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Bahrainis fall to Al Zawra'a of Iraq to wrap up preliminary round campaign in 2023/2024 AFC Cup | P16

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, chaired the 472nd Coordination Committee meeting. They discussed the development of government electronic services and evaluated the government service centers for the year 2023. The committee also followed up on issues related to the regulation of the labour market, emphasising the importance of developing effective and efficient procedures.

Internal regulations under review

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The Parliament yesterday resoundingly rejected Decree Law No. 38 of 2022, which sought to amend specific provisions of Decree Law No. 54 of 2022 concerning the internal regulations of Par-

liament. The rejected decree law has now been referred to the Shura Council for thorough evaluation and deliberation. The explanatory memorandum accompanying the decree law and its amendments highlights its intent to restructure

the operational framework of parliamentary sessions, ensuring the Council's efficient execution of its mandated tasks. Additionally, the amendments aim to rectify any shortcomings in the regulations that had become apparent through practical experience, there-

by saving valuable time and effort. Furthermore, the decree law aims to provide enhanced assurances for Members of Parliament in carrying out their duties, particularly in safeguarding their future careers. Notably, it proposes allowing the reap-

pointment or employment of a member who had previously held a public position but relinquished it upon assuming parliamentary membership, in a similar capacity. This provision is expected to positively impact the performance and contributions of MPs.

220 fils (includes VAT)



Export Bahrain Celebrates Five Years of Empowering Bahraini Businesses and Driving Global Export Success

December 13th, 2023, Manama, Bahrain – Export Bahrain, the national export development and internationalization support entity, is proudly celebrating a remarkable five-year journey of driving Bahrain's global export endeavors and playing a pivotal role in fostering export-centric growth. With an unwavering commitment to empowering businesses, Export Bahrain has firmly established itself as a leading force in propelling local Bahrain-based businesses into global markets, contributing significantly to the Kingdom's economic prosperity. Today, Export Bahrain stands tall, commemorating a series of extraordinary milestones and accomplishments that have cemented its position as a beacon of excellence in the export industry.



Over the course of five years, Export Bahrain has not only facilitated global partnerships but has emerged as a catalyst for success, embracing the diverse and inclusive nature of business operations. With a growing network of over 45 partners, Export Bahrain has demonstrated its global reach by forging connections in more than 92 markets worldwide. Importantly, Export Bahrain has remained committed to promoting entrepreneurship and gender equality, with over 30% of its clients representing women entrepreneurs. Such dedication to inclusivity has set Export Bahrain apart and further solidified its reputation as a trailblazer in the industry.

figures it has achieved. Facilitating over \$600 million in export value, Export Bahrain has propelled Bahrain's local businesses to new heights, enabling them to thrive in international markets. This outstanding accomplishment underscores Export Bahrain's exceptional ability to create opportunities and drive economic growth by connecting Bahraini exporters with global trade partners. As a result, the Kingdom of Bahrain has witnessed a surge in export-centric prosperity, with exporting businesses making significant contributions to the nation's economic landscape.

receiving an impressive array of 15 prestigious global and local business awards since its inception. These accolades serve as a testament to Export Bahrain's tireless efforts in promoting entrepreneurship and their invaluable contributions to the export industry. The awards not only honor the past achievements but also serve as a testament to the promising future that lies ahead for Export Bahrain and the businesses it supports.

In 2023, Export Bahrain achieved remarkable milestones in key markets, with Indonesia emerging as the top exporting market, generating an impressive amount of USD 5.7 million. Saudi Arabia closely followed with USD 5.5 million, and South Korea secured the third

position with USD 5.3 million. The manufacturing sector stood out as the leading economic contributor, accounting for an astounding 90% of total exports, with a value of USD 27 million. Notably, processed and packaged food products were a standout commodity, reaching a value of approximately USD 20 million, further highlighting the diverse and prosperous nature of Bahrain's export industry.

Amidst this celebration, Export Bahrain successfully hosted the second iteration of Export Week, a dynamic initiative designed to cultivate export awareness and amplify opportunities for Bahraini exporters. The week-long series of events, held in conjunction with Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW), showcased Export Bahrain's commitment to empowering exporters and fostering a thriving export ecosystem. The workshops and activities organized by Export Bahrain attracted over 600 participants, providing them with tailored sessions to enhance their export skills and a comprehensive understanding of the support and services offered by Export Bahrain. This initiative demonstrated Export Bahrain's dedication to equipping businesses with the tools and knowledge needed to capitalize on the vast potential of regional and global markets.

H.E. Mr. Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce, commended Export Bahrain on its fifth anniversary and acknowledged its significant contributions to the growth of businesses in the Kingdom



H.E. Mr. Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Export Bahrain



Ms. Safa Sharif Abdulkhalik, Chief Executive Officer, Export Bahrain

role in supporting economic growth and building on the value it has already created.

Ms. Safa Sharif Abdulkhalik, the Chief Executive Officer of Export Bahrain, expressed her pride in Export Bahrain's fifth anniversary, emphasizing the entity's unwavering commitment to supporting the export community. She attributed Bahrain's growing economy to the continuous efforts of Export Bahrain in cementing the nation's position as a leading force in the global market and contributing to its long-term economic growth. Ms. Abdulkhalik extended her gratitude to Export Bahrain's esteemed partners and customers, recognizing their integral role in Export Bahrain's journey and success.

Looking ahead, Ms. Abdulkhalik reaffirmed Export Bahrain's commitment to simplifying the export process and facilitating seamless trade experiences for all stakeholders. She expressed enthusiasm for unveiling upcoming initiatives that will further diversify Export Bahrain's range of solutions and offerings. With unwavering dedication and a customer-centric approach, Export Bahrain is poised to achieve new milestones and provide enhanced support to its customers in the years to come, solidifying its position as the go-to partner for Bahraini exporters in their global expansion endeavors. Export Bahrain's fifth anniversary is not only a celebration of past achievements but also a testament to the entity's unwavering commitment to shaping a prosperous future for Bahrain's export industry.

of Bahrain. He lauded the entity's exceptional support, which has resulted in over \$600 million in export value. He further emphasized that Export Bahrain will continue to introduce and enhance a diversified portfolio of services and solutions, aiming to accelerate export growth, fuel innovation, and reinforce the Kingdom of Bahrain's position as a strategic global export hub. By being a solution innovator and increasing the efficiency of export solutions, Export Bahrain will play a crucial

Telecom sector plays key role in economic progress

TDI | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, affirmed the role of the telecommunications sector today and the importance of strengthening it to further its contribution to the Kingdom's national economy.

HRH Prince Salman was speaking as he met yesterday with the Chairman of the Bahrain Telecommunications Com-

pany (Beyon), His Excellency Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, and the Deputy Chairman of Beyon and Chairman of Bahrain Network (BNET), HE Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, at Gudaibiya Palace.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister commended the developments made in the telecommunications sector, which reflect the Kingdom's commitment to adopting innovative solutions that achieve the desired goals.



HRH Prince Salman meets with HE Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa

He expressed pride in the Kingdom's national workforce for their successes in this vi-

leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

His Royal Highness congratulated BNET for winning the award for the Best Fiber Deployment Award at a global level.

Plans and programmes

HRH Prince Salman was briefed on the BNET's plans and programmes and the company's efforts to attract specialised and skilled national cadres to enhance its telecommunication

services.

Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa and Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa expressed their appreciation for His Royal Highness's interest in the telecommunications sector, which supports companies operating in this sector.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and the Minister of Finance and National Economy, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, also attended the meeting.

Solidifying partnerships

Bahrain and US committed to strengthening military and defence cooperation

TDI | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain and the US are committed to strengthening cooperation across all levels, particularly in the military and defence sectors, through the recently signed Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA) which aims to achieve mutual goals and aspirations.

This was affirmed by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown



HRH Prince Salman receives Vice Admiral Charles B. Cooper II

Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Prime Minister, as he received yesterday the Commander of US Naval Forces Central Com-

mand, Commander of the United States Fifth Fleet, and Commander of Combined Maritime Forces, Vice Admiral Charles B. Cooper II, at Gudaibiya



Palace.

HRH Prince Salman highlighted the depth of the longstanding relations and multisector collaboration between the two

countries.

He noted the US's important role, alongside allied countries, in safeguarding security and stability, which further supports

regional and global development and sustainability.

During the meeting, regional and global developments, and issues of common interest were also discussed.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, and the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, HE Hamad bin Faisal Al Malki, also attended the meeting.

Professional specialisations will boost employment: MP Al-Dhaen

TDI | Manama

Highlighting the outcomes of a series of meetings with the Minister of Labour, MP Dr. Maryam Al-Dhaen emphasised the urgency of promoting enrolment in professional specialisations as a key strategy to expedite employment and address the evolving needs of the labour market.

In her statement, Dr. Al-Dhaen underscored the critical role of heightened community awareness and active participation in professional specialisations, citing the substantial benefits these fields offer. She advocates for the development of tailored professional programs to bridge the gap in the labour market, underscoring the contribution of these specialisations in imparting the necessary skills demanded by the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Commending the dedication of the government, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Dr. Al-Dhaen applauded their commitment to vocational apprenticeship programs. These initiatives play a crucial role in supplying the labour market with specialized national competencies, aligning with the government's focus on realistic solutions.

Dr. Al-Dhaen also expressed appreciation for the Minister of Labour, Jamil Humaidan, and his launched initiative, acknowledging the seriousness in addressing proposals from the legislative authority.

She said she looks forward to the expansion of vocational programs, aiming to pave the



MP Dr. Maryam Al-Dhaen

"I look forward to the expansion of vocational programs that aim to pave the way for citizens to receive professional and specialised practical training, either qualifying them for skilled craft jobs with lucrative wages or enabling them to start their own professional ventures."

- MP DR. MARYAM AL-DHAEN

During a previous session, Dr. Al-Dhaen had raised the issue of professional certificates, emphasising the importance of altering the perception of Bahrainis towards favouring professional studies over academic ones. Particularly in the face of rapid technological advancements and subsequent changes in the labour market, she stressed the necessity of increasing awareness through professional guidance.

This includes introducing students and recent graduates to labour market requirements and encouraging them to pursue professional specialisations for their considerable benefits, ultimately facilitating the citizens' swift integration into the job market based on genuine needs.

Additionally, Dr. Al-Dhaen commended the support provided by the Labour Fund 'Tamkeen', recognising its role in not only assisting in securing salaries but also in equipping individuals in this field with high-level skills. She acknowledged the efforts of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Bahrain Polytechnic, which recently launched the first edition of vocational apprenticeship programs.

This collaborative effort aims to offer applied programs tailored for target groups in specialisations required by employers. Dr. Al-Dhaen also highlighted the significant contributions of major national institutions and companies, which provide numerous career and training opportunities across various professional fields.

way for citizens to receive professional and specialized practical training, either qualifying them for skilled craft jobs with lucrative wages or enabling them to start their own professional ventures.

End-of-service gratuity system for non-Bahrainis in civil societies

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, yesterday issued Edict (109) of 2023, promulgating the end-of-service gratuity system for non-Bahrainis working in civil societies, based on a proposal by the Minister of Finance and National Economy, and following the approval of the Cabinet.

The Edict stipulates the following:

Article (I): The end-of-service gratuity system for non-Bahrainis working in civil societies, attached to this edict, shall be put into effect.

Article (II): Employers are required to submit data on the wages of their insured workers to the Social Insurance Organisation (SIO) within one month after the publication of this edict in the Official Gazette. If employers fail to submit their data within the specified period, contributions will be calculated on the basis of the monthly wage subject to payment to the employment injuries branch.

Article (III): The Minister of Finance and National Economy shall, based on the agreement of the Board of Directors of the Social Insurance Organisation, issue the edicts necessary for the implementation of the system



HRH Prince Salman

attached to this edict.

Article (IV): The Minister of Finance and National Economy, and those concerned – each in their capacity, shall implement the provisions of this edict, which will come into effect from

March 1, 2024, and be published in the Official Gazette.

New SCE director

His Royal Highness issued Edict (110) of 2023, appointing a director at the executive body of the Supreme Council for Environment (SCE), based on a proposal by the Chairman of the SCE.

The edict stipulates the following:

Article (I): Sarah Anees Mohammed Al Rowaiee was appointed as the Director of the Human and Financial Resources Directorate at the SCE.

Article (II): The Chairman of the SCE shall implement the

provisions of this edict, which comes into effect upon its issuance and will be published in the Official Gazette.

New UPDA director

HRH Prince Salman issued Edict (112) of 2023, appointing a director at the Urban Planning and Development Authority (UPDA), based on a proposal by the Minister of Housing and Urban Planning.

The edict stipulates the following:

Article (I): Abdulla Ahmed Ali Al Jowdar shall be appointed as the Director of the Urban Development Directorate at the UPDA.

Article (II): The Minister of Housing and Urban Planning shall implement the provisions of this edict, which takes immediate effect, and will be published in the Official Gazette.

