

Bunting wins Bahrain Darts Masters

England's Stephen Bunting clinches thrilling darts victory at the Bahrain International Circuit | **P 12**

Israel says 737 prisoners to be freed in first phase of Gaza truce deal



Brad Pitt 'feels like a weight has been lifted'

BisB reveals new edition of Tejoori Al Islami for 2025

Debate over pay rises for public workers past retirement age

TDT | Manama

Parliament will debate a proposal on Tuesday to adjust job ranks for public sector workers following the extension of the retirement age, ensuring that annual pay rises continue as employees work longer.

The suggested changes could affect thousands of workers across government ministries, with proponents arguing the adjustments will prevent financial stagnation and boost morale.

MP Mohsen Al Asbool, Chair of the Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee, said the proposal had been thoroughly examined and received unanimous support from committee members.

He described it as an essential step to match salary structures with longer working years while motivating employees to achieve more.

The proposal, put forward by MP Hassan Ibrahim, recommends revising salary scales to ensure uninterrupted annual pay rises, even as the retirement age increases.

Industry Ministry, Korea Intellectual Property Office, European Patent Office sign MoUs

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Korean Intellectual Property Office, and MoUs with the European Patent Office.

The signing of the agreements were signed by Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce; Kim Wan ki, Commissioner of the Korea Intellectual Property Bureau; and António Campinos, President of the European Patent Office.

This step is a significant advancement for the Kingdom in developing its patent and intellectual property sector. It reinforces Bahrain's role in protecting all types of intellectual property and patent rights, which helps attract more investments and develop collaboration to achieve further gains.

Strategy for stability

Bahrain's public debt hits BD17.9 billion, Finance Ministry maps out repayment plan

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's public debt has reached BD17.9 billion, with interest payments for 2023 alone standing at BD843 million, according to the Ministry of Finance.

To address these rising obligations, the ministry has laid out a borrowing strategy aimed at lowering costs and ensuring repayments are carefully timed to avoid putting pressure on the country's finances.

Annual assessments are conducted to determine the funds needed to cover the budget deficit and repay outstanding debts within the year.

Responding to a question from MP Khalid Buanaq, the ministry detailed its approach, which is built around two key initiatives: the Fiscal Balance Programme and the Economic Recovery



H.E. Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy

Plan.

Revenues

These measures aim to improve government revenues by tapping into new income streams while reducing operational expenses.

The ministry is also working to improve the delivery of



Bahrain seeks to ensure greater financial stability in the coming years by controlling borrowing costs and fostering economic growth.

public services while maintaining steady growth in the local economy — a critical factor in creating financial surpluses that can be gradually channelled into reducing public debt.

The ministry pointed out that



MP Khalid Buanaq

Bahrain's reliance on borrowing stems from recurring budget deficits, as permitted by Article 6 of the State General Budget Approval Law.

This provision allows for loans from financial institutions as well as Arab and Islamic funds to cover shortfalls.

However, the ministry stressed that public debt cannot be assessed in isolation.

It must be considered alongside Bahrain's broader economic performance, which has been buoyed by an average GDP growth rate of 9 per cent between 2021 and 2023.

State account

Preparations are being finalised to present the final consolidated state account for 2024 to Parliament.

Meanwhile, debt repayments are managed through a mix of local and international markets, as well as financial surpluses when available.

The ministry stated that its debt management strategy remains firmly tied to fiscal policy and supported by ongoing economic reforms.

By keeping borrowing costs in check and encouraging economic growth, Bahrain aims to bring greater stability to its finances in the years ahead.

Golden Visa holder loses BD40,000 claim against hospital

Due to lack of a valid work permit

H Naser
TDT | Manama

A European doctor holding a Golden Visa has lost a BD40,000 claim against a private hospital after his work permit was revoked.

The Court of Cassation upheld the lower courts' decision, citing the illegality of his employment due to the lack of a valid work permit.

The doctor had worked at the

hospital for two years before his contract was terminated.

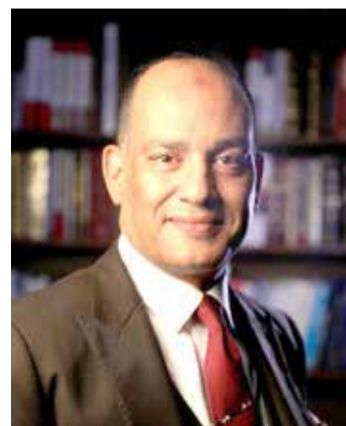
Outstanding payments

He subsequently filed a claim for BD40,000 in outstanding payments.

His claim was rejected in the lower courts and subsequently by the Court of Cassation.

The hospital's lawyer, Abdulrahman Ghunaim, argued that the doctor's employment was invalid because he lacked a valid work permit, despite holding a Golden Visa.

"The Bahraini law mandates foreign workers to possess a work permit issued by the com-



Abdulrahman Ghunaim, the hospital's lawyer

petent authorities. Even a Gold-



The Golden Visa, while offering residency rights, does not automatically grant the right to work for a specific employer without the necessary work permit.

en Visa does not grant automatic

permission to work for another employer," lawyer Ghunaim argued.

Employment contract

While the doctor possessed a licence to practise medicine from the National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA), this licence had been revoked, rendering his employment contract void.

The Court of Cassation agreed with the hospital's argument, stating that a foreign national working in Bahrain without a valid work permit or in violation of its conditions deem the employment contract null and void.



Gaza ceasefire to begin today

AFP | Jerusalem

A ceasefire in the Gaza war will begin this morning, mediator Qatar said after Israel's cabinet voted to approve the truce and hostage-prisoner release deal.

Since Qatar and the US, which mediated the deal along with Egypt, announced the agreement on Wednesday, Israeli strikes on Gaza have continued.

Yesterday, Gaza's civil defence rescue agency said at least five members of a family were killed when a strike hit their tent in Khan Yunis, in southern Gaza.

Dialogue to boost partnerships

India-GCC cooperation catalyst for global peace, innovation and economic growth

Kochi, Kerala, India

Kochi Dialogue 2025, a two-day Track 1.5 international diplomacy dialogue, brought together diplomats, government officials, key decision-makers, stakeholders and business leaders from India and countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council on 16th January 2025 in Kochi, Kerala, on its inaugural day to further strengthen partnerships between India and the GCC.

Organised by the Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR), a Kochi-based think tank, in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, a first-of-its-kind multi-stakeholder dialogue aimed at advancing its ties with the countries of the Gulf region was virtually inaugurated by Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, MoS, External Affairs & Union Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, with a special address by H.E. Jassem

Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary-General Gulf Cooperation Council, Mr Raghuram S (IFS), Joint Secretary, PP&R Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt of India and Dr. D. Dhanuraj, Founder-Chair-



MoS Kirti Vardhan Singh



H.E. Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary General of GCC



Mr Raghuram S (IFS), Joint Secretary



Dr D Dhanuraj, CPPR Chairman



Diplomats and delegates

man, Center for Public Policy Research (CPPR).

The inaugural ceremony was also attended by H.E. Issa Saleh Al Shibani, Ambassador of Oman to India; H. E. Meshal Mustafa J Alshemali, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to India; and Mr. Obaid Khalifa Bakheet Abdulla Alkaabi, Consul General of the UAE in India.

The inaugural edition, centred around the theme "India's Look West Policy in Action: People,

Prosperity, and Progress," is being attended by diplomatic communities and delegates from the GCC countries — Oman, Kuwait, UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia — along with diplomats from Australia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and India.

Dimensions

The dialogue delves into the strategic dimensions of India's evolving ties with the GCC nations.

The Gulf region, being a foreign and security-policy priority, is an integral part of India's 'extended neighbourhood' in which India has increasing interests and influence.

In his inaugural message, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, MoS, External Affairs, Government of India, said, "The theme, India's Look West Policy in Action, People, Prosperity and Progress, of Kochi Dialogue clearly demonstrates the three cornerstones

of this relationship, which has historically been led by people-to-people engagement, based on a desire for mutual progress and prosperity.

"This is evident by the nearly 9 million vibrant expatriate Indian communities in the GCC countries, as well as more than US\$160 billion annual trade between us.

"Instead of viewing our relationship with this region through the decades-old prism

of energy, trade and diaspora, the Government of India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has expanded structured collaboration in sectors including renewables, emerging technologies, innovation, healthcare, space and defence.

"The announcement of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor at the G20 Summit in New Delhi has opened a promising new perspective for trade and connectivity.

"Any future-facing initiative that India has taken in recent years evolves countries from this region partnering with us.

"It is therefore very pertinent that this Track 1.5 Dialogue on this theme is taking place in Kerala, from where the earliest foundations of this relationship have been built."

