

Bahrain football team set for Asiad

Twenty-two players named on Kingdom's squad for men's football tournament at Hangzhou Asian Games | P12

68 China warplanes, 10 vessels detected around Taiwan

AFP | Taipei

Dozens of Chinese warplanes and 10 navy ships were detected around Taiwan, authorities in Taipei said yesterday after warning that Beijing was conducting air and sea drills in the Western Pacific.

China claims self-ruled Taiwan as its territory and relations have soured since the island's independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen came to power in 2016.

Beijing has in recent years ratcheted up diplomatic and military pressure on Taiwan and the number of warplane flights around the island increased dramatically following last August's visit by Nancy Pelosi, then-speaker of the US House of Representatives.

Venice heritage not in danger, says Unesco

AFP | Paris

The UN's cultural organisation said yesterday it had stopped short of placing Venice, one of the world's top tourist destinations, on its world heritage in danger list.

The Italian city has been in Unesco's sights because of mass tourism and rising water levels, but at its annual meeting in Riyadh the agency decided against a downgrade.

"The Committee has taken the decision not to include Venice on the list of World Heritage in Danger," a Unesco source said.

Houthi head for Saudi talks

AFP | Sanaa

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels left for Riyadh yesterday on their first publicly announced visit since a Saudi-led coalition launched hostilities in 2015, raising hopes of progress towards ending the conflict.

An Omani plane carrying a 10-strong Houthi delegation and five officials from mediator Oman headed towards the Saudi capital for what a Houthi government official said would be a five-day visit.

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Royal praise for solid Bahrain-US relations

HRH Prince Salman: They are based on shared values of fairness, justice, tolerance, peace and diversity

HRH holds key talks with US National Security Advisor and Secretary of Defense

Washington

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, noted that longstanding Bahrain-US relations are based on shared values of fairness, justice, tolerance, peace and diversity.

HRH Prince Salman was speaking as he held a meeting yesterday with US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan at the White House. It took place during HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister's official visit to the US.

During the meeting, Sullivan reaffirmed the US's enduring commitment to Bahrain's security, and thanked HRH Prince Salman for the Kingdom's steadfast partnership, which includes hosting the US Navy's Fifth Fleet and the headquarters of US Naval Forces Central Command.

They praised the signing of the new Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement, which will serve as a cornerstone for cooperation among a broader group of countries that share mutual interests and a common vision with regard to deterrence, diplomacy, and escalation.



His Royal Highness with the US Secretary of Defense

The Bahrain and US delegations discussed opportunities to strengthen economic and commercial ties under the new agreement, including a target of summer 2024 to launch direct flights between Bahrain and the US.

His Royal Highness and Sullivan also discussed exploring bilateral cooperation on the development of commercial advanced small modular reactors, in line with shared goals of deploying innovative, zero-carbon technologies.

They pledged to stay in regular contact in the coming weeks and months to oversee implementation of the agreement.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister and the Bahraini delegation also participated in

bilateral technology dialogue with senior US officials at the White House yesterday to explore ways of deepening cooperation on critical and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence.

Support for global security and peace

His Royal Highness also met with the US Secretary of Defense, Lloyd J. Austin III, at the Pentagon.

During the meeting, HRH Prince Salman emphasised Bahrain's steadfast commitment to supporting efforts to enhance international security, stability and peace, and to address regional and global challenges.

HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad and Austin welcomed the



US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan reaffirmed the US's enduring commitment to Bahrain's security.

historic signing of the new Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement.

They noted that the agreement will significantly bolster shared efforts to protect region-

al stability.

The meeting also addressed ongoing bilateral military and defence cooperation and covered regional and international developments of common interest.

The National Security Advisor, Secretary-General of the Supreme Defence Council, and Commander of the Royal Guard, HH Lieutenant-General Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, HE Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the Bahrain Defence Force Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Theyab bin Saqr Al-Nuaimi, and a number of senior officials also attended both meetings.

Migrant crisis



Migrants gather outside the operational center called "Hotspot" on the Italian island of Lampedusa yesterday. The tiny Italian island of Lampedusa struggled to cope with a surge in migrant boats from North Africa after numbers peaked at 7,000 people - equivalent to the entire local population. (AFP)

Germany blocks full Chinese takeover of satellite startup

AFP | Frankfurt

Germany has blocked a complete Chinese takeover of a satellite startup on national security grounds, sources close to the matter revealed yesterday, as Berlin takes an increasingly hard line against Beijing.

Concerned at the heavy reliance of Europe's top economy on China, Chancellor Olaf Scholz's government has been pushing to "de-risk" and dial back dependencies.

The German tech company KLEO Connect aims to establish its own network of satellites in low Earth orbit that can pro-

vide internet to remote locations, hoping to rival Starlink.

The strategic importance of space telecommunications has been highlighted by the Ukraine war where Starlink, operated by Elon Musk-owned company SpaceX, has become a key battlefield tool for Kyiv.

According to German media reports, Shanghai Spacecom Satellite Technology (SSST) holds about 53 percent of KLEO Connect and wanted to acquire another 45 percent from German firm EightyLeo.

But Berlin blocked SSST's move after an investment review by the economy ministry.