New Ministry director

HRH Prince Salman issued Edict (111) of 2023, appointing a director at the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, based on a proposal by the Minister of Shura and Representatives Councils Affairs. Nayef Abdulaziz Mohammed Al Fadhel shall be appointed as the Director of the Human and Financial Resources Directorate at the ministry.

Oil Minister takes part in OAPEC meeting in Doha

Doha

His Excellency Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, Minister of Oil and Environment and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, participated in the meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

The meeting chaired by Dr. Hayyan Abdul Ghani, the Deputy Prime Minister for Energy Affairs and Oil Minister, discussed views and coordination of stances and efforts for the development of the oil sector in Arab countries.

The meeting discussed items on its agenda, including: the organisation's draft estimated budget, the results of the OAPEC Scientific Award for the year 2022, and a review of the activities of the General Secretariat related to the environment and climate change.

They also highlighted the studies on economic and technical issues related to oil, gas and the environment.

Harmony restored

MPs Abdulnabi Salman and Ahmed Sabah Al Saloom end rift in Parliament

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In a remarkable turn of events, the rift that unfolded during the previous parliamentary session between the First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, Abdulnabi Salman, and the head of the Strategic Thinking Bloc, MP Ahmed Sabah Al Saloom, has come to a peaceful resolution. This reconciliation took place during yesterday's session, marking a significant step towards restoring harmony within the Parliament.

During the session held on December 5th, tensions escalated, prompting the First Deputy Speaker to request the removal of certain remarks made against MP Al Saloom from the minutes of last week's session. The First Deputy Speaker expressed his desire for this moment to serve as the foundation for a renewed and healthy Parliament, emphasising their shared



MP Ahmed Sabah Al Saloom

fraternity.

Responding to this gesture, MP Al Saloom took the floor and warmly acknowledged MP Salman as a "brother and friend, indispensable to us all". He extended his heartfelt gratitude to the Speaker and the First Deputy Speaker for their commitment to reconciliation and unity.

The spokesperson for the Strategic Thinking Bloc, MP Khalid Bu Anq, condemned earlier in a statement what he called the repeated disrespect-



MP Abdulnabi Salman

ful behaviour of the First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament towards his colleagues during sessions necessitates the implementation of legal measures outlined in the internal regulations of the Parliament.

As the waters of discord recede, replaced by an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual respect, the Parliament can now focus on its essential legislative responsibilities with renewed vigor and a shared commitment to progress.

Tree-planting initiative



His Excellency Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak, the Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture, attended the inauguration ceremony of planting 100,000 trees in Bahrain. The initiative was launched by the Saudi company Tanniah Food in partnership with the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture and Saudi Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture. The inauguration was attended by Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, Minister of Oil and Environment and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, and Dr. Khaled Alabdulkader, CEO of the Saudi National Center for Vegetation Cover and Combating Desertification on behalf of the Saudi Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture. Al Mubarak affirmed Bahrain's commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2060, quadrupling the numbers of mangrove trees, and doubling the number of trees in general in the Kingdom 2035.

Parliament approves extension of imported car age limit to 10 years



Image used for illustrative purposes only

● Aims to ease financial burden on citizens

TDT | Manama

The Parliament yesterday approved the extension of the age limit for imported cars to 10 years, allowing them to be registered as used vehicles instead of the previous five-year limit.

The proponents of this proposal cited the significant increase in prices of used cars as the driving factor behind their recommendation. They pointed out that the current law permits the importation of cars that are up to 5 years old. However, extending this period to 10 years will help alleviate the financial

burden on citizens due to the recent surge in car prices.

By extending the allowable age limit, citizens will have the opportunity to access more affordable options in the used car market. This decision aims to provide relief to individuals and families who rely on private transportation for their daily needs, especially in light of the challenging economic circumstances.

It is worth noting that this measure aligns with the government's ongoing efforts to support the welfare of its citizens and mitigate the impact of rising prices on various sectors, including the automotive industry. The decision reflects a balancing act between ensuring road safety, environmental considerations, and the affordability of vehicles for the general public.

'The world must act now' to end Gaza crisis

Geneva

The Foreign Affairs Minister, His Excellency Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, urged the international community to intensify its efforts to end the hostile war on the Gaza Strip and put an end to the horrific human catastrophe.

Dr. Al Zayani said that it must fulfill its responsibilities and legal and ethical obligations by intervening immediately in resolving the crisis in Gaza, which persists as the offensive continues to violate international law and international humanitarian law.

The Minister made the statements as he attended an event in Geneva by the Permanent Mission of Palestine regarding the war in Gaza.

The event was attended by members of the Joint Arab-Islamic Ministerial Committee formed following the Extraordinary Arab-Islamic Summit and participating ministers and representatives of countries participating in the United Nations celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In his speech, Dr. Al Zayani



Dr. Al Zayani at the event

affirmed that Bahrain supports the rights of the Palestinian people and calls for a ceasefire and cessation of military operations in Gaza, protecting civilians, releasing hostages, he said, stressing the importance of putting an end to killing Palestinians of hunger, thirst, and the spread of diseases.

He called on the international community to end the humanitarian crisis, lift the Israeli siege on the Gaza Strip, open humanitarian corridors, and facilitate aid flow.

The kingdom calls on Israel to stop targeting residential

neighbourhoods, health facilities, and places of worship, and forcibly displace Palestinians; in adherence to international humanitarian law and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 2014, he added.

Security and stability

Dr. Al Zayani affirmed the need for permanent security and stability in the Middle East by ensuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and that an independent Palestinian state must be established with East Jerusalem as its capi-

tal on the June 4, 1967 borders. He stressed that the two-state solution, endorsed by international legitimacy, paves the way to a just and comprehensive peace.

He called on the international community to join efforts in commitment to justice and human dignity values, and to take swift humanitarian measures to end the suffering in the Gaza Strip.

The Minister said the international community has the ability to achieve a brighter, more peaceful future for the Palestinian people and the Middle East.

Mind Matters

How to become emotionally strong



ANEESA MOIDOO, PSYCHOLOGIST

I try not to express my emotions to anyone, particularly close family members. But I am susceptible at times, which I despise about myself. Could you help me in not repeating that mistake? I want to be strong all of the time.

Appreciate that you are aware of your feelings. Feelings as such are not negative. Every emotion has its roles. Regulating the emotions is the key. So feeling vulnerable in front of the people you feel safe helps you make stronger because as human we need connection. It is not bad but healthy when you feel strong enough to let yourself weak with your close ones. Besides, there are ways where you can be emotionally strong like:

Understanding and articulating your emotions. Giving a name to your feelings can have a calming effect, diminishing their intensity. Whether it's sadness, anxiety, anger, or fear, a simple acknowledgment to yourself can be a powerful first step. By recognizing you lay the groundwork for effectively managing and expressing these feelings in a healthy manner.

Acceptance is a crucial step in fostering a balanced emotional life. Embrace the reality that experiencing both positive and negative emotions is a natural part of the human experience. Grant yourself permission to feel without judgment, cultivating a more compassionate approach to your emotional well-being.

Expressing your emotions in constructive ways is essential for maintaining mental health. Share your feelings with trusted individuals, engage in activities that bring you joy, or utilize outlets like journaling and exercise. These actions allow you to channel your emotions into positive avenues, preventing them from being bottled up or expressed in harmful ways.

Communication plays a pivotal role in emotional well-being. Opening up to someone you trust about your feelings creates a support system. It not only strengthens your connections with others but also provides an outlet for emotional expression, contributing to a more resilient mindset.

Setting boundaries is a form of self-care in managing negative emotions. If certain situations or individuals consistently trigger emotional distress, establishing and enforcing limits becomes crucial. This empowers you to protect your well-being and navigate challenging circumstances more effectively.

Incorporating mindfulness and relaxation techniques into your routine fosters emotional resilience. Practices such as meditation and deep breathing exercises promote present-moment awareness, helping you manage stress and cultivate a sense of calm amidst life's challenges.

Learning from your emotions involves reflection and self-awareness. By understanding the underlying causes of your feelings, you pave the way for personal growth. This introspective process allows you to develop strategies for handling similar situations in the future, contributing to emotional maturity.

Seeking professional help is a proactive step toward maintaining emotional well-being. If managing emotions becomes overwhelming, a mental health professional can offer tailored support, coping strategies, and a safe space for deeper exploration. This decision reflects strength and a commitment to prioritizing your mental and emotional health.

“Learning from your emotions involves reflection and self-awareness. By understanding the underlying causes of your feelings, you pave the way for personal growth. This introspective process allows you to develop strategies for handling similar situations in the future, contributing to emotional maturity.”



(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Daily Tribune)

Weather woes

Bahrain experiences foggy conditions with low visibility

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

The Meteorological Department at the Ministry of Transportation and Communications has reported that the Kingdom encountered foggy conditions in certain areas yesterday.

According to the department's observations, the initial hours of yesterday were marked by foggy conditions, which gradually transitioned into a general state of moderate weather with intermittent cloud cover as the day unfolded.

The fluctuating weather conditions prompted the authorities to issue a warning regarding low horizontal visibility, cautioning that visibility levels in certain areas dropped below 1,000 metres.



Drivers find it challenging to navigate safely through the zero visibility conditions



Visibility levels in certain areas dropped below 1,000 metres.

Caution

In light of the weather conditions, the General Directorate of Traffic has called upon all road users to exercise caution, particularly in areas experiencing

reduced visibility.

Motorists are urged to prioritise safety and avoid careless driving practices, as such actions can significantly increase the risk of accidents.

Consequently, the General

Directorate of Traffic appeals to individuals to adhere to safety measures, including reducing speed, maintaining a safe distance from other vehicles, and utilising headlights and fog lights when necessary.

Bahrain values education: Dr. Jumaa



HE Dr. Jumaa at the event
TDT | Manama

Bahrain is at the forefront of countries in the region that recognises the importance of education in building nations.

This was emphasised by His Excellency Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Jumaa, Minister of Education, as he attended the 75th anniversary celebration of Sacred Heart School.

Dr. Jumaa noted that education is vital to promoting peace, tolerance, understanding, and coexistence between cultures and religions.

He congratulated Sacred Heart School Principal Rosalyn Thomas and all members of the school.

The Minister highlighted the importance of the school which was further demonstrated by

the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to the it during his trip to Bahrain in November 2022 to attend the Bahrain Forum for Dialogue: East and West for Human Coexistence.

Dr. Jumaa said that Sacred heart school was a significant component of the education of history in Bahrain, commending its efforts in offering quality education.

Health sector development on track

● Various projects underway

TDT | Manama

His Excellency Lieutenant-General Dr. Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Supreme Council for Health (SCH) Chairman, has affirmed that Bahrain is on the right track towards achieving all its goals at all levels in the health sector.

Dr. Shaikh Mohammed stressed the importance of continuing to implement health projects to serve the comprehensive development process, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and supported by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

While laying the foundation stone of the “Hussain Ali Yateem Health Centre” at Salman City, Northern Governorate, the SCH head expressed thanks and appreciation to the Ali & Mohammed Yateem Company for its support, and keenness



HE Dr. Shaikh Mohammed at the foundation stone-laying ceremony

to deliver health and treatment services to patients, within the framework of its social responsibility.

Healthcare

Health Minister, Her Excellency Dr. Jaleela bint Al Sayed Jawad Hassan, underlined the kingdom's keenness to launch more development projects to improve its health facilities and services so as to ensure the delivery of integrated and distinguished healthcare to

everybody.

Cooperation

She commended the major role played by the private sector and civil society organisations in supporting efforts to achieve sustainable development, especially in the health sector, extending thanks and appreciation to the Yateem Family for their contributions, which will ensure the provisions of high-quality healthcare services.

Filipino business group inducts new officers

TDT | Manama

The Filipino Business Council Bahrain (FBCB) has officially launched and inducted its first set of officers in the presence of Consul Bryan Jess B. Baguio of Philippine Embassy Manama and Shaikh Daij bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Chairman of the ASEAN Bahrain Council (ABC), in a ceremony held on 30 November at Ramada Hotel, Seef.

The program, which was attended by more than a hundred guests from Bahrain government, business owners, entrepreneur, members of academe and leaders of Filipino community, was commenced with the singing of Philippine national anthem followed by a welcome remarks from Dr. Ilene Agana, FBCB Head of Government Relations who thanked everyone for gracing the occasion.

A representative from the office of Dr. Hashim S. Hussein, Head of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO-ITPO), Mr. Ehab Mustafa Abdurassak, extended his greetings to FBCB.

Governorate marks national celebrations

TDT | Manama

The Southern Governorate held a celebration for the people of Zallaq, as a continuation of the series of events and celebrations on the occasion of the Kingdom of Bahrain's national celebrations.

The successful celebration included several events showcasing the historical and national heritage, which expressed the history, status and authenticity of the region.