Vision

H.E. Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary-General Gulf Cooperation Council, in his special address expressed, "The GCC Vision is to promote peace and stability, address climate challenges, and prioritise maritime freedom of navigation in the Arabian Sea, among other priorities.

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MPs set to vote on early childhood education bill

TDI | Manama

The Council of Representatives is set to vote on a proposed law that would significantly expand the government's role in early childhood education, potentially transforming the sector.

The bill, introduced by MP Basma Mubarak, aims to bring the establishment and management of kindergartens under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education, alongside its existing roles of encouraging private sector involvement and providing oversight.

Currently, the Ministry of Education's responsibility is limited to licensing and regulating private kindergartens.

The proposed law seeks to change this, reflecting a broader shift toward lowering the compulsory education age.

Regulatory framework

The Ministry of Education, in its response to the bill, acknowledged the recent issuance of a regulatory framework for independent early childhood education institutions.

"This framework aims to im-



MP Basma Mubarak

prove the quality of services, increase investment in early childhood education, and strengthen oversight," the ministry added.

However, the Ministry's response did not explicitly endorse the proposed change in its direct role.

Budgetary allocations

Despite this, the parliamentary Financial and Economic Affairs Committee strongly supports the bill, although it recognised that its implementation would require additional budgetary allocations.

The committee highlighted that entrusting the Ministry of Education with the estab-

lishment and management of kindergartens represents a valuable investment in human capital, contributing to sustainable economic growth.

The committee recommended approving the proposed bill, citing several positive impacts: reducing financial burdens on Bahraini families, improving salaries for kindergarten workers, and leading to a significant improvement in the quality of services provided.

Goal

MP Mubarak's explanatory memorandum underscored the bill's goal of developing the kindergarten sector in line with sustainable development principles.

It also aims to raise salaries for qualified kindergarten teachers to match those of primary school teachers serving in public schools, as well as ensuring a supportive environment for children's development.

The Council of Representatives' Services Committee has also recommended approval of the bill, which will be put to a vote in Parliament this coming Tuesday.

Risk of 'serious injury or death'

Spate of manhole and cable cover thefts pose public safety concerns in Northern Governorate

Athletes and horse riders in danger

H Naser
TDI | Manama

The recurring theft of manhole covers and fiber optic cable covers in the Northern Governorate is raising serious safety concerns, particularly for athletes and horse riders.

Abdullah Ashoor, a member of the Northern Governorate Municipal Council, is calling for innovative and permanent solutions to curb this escalating problem, highlighting to The Daily Tribune the repeated thefts along Road 12 in Salma and Shaikh Zayed Highway in the sixth constituency of the Northern Governorate.

He expressed concern that even recent welding efforts to secure manhole covers in Buri



An open manhole in the Northern Governorate

near the tunnel and the road adjacent to Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Highway haven't deterred thieves.

"The recent spate of manhole cover thefts in the Buri-A'ali agricultural area has created a truly dangerous situation for our community. Joggers, walkers, and especially horse riders are at significant risk of serious injury or even death from fall-

ing into these uncovered holes," Ashoor said.

"This isn't just an inconvenience; it's a matter of public safety. Addressing this requires a collaborative effort between residents, the municipality, and other relevant authorities. We need to work together to find a lasting solution, and I urge all residents to report any incidents of missing manhole covers to the authorities immediately," he added.

Abdullah Hassan, a horse breeder and active social media user, echoed these concerns.

"Welding alone isn't enough. We need a permanent solution, like replacing the metal manhole covers near the farms and the Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Highway tunnel with concrete ones. The rainy season makes the missing covers even more dangerous for horse riders and drivers, and the risk of serious injury is too high to ignore," Hassan stated.

Legal win for Bahraini father

Marriage certificate discrepancy fixed, son's documents secured

TDI | Manama

A Bahraini father has successfully challenged a one-year discrepancy in his marriage certificate, paving the way for his son to obtain official Bahraini documents.

The case highlights a bureaucratic hurdle caused by a clerical error made by a marriage registrar.

According to lawyer Ali Kareem, his client initiated legal proceedings against his wife, the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, and the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports, and Residence.

Wedding date

The lawsuit sought to invalidate the original marriage certificate, which incorrectly listed the wedding date as December



31, 2003, instead of the correct date, December 31, 2002.

The discrepancy prevented the issuance of Bahraini birth certificates, identity cards, and passports for the couple's son.

The couple married in Bahrain in 2002 and subsequently moved to the wife's Asian home country.

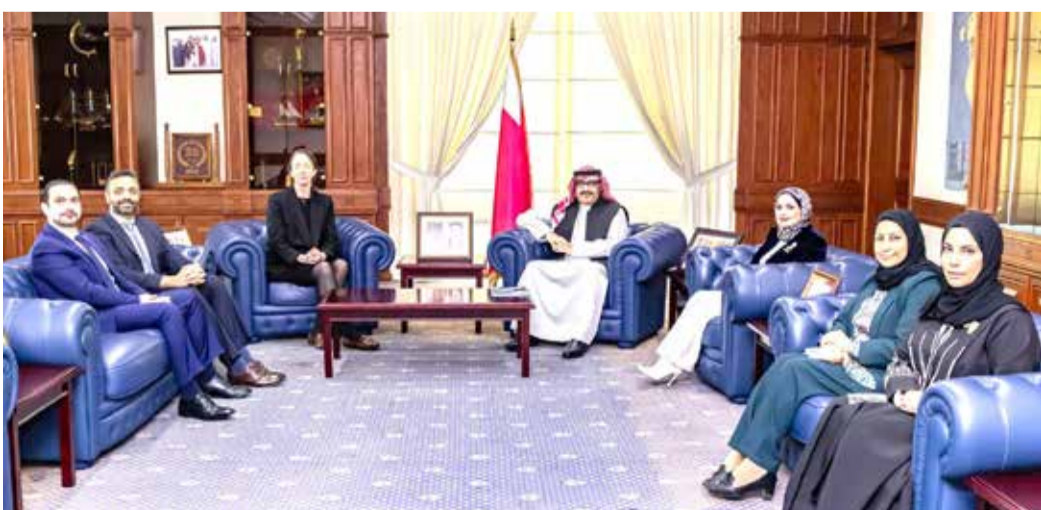
Their son was born there

in July 2003, and received an Asian birth certificate and identity documents.

Upon returning to Bahrain, the father attempted to obtain Bahraini documents for his son but was informed of the error in the marriage certificate.

The court case involved presenting evidence to prove the correct wedding date.

Education partnership



His Excellency Dr. Mohamed bin Mubarak Juma, Minister of Education and Chairman of the Higher Education Council Board of Trustees, met with the heads of private universities in Bahrain, where he announced a new partnership between the Higher Education Council and Times Higher Education (THE) to develop a comprehensive strategy for higher education and research in Bahrain. The minister said the strategy will focus on improving performance, enhancing regional and international competitiveness, and fostering growth in the higher education sector.




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Passion for learning

Education Ministry ready to establish Gifted Student Centre in Southern Governorate

H Naser
TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Education has confirmed its readiness to establish a centre for gifted students in the Southern Governorate whenever necessary and in accordance with priority construction plans and available resources.

This announcement comes in response to a proposal submitted by MP Ali Al Noaimi, which aims to create a dedicated centre for gifted students in the Southern Governorate.

The ministry highlighted the existence of a "Centre for Gifted Students" operating under its supervision, which provides comprehensive care for talented students from various governorates in Bahrain.

This centre, as per the min-

istry's response, caters to students enrolled in both public and private schools across all educational stages, focusing on nurturing their academic and performance-related talents after identifying and registering them.

Specialised programmes and initiatives

The centre offers ongoing support for gifted students through a variety of specialised programmes and initiatives, including raising awareness about the importance of nurturing gifted students in schools, providing lectures, training courses, and workshops for educational and administrative staff to identify these talents at different educational levels, collaborating with all official and community organisations to develop students'



Image used for illustrative purposes only

intellectual and mental capacities and publicise their achievements, and implementing a series of enriching workshops and courses, both in the morning and evening, along with field visits to

public and private schools across the kingdom.

The ministry further noted that the centre employs approximately 250 teachers, assigned by school administrations to

coordinate the committees for gifted students in both public and private schools.

Specialists

"This team includes specialists in mental giftedness, facilitating a communication link between these schools and the centre to provide educational services to a broader segment of talented students from various educational stages throughout the Kingdom," the ministry emphasised.

The Services Committee of the Council of Representatives has reviewed the proposal and recommended its approval, paving the way for further development in nurturing the talents of Bahrain's gifted youth.

The Council of Representatives will discuss and vote on the proposal next Tuesday.