Huawei executives hail Bahrain's business-friendly environment, digital advancements

TDT | Manama

Top Huawei executive has commended Bahrain for its competitive and business-friendly environment, during a meeting yesterday with the Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber, Sameer Nass.

Aziz Tang, the Chief Executive Officer of Huawei Technologies-Bahrain, expressed admiration for Bahrain's impressive pace of advancement and development. He further discussed the company's ongoing and upcoming projects in Bahrain and



In pictures, the meeting held yesterday at Bahrain Chamber

the broader region.

The meeting took place at Sameer Nass's office in the

Chamber's premises and included Huawei's Account Director Dongnan 'Jacky' Shao and

Managing Director Li Haiyun. Also in attendance were Bahrain Chamber's Second Vice-Chair-



Digital Economy Committee Al-harith Alatawi.

Sameer Nass highlighted Huawei's significant role in Bahrain's digital transformation and technological advancement, praising the company's global ranking and its commitment to fostering innovation and creativity.

Aziz Tang emphasized Huawei's noteworthy achievements in industrial research and development investment, revealing the company's fourth position globally in Q1, 2023, and its fifth position in the global cloud services market.

CEO of Mumtalakat visits Al Dana Theatre



Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, CEO of Mumtalakat, recently visited local portfolio company, Al Dana Amphitheatre. During his visit, Sheikh Abdulla toured the facilities, which have sustainability embedded into its architecture. Al Dana Amphitheatre plays a significant role in realising the Kingdom of Bahrain's 2022-2026 Tourism Strategy, aiming to position Bahrain as a global tourism destination. Sheikh Abdulla discussed the milestones achieved since the Amphitheatre's opening in 2021 and its future prospects with the newly launched season. Mumtalakat collaborates closely with the Amphitheatre to advance its goals of developing the leisure and entertainment industry within the Kingdom.

StartUp Bahrain spotlights four Bahraini startups

TDT | Manama

StartUp Bahrain, the leading platform for startups in the Kingdom of Bahrain, recently concluded the ninth edition of the highly anticipated Start-Up Bahrain Pitch series with the presence of Noor bint Ali Alkhalifa, Minister of Sustainable Development and Board Member of the Labour Fund (Tamkeen). The event was organized in collaboration with key industry stakeholders, including the Ministry of Industry & Commerce, the Labour Fund (Tamkeen), the Bahrain Economic Development Board, and Bahrain Development Bank (BDB). This edition of the series featured a keynote speech by Khalid Machchate, disruptive technologies expert and Royal Policy Advisor at Morocco's



The honouring ceremony

Special Commission on the Development Model, who shared insights and key learnings from his entrepreneurial journey.

The event showcased four Bahraini startups presenting their innovative ideas to a distinguished panel of judges featuring local and regional experts, including: Hala Ebrahim, Investment Director at Antler, Ahmad Sufian, General Part-

ner at Blackbox & Author, Ali Abussaud, Founding Managing Partner at HALA Ventures, Yasser AlGhamdi, Cyber Security GM (CISO) and Khalid Machchate.

The four Bahraini rising startups featured at this event have showcased great potential for success, engaging both judges and the audience with their pitches. The startups included:

Unipal, an application that provides exclusive student benefits through an innovative digital student ID; Lumofy, an integrated learning experience platform that assists businesses in identifying, curating, utilizing, and monitoring their human capital competencies; doobi, an online laundry subscription platform built smartly for busy people, and Tamarran, a booking application with a wide range of service providers in the sports activities domain.

Following a thorough evaluation of each startup, the judging panel ultimately announced Lumofy, founded by Ahmed Faraj, as the first-place winner.

Ahmed Faraj, Founder and CEO of Lumofy, expressed immense gratitude for the opportunity to showcase their business on this platform.

ila Bank rewards Credit Card spends this December

TDT | Manama

ila Bank, the digital mobile-only bank powered by Bank ABC, has launched three personalized Credit Card campaigns offering customers superior benefits over the coming two months.

As part of the first campaign, customers can win cashback of up to BHD1,000 on their international credit card spends made until 31 December. Ten lucky winners who spend a minimum equivalent of BHD 300 in any foreign currency with their ila Credit Card while travelling and shopping online stand a chance to win back their international expenses. The winners of this campaign will be announced on 24 January 2024.

ila Bank's second credit card campaign is a win-win for each and every one of its Credit Card holders. This winter, all customers will receive double the ila Rewards on their international and online credit card transactions made between 5 December 2023 – 15 January 2024. Customers of ila's Airline Miles Reward program will get double the airline miles with Gulf Air or Turkish Airlines, based on their preference. If customers have enrolled for the Cashback Reward program, they will get twice the cashback into their Credit Card accounts. Customers who have opted for the ila Tokens Reward program will receive 2X ila Tokens.

The Bank's third campaign enables customers to win back



Nada Tarada

money spent on buying gold and precious jewelry. All that they need to do is spend a minimum of BHD300 using their ila Credit Card on gold and jewelry bought locally or internationally until 31 December, to enter the draw. Three lucky winners will win cashback up to BHD2,000.

Nada Tarada, Head of Business & Customer at ila Bank, said, "These personalized benefits echo our endeavor to keep customers the central focus in every aspect of our banking experience to ensure we always provide 'banking that reflects you' in its truest form."

The flexible reward blueprint empowers customers to select and even switch between their preferred reward programs: the Airmiles program offering rewards as airline miles on Gulf Air or Turkish Airlines; the Cashback program which automatically credits cash back into the customer's account; and the ila Tokens program, in which ila Tokens can be collected and redeemed as either airline miles, cashback, or to pay for any transactions made within the past 30 days.

Babasons/Mega Mart concludes 6-month long Goodness Campaign

TDT | Manama

Babasons/Mega Mart wrapped up the 6-month long Goodness Campaign with a fun filled Award Ceremony in the BMC auditorium, Segayya, on Monday. The Goodness Campaign is an employee engagement event driven every year by the Human Resources team with the support of nominees from all Outlets, Distribution Center and Offices.

During this campaign, numerous tournaments, competitions, and challenges are held to engage employees and boost their morale. The competitions aim to



Participants during the Goodness Campaign

cover job specific activities such as the Product Hunt wherein

participants have to collect the list of products in the shortest

span of time, Fastest Check Out for the cashiers, Best Dessert

challenge and Cooking without Fire challenge to name a few. They also conduct fun games such as Minute to Win it, chess, carrom, etc. The most awaited tournament every year is the Gully Cricket with the highest number of passionate participants from across the corporate ladder. The championship trophy was bagged by the reigning champ, Commerce Comrade.

This year, they successfully witnessed participation of a whopping 60% of the total workforce from all the departments. To further encourage active participation, winners and runners-up are awarded trophies,

medals and cash prizes every year. Certificate of participation are also given to the participants. Winners, runners-up and participants were welcomed to the Award Ceremony this week and were also entertained by fellow colleagues with singing, dancing, mimicry, and comedy.

Anil Nawani, General Manager for Babasons/Mega Mart praised the efforts of the Human Resources team for seamlessly driving this campaign and also thanked all the employees who have participated and supported to make this campaign one of the key highlights of the year.

News in brief

◆ **The European Parliament**

yesterday presented a top EU rights prize to Mahsa Amini, whose death in Iranian custody sparked mass protests, but her family was blocked by Tehran from attending. The award -- also for the broader "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement -- is the latest international recognition for the women challenging Iran's religious government after jailed activist Narges Mohammadi was given the Nobel Peace Prize. Amini's mother, father and brother missed the ceremony at the parliament in the French city of Strasbourg after Iran's authorities confiscated their passports and barred them from flying to collect the EU's Sakharov Prize. In a speech read out by the family's lawyer, Amini's mother Mojgan Eftekhari said they were denied the opportunity to attend "in violation of all legal and human standards". She said her daughter's name "became a secret code for freedom and spread the dream of liberty from her birthplace, Kurdistan, all over Iran, the Middle East and the world".



EU awards Mahsa Amini rights prize as Iran blocks family

◆ **At least 23 soldiers**

were killed when militants rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into a Pakistan military base yesterday, the army said, in an attack claimed by affiliates of the Pakistani Taliban. A suicide squad of six fighters attacked an outpost in Dera Ismail Khan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province -- near the Afghan border -- in the early hours of Tuesday, the military's media wing said. "The attempt to enter the post was effectively thwarted which forced the terrorists to ram an explosive-laden vehicle into the post, followed by a suicide bombing attack," a statement said. "The resulting blasts led to the collapse of the building, causing multiple casualties," it added, saying all six attackers were slain as soldiers fought back. A local official who spoke on condition of anonymity said many of the soldiers "were killed while they were sleeping" in the base, a government school commandeered by the army adjacent to a police station.



Suicide attack on Pakistan army base kills 23 soldiers: military

◆ **China's President Xi Jinping** called yesterday for a "new stage" in relations with Vietnam as he began his first visit in six years, seeking to counter the United States' growing influence with the communist nation. Xi will meet the leader of Vietnam's ruling Communist Party, Nguyen Phu Trong, later on Tuesday, after Hanoi upgraded diplomatic ties with Washington when US President Joe Biden visited in September. Speaking after his arrival at Hanoi's airport, Xi said he would talk with Vietnamese leaders on "the overall, strategic, and directional issues of China-Vietnam relations, as well as international and regional issues of common concern, in order to push bilateral relations into a new stage", according to Chinese state media.

China's Xi visits Vietnam in bid to counter US



CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Final two members of BTS start mandatory military service



A man walks past a banner showing an image of South Korean K-pop group BTS in front of a cafe in Seoul

AFP | Seoul, South Korea

The last two members of K-pop superstars BTS to enlist for mandatory military service, Jimin and Jung Kook, were set to begin their training on Tuesday, South Korean media reported, resulting in the entire megagroup being on hiatus.

All able-bodied men in South Korea must serve at least 18 months in the military.

After a years-long debate about whether BTS deserved a rare exemption, Jin, the oldest member of the group, enlisted last year, with the remaining members following suit in 2023.

The BTS septet has become a global cultural phenomenon, selling out stadiums around the world and dominating key US charts while raking in billions for South Korea's econ-

omy and building an international legion of fans known as ARMY.

BTS members J-Hope and SUGA enlisted earlier this year. Two more members, RM and V, enlisted on Monday.

Now, the final two members of the group will begin their five-week basic training at an army boot camp on Tuesday, the Yonhap news agency reported.

"I think I will be able to rely on Jung Kook a lot since we are enlisting together," said Jimin during a livestream with fans on web platform Weverse late Monday. "I'll be back after doing a good job," he added.

South Korea offers exemptions from military service to some individuals, including Olympic medal-winning athletes and some classical musicians, but K-pop stars are not eligible under the existing programme.

Puma to end kit deal with Israeli national football team

AFP | Berlin, Germany

German sportswear maker Puma said yesterday it would end a sponsorship deal with the Israeli national football team in a decision made before the beginning of the war in Gaza.

Following a strategy review carried out at the end of 2022, Puma would stop outfitting the Israeli team from next year, the company said.

"While two newly signed national teams -- including a new statement team -- will be announced later this year and in 2024, the contracts of some federations such as Serbia and Israel will expire in 2024," a spokeswoman said in a statement.

"These decisions were taken in 2022 in line with the regular timelines for the design (and) development of the team jerseys," the spokeswoman said.

The deal with Israel, which was signed in 2018, prompted calls to boycott the sportswear brand.

US concerned over reports Israel used white phosphorus

Washington, United States

The White House expressed concern Monday over reports that Israel used US-supplied white phosphorus in attacks on Lebanon, adding that it was seeking more details about the allegations.

Lebanon accused Israel of repeatedly using the incendiary weapon in October, while the Washington Post on Monday said analysis of shell fragments from one attack showed the rounds were US-made.

"We've seen the reports, we're certainly concerned about that. We'll be asking questions to try to learn a little bit more," said National Security Council spokesman John Kirby.

The use of white phosphorus as a chemical weapon is prohibited under international law, but it is allowed for illuminating battlefields and can be used as a smokescreen.

"Obviously, any time that we provide items like white phosphorus to another military, it is with the full expectation that it will be used in keeping with those legitimate purposes and in keeping with the law of armed conflict," said Kirby.



An Israeli air force attack helicopter fires a missile

UN labels Gaza 'hell on earth'



The grandfather of Sidal Abu Jamea, a Palestinian girl from Khan Yunis, mourns over her body after she died overnight while sleeping in a tent from a shrapnel fragment that hit her in the head following Israeli bombardment on a nearby position, at the Kuwaiti Hospital in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip

AFP | Jerusalem

Israeli forces battled Hamas and bombed more targets in the devastated Gaza Strip on Tuesday as the UN General Assembly was due to vote on a new demand for a ceasefire.

More than two months into the war sparked by Hamas's October 7 attack, the visiting chief of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, Philippe Lazzarini, likened Gaza to "hell on earth". The Hamas-run health ministry updated the death toll in Gaza to 18,412, mostly women and children.

The group said Israeli forces raided a hospital in Gaza City, the biggest urban centre.

"Israeli occupation forces are storming Kamal Adwan hospital after besieging and bombing it for days," Ashraf al-Qudra said, accusing troops of rounding up men in the hospital courtyard, including medical staff. The army did not immediately comment, but Israel has repeatedly accused the Islamist group of using hospitals, schools, mosques and tunnels beneath them as military bases -- claims Hamas has denied.

The UN humanitarian agency OCHA said earlier that "the hospital remains surrounded by Israeli troops and tanks, and fighting with armed groups has been reported in its vicinity for three consecutive days".

It said two mothers were killed in a strike on the maternity ward and that about 3,000 internally displaced people were trapped in the facility amid reports of "extreme shortages of water, food and power".

Air and artillery strikes again rained down on multiple targets in Gaza, a day after Defence Minister Yoav Gallant claimed significant progress in the war,

now in its third month. "Hamas is on the verge of dissolution -- the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) is taking over its last strongholds," said Gallant.

'WWII-level devastation'

The war has deepened the suffering in Gaza, whose devastation the EU's top diplomat Josep Borrell has compared that of Germany during World War II.

The UN estimates 1.9 million of Gaza's 2.4 million people have been displaced by the war, half of them children.

Israeli air strikes killed at least 24 people in Rafah near the border with Egypt, where tens of thousands are seeking shelter, the health ministry said.

One strike left a deep crater and gutted surrounding buildings. Teenagers were salvaging belongings from the debris with their hands, a young girl retrieving some notebooks.

"There are still people under the rubble," said local resident Abu Jazar, 23. "We call on the Arab people and the world to put on pressure to stop the strikes on Gaza."

At Rafah hospital, bereaved father Hani Abu Jamaa was holding the body of his young daughter Sidal, who was killed by shrapnel.

He said there had been strong explosions overnight and that he only found she was dead when he tried to wake her in the morning.

"Even if I live 100 years, I will never find another like her," he said, crying. "May God have mercy on her, oh Lord."

'No water, no power, no bread'

Israel's military said it had struck a rocket launch site in Jabalia near Gaza City that had fired on Sderot in southern Is-

YOU KNOW WHAT

The Hamas-run health ministry updated the death toll in Gaza to 18,412, mostly women and children.

rael, and found hundreds of shells and rocket-propelled grenade launchers in a Hamas compound.

The army has lost 105 soldiers in the offensive, it said Tuesday, including 13 killed by friendly fire and others in accidents.

Fighting and heavy bombardment in the south of Gaza, where Israel had previously urged civilians to seek safety, have left people with few places to go.

In central Gaza, Al-Aqsa hospital was inundated with victims Monday, including dozens of screaming children, after Israeli strikes on the Al-Maghazi refugee camp.

New UN meeting

The UN General Assembly was due to vote later Tuesday on a non-binding resolution demanding "an immediate humanitarian ceasefire" in Gaza.

The draft text, seen by AFP, largely reproduces the resolution blocked by the United States, a key ally of Israel, at a UN Security Council vote on Friday.

Arab countries called the new special session of the General Assembly following a visit to the Rafah border by more than a dozen Security Council ambassadors.

Francis Drake sets sail from England on an epic three year circumnavigation of the world aboard the 'Pelican' (later renamed the 'Golden Hind')



League of Nations establishes the International Court of Justice in The Hague

Former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is captured near his home town of Tikrit, during Operation Red Dawn by US forces

The Beatles sign a formal agreement to be managed by Brian Epstein

Hamas-run health ministry says Israeli troops storm north Gaza hospital

AFP | Jerusalem

The health ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip said Israeli forces were raiding a hospital Tuesday in the north of the Palestinian territory.

"Israeli occupation forces are storming Kamal Adwan hospital after besieging and bombing it for days," ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qudra said in a statement.

The Israeli military did not immediately respond to an AFP request to comment.

Qudra said the troops were rounding up men in the hospital courtyard, including medical staff.



Israeli forces shell the Gaza Strip from the border area in southern Israel

"We fear their arrest and the arrest of the medical teams or their killing," the health ministry spokesman added, calling for international intervention.

The United Nations humanitarian agency OCHA said two mothers were killed when the maternity department of Kamal Adwan hospital was reportedly hit Monday.

"The hospital remains surrounded by Israeli troops and tanks, and fighting with armed groups has been reported in its vicinity for three consecutive days," OCHA said.

It said the hospital was "currently accommodating 65 patients, including 12 children in

the intensive care unit and six newborns in incubators".

"About 3,000 internally displaced persons remain trapped in the facility and are awaiting evacuation with extreme shortages of water, food and power reported," it added.

Israeli troops have previously raided other medical facilities in Gaza, including Al-Shifa, the territory's largest hospital.

There is currently only one hospital in northern Gaza able to admit patients, according to the UN. Just 13 of 36 hospitals across the territory are functioning, providing limited healthcare while sheltering thousands of displaced people.

Yemen's Huthi claim attack on Norway-flagged tanker

AFP | Sanaa, Yemen

Yemen's Huthi rebels claimed responsibility on Tuesday for a missile strike on a Norwegian-flagged tanker, an attack the Iran-backed group said was part of its military campaign against Israel.

Norwegian shipowner J. Ludwig Mowinckels Rederi said the overnight strike on the Strinda caused a fire that the crew, all Indian nationals, were able to extinguish and that no one was hurt.

The Huthis said the ship was carrying oil bound for Israel -- a claim denied by the owners of the 144-metre (472-foot) vessel that was sailing towards the Suez Canal.

France's defence ministry said one of its naval vessels in



Cargo and tanker shipping vessels sail in the Mediterranean sea waters off the coast of Israel's northern city of Acre

the area shot down a drone that had also been launched during the attack, which it described as an "attempted hijacking".

The Languedoc frigate, "which was patrolling in the area, intercepted and destroyed a drone directly threatening the

Strinda," it said in a statement.

The shipowner said the vessel was neither headed toward Israel nor carrying oil, but that it was en route to "Italy from Malaysia with feedstock for biofuel" and was now "proceeding to a safe port".

WHO says patient dies amid lengthy Israeli checks on Gaza convoy



Palestinians gather to receive flour rations for their families outside a warehouse of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip

AFP | Geneva, Switzerland

The World Health Organization said Tuesday that a patient had died in an emergency convoy en route to a Gaza City hospital, during repeated and lengthy Israeli checks.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at the weekend that the UN health agency and its partners had managed to deliver essential trauma and surgical supplies to the Al-Ahli hospital and to transfer 19 critical patients.

But on Tuesday, he provided more details about the high-risk mission, saying on X, formerly Twitter, that the WHO was "deeply concerned about prolonged checks and detention of health workers that put lives of already fragile patients at risk".

"Due to the hold-up, one patient died en route, given the grave nature of their wounds

and the delay in accessing treatment," he said.

Tedros did not say in his message who carried out the checks, but a WHO spokesman told AFP they took place at an Israeli army checkpoint.

The Kremlin played down the consequences of any further US funding on Tuesday, saying it would be doomed to a "fiasco".

"It is important for everyone to understand: the tens of billions of dollars pumped into Ukraine did not help it gain success on the battlefield," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

"The tens of billions of dollars that Ukraine wants to be pumped with are also headed for the same fiasco."

In an interview with Russian state television on Sunday, Putin said that Ukraine was "running out" of arms because its defense industry was not able to produce enough.

Biden's haul from a weekend of fundraising in LA: a tidy \$15 mn

AFP | Washington, United States

President Joe Biden raised more than \$15 million for his reelection campaign this past weekend from wealthy donors in the Los Angeles area, a source close to his campaign told AFP on Monday.

According to some press reports, a sitting president or presidential candidate has never before raised so much money in a single visit to the film metropolis, traditionally generous to Democratic candidates.

Biden held a series of fundraisers between Friday evening



Biden

and Saturday evening.

While some meetings in mansions in the hills surrounding Los Angeles remained strictly confidential, journalists had ac-

cess to two receptions designed to raise funds for the 81-year-old Democrat, who touted his record but above all launched a frontal attack on former president Donald Trump, his likely rival.

On Friday evening, in the airy courtyard of a villa, as filmmaker Steven Spielberg and others looked on, and before a private concert by Lenny Kravitz, Biden said Trump posed threats on many fronts.

"But the greatest threat Trump poses is to our democracy, because if we lose that, we lose everything," Biden said.

Zelensky makes plea for US aid as Russia claims advances

AFP | Washington, United States

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will press Tuesday for more US military aid to battle Russia, which said any funding would be a "fiasco" and claimed its forces were advancing on the front.

Zelensky, who is in Washing-



Zelensky

ton to plead for continued support, will meet with President Joe Biden at the White House

and also with congressional leaders from both parties.

For much of the nearly two years that Ukraine has resisted President Vladimir Putin's onslaught, the United States has led a Western coalition sending billions of dollars in weaponry and ammunition.

But Republicans are ev-

er-more openly rejecting the need to fund Ukraine, saying that Biden needs to devote more attention to domestic security, particularly to stopping illegal migration over the US-Mexican border. The Republicans are also questioning whether Ukraine should keep fighting at all.

Biden is a key supporter, fram-

ing the Ukrainian war effort as part of a global struggle between democracies and aggressive autocracies. But on Capitol Hill, Zelensky will face his real test when he addresses Republican and Democratic senators, and meets the new Republican speaker of the House, Mike Johnson.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



This year, humanitarian aid has reached 128 million people with food, shelter, medicine & water. They did so with only one-third of the funds they need. We can't continue doing more with less. In 2024, we're counting on donors' generosity to turn the tide.

@antoniogetterres

02



Today MPs will vote on the toughest ever anti-immigration law. But that bill is just one part of our plan to tackle illegal migration. Find out what we're doing to stop small boat crossings and control our borders

@RishiSunak

03



Congratulations, @KateForbes_IFRC, on being elected to serve as the next @ifrc President. I look forward to working with you towards a healthier, safer, fairer world.

@DrTedros

04



Met with Turkish Foreign Minister Fidan. We talked about efforts to ensure the conflict in Gaza does not spread further and the provision of humanitarian aid. Emphasized the importance of ratifying Sweden's NATO accession without delay.

@SecBlinken

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



Eats & Treats

BAHRAIN

to your heart's content

B023-27



Bahrain - Unique & Unforgettable

"I miss Bahrain", are words spoken by my expat friends who no longer reside here. Whether they stayed for a month or a decade, they felt a sense of belongingness. Bahrain became a part of their very being. A tiny country with just under 2 million people, Bahrain has won the hearts of scores of people over the years. I have often wondered why people have an attachment to Bahrain.

To begin with, Bahrain is home to people from all over the world. The country's ability to encourage diversity makes it attractive. People from various nations enjoy freedom here. The freedom to move around securely, practice religious beliefs, enjoy their traditional food at specialty restaurants. Sourcing ingredients is much easier here too, as Bahrain ensures imports from various countries worldwide.

The kingdom has its influence from various countries, and a combination of cultures and traditions make it welcoming and interesting. Bahraini cuisine is an amalgamation of various cultures

One commonly used ingredient that has fascinated me is black lemon/ lume. Black lemon originated in Oman and made its way to Bahrain for use in traditional recipes such as machboos, salona, meat tikka, etc. They are usually prepared in households by sun drying fresh limes or lemons until they turn black. Pierced black lemons are added to dishes.

This infuses a citrusy, strong tang with smoky and earthy undertones. The resulting dish has a unique zing that is very enjoyable.

One cannot discount the health benefits attached to lume. It is rich in antioxidants that help to destroy oxidative stress in the body. It aids digestion and is a great source of vitamin C. Use it while cooking stews and rice dishes to impart unforgettable flavour.

Happy National Day, Bahrain!



including Persian, Indian and neighbouring GCC. Famous Bahraini recipes contain ingredients from these countries.



Deck the Halls

With the sweet aroma of hot chocolate!

The fascination of an occasion such as Christmas often lies in the elements of the celebration. The combination of fun times spent with loved ones enjoying festive treats makes any event beautiful. Sharing conversations, food, and surprise gifts spreads love, care and heartfelt moments. A festive treat that is quite impressive is the Hot Chocolate Bomb. Hot chocolate bombs are so cool! They are spheres of chocolate filled with mix-ins, flavourings, and toppings of choice.

This brilliant idea gained popularity five years ago, and this creation went viral on social channels. Videos on social media reveal these beauties melting when dunked in hot milk to reveal buoyant marshmallows, sprinkles, glitter, etc. The beauty of these spheres is that you can add various elements to add colour, decoration, and flavours to an otherwise simple hot chocolate. Elements of surprise and involvement make this an amusing experience. Hot chocolate bombs are not just a creative way of presenting hot chocolate, but they also make great gifts.

The upcoming Bahrain National Day holiday is a great time to make these for Christmas celebrations. Fill your home with the warm and pleasing aroma of hot chocolate, and happy times!