Repeat offender three-year jail term upheld

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Appeals Court has upheld a three-year prison sentence for a repeat offender who has a history of deliberately targeting food delivery drivers with his vehicle. The defendant's appeal was dismissed due to his failure to appear in court.

The case centres around an incident in Saar where the defendant, known for his history of similar offenses, deliberately rammed his vehicle into a food delivery driver's motorbike.

This resulted in a 1% permanent injury to the driver and damage to the motorbike. The court found that while the defendant did not intend to cause such a severe injury, the act of deliberately striking the motorbike was intentional.

A minor traffic dispute escalated when the defendant deliberately collided with his motorbike.

Ease and convenience

iGA launches eService for requesting newborn birth certificate outside Bahrain

TDT | Manama

The Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), has launched the "Request for Birth Certificate for Newborn Outside the Kingdom of Bahrain" eService.

This eService is accessible through the national portal bahrain.bh, enabling citizens abroad to submit their requests for issuing the certificate electronically with ease and convenience.

The iGA's Chief Executive, Mr. Mohammed Al Qaed, stressed that this eService is part of the ongoing collabora-

tion with the MOFA and reflects the efforts of the Authority to enhance the digital transformation process in the Kingdom.

This initiative is in line with the government's directives, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to continue providing high-quality services that contribute to improving the user experience.

Al Qaed also pointed out the iGA's commitment to the on-going enhancement of the birth registration system by introducing new and improved eServices that meet the needs of the public. These initiatives support the objectives of the

Ministerial Committee for Information and Communication Technology (MCICT), chaired by His Excellency General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Committee.

Furthermore, he emphasized the Authority's dedication to utilizing its full efforts and resources to deliver innovative services that provide individuals with easy access, enabling them to complete their transactions efficiently and saving both time and effort.

This eService marks a significant shift in the delivery of government services and reflects the Kingdom's commitment to its citizens abroad.

Ministry opposes proposed autism treatment, care centre

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Social Development has expressed its opposition to a proposal submitted by members of the Council of Representatives for the establishment of an autism treatment and care center in the Zallaq area.

The ministry highlighted that the objectives of the proposal are already being met through existing facilities.

The proposal was put forward by MPs Ali Al Dosari, Muneer Seroor, Hesham Al Awadhi, Ahmed Qarata, and Mohammed Janahi.

In its response to the proposal, the ministry noted that there are numerous specialised rehabilitation centres across

the Kingdom of Bahrain, totaling 53.

This includes 17 community centres, 30 private centres, and six government-operated facilities.

The ministry further stressed that the government allocates an annual budget of BDI.2 million to support most rehabilitation centres for individuals with disabilities.

Additionally, it mentioned ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of Works to complete maintenance at the Comprehensive Disability Complex, which aims to provide care and rehabilitation for individuals with disabilities from all governorates of Bahrain, catering to all ages and genders.

The explanatory memorandum accompanying the proposal indicated a rising incidence of autism in all its forms within Bahrain.

It pointed out that the Zallaq area, located in the ninth district of the Southern Governorate, is far from the nearest center that treats and handles special cases, including autism.

This distance has become a burden for parents who struggle to transport their children to facilities located far from their homes.

The proposal was reviewed by the Services Committee of the Council of Representatives, which recommended its approval, citing several public interest considerations.

Bahraini father's custody bid rejected after year-long delay

Mmed Darwish
TDT | Manama

After a year of silence, a Bahraini father's attempt to take custody of his two daughters, aged nine and ten, has been dismissed by a Sharia Court, which ruled that the girls are better off

staying with their GCC-national mother in her home country.

The court noted that the father's long delay in filing the claim and the ease of travel within the GCC made his arguments weak, according to lawyer Khulood Madhloom, who represented the mother.



Khulood Madhloom, lawyer

The father had waited more than a year after the daughters were placed with their mother by a GCC court ruling before raising his custody claim.

The Bahraini court found his delay implied acceptance of the arrangement and dismissed his evidence, which included wit-

ness statements about the difficulties of travel.

Madhloom said her client, divorced from the father for four years, had been granted custody a year after their separation by a court in her home country.

The mother, who moved to her Gulf home before the di-

vorced, has been raising the children there ever since.

The father argued that the mother's decision to live outside Bahrain made it difficult for him to stay involved in the girls' lives, but the court found otherwise.

The daughters, it said, were thriving in their current home.

Turkish scholar explores Bahrain's rich literary heritage in doctoral study

TDT | Manama

Omer Faruk, a doctoral candidate from Turkey, is currently in Bahrain conducting research for his dissertation on the Kingdom's rich literary history and its significant contribution to Arab culture.

Faruk's study aims to illuminate the evolution of Bahraini literature, from Nabati poetry to contemporary writings, highlighting the role of Bahraini writers and intellectuals in enriching the Arab cultural

landscape.

Speaking to The Daily Tribune, Faruk explained that his research will involve extensive work in national archives and libraries, as well as interviews with prominent literary figures.

Faruk expressed his enthusiasm for his visit, stressing the importance of his research in understanding the depth of Bahraini civilization and its impact on Arab culture.

He anticipates his work will significantly contribute to global



knowledge of Bahraini literature.



"I hope my work will foster stronger cultural ties and academic collaboration between Turkey and Bahrain."

- OMER FARUK, DOCTORAL CANDIDATE FROM TURKEY

"Researching Bahraini literature is both enjoyable and

rewarding," Faruk stated. "It reflects the rich history and civilization of Bahrain and presents a fascinating intellectual challenge. I am impressed by Bahrain's cultural diversity and how this diversity is reflected in its rich and varied literary output."

"Through this study, I aim to present a comprehensive picture of this output and highlight its contribution to the Arab and global literary scene. I hope my research will enhance understanding and appreciation of this

valuable cultural heritage."

Faruk's interest in Bahraini literature stemmed from his undergraduate studies in Arabic literature at Istanbul University.

"While studying, I noted the extensive research on other Arab nations but found a gap in the scholarly attention given to Bahrain's literary contributions," he said. "I chose Bahrain as the focus of my doctoral dissertation to bridge this gap, introducing Turkish society to the Kingdom's abundant literary heritage."

BisB reveals new edition of Tejoori Al Islami for 2025

Rewarding more than 1,150 winners throughout the year

TDI | Manama

Islamic Bank (BisB), the leading provider of innovative Islamic financial solutions for simplifying money matters in Bahrain, has unveiled its latest edition of Tejoori Al Islami for 2025, offering more than of 1,150 prizes. The Bank has also revealed 'Tejoori SME' as the latest category added to its existing range of Tejoori Al Islami accounts.

The enhanced scheme includes four grand quarterly prizes. The grand prize for the first quarter is \$100,000, the grand prize for the second quarter is \$200,000, the grand prize for the third quarter is \$300,000, and the year 2025 concludes with an exceptional draw for the fourth quarter, awarding a lucky winner the big grand prize



Faisal Al Abdulla

of \$1,000,000.

Addressing diverse customer needs and aspirations, Tejoori Al Islami is Bahrain's pioneer-

ing Islamic investment savings account developed to foster financial security and reward responsible saving habits across

specific niches. Among these, 'Tejoori for Her,' offers four women the chance to secure 4 sets of natural pearl jewellery from Mattar Jewelers in each month, celebrating a total of 48 winners during the year. 'Tejoori Youth' aims to instil financial literacy and discipline among young adults under 25 years of age, presenting 10 cash prizes worth \$500 every month and rewarding 120 individuals during the year.

Additionally, to honour continued customer loyalty, 'Tejoori First-Time Winners' caters to long-term account holders who have not won any prizes in the past year, allowing them to participate in monthly draws for 50 prizes worth \$500 each. With 50 winners selected each month, the category felicitates 600 patrons throughout the year.

Meanwhile, for high-net-worth clientele seeking exclusive privileges, 'Tejoori Premium' and 'Premium Lite' offer a superior banking experience that features premium private medical insurance, home maintenance packages, and annual fee waivers for Visa Infinite Credit Card holders. A sum of \$10,000 is awarded to one customer each month in addition to eligibility to other monthly prizes.

For 2025, BisB has introduced 'Tejoori SME' as the new category targeted towards Bahraini entrepreneurs and business owners, which offers 5 monthly prizes valuing \$1,000 each. SME clients holding a Tejoori Al Islami account will be eligible for exclusive draws with every BD 50 deposited earning them a raffle entry.

Mr. Faisal Al Abdulla, Acting

Head of Branches and Sales at BisB said, "We are delighted to launch the new edition of the 'Tejoori Al Islami' account, through which we offer a variety of cash prizes that meet the needs and aspirations of our customers. Over the past year, we have expanded the product's reach with dedicated segments designed to reward our customers – whether by encouraging financial independence among women, cultivating careful money management in youth, or offering exclusive benefits for discerning clients and first-time winners. This year, we continue to broaden the scope of our Tejoori Al Islami offerings by supporting the growth of Bahrain's entrepreneurial community and contributing to the Kingdom's sustainable economic development."