CLASSIC HOT CHOCOLATE BOMBS

EQUIPMENT

- 2.5 inch Semi-Sphere Silicone Mold
- 2 small baking pans
- Parchment paper
- Spoon

INGREDIENTS

- 200 gms good quality chocolate, such as Valrhona or good quality chocolate chips dark, milk or white
- 6 tablespoons hot cocoa mix
- 6 teaspoons mini marshmallows or marshmallow bits
- 1.5 teaspoons colourful sprinkles

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Break the chocolate bars into pieces and place them in a small bowl. Microwave in 15-second intervals, pausing to stir each time until fully melted and smooth.
2. Prepare a small baking pan by lining it with parchment paper. Set aside.
3. Place the silicone mould on the second (non-lined) baking pan. Working quickly, fill each cavity with about a tablespoon of melted chocolate.
4. Lift the mould and swirl it carefully to make sure that the chocolate coats the entire interior of each sphere to the lip. Invert the silicone mould to allow the excess chocolate to drip off over the parchment-lined baking pan.
5. Set the coated mould back on the non-lined pan and place it in the freezer for about 5 minutes.
6. When the chocolate has set, remove it from the freezer and repeat the process, adding another tablespoon of chocolate into each semi-sphere, swirling to coat as much as possible up to the lip. (This process must be completed quickly, as the melted chocolate will begin to harden once it touches the cold, set chocolate in the mould). Return to the freezer for another 5 minutes.
7. Once set, remove the mould from the freezer. Run your hands under freezing water or hold some ice for a few seconds to make your fingers hard. With cold and dry hands, carefully remove each half sphere from the mould, placing them gently on the baking pan.
8. Fill three moulds with one tablespoon of hot cocoa mix, one teaspoon of mini marshmallows, and half a teaspoon of sprinkles. Add additional fillings if you'd like.
9. Heat a small plate in the microwave for about 15-20 seconds or until warm to touch.
10. Chill hands again and dry. Carefully lift a chocolate sphere (these will be the "lids") and place it gently on the warm plate for just a second or two until the bottom becomes melty. Quickly place on top of a cocoa-filled sphere half. Repeat with the remaining sphere halves. You will have three spheres. Seal gaps, if any, with a bit of melted chocolate.
11. Repeat this process to create more hot chocolate bombs.
12. Decorate as desired with a chocolate drizzle, sprinkles, etc.
13. Gently transfer to an airtight container and keep refrigerated until ready to package or use.

To use, dunk a hot chocolate ball in hot milk until melted. Stir and enjoy.

CELEBRATE THE FESTIVE SEASON WITH ELEGANCE AND ENJOYMENT

Prepare to be mesmerized as The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain transforms into a captivating festive paradise. From our elegantly adorned Grand Christmas Tree and magical Gingerbread House to glittering lights and enchanting festive displays in every corner, you will be surrounded by the sheer magic and beauty of the season.

For reservations, please call +973 1758 6499.



Bldg 173, Road 2803, Al Seef, Block 428, Kingdom of Bahrain +973 1758 0000



- Don't miss out on the most enchanting festive season offers!
- Winter Chalet at Go Bistro
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 - Christmas Dinners
 - Grand Christmas Brunch
 - Sunday Night Fever, A New Year's Eve Ball
 - New Year's Eve Dinner Celebrations
 - New Year's Day Mystical Brunch
 - Holiday Staycation Packages

Grand Christmas Celebrations

At The Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa

Grand Christmas Brunch
25th December, 2023

Happy Vibes, great food and a whole lot of fun! This is the best way to define dining at the Gulf Hotel. The five-star hotel, which is over fifty years old, and located in the heart of Adliya, is home to ten specialty restaurants, making it a significant dining destination in Bahrain. The team is experienced in effortlessly hosting guests in style, and the food is always fresh and consistent in quality. They are all set to

welcome dining enthusiasts to their upcoming festive season happenings. Grand Christmas brunch at the Gulf Hotel is one of their highly anticipated celebratory events. In a conversation with Sunuj Deen, Director of Food & Beverage at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention and Spa, he revealed that they will have over 500 guests attending this year's Grand Christmas Brunch, making it the largest Christmas brunch in Bahrain.

He assured that the convention centre will be transformed into a Christmas wonderland with live entertainment and delicacies for everyone to enjoy. "Festive Season is all about family and spreading love, which the world needs the most today. And there is no better way to celebrate this season than spending it with loved ones and great food, and that is what the Gulf Hotel is here to offer", he said.



CHRISTMAS EVE
24th December, 2023

AL WAHA
Bring in Christmas with a delightful dinner at Al Waha. They have curated a signature menu with a very special twist to make your celebrations special.
7pm - 11pm
BD 32 net (inclusive of selected alcoholic beverages)
BD 25 net (inclusive of selected non-alcoholic beverages)

LA PERGOLA
Celebrate Christmas Eve the Italian way! La Pergola takes you on a journey to Italy with their unique menu that will make you go "Fantastico!" Indulge in chef's wonderful Christmas delights.
7pm - 11pm
BD 25 (20% Discount for Prestige Club members).



enjoy the brunch. Santa will visit bearing gifts, and Santa's grotto will be the ideal spot for family photographs to serve as everlasting memories.

12:30pm - 4pm
BD 39 net inclusive of selected beverages
BD 34 net inclusive of selected beverages (Prestige, NSA, GFG)

Christmas Dinner at Al Waha
25th December, 2023

Dive into the festive season spirit with a special Christmas themed dinner at Al Waha Restaurant. Enjoy an evening filled with sweet and savoury gastronomic delicacies that will satisfy your Christmas cravings.

7pm - 11pm
BD 18 per person

Please ask the hotel about applicable taxes on all the above-mentioned prices. For more information and bookings, contact 17713000



GRAND CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

Monday, 25th December | 12:30pm - 4pm

The much-awaited Grand Christmas Brunch is here!

We welcome you and your loved ones for a joyous Christmas, filled with delectable festive favourites, a live band, and a very special visit by Santa Claus with gifts for your little ones plus a selection of kid's activities.

Merry Christmas!

BD 39 net inclusive of selected beverages
BD 34 net inclusive of selected beverages (Prestige/NSA/GFG)

For bookings, call +973 1771 3000 | +973 3655 1333

El Salvador to issue bitcoin bonds in first quarter of 2024

AFP | San Salvador

El Salvador announced Monday it will issue bitcoin bonds in the first quarter of 2024, the proceeds of which are expected to finance the construction of a "Bitcoin City" powered by a volcano.

"The Volcano Bond has just received regulatory approval from the Digital Assets Commission (CNAD). We anticipate the bond will be issued during the first quarter of 2024," the



National Bitcoin Office, which manages all cryptocurrency-related projects, said on X.

Bitcoin became a legal currency in El Salvador, alongside the US dollar, in 2021 at the behest of President Nayib Bukele. The dollar has been legal tender in the Salvadoran economy since 2001.

With bitcoin, Bukele sought to make it easier, and cheaper, for Salvadorans to receive remittances and to provide financial services access to the 70 percent of people with no bank account.

But a poll conducted in May by the Central American University found that 71 percent believed the cryptocurrency "has in no way helped to improve their family economic situation."

Also in 2021, Bukele announced a plan to build a "Bitcoin City" in the east of the country, which would be powered by thermal energy from a volcano.

The city would be built in part with at least \$1 billion in volcano bonds that were to be issued, Bukele said at the time.

The Salvadoran government said it has bought 2,381 bitcoins.

The last purchase was made in July 2022 when it bought 80 bitcoins.

Bukele announced that El Salvador would buy one bitcoin a day from 17 November 2022. The government has not disclosed whether this has been done.

Spain seizes 11-tonne cocaine haul from Albanian druglords

AFP | Madrid, Spain

Spain has seized 11 tonnes of cocaine imported by Albanian cartels and arrested 20 people in two separate raids highlighting the growing prominence of such gangs across Europe, police said Tuesday.

Packed into shipping containers, the drugs were dispatched from Colombia then passed through Ecuador before being seized by police when they docked at two separate ports in Spain, one in the northwestern city of Vigo and the other in Valencia in the east.

"Within just one week, we managed to remove 11,000 kilograms of cocaine from the market," Antonio Martinez Duarte, head of the police's drugs and organised crime unit, told reporters in Madrid.

In Vigo, police seized 7.5 tonnes of cocaine concealed within a shipment of frozen tuna in what was the largest-ever seizure in Galicia -- a region that has long served as the main gateway for drug shipments from Latin America heading for Europe.

Separately, police found another 3.4 tonnes of cocaine hidden inside double-bottomed compartments in the containers that reached Valencia.

Of those arrested, most were Albanians but also a Colombian, a Dominican national and sever-



A total of 11 tonnes of cocaine in plastic-wrapped packs from two seizures made by police in Valencia and Vigo, displayed to the members of the media at the Canillejas Police Complex in Madrid

al Spaniards, including a Galician businessman who let them use his fishing firm to transport the drugs and whose identity was not revealed.

"The two operations were not connected, the only thing linking them is we believe both are run by Albanian organisations," said Martinez Duarte.

He said the organisations were part of the so-called "Balkan cartel" which has caught the attention of "all European

police forces".

"Albanian mafia groups have for some time been monopolising the shipment of drugs, not only in Europe but also in Latin America," he said.

"These organisations have gone right to the point of origin, they control the shipment from start to finish," he said.

Carlos Gomez, another drugs squad police official, said there had been a shift in the nature of the organisations involved in

the purchasing, transportation and sale of Colombian cocaine within Europe.

"We've shifted from secretive, closed groups like the old Colombian and Mexican cartels that controlled the whole process to organisations which are much more open, decentralised and international," he said.

"And they are also creating criminal cooperatives in which they also share resources."

Ancient Roman home with 'unparalleled' mosaic found in Italy



Mosaics uncovered in a luxurious Roman home near the Colosseum



Three large ships ride waves in the mosaic towards a coastal city, its walls dotted with small towers and porticoes in a scene suggesting the owner of the more than 2,000-year-old home, or domus, had been victorious in battle.

● **The building dates to between the second half of the 2nd century BC and the end of the 1st century BC**

AFP | Rome, Italy

Italian archaeologists have uncovered a luxurious Roman home near the Colosseum, boasting an "unparalleled" mosaic featuring shells, marble and precious glass, the culture ministry said Tuesday.

Three large ships ride waves in the mosaic towards a coastal city, its walls dotted with small towers and porticoes in a scene suggesting the owner of the more than 2,000-year-old home, or domus, had been victorious in battle.

The building, which dates to between the second half of the 2nd century BC and the end of the 1st century BC, is "an authentic treasure", Culture Minister Gennaro Sangiuliano said in a statement.

Brought to light after archaeologists discovered a series of walls in 2018, the domus is spread over several floors. So far only some rooms have been excavated, and the dig

will continue well into 2024. Set around an atrium, the domus's main room is a banquet hall styled as a grotto, which was used during the summer months, the ministry said.

The owner, a nobleman likely to have been a senator, would have entertained guests with "spectacular water games", thanks to lead pipes set between the decorated walls, it said.

But what "makes the discovery exceptional is... an extraordinary wall covered with a so-called 'rustic' mosaic unparalleled in terms of the chronology and the complexity of the scenes depicted," it added.

Trumpets, warships, tridents

A "complex sequence" of scenes are depicted through "different types of shells, Egyptian blue tesserae, precious glass, minute flakes of white marble or other types of stone", according to the ministry.

Among the vines and lotus leaves lie piles of weapons with Celtic-type trumpets, warships, and tridents, "alluding perhaps to a double triumph, terrestrial and naval, of the owner of the domus".



amphoras uncovered in a luxurious Roman home near the Colosseum

Zara drops clothing ad after Gaza war uproar

● **Zara said its advertising campaign "was conceived in July and photographed in September".**

AFP | Madrid, Spain

Facing mounting calls for a boycott, Spanish fashion brand Zara has withdrawn a controversial advertising campaign featuring body bags after it sparked online fury over its similarity to war-torn Gaza.

Addressing the controversy on Tuesday, Zara -- which is owned by Spain's Inditex, the world's biggest fashion retailer -- denied the claims but nonetheless removed the controversial images from its website.

"Unfortunately, some customers felt offended by these images, which have now been re-



In one of the images, an anaemic-looking model holds what appears to be a body wrapped in plastic over one shoulder, while in another the shrouded shape lies at her feet as she stands on a set featuring chunks of rubble, broken walls and other signs of destruction.

moved, and saw in them something far from what was intended when they were created," said a Zara statement published online.

The campaign sparked a furious backlash on social media where many said it was delib-

erately poking fun at the devastation in Gaza where Israel has waged a vast campaign since the October 7 Hamas attacks.

One message on X, formerly Twitter, superimposed a picture of a Gazan mother embracing the body of a child wrapped in

a white shroud, with many users calling for a boycott of the brand. In response, Zara said its advertising campaign "was conceived in July and photographed in September".