Canada vows 'Trump tax' on US in response to tariffs: minister

AFP | Montreal, Canada

Americans will be hit by a "Trump tariffs tax" if the US president-elect increases customs duties on Canadian products, the Canadian foreign minister said Friday, pledging a hard-hitting response in any trade war.

Donald Trump, who returns to the White House next week, has said he plans to slap 25 percent tariffs on Canadian imports as part of his economic and foreign policy plans that also target Mexico, China and other trade



Trump

partners.

"This would be the biggest trade war between Canada and the US in decades," Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said. "The Americans would be starting a trade war against

us. "We are ready to put maximum pressure," she said at a press conference in Washington, adding that Canada has a series of measures prepared if Trump carries out his threat, which would have a major impact on Canadian consumers and jobs.

A government source told AFP that Ottawa is considering higher duties on goods from the United States including steel products, ceramics like toilets and sinks, glassware and orange juice -- in a first phase of tariffs that could be extended.

"We will be strong and unequivocal in our defense of Canada and Canadians," said outgoing Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

"The proposed tariffs would put American jobs at risk, raise prices for American consumers, put our collective security at risk and raise costs all across the continent."

One scenario from Scotiabank suggests that a trade war could cause Canadian GDP to fall by more than five percent, increase unemployment significantly and fuel inflation.

Telegram boss admits 'seriousness' of French allegations: source

AFP | Paris, France

Telegram founder Pavel Durov has told investigating magistrates in France, where he was charged with infractions linked to enabling organised crime, that he "realised the seriousness of all the allegations", AFP learned yesterday from a source familiar with the case.

The messaging service Durov founded with his brother in 2013 "was not created to be a platform for criminals", he told investigators through an interpreter, according to extracts from his questioning in December provided by the source.

"Its growing popularity, the

overall increase in the number of our users, meant that the number using Telegram for criminal purposes also increased," added the 40-year-old, who possesses multiple passports including French.

"Every time we've been informed of illicit usage, we've tried to remove the users who have broken the law or the platform's rules," Durov said, numbering deleted accounts at between 15 and 20 million per month. In 10 hours of questioning by the magistrates dealing with a sample of 15 criminal activities allegedly facilitated by Telegram's "ease of use", Durov said that he was "disgusted in a personal capacity".

Rome shoppers take pot luck in 'blind sale' of unclaimed packages

● Organised by French startup King Colis, the event aims to reduce waste and promote sustainability.

AFP | Rome, Italy

Benedetta slid a manicured nail through the sellotape of a mystery package to unwrap a garden hoe and earbuds. Her friend discovered she had bought some sort of harness.

The Italian students are among hundreds of people at this "blind sale" of unclaimed packages, where boxes large and small are paid for according to their weight at a Rome shopping centre.

"Many people might say this is a good surprise," Benedetta told AFP, holding up the wireless earphones in one hand. "But in my opinion it's this. It's a hoe."

"I live in the countryside. I



Shoppers choose secret packages during "blind sales" at the pop-up store King Colis, a French start-up that organizes sales of lost parcels from e-commerce platforms like Amazon, at the Roma Est shopping center

always have to plant flowers and I use a soup spoon to dig. I would never have bought a hoe of my own volition," she said.

Organised by French startup King Colis, the event aims to

reduce waste and promote sustainability.

It is the company's first event in Italy and is proving so popular that King Colis CEO Killian Denis predicts they could sell 10

tonnes of packages in six days, with an average of 800 buyers and 3,000 visitors per day.

Denis said he came up with the idea during the Covid lockdown, after several things he ordered online to entertain his young daughters got lost in the post.

"Each time I was reimbursed... but I started to wonder what happened to the lost, undeliverable packages," Denis told AFP.

"I discovered that they were destroyed by the logistics companies in charge of their delivery, since they're of no use to them and the suppliers refuse to take them back because of the transport costs."

That is when he and a childhood friend decided become "parcel rescuers", he said.

'Only one rule'

Antoine Ulry manages the pop-up stand in the shopping centre, where people get 10 minutes to "take as many items as you like from the bins".

People dug through the piles, holding packages up to their ears and shaking them. The queue to join them snaked through the centre.

"The only rule you have to follow is not to open the parcels before you buy them," Ulry said.

Some shoppers immediately tore into their purchases the moment the cash was handed over.

As one customer wheeled away a shopping trolley overflowing with boxes, road maintenance worker Giuseppe Arancio discovered the packages he paid 123 euros (\$126) for include a stone cooking pot.

"The pot is valuable and I got other little things I needed. Out of the uncertainty came useful things", he said with a smile.

After the initial pop-up sales in France, the company has organised blind sales in Aus-

tria, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Portugal, Spain and Sweden are to follow soon.

It also sells bundles of mystery parcels online.

One third of the packages sold come from European logistics giants, while the other two thirds come from Amazon resellers.

Most of the latter are lost parcels, while the remainder are returned and unsold items.

Such is the appetite for the blind sales that King Colis is currently out of e-commerce packages to sell, beyond the three pop-up events it has planned in January. Its website says it hopes to replenish stocks soon.

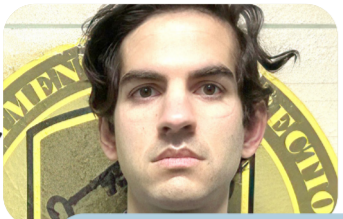
An Amazon spokesperson told AFP: "We do not work with 'mystery box'/'secret package' retailers."

The company does "not send unopened or undeliverable customer returns to liquidators" but does use liquidations to give some returned products "a second life".



News in brief

A former CIA official pleaded guilty Friday to leaking top secret US intelligence documents about Israeli military plans for a retaliatory strike on Iran. Asif Rahman, 34, who worked for the Central Intelligence Agency since 2016 and held a top secret security clearance, was arrested by the FBI in Cambodia in November. Rahman faces up to 20 years in prison after pleading guilty in a federal court in Virginia to two counts of willful retention and transmission of national defense information. Iran unleashed a wave of close to 200 ballistic missiles on Israel on October 1 in retaliation for the killings of senior figures in the Tehran-backed Hamas and Hezbollah militant groups. Israel retaliated with a wave of strikes on military targets in Iran in late October. According to a court filing, Rahman, on October 17, printed out two top secret documents "regarding a United States foreign ally and its planned kinetic actions against a foreign adversary."



Ex-CIA analyst guilty of leaking docs on Israel plans to strike Iran

US immigration authorities will carry out mass arrests of undocumented immigrants across the country on Tuesday, a top border official in the incoming administration of Donald Trump has said. The move would be among the first by Republican Trump, who returns to the White House on Monday, to uphold a campaign pledge to deport millions of undocumented immigrants from the United States. The remarks on Friday by Trump's incoming "border czar" Tom Homan to Fox News came in response to reports in the Wall Street Journal and other US outlets that Trump's new administration planned to carry out an "immigration raid" in Chicago beginning Tuesday. "There's going to be a big raid across the country. Chicago is just one of many places," said Homan, a former acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) who oversaw a policy that separated migrant parents and children at the border under the first Trump administration.

The United States on Friday grounded SpaceX's Starship and ordered Elon Musk's company to investigate why the spaceship spectacularly disintegrated in a fiery cascade over the Caribbean during its latest test mission. Authorities in the Turks and Caicos Islands confirmed they diverted all flights from their airspace during the incident and urged residents not to touch fallen debris, warning it could be hazardous. "The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) is requiring SpaceX to perform a mishap investigation into the loss of the Starship vehicle during launch operations on Jan. 16," the agency said. "There are no reports of public injury, and the FAA is working with SpaceX and appropriate authorities to confirm reports of public property damage on Turks and Caicos."

US grounds SpaceX's Starship after fiery mid-air explosion



SPOTLIGHT

Croatian deputy PM quits over gun shooting video



Screen shots from a video footage circulating online AFP | Zagreb, Croatia

Lights in the distance appear to show an inhabited area. "I am aware that these circumstances create an additional burden for the government and my party," he wrote in Saturday after a video surfaced of him shooting at random from a moving car. The incident is the latest to trouble the cabinet of conservative Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic, whose health minister, Vili Bros, was dismissed in November to face a corruption probe. "I hereby submit my irrevocable resignation," Dabro posted on Facebook. The 42-year-old was also agriculture minister in Plenkovic's government. The video, made public by the daily Jutarnji List earlier this week, shows him sitting in the passenger seat of a moving car, singing to loud music and firing a pistol into the dark. The footage appears to show it was filmed in summer.

Israel says 737 prisoners to be freed in first phase of Gaza truce deal

- Israel's cabinet voted to approve the ceasefire deal early Saturday, according to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office, ending days of uncertainty about whether the truce would go into effect this weekend.
Those named by the ministry include men, women and children who it said will not be released before Sunday at 4:00 pm local time (1400 GMT).

The majority women, to be freed in exchange for Israeli captives in Gaza.

Also to be freed is Khalida Jarar, a leftist Palestinian lawmaker whom Israel arrested and imprisoned on several occasions. Jarar is a prominent member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a group designated as a "terrorist organisation" by Israel, the United States and the European Union. Detained in late December in the West Bank, a Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, the 60-year-old has been held since then without charge. Two sources close to Hamas told AFP that the first group of hostages to be released consists of three Israeli women soldiers. However, since the Palestinian Islamist movement considers any Israeli of military age who has



A Palestinian flag inscribed with the Arabic phrase "we sacrifice ourselves for the nation", at a camp for people displaced by conflict in Bureij in the central Gaza Strip

completed a mandatory service a soldier, the reference could also apply to civilians abducted during the attack that triggered the war. The first three names on a list obtained by AFP of the 33 hostages set to be released in the first phase are women under 30 who were not in military service on the day of the Hamas attack. Justice ministry spokeswoman Noga Katz has said the final number of prisoners to be released in the first swap would depend on the number of live hostages released by Hamas. Even before the truce begins, displaced Gazans were preparing to return home. "I will go to kiss my land," said Nasr al-Gharabli, who fled his home in Gaza City for a camp further south. "If I die on my land, it would be better than being here as a displaced person." In Jerusalem on Saturday, residents said the deal had been a long time coming. "Hopefully a maximum amount

Lebanon president says Israel must withdraw from south by January 26 deadline



Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

Lebanon's new president said yesterday that Israel must withdraw from his country's south by the January 26 deadline set to fully implement an Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire agreed last year. His remarks follow a speech by Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem who accused Israel of hundreds of ceasefire violations, warning it against testing "our patience" and calling on the Lebanese state to be "firm" in its response. President Joseph Aoun told visiting United Nations chief Antonio Guterres that it was necessary for "Israeli forces to withdraw from the deadline set by the agreement reached on November 27". "Israel's continued violations on land and in the air... blowing up homes and destroying border villages, completely contradicts what was stated in the ceasefire agreement," a statement from Aoun's office added. Under the November 27 ceasefire deal, which ended two months of all-out war between Israel and Hezbollah, the Lebanese army has 60 days to deploy alongside peacekeepers from the UNIFIL mission in south Lebanon as the Israeli army withdraws. At the same time, Hezbollah is required to pull its forces north of the Litani River, around 30 kilometres (20 miles) from the border, and dismantle any remaining military infrastructure it has in the south.

TikTok could 'go dark' in US Sunday after Supreme Court ruling

AFP | Washington, United States

TikTok says it will "go dark" in the United States today unless the government provides assurances a new law calling for its ban won't be used to punish service providers. "Unless the Biden Administration immediately provides a definitive statement to satisfy the most critical service providers assuring non-enforcement, unfortunately TikTok will be forced to go dark on January 19," TikTok said in a statement. The US Supreme Court on Friday upheld a law supported by President Joe Biden and Congress that requires the app's owner ByteDance to either sell TikTok or cease US operations by January 19. "The statements issued today by both the Biden White House and the Department of Justice have failed to provide the necessary clarity and assurance to the service providers that are integral to maintaining TikTok's availability to over 170 million Americans," TikTok said following the Supreme Court decision. The unanimous ruling, which found the law does not violate free speech rights, dealt a major blow to TikTok and created uncertainty about what will happen when the ban takes effect. The court agreed with the government's national security concerns about Chinese company ByteDance's ownership of the app. ByteDance has firmly rejected selling its US operation, a stance also taken by Beijing, which has denounced the law as theft.

Gamers tear into Musk for 'faking' video game prowess

AFP | Washington, United States



Tesla CEO Elon Musk arrives on New Year's Eve at Mar-A-Lago club

Elon Musk's self-proclaimed persona as a top-class gamer took a thrashing on Friday, as video game enthusiasts mercilessly mocked the tech billionaire following a disastrous performance in a livestream. The uproar -- tinged with hilarity -- left the CEO of Tesla and SpaceX battling the humiliating accusation that he was faking it as a skilled gamer. It erupted after Musk streamed himself last week playing "Path of Exile 2," boasting of having one of the highest-ranked characters and inviting scrutiny from seasoned gamers. Many noted that Musk made rookie mistakes and was unfamiliar with basic game mechanics that he should have been familiar with given the advanced level of his avatar in the game. Suspicions swirled that the world's richest man had hired help, inviting brutal comments that demolished his elite gamer persona. The spat did not end there. Musk shared private direct messages he had exchanged with Asmongold, which insinuated that the streamer's opinions were not his own. "Asmon behaves like a maverick 'independent,'" Musk wrote in a post. "But in reality has to ask his boss for permission before he can do anything. He is not his own man." Provoking titters online, Musk's post was attached with a Community Note -- a crowd-sourced tool to debunk false information -- which noted that Asmongold does not have "bosses." The public spat led to an avalanche of comments that labelled Musk a "man-child" and lampooned his "fragile ego," while many previous fans added that the billionaire had lost their trust. "This sounds like a middle-schooler giving a book report on a book they've never read," said one comment under a YouTube video of Musk's gameplay. A popular Twitch streamer called Asmongold took the criticism a step further, challenging Musk to prove that he had reached that level himself. The rebuke did not go down well. The billionaire unfollowed Asmongold on X, and soon the streamer lost his blue checkmark. The platform, previously known as Twitter, was purchased by Musk in 2022 for \$44 billion. agement skills: running multiple corporations, posting breathlessly on X and excelling at video games -- all while being a father to several children. The billionaire is also an advisor to the incoming administration of US President-elect Donald Trump and has been tapped to run the new Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), tasked with reducing government spending. "Path of Exile 2" is considered a challenging game that expert players say requires a serious time commitment to reach the advanced level of Musk's character -- something he likely lacks. The tycoon has frequently shared his gaming experiences on social media, claiming to be one of the top players in various online games. He has said the activity forces him to "concentrate" and "kill the demons in a video game calms the demons" in his mind. The uproar has led users to question Musk's other purported accomplishments, such as his



Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, once taught himself rocket science by reading textbooks and seeking advice from industry experts. His self-education and determination led to the founding of SpaceX, which became the first privately funded company to successfully launch, orbit, and recover a spacecraft in 2010.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Will America make Gaza great again?



CAPTAIN MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

That old cliché "Déjà vu all over again" could not be more true than in the sight of two of the most powerful politicians in the world -- one, an outgoing U.S. president and another who takes charge tomorrow -- scrabbling for credit over a long-overdue ceasefire between Israel and Palestine. Biden and Trump have been alternately snapping at any notion that the other is responsible for the ceasefire and crowing about it as their handiwork. Meantime, insiders say that negotiators of the two Presidents actually need credit for setting aside differences and working sincerely to break the long impasse. They clearly wanted to demonstrate the continuity of US commitment to the region. This is not the first time that two US Presidents have fought like schoolboys to score brownie points over a Middle East crisis. Remember how Jimmy Carter, then an outgoing President, and incoming Ronald Reagan both took (shared?) credit for securing the release of American diplomats from Khomeini's Iran? Regardless of who takes credit, let us not ignore the fact that the ceasefire comes at a time when most of the world finds it increasingly difficult to countenance the terrible genocide by Israel of Palestinians, in the name of self-defence.



01



A great risk to their safety & security, the men & women #ServingForPeace with our @UN-Peacekeeping mission@UNIFIL... in Lebanon deliver on their mandate with bravery & dedication. I hope that their courage will be an important contribution for the ceasefire to be transformed into true peace. @antonioguterres

02



Kudos to Indian space startup @DigantaraHQ at the success of Mission SCOT. This is an important contribution of the growing Indian space industry towards enhancing space situational awareness. @narendramodi

03



My NEW Official Trump Meme is HERE! It's time to celebrate everything we stand for: WINNING! Join my very special Trump Community. GET YOUR \$TRUMP NOW. Go to http://gettrumpmemes.com - Have Fun! @realDonaldTrump

04



The ceasefire agreement offers great hope that Israeli hostages will be liberated after more than 450 days in #Gaza. I've met many of their families and some of those who were released previously -- they all suffered for too long. We mourn those who died in captivity. @DrDedros

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

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)

celebs



Brad Pitt

Brad Pitt 'feels like a weight has been lifted'

● **Brad Pitt is looking to the future after finalising an agreement with Angelina Jolie**

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Brad Pitt feels like a "weight has been lifted" after finalising his divorce from Angelina Jolie.