The idea, it said, was to present "a series of images of unfinished sculptures in a sculptor's studio and was created with the sole purpose of showcasing craft-made garments in an artistic context".

It expressed regret for the "misunderstanding" and reiterated its "deep respect towards everyone".

At the start of the Gaza war, Inditex said it was temporarily closing its 84 Zara shops in Israel until further notice.

The war began on October 7 when Hamas stormed into southern Israel killing 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and kidnapping some 240 others, according to an Israeli court.

Classifieds



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TWO CORNERS CLEANING CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33939913 or ATTOOLY@HOTMAIL.COM

BOSS SALON has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36611882 or M.66661666@GMAIL.COM

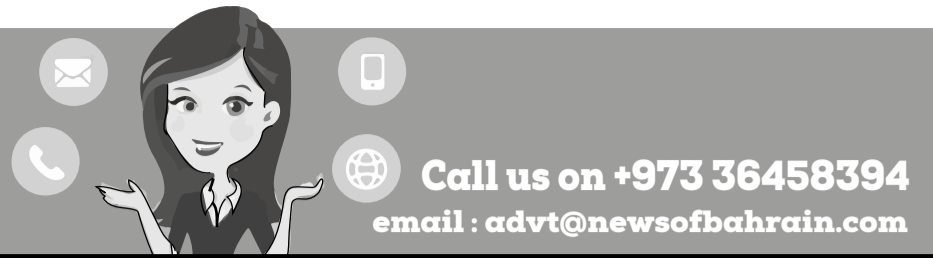
FAIZAN CARS REPAIRS SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33716491 or ASMAIBIBI641@GMAIL.COM

7WONDERS DECOR has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38390207 or SEVENWONDERS2009@HOTMAIL.COM

PAN ARAB MARKETING & AGENT COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17514166 or info@panarabco.net

GREEN SKENAR ELECTRIC WORKSHOP CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33161222 or SARBJEET2003@YAHOO.COM

Classifieds



VACANCIES AVAILABLE CONTINUED

LULU CONTRACTING CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17720648 or INFO@LCMWLL.COM

AFAQ ALKALIJ EXCAVATION & BUILDING EQUIPMENTS RENTAL W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WELDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 13644244 or afaqalkhalij@gmail.com

AL-AHLIA CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17737000 or h.s.m1111@gmail.com

PANARAB MARKETING & AGENT COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17514166 or info@panarabco.net

DURRAT AL KHALEJ MARINE SERVICES has a vacancy for the occupation of SCAFFOLDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17674316 or durratkhaliej@hotmail.com

Abo-hatim building contracting has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33608787 or ABO-HATIM@OUTLOOK.COM

AL KARAMI WORKSHOP W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CARPENTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34180337 or MUSHTAQ11009@GMAIL.COM

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NEAT AND TIDY LAUNDRY has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(LAUNDRY), suitably qualified applicants can contact 37103199 or KHALIDDOSSARY2@GMAIL.COM

MODERN SHABIR GLASS & METAL WORKSHOP W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39857907 or SABBIR_KHUZEM@HOTMAIL.COM

MMS FOOD STUFF CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 66661001 or WWW.MK3902@GMAIL.COM

SECCO BY COFFEA W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39921727 or MUSLIMCOOL@GMAIL.COM

VANDIK BAHRAIN HOTEL COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WAITER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33658488 or MoosaA@addresshotels.com

SUPPER BOOM INTERNATIONAL FASHION DESIGN - BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39604217 or NAVEEDSHAHID940@GMAIL.COM

ALOJAIMI HOME STAR TRADING & CONTRACTION has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33001080 or ALOJAIMI1989@GMAIL.COM

BROTHERS KARAK TEA AND CAFETERIA has a vacancy for the occupation of COOK(GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33418497 or FATIHM.AHMAD112@GMAIL.COM

SINAN CAFETERIA W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34110404 or BURJMUHAMMAD786@GMAIL.COM

GOLDEN TOUCH CLEANING CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36662111 or abey@gctcbah.com

SINGH AUTO PARTS W.L.L. has a vacancy

for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34393502 or PARDEEPSINGH885@YAHOO.COM

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AL NAWRAS MANPOWER has a vacancy for the occupation of SECRETARY, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39070188 or NMSRECRUITMENT@ALNAWARAS.COM

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THE ISLAMABAD W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33867547 or ATIQPAKBAHRAIN@GMAIL.COM

TECHNO PAK CONTRACTING CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39245981 or ZAHEERABBAS1283@GMAIL.COM

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ALASEEL BACHA RESTAURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33720866 or MDALMANEA66@GMAIL.COM

Stiller Agency for the Supply Workers w. l. l has a vacancy for the occupation of ASSISTANT MANAGER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17717730 or rsuresh@alazzamgroup.com

Al amoor Middle East Cleaning Co.W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 36410050 or SAMEER.SAYED4U@GMAIL.COM

EVIAN MANPOWER has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39822285 or AMEERALKHAL@HOTMAIL.COM

MMB CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39837016 or MUHASSAN5064@GMAIL.COM

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ALGHANAH ALUMINUM has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36065102 or info@alghanah.com

MARBLE RESTORATION CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39468574 or aqeel@basma.com.bh

SAHAEL CONSTRUCTION EST has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39229366 or HASAN337722@GMAIL.COM

AIRMECH COMPANY W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17768200 or AIRMECH.BAHRAIN@AIRMECH.NET

MOVENPICK HOTEL BAHRAIN W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of ROOM ATTENDANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17460087 or Fatema.Meftah@movenpick.com

LIYAN TECH PHONE has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39501060 or BH_1996@ICLOUD.COM

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

Four Stars AB Construction Co W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39855662 or AMIN33128161@GMAIL.COM

PARKAR MAINTENANCE CO. W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33215498 or KHADIMPARKAR@GMAIL.COM

SAMAD DOCTOR WATCHES CO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WATCHMAKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38798030 or sameduhad@GMAIL.COM

MILON MOON DECOR W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33718504 or MILONMOON2020@GMAIL.COM

SHERIN HALAHIL VEGETABLE & FRUITS has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36639399 or ABDULRAHMANALSUBAIE98@GMAIL.COM

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SUPER DRUG PHARMACY has a vacancy for the occupation of PROMOTER(COMMERCIAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17720016 or H.ALJAD@NASSERPHARMACY.

com

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BABA MAHMOOD FRESH MEAT W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33318792 or MAHMOODSHABIR1964@GMAIL.COM

BALAND BAKHAT CONTRACTING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 34549667 or BALANDBBC@GMAIL.COM

OWNER VAPE has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33055288 or OVAPEBH@GMAIL.COM

KHANPUR CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38957110 or BURJNAWAL00@GMAIL.COM

A H ELECTRONICS W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36199176 or NEWBRITON65@GMAIL.COM

SALON ABU SHANAB has a vacancy for the occupation of BARBER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36353593 or ALJUOFON@HOTMAIL.COM

BON VOYAGE DESIGNER STUDIO W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33923307 or MAHMOOD.ALSAMMAK0@GMAIL.COM

WINGATE TRADING W.L.L. has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36558539 or ALIM.MOZUMDAR0102@GMAIL.COM

WARRAICH AL PUNJAB RESTURANT has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36104147 or Bashirmahar5747@gmail.com

French celebrity writer Beigbeder held after rape allegation

AFP | Pau, France

Police detained French best-selling writer Frederic Beigbeder yesterday to question him about a rape allegation, sources close to the case told AFP.



Frederic Beigbeder

The interrogation of the 58-year-old writer, who lives in the French Basque country, started at 9:00 am (0800 GMT), prosecutor Rodolphe Jarry told AFP.

The prosecutor declined to say what he was being held for, but sources close to the investigation said the arrest followed a rape allegation made by a woman with whom the author had had a relationship lasting several months.

Broadcaster Franceinfo said the woman filed her complaint during the summer.

According to Franceinfo, the woman said she had had a consensual sexual encounter with Beigbeder in a hotel room, and then another, non-consensual one, later the same night.

Beigbeder has explored love, sex, politics and the glitzy side

of Paris in his writing. He became famous thanks to "99 Francs", published in 2000, a novel that explores drugs, cynicism and money in the world of advertising.

The prosecutor told AFP the arrest was unrelated to drugs.

In 2008, Beigbeder had been arrested in Paris for consuming and possessing cocaine.

He later said he had given up using cocaine, which he described as "a drug for old square people".

Beigbeder said earlier this year that his lifestyle had "changed completely" since living with his third wife, photographer Lara Micheli, and their two children in Guethary, a village of 1,350 people on the Basque coast.

Palestinian economy severely impacted by Israel-Hamas war: World Bank

AFP | Washington, United States

The Israel-Hamas war in Gaza is having a severe impact on the Palestinian economy, according to the World Bank, which now estimates sharp economic contraction this year and next.

The UN estimates 1.9 million of Gaza's 2.4 million people have been displaced by the war, half of them children, as Israel's overwhelming aerial bombardment in the days after October 7 was subsequently accompanied by a ground invasion aimed at destroying Hamas.

Beyond the immediate human cost, the Israel-Hamas conflict has also "severely impacted the Palestinian economy," the World Bank announced in a statement published Tuesday.

Gaza's contribution to the



Smoke billows during Israeli bombardment in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip

overall Palestinian economy, which includes the West Bank, had already shrunk from around 36% in 2005 to just 17% last year, according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

Israel's fierce response to the Hamas attacks on October 7, along with the shuttering of its borders to Palestinian workers

from both Gaza and the West Bank, is likely to severely impact the Palestinian economy, according to the Bank.

Despite Gaza's small economic contribution, the World Bank now expects the overall Palestinian economy to contract by 3.7% this year, down sharply from its pre-war forecast of a

3.2% increase. Next year, the situation is expected to be even worse. Whereas the World Bank previously anticipated growth of 3.0% in 2024, it now expects an overall contraction of 6.0% -- on the assumption that the severity of the conflict decreases next year.

If the war drags on, the economic impact could deteriorate further.

In response to the conflict, the World Bank has announced some financial support aimed at meeting the immediate needs of the population in Gaza.

On Tuesday, the development lender announced an additional \$20 million in funds for medical care, humanitarian needs, and financing for food vouchers and parcels in the besieged Palestinian territory, on top of the \$15 million already delivered.

CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **HAKIMUDDIN** s/o Mohammed Husain, **INDIAN PASSPORT NO. Z3073673** dated 16/10/2016 issued at Bahrain having permanent residence at Pratapgarh, Rajasthan, address Adamkhana Mohalla Bohragali, Pratapgarh, Rajasthan, PIN 312605 **INDIA** presently residing at Manama, BAHRAIN address: Road. 5133, BLK 351, BLDG 1803 - Silver Tower, will henceforth be known as (Given name) **HAKIMUDDIN MOHAMMED** (Surname) Husain.

Objection(s), if any, may be forwarded to **EMBASSY OF INDIA**, P.O. Box 26106 Al Seef, **KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN**

SITUATIONS VACANT

DRIVER & HELPER required. Details: Driving, loading & unloading (upto 180 KG). Working hours: 12 hours. Bahraini Driving license must. Experience minimum 4 years driving in Bahrain. Nationality: Nepali or Sri Lanka. Call +973-38250867

Fight on fossil fuels as Dubai summit goes into overtime

AFP | Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Negotiators haggled yesterday to find a compromise over the fate of fossil fuels as the Dubai climate summit went into overtime, with Saudi-led crude producers resisting a phase-out of oil, gas and coal.

The 13-day UN COP28 conference in the glitzy metropolis built on petrodollars has debated a historic first-ever global exit from fossil fuels, the main culprits in a planetary crisis of warming.

But a deadline set by COP28



A participant rests on a couch in a hallway during the United Nations Climate Change Conference COP28 in Dubai

president Sultan Al Jaber, himself head of the UAE oil company, expired without a deal, a

day after he presented a draft that only suggested reductions in fossil fuels among several

options. With low-lying island nations warning that their very survival is at risk, negotiators worked through the night and the Emirati hosts promised a new text to try to find consensus. Denmark's Dan Jorgensen, one of the climate ministers tasked with leading the talks, said the summit needed to be clear that fossil fuels were on their way out.

"I'm personally not married to one word," he said. "But I am insisting that the meaning of this formulation, whichever one we will end up having, has to be extremely ambitious."

CELEBS

'Neither of us is going anywhere': Jada Pinkett Smith vows she'll never leave Will Smith

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Jada Pinkett Smith will never leave Will Smith, even though she recently moved into her own "woman cave".

The 52-year-old actress and her 55-year-old actor husband shocked fans this year by revealing they have been separated for six years but Jada insisted that the pair are committed to each other, even if one of them meets someone else.

Speaking to The Mail On Sunday's You Magazine, Jada said: "We are both getting older. And besides, we've been together 30 years so, even if someone new

came along, neither of us is going anywhere. We are a family that needs to look out for one another and always will be. Sometimes it takes a crisis for you to see that."