The 61-year-old actor and the Oscar-winning actress recently concluded their long-running legal battle, and Brad now feels ready to move to the next chapter in his life with his girlfriend Ines de Ramon.

A source told Us Weekly: "There's a big sense of relief that it's over. A weight has been lifted."



Brad and Angelina, 49, spent more than eight years locked in a bitter legal dispute. But after reaching a settlement agreement in December

Brad and Angelina, 49, spent more than eight years locked in a bitter legal dispute. But after reaching a settlement agreement in December, Brad is now looking to the future with a renewed sense of optimism.

The insider explained: "Brad wants to get his life [back] on track and put this behind him. He can start over again."

Brad - who married Angelina in 2014 - began dating Ines, who

works as a jewellery designer, in 2022.

However, a source previously claimed that the movie star - who was married to Jennifer Aniston between 2000 and 2005 - was happy to take his time with their romance.

The source told 'Entertainment Tonight': "Brad and Ines are still seeing each other and having fun."

"They enjoy each other's company and have similar interests. They're both creative, like to travel, and are happy being low-key. Things are good between them, but Brad isn't rushing anything."

Brad is "very careful and intentional about who he dates", according to the source, who observed that the 'Mr. and Mrs. Smith' star is also keen to "let things grow naturally" with Ines.

The insider shared: "Brad is very careful and intentional about who he dates. He likes to ease into things and let things grow naturally."

I was a shy kid, says Zendaya

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Zendaya was a "shy" child. The 28-year-old star first found fame during her childhood, starring in the Disney Channel sitcom 'Shake It Up', and Zendaya now admits that auditioning actually helped to improve her self-confidence.

The Hollywood star told W Magazine: "I was a shy kid, and I gained confidence and a sense of self when I started to audition. I'd create my own little outfits, do my own hair and make-up. Falling into different characters helped me get out of my shell."

Zendaya feels that acting gives her a real sense of freedom. The actress has relished starring in 'Euphoria', the hit HBO teen drama, and 'Challengers', the critically acclaimed sports drama film, in recent years.

She explained: "A reason why

I love my job is it allows me the space to be less self-critical and try things, because I don't have to deal with the consequences of the character's actions in real life.

"When I'm Rue or when I'm Tashi, for example, I can just be messy, let the instincts come, and not judge myself because I'm not judging them."

Last year, Zendaya admitted that she felt "a little bit terrified" about returning to 'Euphoria'.

The actress - who plays Ruby 'Rue' Bennett in the teen drama - told Vanity Fair: "I'm a little bit terrified. I'm like, 'Can I even do this anymore?' I don't know."



Zendaya

Ellie Goulding reflects on 'hard times' in 2024

● **Ellie Goulding has confessed to experiencing some tough times last year**

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Ellie Goulding experienced some of the "hardest times" of her life in 2024.

The 38-year-old pop star has taken to social media to reflect on the last 12 months, acknowledging that she experienced a range of emotions throughout the year.

Ellie - who announced her split from her husband, Caspar Jopling, back in February - wrote on Instagram: "Strange that the hardest times can exist at the same time as feeling the most alive."

"God you're welcome, 2025. Love to my amazing son, the glorious women in my life and my fans."

"Thank you for this and thank you all for your support, with-

out which I wouldn't be here [heart emoji] (sic)"

Ellie's Instagram post also featured a montage of clips from the last year, including shots of her working out, as well as relaxing with friends and family.

Ellie took to social media in February to announce her split from Caspar, revealing that they actually "separated some time ago".



Ellie Goulding

The 'Lights' hit-maker said on Instagram: "Caspar and I privately separated some time ago."

"We remain the closest of friends and have been successfully co-parenting with our sons best interests at heart. We are committed to protecting our family privacy and thank people in advance for respecting our wishes - we won't be commenting further. Thank you."

Meanwhile, Caspar insisted that they will remain close friends following their breakup.

Caspar -

Jennifer Aniston reveals what she has learned after years of 'trying everything' to stay in shape

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Jennifer Aniston has learned that she "doesn't need to beat [herself] up" over health and fitness.

The 55-year-old actress has tried everything to stay in shape through her decades in Hollywood and since taking up a low-impact regime with resistance-based equipment through her partnership with Pvovle, she has realised that she could have been too hard on herself in the past.

She told People: "I know more, because I've tried it all. And my big takeaway is, 'Boy, you didn't have to hurt your body so much back then. You

Jennifer Aniston has learned that she "doesn't need to beat [herself] up" over health and fitness after trying everything to stay in shape

didn't need to beat yourself up.

"I always had the message in my brain

"You gotta do 45 minutes of cardio, then floor work and then weights. You can actually enjoy your workout, not break your body and have an incredible transformation."

"In all the workouts I've tried over the years, this one has transformed my body more than any of the others."

Meanwhile,

the former 'Friends' star has admitted that she is not really the type to make New Year's resolutions because she doesn't want to "let [herself] down" with them.

She said: "I'm not a good person to ask about [resolutions]. I don't make resolutions. If you only can make it for two of those weeks, and it doesn't work for you, it doesn't work."

The 'Morning Show' actress also stressed that her regime will not come with a year-long commitment from the individual but noted that most people have "loved" the plan so far.

Jennifer Aniston



Jennifer Aniston

SUDOKU

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

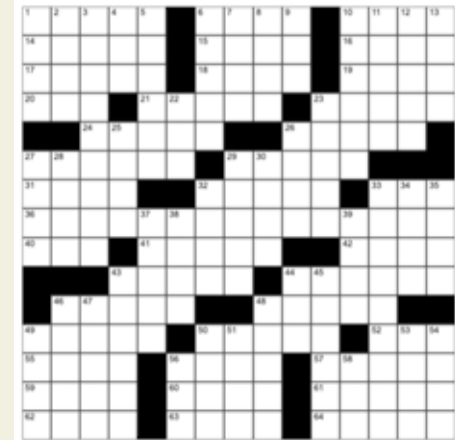
Yesterday's solution

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

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- Green pasta sauce; 6- Steinbeck: East of ___; 10- Queue after Q; 14- Standoffish; 15- Vietnam neighbor; 16- Bahrain bigwig; 17- Coffee choice; 18- 2002 erupter; 19- Persian fairy; 20- ___-fi; 21- Early Peruvians; 23- Strong winds; 24- Cravat; 26- Narrow cuts; 27- One who grinds grains; 29- "See ya!"; 31- La Scala highlight; 32- Brother of Moses; 33- Vegas opening; 36- In spite of; 40- Single; 41- Gaggle members; 42- Yeah, sure; 43- San Antonio landmark; 44- Continues a subscription; 46- Barbershop quartet member; 48- University of Florida player; 49- Salk's conquest; 50- Chart; 52- Shade at the beach; 55- Barbershop request; 56- Swedish auto; 57- Uncle; 59- Proceedings; 60- Canadian gas brand; 61- Summer camp transport; 62- Cartoonist Silverstein; 63- Blacken; 64- Used up;

Down

1- Cushions; 2- Utill; 3- Debutante; 4- Get thee ___ nunney; 5- Place where business is conducted; 6- Choose; 7- Computer input; 8- Ages and ages; 9- D.C. advisory grp.; 10- Mend; 11- Refine; 12- Wearies; 13- "Exodus" author; 22- ___easter; 23- First American to orbit Earth; 25- Cabbage salad; 26- Greek portico; 27- Look ___ hands!; 28- Pressing need?; 29- Dogie catcher; 30- Jocular Johnson; 32- Excuse me; 33- Rake; 34- Once again; 35- Cpls' superiors; 37- Ice house; 38- Shred; 39- Pebbles's pet; 43- Beat; 44- Knock vigorously; 45- Morals; 46- Burn down; 47- Cream of the crop; 48- Zsa Zsa or Eva; 49- School orgs; 50- Deep cut; 51- Tabula ___; 53- Stratford's river; 54- Nair rival; 56- Jiff; 58- Opening;

Yesterday's solution

M	A	A	S	C	A	L	P	T	R	A	C
E	L	I	A	E	R	I	E	R	E	L	E
L	O	R	N	K	N	E	A	D	E	T	E
T	H	E	M	E	S	T	R	A	N	S	E
S	A	R	A	N	T	E	S	L	A	S	
D	E	S	I	E	L	F	E	A	S	I	E
E	S	C	A	L	L	A	T	N	E	A	
D	E	A	F	E	N	U	R	N	R	E	D
S	C	A	L	D	I	A	T	E			
O	D	E	S	S	A	A	C	A	S	T	
E	V	E	R	Y	O	N	E	D	E	L	E
D	E	M	I	S	A	L	T	Y	A	T	A
I	R	E	M	I	R	E	N	E	I	N	R
T	A	R	T	N	E	S	T	S	M	A	S

Classifieds

VACANCIES AVAILABLE
CONTINUED

KANAN METAL WORKSHOP W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WELDER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38047328 or TISSAC1980@GMAIL.COM

NOMAN SHAKOOR DECOR SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DECORATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33414410 or RANAIMIAZABH@GMAIL.COM

R & R CONTRACTING CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MASON, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33672737 or RRCONTRACTINGBH@GMAIL.COM

COURIERX W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38870666 or HAMAD@COURIERX.COM

FANCY FRUITS GULF TRADING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SALESMAN, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33522101 or MTAHIRNAWAZ78@GMAIL.COM

KAFLAN CONSTRUCTION has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(CONSTRUCTION), suitably qualified applicants can contact 33316767 or kaflanconstruction@gmail.com

ANATOLIA JEWELLERY DESIGN COMPANY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(SALES), suitably qualified applicants can contact 35091661 or Rockrock12345@gmail.com

COURIERX W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 38870666 or HAMAD@COURIERX.COM

NEW TALA 22 MARKETING & PROMOTION W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE WORKER HELPER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35948612 or BATTALIGHT@GMAIL.COM

EMPERIO FASHION BAHRAINI PARTNERSHIP COMPANY has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 39581236 or PESO.BAHRAINI@GMAIL.COM

SAMARKANDI RESTAURANT FOR BUKHARI RICE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CASHIER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 37454646 or INFO@3BROTROTRAVEL.COM

D M K MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ASSISTANT, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33715201 or MOHAMMEDRASEB@HOTMAIL.COM

DAR AL KHALEEF TRADING & CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CONSTRUCTION WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17292851 or SHRIFAHMAD@GMAIL.COM

ALEEM SUPPORT SERVICES CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35460939 or MUSHTAQ29SP@GMAIL.COM

EAGLE FOR SAFE AND SECURITY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17270140 or alialtmi@yaho.com

GREAT TALISH PACKAGING CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER/PACKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33150476 or 0047NAWAZ@GMAIL.COM

DEPAALPUR SERVICES CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of HEAVY DRIVER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35306735 or REYALMUHAMMAD@GMAIL.COM

SHERAZ AFZAL SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER(PAINT FINISHER), suitably qualified applicants can contact 32328364 or ALRASHIDNAJEEB@GMAIL.COM

SHARYAR PACKAGING SERVICES W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36806463 or SHARYARKHANSHARYARKHAN064@GMAIL.COM

ALMOAYYED CLEANING & MAINTENANCE W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17400407 or proffice@almoayyedcg.com

BLACK CHERRY EVENTS CO W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SUPERVISOR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 35935010 or TABFAROOQ101@GMAIL.COM

Mechanical Contracting & Services Company W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of FITTER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 36937988 or MCSC@MCSCWLL.COM

4W SECURITY CO. W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17001640 or info@sss.bh

ALYAMAMA HOUSE FOR CLEANING CONTRACTING W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of CLEANER (GENERAL), suitably qualified applicants can contact 17345569 or YAMAMAHOUSE1@GMAIL.COM

EAGLE FOR SAFE AND SECURITY W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of SECURITY GUARD, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17270140 or alialtmi@yaho.com

EDEN GARDEN HOTEL APARTMENT W.L.L has a vacancy for the occupation of MASSEUR, suitably qualified applicants can contact 17722333 or AHMED@KINGDOM.BH

Bahrain's Hasan Al Sadadi successfully finishes Dakar Rally 2025 in Saudi Arabia

TDT | Manama

Renowned rally driver Hasan Al Sadadi has made the Kingdom of Bahrain proud after successfully finishing the Dakar Rally 2025 – one of the world's most prestigious and most challenging off-road races.

After reaching the finish line, Al Sadadi expressed his gratitude to His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and the supporters of his participation in



Hasan Al Sadadi and his team with Bahrain's flag after the event

this year's Dakar Rally, as well as to Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) and Beyon Group, noting that their backing was key to

his success.

Al Sadadi raced in the side-by-side vehicle (SSV) T4 class in his #444 BRP Can-Am Maverick

XRS Turbo RR. The 61-year-old veteran Bahraini racer took on the adventure with his team, R-X Sport, and was in the driver's seat alongside his navigator, Marcin Pasek of Poland.

Al Sadadi was ranked 83rd in his category for the 12th and concluding stage and finished 107th overall in the general classification (GC). It was his best stage ranking of the event, while his highest placing on the GC was 98th after stage 10.

His total time in the rally was 123 hours, six minutes, and three

seconds.

Al Sadadi also expressed his pride in being able to fly the Kingdom of Bahrain's flag in one of the biggest and most-followed races in the world, adding that it was an honour to represent his country on one of the grandest stages in motorsport.

Al Sadadi's participation is part of Bahrain's efforts to enhance its standing in world sport and confirm its commitment to supporting Bahraini athletes and enhancing their ability to compete at the highest levels.

Sinner sweeps into last 16

Sinner and Monfils advance, Swiatek crushes Raducanu at Australian Open

● Monfils beats Fritz in comeback

AFP | Melbourne

Defending champion Jannik Sinner raced to victory at the Australian Open yesterday to sweep into the last 16 as Iga Swiatek demolished Emma Raducanu.

Also into the second week is 38-year-old Gael Monfils after he stunned fourth seed Taylor Fritz -- with the veteran's wife Elina Svitolina also enjoying a shock win immediately after on the same court.

"It's really a great day for us today, beating top-four players and playing great tennis," said Ukraine's Svitolina.

American qualifier Learner Tien, 19, won in straight sets to extend his fairytale run on his debut in Melbourne.

But Danielle Collins, the pantomime villain after thanking hecklers for "paying my bills" in the previous round, lost and was booed.

Italian world number one Sinner dropped a set for the

first time in 14 matches in the second round.

But there were no such wobble against the unseeded Marcos Giron on Rod Laver Arena as he sprinted home 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 in 2hr 1min, slamming

35 winners

and

eight aces.

Awaiting him next is either Serbian Miomir Kecmanovic or Danish 13th seed Holger Rune.

"If I want to go on in this tournament I have to improve," said the 23-year-old Sinner.

French showman Monfils rolled back the years to storm back and defeat the American Fritz 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7/1), 6-4.

The unseeded Monfils, who hit a career-high ranking of six in 2016 but is now 41st, is enjoying a late-career flourish.

A week ago he became the oldest singles champion in ATP Tour history when he swept to victory at the Auckland Classic.

Monfils faces another American in 21st

seed Ben Shelton, who is a big fan.

"I think that any time he's on the court, it's a box-office match," said Shelton.

Monfils is married to Svitolina, who emulated his giant-killing efforts when she defeated world number four Jasmine Paolini, also on Margaret Court Arena. Svitolina came though 2-6, 6-4, 6-0.

"I warmed up the court for her," joked Monfils.

Tien became the youngest man to reach the fourth round since Rafael Nadal in 2005 when he overcame injured Frenchman Corentin Moutet.

The gifted teenager won 7-6 (12/10), 6-3, 6-3 with Moutet collapsing clutching his leg in the third set before gamely carrying on.

"Honestly it feels pretty crazy to be in the second week," he said.

Tien stunned three-time runner-up Daniil Medvedev in a five-set epic in the previous round.

Home hope Alex de Minaur, the eighth seed, went through in four sets against Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo and will face American Alex Michelsen for a place in the quarter-finals.



Rampant Swiatek

In a one-sided battle of former US Open champions, Swiatek romped to a 6-1, 6-0 triumph in a statement victory over Raducanu as she pursues a first Melbourne crown.

Emma Navarro, the eighth seed from the United States, joined the Pole in the next round with a gritty three-set win over Ons Jabeur.

Sixth seed Elena Rybakina also advanced despite a back problem.

"I felt like the ball is listening to me," Swiatek said after rattling off 11 straight games in a brutal display against Britain's Raducanu on Rod Laver Arena.

The 23-year-old Swiatek is a five-time major winner but she has never gone beyond the semi-finals at Melbourne Park.