However, Jada revealed there are benefits to moving out of their Calabasas mansion and into her own home nearby.

She said: "I bought myself a 'woman cave'. Every woman needs a woman cave!"

"The best thing is I don't need to say to Will, 'Are you OK with this couch?'. I got one that's cream patent leather but with gold studs on it. That expresses the heavy-metal side to me."



Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith

When asked how their children reacted, she said: "They knew I needed it. And besides, they are adults now. They

"We are both getting older. And besides, we've been together 30 years so, even if someone new came along, neither of us is going anywhere. We are a family that needs to look out for one another and always will be. Sometimes it takes a crisis for you to see that"

JADA PINKETT SMITH

know where to find me. They all have their own keys - even Will."

Back in 2020, before they announced they were separated, Jada admitted to having an "entanglement" with August Alsina, a singer/songwriter, 19 years her junior.

She said: "I'm not here to discuss Will's journey. The point is, at the time of my entanglement, Will and I were not together but he just wasn't ready for our split to be revealed. The reason I addressed it was that the 'entanglee' had spoken about it and I wanted to confront that. It was my mess, and I took the bullet for it."

Julia Roberts relished her Leave the World Behind role

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Julia Roberts loved playing a complex character in 'Leave the World Behind'.

The 56-year-old actress stars alongside Ethan Hawke, Mahershala Ali and Kevin Bacon in the psychological thriller film, and Julia has revealed that she relished the opportunity.

Asked if she enjoyed the experience, Julia told Sky News' 'Backstage' podcast: "Absolutely - just more interesting and more complicated."

"And then you add in [the other characters] and then to create all the circumstances that Sam [Esmail, the director] has put us in, in this story, it's like a sandbox."

In 'Leave the World Behind', the characters struggle to cope when they're cut off from technology.

But Julia believes she would actually be fine in that scenario.

She said: "I'm 56 years old - I grew up with, like, Triple A Triptychs where you turn the page on the map, and you're like, 'Oh, Dad, now we're going to get down here and ... we're going to go [here]...'"

"I mean, I can do it - I was a Girl Scout,

come on! I am not just an actor. I can tie all kinds of knots."

Meanwhile, Myha'la Herrold also relished being part of the film's star-studded cast.

The 27-year-old actress shared: "[It was] a huge, a huge opportunity in so many ways and I felt very honored and grateful and I was very up for and ready for the challenge."

"On day one, I was very much like, 'I'm ready for this masterclass, I'm ready to take this class' and it was very much that, but in the same breath I felt so welcomed in and I was treated as a peer and challenged, so rising to that is my favorite thing."



Julia Roberts

I'm obsessed with beauty, says Camila Cabello

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Camila Cabello has become "obsessed" with beauty.

The 26-year-old pop star used to consider the beauty industry to be "frivolous" - but her attitude has evolved over recent years.

Camila - who was born in Mexico City and spent some of her childhood in Havana, Cuba - told PEOPLE: "It's really evolved so much. I feel like when I was younger and I started working, beauty was just the last thing on my mind."

"Being in an immigrant family ... it felt frivolous to me. Now I'm like, 'No, it's actually just an expression of joy and what it means to be alive.' I'm obsessed with beauty now. It's just so fun." Camila's style has been heavily influenced by her mom, Sinuhe.

Tom Holland sets conditions for Spider-Man return

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Tom Holland won't play Spider-Man again just "for the sake of making another one".

The 27-year-old actor last played Peter Parker and his web-slinging alter ego in 2021's 'Spider-Man: No Way Home' and while he confirmed he had been "actively engaging in conversations" about making another movie, he feels "protective" over the character and will only reprise the role if the story is right.

Speaking during a Critics Choice Association press conference, he said: "All I can say is that we have been actively engaging in conversations about what it could potentially look like for a fourth rendition of my character."

"Whether or not we can find a way to do justice to the character is another thing. I feel very protective over Spider-Man."

"I feel very, very lucky that we were able to work on a franchise that's a lot better with each movie, that got more successful with each Tom Holland

movie, which I think is really rare, and I want to protect his legacy."

"So, I won't make another one for the sake of making another one. It will have to be worth the while of the character."

And Tom admitted he'd be a "fool" not to say yes if another film in the franchise came along.

He added: "But that said, if we can figure that out, I would be a fool not to put the suit back on again because I owe everything to Spider-Man. I love the character and the people I get to work with."

"So, I would love to tell another story, but I'll only tell it if we can find the right one".

Tom previously admitted he'd be "lucky" if he got to return to the series.

Asked by Screen Rant which Spider-Man villain he would like to take on next, Tom replied: "That's a really tough question. I mean, 'Spider-Man' has got arguably some of the best villains in the comic book world."

"I love the character. I love 'Spider-Man'. I'd be lucky to play him again, but we'll have to wait and see."



Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson feels 'lucky' to be able

Celebretainment | Los Angeles

Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson "feels lucky" to have been able to create his own schedule because it means he can spend more time with his young children.

The 51-year-old actor - who was initially married to Dany Garcia and has 22-year-old Simone with her - now has Jasmine, seven, and five-year-old Tiana with current wife



Lauren Hashian and explained that it has been "really nice" to be able to organise work around his family life, because that wasn't always the case.

He told PEOPLE: "I think I've reached a point in my life where I can create my own schedule, Dwayne Johnson

which has really been nice, because it wasn't always that way, and I'm really lucky."

"And I think, in the spirit of creating my own schedule, it allows me to get closer to the girls and where they're around every corner they're with me."

The 'Fast and Furious' star spends a lot of his time in Mexico and whilst he hasn't had the little girls down there just yet, he still plans to and when he is at home in his LA mansion, his office has become "daddy central" because it is where his kids

like to spend their time whilst he carries out all of his business as one of the world's top movie stars.

He said: "So even though they haven't joined me down in Jesus Maria, I do plan on bringing them there. And some of the other things that we have coming up ... My office at the house is Daddy Central, where they're always hanging out, so they're always privy to all the stuff that's going on."

"It's like they're privy to the chocolate factory."

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

CROSSWORD

Across
1- Fail to hit; 5- Scottish musician; 10- Molecular component; 14- Apple variety; 15- Spud state; 16- Director Ephron; 17- Injectable diazepam, in military lingo; 18- ___ cholesterol; 19- Very, in Versailles; 20- 1981 Neil Diamond hit; 22- Diary; 24- Wreath of flowers; 25- Maiden name precursor; 26- Restaurant in Greece; 30- Polygon having eight sides; 34- Send forth; 35- Eat away; 37- Acting part; 38- Bodybuilder's pride; 39- Conclusion; 40- Summer drink; 41- Stiff bristle; 43- Chirp; 45- Rushed, drove too fast; 46- Wipeout?; 48- Rascality; 50- RR stop; 51- Metro area; 52- Implore urgently; 56- Place in order; 60- Chemical used on trees; 61- Artist Rousseau; 63- Young male horse; 64- Hit the ground; 65- Great Lakes tribesmen; 66- Arrow poison; 67- Scottish boys; 68- At right angles to a ship's length; 69- Barely passing grades.

Down
1- Flaky mineral; 2- Muslim leader; 3- Fit to be tried; 4- Bright red color; 5- Resembling fish; 6- Thought; 7- Acceptable score for a professional golfer; 8- Israel's Barak; 9- Love affair; 10- Aardvark; 11- Mower brand; 12- Black-and-white cookie; 13- Face covering; 21- Occupational suffix; 23- Nevertheless; 26- Fluff, as bangs; 27- Yellowish brown; 28- Panorama; 29- ___ having fun yet?; 30- More bizarre; 31- Flip out; 32- More mature; 33- Wanting; 36- Washington bill; 42- Maintains; 43- Windpipe; 44- Hawaii's largest industry; 45- Slightly sour; 47- Salt Lake City athlete; 49- Boxer's warning; 52- False god; 53- Rains of film; 54- Stated; 55- Aromatic plant; 56- Calculus calculation; 57- Zlitch; 58- High level of satisfaction; 59- French summers; 62- Never, in Nuremberg.

Yesterday's solution

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

HH Shaikh Abdulla bin Hamad congratulates son on '2 Seas Motorsport' IGTC title



From left, HH Shaikh Isa bin Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Ian Loggie and Al Faisal Al Zubair with their trophies for second place in the Am class of the Gulf 12 Hours

TDT | Manama

His Highness Shaikh Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa, HM the King's Personal Representative, Supreme Council for Environment President, has congratulated his son, His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the owner of "2 Seas Motorsport", following the team's success in winning the driver and constructor titles of the Intercontinental GT Challenge (IGTC) 2023, whose final race was held at the Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

HH Shaikh Abdulla bin Hamad asserted that the bril-

liant achievement adds to the kingdom's rich record of sports accomplishments during His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's prosperous era.

His Highness highlighted the unlimited support accorded by HM King Hamad and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to Bahraini sport, contributing to attaining landmark results across various sports, including motorsport.

HH Shaikh Abdulla commended HH Shaikh Isa bin Abdulla's perseverance and determination, wishing His Highness continued success.

Lukaku banned for one match after Fiorentina marching orders

AFP | Milan

Romelu Lukaku has been given a one-match ban after being sent off late in Roma's dramatic draw with Fiorentina for a tackle on Christian Kouame, Serie A said.

Lukaku was shown a straight red card in the 87th minute of Sunday's 1-1 draw in Rome after clattering into Kouame, leaving Roma with nine men after Nicola Zalewski was sent off midway through the second half.

HH Shaikh Nasser receives Royal Guard boxing team on winning Royal Rumble

TDT | Manama

His Highness Lieutenant-General Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, National Security Advisor and Royal Guard Commander, received the Royal Guard boxing team which won the Royal Rumble boxing tournament, organised by the Bahrain Boxing Federation and the Bahrain Rugby Club.

Present was His Highness Colonel Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Commander of the Royal Guard's Special Force.

His Highness Lt. Gen Shaikh Nasser congratulated His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa on the occasion.

The team secured six out of nine securing six victories out of nine against the British Army's "Parachute Unit", in a testament to Bahraini boxing



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa and HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa receive the trophy

prosess.

His Highness Lt. Gen Shaikh Nasser also congratulated the members of the team on this

achievement.

His Highness said Bahrain has had an eventful sporting season with prestigious in-

ternational achievements, demonstrating the support received by the sports sector.

Lebanese MMA fighter Ahmed Labban ready to put on another viral show on December 15th at BRAVE CF 80

TDT | Manama

Ahmed Labban put on an amazing show last time he was in action under the BRAVE CF banner, and as he marks his return for BRAVE CF 80, on December 15, he is hoping to go viral again. The Lebanese MMA fighter is getting near a world title shot and will face Englishman Jack Grant in the Team Arab Legends vs Team UK & Ireland portion of the fight card.

In his last fight, which also took place at the Khalifa Sports City Arena, Labban put on a masterful performance, showcasing amazing leg kicks and chopping down the legs of Carl Booth en route to a unanimous decision victory.



Ahmed Labban in action

But it was his actions after the win that went viral, as he jok-

ingly called out Hasbulla Magomedov, the internet personality

that attended last year's BRAVE CF 65. After the bout ended and his call out was made, he joined Hasbulla in the audience and was jokingly hit with a signature punch from the celebrity, with the moment being shared all around the internet last year.

Now, as he gets a much-needed return bout, "The Shadow" is hoping to recreate that magical moment with other celebrities in place for the final event of BRAVE Combat Federation in a historic 2023 for the company, which saw BRAVE CF become the most global MMA organization in the world, having been hosted in a world record 30 countries, more than any other promotion in the sport.

Australia's Warner in spotlight, under pressure ahead of Test farewell

AFP | Sydney

David Warner will take centre stage when the three-match series against Pakistan begins on Thursday ahead of what is expected to be the Australian opener's farewell to Test cricket.

The 37-year-old has indicated that he plans to quit the five-day game after the third Test at his home Sydney Cricket Ground early next year.

Warner has been a mainstay of the Australian team for more than a decade but his Test form is under intense scrutiny, scoring just one century since early 2020.

Former team-mate Mitchell Johnson has said that he does not deserve to dictate the terms of his exit.

Querying why Warner should be given a "hero's send-off" in light of his poor Test form, former fast bowler Johnson wrote in a newspaper column: "Can somebody please tell me why?"

Johnson also brought up Warner's central role in the notorious "Sandpaper-gate" ball-tampering scandal



Australia's David Warner celebrates after scoring a century (file photo)

in 2018.

In naming the Australia squad for the opening Test in Perth, chief selector George Bailey said that Warner had earned his place.

But there are no guarantees beyond

Pakistan aims not just to compete but to win, with a focus on showcasing talent and overcoming challenges

the first Test, putting Warner under pressure to score runs if he wants to go out on his own terms with an emotional send-off in Sydney.

"Davey's playing the first Test match and we'll go from there," said coach Andrew McDonald.