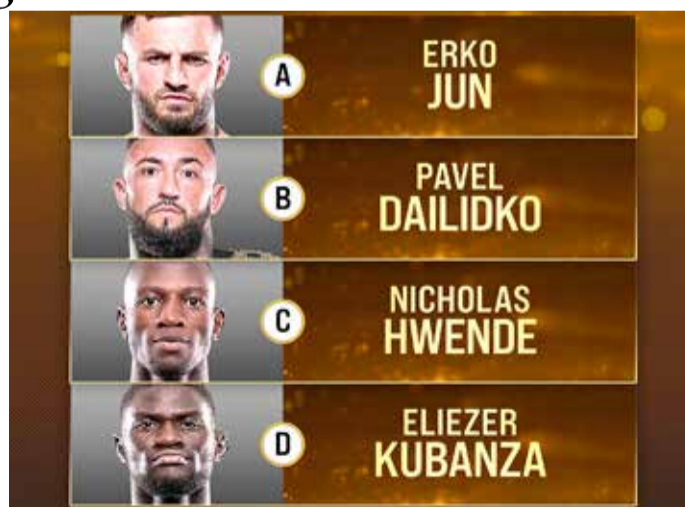
BRAVE CF Awards: Newly crowned champions lead race for Fighter of the Year Award

TDT | Manama

Brave Combat Federation has announced the nominees for the 2024 Fighter of the Year Awards, with newly crowned BRAVE CF champions leading the race. Erko Jun, Pavel Dailidko, Nicholas Hwende, and Eliezer Kubanza have been named as the nominees for the prestigious award.

Erko Jun secured two huge victories this year in BRAVE Combat Federation. He captured the BRAVE CF Light Heavyweight title at BRAVE CF 88 in Slovenia by outclassing Alexander Wesner. Before this, Jun also stopped former title contender Mohamed Said Maalem at BRAVE CF 81, maintaining his undefeated streak in the organization.

Pavel Dailidko made history by becoming the first-ever BRAVE CF Heavyweight Champion at BRAVE CF 88 in Slovenia. Pavel achieved two dominant wins in 2024, stopping Valdrin Istrefi in the second round at BRAVE CF 81 and defeating Pa-



tryk Dubiela in the first round at BRAVE CF 88 to claim the title.

Newly crowned Bantamweight Champion Nicholas Hwende also made the nomination list following his dominant performance against Nkosi Ndebele at BRAVE CF 91 in Bahrain. Hwende captured the title in an impressive showing and had earlier dominated Khurshed Nazarov at BRAVE CF 82, making 2024 a memorable year

for him.

The sole non-champion in the nominations is African superstar Eliezer Kubanza, who delivered two major wins this year. Kubanza began his year with a stoppage victory over Salamat Orozakunov at BRAVE CF 85 and followed it up with a hard-fought decision win against Zagid Gaidarov at BRAVE CF 91 in Bahrain, earning his place among the nominees.

REHC announces hosting "RoyalTea" festival for the second season



Participants during last year's event

TDT | Manama

The Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club (REHC) announced hosting the second edition of the "RoyalTea" festival, which will be held in cooperation and partnership with the Supreme Council for Women (SCW) on January 24 as part of the 2024/2025 horseracing season.

The second consecutive edition of the "RoyalTea" festival underscores the resounding success of its inaugural season, which aims to enhance the role of Bahraini women and their participation in various fields, including equestrian sports

and horseracing.

This sport is deeply rooted in the Kingdom's history and heritage and hold significant cultural importance and garner widespread enthusiasm across Bahraini society.

The main purpose of the "RoyalTea" festival is to create the ideal conditions to spread the culture of equestrianism and horseracing, and highlight its importance in Bahraini society, which would further create an attractive environment that encourages women to engage in practicing their favorite hobby in the field of horseracing.

HH Shaikh Nasser and HH Shaikh Khalid attend third round of Bahrain International Trophy



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa presents an award

TDT | Manama

His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Works and Youth Affairs, and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS), and His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Chairman of the General Sports Authority (GSA), and President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC), attended the third round of the fourth edition of the Bahrain International Trophy.

Held under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Isa bin Salman Educational Charitable Trust, the event took place during the 13th race of the 2024/2025 racing season at the Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club (REHC) in Al Raffah.

The races featured several prestigious trophies, including

the HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa Cup, the Cups of HH Shaikh Hamad bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, HH Shaikh Abdullah bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and HH Shaikh Salman bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, as well as the Al Adiyat Cup, the Al Wasmiya Cup, and the Huntsman Cup.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa attended the event alongside other dignitaries, prominent guests, and representatives of sponsoring organisations. The large audience enjoyed the competitive spirit and vibrant atmosphere of the evening.

HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa crowned the winners, presenting the second race trophy to Trainer George Scott, the third race trophy to HH Shaikh Isa bin Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, the fourth race trophy to Trainer Haider Ebrahim, and the sixth race trophy to Jockey Seamie Heffernan. HH Shaikh Faisal bin Rashid Al Khalifa presented the first race trophy to Trainer



HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa and HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa

Jaffar Marzooq, while Taj Phull, General Manager of Huntsman, awarded the fifth race trophy to Trainer George Scott.

In the third round of the Bahrain International Championship, HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, leader of Victorious Team, received the Al Adiyat Cup, sponsored by Yusuf Bin Ahmed Kanoo, after Phantom Flight secured first place in the sixth race. The trophy was

presented by Fawzi Ahmed Kanoo, Deputy Chairman of Yusuf Bin Ahmed Kanoo Group, and Nabeel Khalid Kanoo, Chairman of Kanoo Capital.

Additionally, Ahmed Fawzi Kanoo, a Board Member of the National Bank of Bahrain, presented the Al Wasmiya Cup, sponsored by the National Bank of Bahrain, to owner Hasan Abdulla, whose horse Ava Go Joe won the fifth race.



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa with a winning horse

HH Shaikh Nasser inaugurates Bahrain's longest cycling track



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa rides at the track

TDT | Manama

His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS), inaugurated the Nasser bin Hamad Cycling Track in the Southern Governorate.

The event of the 50 km track was attended by several sports officials in Bahrain.

HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad highlighted that the launch of the cycling track is one of the strategic steps by the Kingdom to promote sports as a lifestyle. The initiative aligns with the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to enhance quality of life and ensure citizens' health and well being. HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad also commended the government, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the

Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for its comprehensive development plans, including encouraging sports as a key element of a healthy lifestyle.

HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad emphasised that the track is a significant addition to Bahrain's sports achievements. It is the first of its kind in the country and the longest in distance, strategically located near key areas, making it an ideal destination for cyclists.

The inauguration began with HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad leading a ceremonial ride with professional cyclists from various national federations along the track, concluding at a commemorative monument marking the inauguration.

The event also included a children's cycling tour to inspire the youth to take up the sport. Young participants showed great enthusiasm and sportsmanship.

Bunting wins Bahrain Darts Masters

England's Stephen Bunting clinches thrilling darts victory at the Bahrain International Circuit

● **Stephen Bunting** defeated Gerwyn Price in final

TDT | Manama

Stephen Bunting from England was this evening crowned champion of the 2025 Bahrain Darts Masters at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

Bunting, the World Number Five a former Masters Champion, secured the title after defeating World Number Nine and 2021 World Champion Gerwyn Price of Wales 8-4 in a hugely exciting final, played in front of a sold-out and energetic crowd that packed the BIC Dome.

Following the title-decider, which was played best-of-15 legs, Bunting was presented with the tournament's glittering champion's trophy, molded in the form of a palm tree.

BIC chief executive Shaikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa and CBX CEO Carlo Boutagy were on hand for the awarding.

Bunting has now joined recently crowned World Champion and last year's victor in the Kingdom, Luke Littler, and Michael Smith as champions in the Bahrain Darts Masters.

In this evening's exciting final, Bunting took a 4-1 lead, but Price won the next two legs and got back to within one. Bunting replied with back-to-back legs for a commanding 6-3 advantage, but Price stayed alive with the ensuing leg. But Bunting was not to be denied, taking the next two in style to close things out for

Stephen Bunting



BIC chief executive Shaikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa and CBX CEO Carlo Boutagy present the award to Stephen Bunting

his historic victory.

Bunting was first to secure his place in the title affair, edging past 2024 World Champion Luke Humphries 7-6 in a nail-biting semi-final encounter.

In the other contest of the last four, Price defeated former two-time World Champion Peter Wright 7-4 in their best-of-13 meeting to book his place in the championship match.

Earlier this evening, in the best-of-11 legs quarter-finals, Bunting powered past fellow-Bahrain Darts Masters debutant Chris Dobey 6-0, and Price outclassed Littler 6-2.

YOU

KNOW WHAT

Stephen Bunting's victory marks his first Bahrain Darts Masters title, joining past winners Luke Littler and Michael Smith in the tournament's history books

Humphries was a narrow 6-5 victor against Nathan Aspinall, while Wright ended the dream run of Asian representative Paolo Nebrija of the Philippines in a 6-4 triumph.

The Bahrain Darts Masters was organised by BIC and sports promoter CBX, and is supported by Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority.

This year's event marked the third edition of the prestigious competition, which this year was held as the first round of the 2025 PDC World Series of Darts.