"Until we have to make that decision it'll continue to I suppose bubble away and the speculation will be there."

Pat Cummins' side are strong favourites against Pakistan as they kick off their defence of the World Test Championship.

Winning the WTC was part of a triumphant year that also saw them retain the Ashes and win the one-day World Cup last month, with Warner Australia's leading scorer.

Pakistan have won only four Tests in Australia dating back to 1956-7 and none since 1995, when they sealed a

74-run victory in Sydney.

They have never won a Test series in the 12 times they have toured Australia.

"They've gone through some transition with their coaching staff and management and I think in the last series they played, they played a more up-tempo brand in a bid to put more pressure on the bowling," said McDonald.

"So I think we will see a little more of that. But like anything, if we execute well with the ball it's going to be difficult (for them) to be able to maintain that over long periods of time."

On their last, two-Test tour in 2019, Pakistan were thrashed by an innings and five runs at Brisbane and an innings and 48 runs in Adelaide.

Warner made 154 and 335 not out in his two knocks.

Pakistan rookies

Aside from Warner, Pakistan will need to tame one of the world's most potent bowling attacks in Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Nathan Lyon.

Lyon is four wickets away from joining just seven other Test bowlers to breach the 500-mark, including fellow spin kings Muttiah Muralitharan, Shane Warne and Anil Kumble.

Team director Mohammad Hafeez said Pakistan were in Australia not just to compete, but to win.

"We have ticked most of the boxes in our training. Everyone on the team is excited to showcase their ability and eager to win," he said.

They will attempt to do so after a disastrous World Cup and chaos off the field, with the country's cricket board overhauling the national team and support staff.

Shan Masood is now at the helm after Babar Azam resigned as skipper in all three formats and there are a slew of new faces.

Azam spearheads their batting with Shaheen Shah Afridi the only fast bowler to have played in Australia before.

Among the rookies are uncapped quick Khurram Shahzad, dashing left-hander Saim Ayub and all-rounder Aamer Jamal.

BIC and Gulf Air launch Kingdom-wide search for first-ever Bahrain GP Superfan

TDI | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East" and Gulf Air announced today the launch of its Kingdom-wide search for the first-ever Bahrain GP Superfan.

This competition is part of BIC's fantastic fan-engagement activities leading up to the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2024, which will commemorate BIC's landmark 20th anniversary in F1.

F1 enthusiasts who believe they have what it takes to claim



Action from previous Bahrain GP at BIC

the celebrated tag are invited to submit a short video explaining why they should be considered the Bahrain GP Superfan.

Potential winners could be someone who has been to every race since 2004, someone with an exceptional story of their Bahrain Grand Prix experience, someone with a unique tradition for the annual F1 event, or someone with any other reasons that make them that extra-special fan BIC and Gulf Air are looking for.

The top ten finalists will be invited as VIP guests to the official launch of F1 2024 on 4

January, which will be a special event marking the start of the highly anticipated anniversary celebrations. There, the winner of the Bahrain GP Superfan search will be unveiled.

All those that make the top ten will win special prizes including Gulf Air flights, Bahrain GP number plates signed by an F1 driver and many other special prizes. The ultimate winner will receive a money-can't-buy grand prize and the title of Bahrain Grand Prix Superfan.

Those interested in taking part can submit their videos via

direct message to BIC's official Instagram account @bah_int_circuit.

The deadline for entries is 28 December and the competition is only open to Bahraini citizens and residents. For full details, including complete terms and conditions, please visit Bahrainraingp.com.

Next year's F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix kicks off the 2024 FIA Formula 1 World Championship. It is scheduled to be held 29 February to 2 March, and it will be the Kingdom's first-ever Saturday night F1 race.

Muharraq power past Qatar's Rayyan

Bahrainis claim second successive victory in Gulf sub-zone of 2023/2024 FIBA West Asia Super League

● Ra'Shad James leads Bahrainis with 20 points, Tyler Wilkerson finishes with 19

● Muharraq maintain place in second on Group A table with 2-1 win-loss record

TDI | Manama

Muharraq posted their second successive victory in the 2023/2024 FIBA West Asia Super League (WASL) last night.

The Bahrainis powered past Al Rayyan of Qatar 79-65 at Lusail Multipurpose Hall in Doha.

The result maintained their position in second place on the Group A standings in the Gulf sub-zone of the competition's preliminary round. They had previously lost to Kuwait Sporting Club of Kuwait in their opening fixture but bounced back



Muharraq's Bader Abdulla Malabes looks to make a play as he is guarded closely by Al Rayyan's Meho Haracic

with a big win against Al Ahli of Saudi Arabia.

Their victory yesterday wrapped up their FIBA WASL schedule for the year, as they only return to the hardwood in the tournament in 2024. Their

next assignment will be against Kuwait SC once again on 8 January in a game that will be played in Kuwait City.

Muharraq are making their debut in the regional championship. They are joined by reigning

FIBA WASL champions Manama as the two Bahraini clubs competing this season.

In their win last night, Muharraq extended their 22-16 lead at the end of the first quarter to double digits in the second. A Bader Abdulla Malabes driving lay-up just before the half-time buzzer gave them a 46-34 advantage at the break.

The Bahrainis continued to build on their advantage in the third, where they went ahead by as many as 15 points. Rayyan fought back to within single digits in the final canto, but never really threatened as Muharraq did enough to seal the win.

Ra'Shad James top scored for the winners with 20 points, while Tyler Wilkerson finished with 19 markers. Austin Daye chipped in with 13 and Malabes finished with 11.

Nick Griffin was Rayyan's leading performer with 27 points, while mouhammad Faye had 15 and Malek Salem Abdulla 10.

Following their next assignment against Kuwait SC, Mu-

Standings

	P	W	L	+/-	Pts
Kuwait SC (Kuwait)	3	3	0	57	6
Muharraq (Bahrain)	3	2	1	12	5
Al Rayyan (Qatar)	3	1	2	-27	4
Al Ahli (Saudi Arabia)	3	0	3	-42	3

harraq face Ahli in Jeddah on 30 January and then complete this stage against Rayyan at home on 12 February.

Manama, on the other hand, travel to the UAE to face Shabab Al Ahli of Dubai on 18 December in their third Group B assignment.

The competition format for the second season of the FIBA WASL remains the same as the inaugural campaign. The three best teams at the end of the WASL Gulf sub-zone and the WASL West Asia sub-zone leagues earn their tickets to the WASL Final Eight. There, they will be joined by the champion teams from South Asia and Central Asia, and they will all vie for the right to become cage kings of the region.



Muharraq's win last night wrapped up their FIBA WASL schedule for the calendar year. They only return to the hardwood in the tournament on 8 January against Kuwait SC in a game to be played in Kuwait City

Prior to the Final Eight, each sub-zone league will feature two groups of four teams, with the top seeds by the end of the round-robin opening phase directly qualifying to the best-of-three semi-finals. The second and third-ranked teams will play for the other final four berths, also in a best-of-three.

Ahli outclass Muharraq in volleyball league

● Al Ahli make strong start in Top Six to join defending champions Dar Kulaib, Nabih Saleh as week one winners

TDI | Manama

Al Ahli posted a convincing straight-sets victory over Muharraq last night in their opening game of the Top Six in the 2023/2024 Isa bin Rashid Bahrain Volleyball League.

Led by the prolific duo of Ali Ebrahim and Nasser Anan, Ahli were in control from the start and went on to make a winning start in this stage with a 3-0 (25-16, 25-20, 25-22) score



Al Ahli's Nasser Anan attacks Muharraq's blockers during their match last night

line. Ahli joined defending cham-

pions Dar Kulaib and Nabih Saleh as winners from week one

in the Top Six.

Nabih Saleh enjoyed their own 3-0 (25-21, 25-16, 25-21) triumph against Al Nasser in this first week of competition between the league's leading clubs.

Action in this phase continues on Sunday next week. Muharraq are back in action as they hope to bounce back against Al Najma, while Dar Kulaib will look to maintain their winning ways against Al Nasser. Ahli then face Nabih Saleh in Monday's sole contest.

This stage of the league will be held in a double round-robin. The first round continues until the first week of next month, with the second round still to be scheduled by the Bahrain Volleyball Association.

Inter Miami confirm Saudi Arabia friendly dates

AFP | Miami

Inter Miami on Monday confirmed details of two upcoming friendlies in Saudi Arabia next year which will include a showdown between Lionel Messi and old rival Cristiano Ronaldo.

The Major League Soccer club had already announced plans for the team to face Ronaldo's Al Nassr in Riyadh, without confirming a date.

Inter said on Monday the team would take on Saudi powerhouses Al Hilal at the Kingdom Arena in Riyadh on January 29.



Inter Miami's Lionel Messi holds his record eighth Ballon d'Or trophy prior to a match (file photo)

They will then face Al Nassr at the same venue on February 1, giving Messi the chance to lock horns once again with Ronaldo in the latest installment of a rivalry that has spanned decades stretching back to their first meeting in 2008.

"These matches will offer important tests for our team, which will benefit us as we approach the new season," said Chris Henderson, Miami's chief soccer officer and sporting director.

Inter Miami will face Al Nassr at the Kingdom Arena in Riyadh on February 1, giving Messi the chance to lock horns once again with Ronaldo in the latest installment of a rivalry that has spanned decades stretching back to their first meeting in 2008

Australia's Steve Smith turns to golf after below-par form

AFP | Sydney

Australia's Steve Smith conceded on Tuesday that he has not played to his usual high standards this year but believes he has found part of the solution -- taking up golf.

It has been a gruelling year

of cricket for the star batsman, an integral part of the Australia team which retained the Ashes and won the World Test Championship and the World Cup.

But speaking ahead of the first Test against Pakistan starting on Thursday in Perth, the 34-year-old admitted that his form had

dipped.

He averages 58.61 with the bat in Tests and is ranked third in the world by the ICC, but he averaged 37.30 in the Ashes and 29 in the away series in India.

"I don't have to reinvent the wheel," he told reporters in Perth.



Steve Smith

Riffa suffer tight defeat

Bahrainis fall to Al Zawra'a of Iraq to wrap up preliminary round campaign in 2023/2024 AFC Cup

● Joel Vinicius on target for Riffa in first half of narrow, non-bearing loss

● Riffa concede second-half winner to Zawra'a forward Collins Opare

TD | Manama

Bahrain's Riffa Club wrapped up their preliminary round campaign in the 2023/2024 AFC Cup with a tough 1-2 loss last night against Al Zawra'a of Iraq.

The match was played at Basra Sport City Stadium in Basra, and it was the concluding fixture for both sides in Group C.

Riffa headed into the contest having already secured their place in the knockout stage, where they will play in the West Zonal semi-finals. Zawra'a were hoping to also make it through as the best runner-up from the three pools in the preliminaries.



Riffa's Lazar Dordevic looks to maintain possession as he is challenged by Zawra'a player Ali Muhsen

Joel Vinicius and Hasan Abdulkareem were on target for their respective sides in the first-half yesterday, and then Collins



Despite last night's loss, Riffa finished in first place in Group C of the AFC Cup's preliminary round and are already through to the Zonal semi-finals, which take place in February of next year

Opare supplied the winner for the Iraqis seven minutes from full time.

With the result, Riffa suffered their first loss after six matches in this year's AFC Cup and stayed on 13 points atop the Group C standings. Zawra'a scored their third win and improved to 11 points, increasing their chances

Standings

	P	W	D	L	+/-	Pts
Riffa (Bahrain)	6	4	1	1	10	13
Al Zawra'a (Iraq)	6	3	2	1	4	11
Al Arabi SC (Kuwait)	6	2	2	2	-2	8
Nejmeh SC (Lebanon)	6	0	1	5	-12	1

of a West Zonal semis berth.

In last night's other Group C match, Al Arabi of Kuwait defeated Nejmeh SC of Lebanon 2-1 in a non-bearing encounter. Arabi and Nejmeh finished as the bottom two teams from their pool and were eliminated from further title contention.

Riffa opened the scoring last night in the ninth minute. Vinicius found the net with a left-footed effort from the centre of the box which he sent to the bottom-left corner of goal. He received an assist from teammate Abdulaziz Khalid.

Zawra'a were able to level the scores just four minutes before the break through Abdulkareem. He fired in with a left-footed shot from the centre of the box

to the bottom-right corner of goal, with Opare supplying an assist.

It was then Opare's turn to get onto the scoresheet. He put Zawra'a in front with a header from close range off a cross from the right wing following a corner. That was enough to separate the two sides in the game.

The Zonal semi-finals are scheduled to take place in February of next year, to be followed by the Zonal finals in April. There will also be Inter-zone play-off semi-finals in March and Inter-zone play-off finals in April for teams outside the West zone.

This season's AFC Cup final is then scheduled for May of next year.

The AFC Cup is the annual continental club competition of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) for the continent's top teams not competing in the AFC Champions League. Riffa are the lone Bahraini outfit in this year's tournament.

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