

Pogacar dominates Stage 19

Tadej Pogacar extends lead, nearing historic Tour-Giro double with two stages remaining | P12



THE DAILY tribune



Ariana Grande slams double standards over changing voice

8 CELEBS

BUSINESS

5 Stocks slide as global tech outage rattles investors

Bahrain committed to bolstering Malaysia ties

TDT | Kuala Lumpur

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa emphasised the Kingdom of Bahrain's commitment to bolstering relations with Malaysia to fulfill the aspirations of both countries' leaderships and benefit the people of both nations.

HM the King was speaking as he received Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim yesterday at HM's residence in Kuala Lumpur.

During the meeting, HM King Hamad discussed with the Prime Minister the historical Bahraini-Malaysian relations and efforts to promote cooperation in various domains. They also exchanged views on several topics of common interest.

The two sides affirmed their keenness to further enhance cooperation in various fields.

Ibrahim expressed his appreciation to HM King Hamad for his ongoing interest and support in strengthening cooperation

between the two countries.

Coronation ceremony

HM King Hamad expressed his delight at participating in the coronation ceremony of His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim ibni Sultan Iskandar of Malaysia.

HM the King wished His Majesty the Sultan success in achieving his goals for the benefit of the people of Malaysia.

HM King Hamad visited Malaysia, upon an invitation from HM Sultan Ibrahim to attend His

Majesty's coronation ceremony in Kuala Lumpur.

Upon arrival, His Majesty the King was received by the sons of HM Sultan Ibrahim, including Prince Ismail, Prince Idris, Prince Abdul Rahman, Prince Abu Bakar, Fahmi Fadzil, Minister of Communications of Malaysia, and His Excellency Dr. Waleed Khalifa Al Manea, Ambassador of Bahrain to Malaysia, as well as members of the Bahraini embassy in Malaysia.



HM the King receives Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim

'Stay away from foreign calls for violence'

TDT | Manama

The Chief of Public Security, Lieutenant General Tariq bin Hassan Al Hassan, has issued a stern warning against responding to calls for violence and illegal protests emanating from suspicious sources operating abroad.

In a statement released yesterday, Al Hassan emphasised that participating in or responding to any incitements or actions that disrupt public order and security is a crime punishable by law. He cited Bahrain's Penal Code, which considers the act of incitement itself a crime, regardless of whether the instigated action is carried out.

The statement comes in response to recent calls for violence and illegal protests disseminated by unidentified entities operating outside Bahrain.

Curfew imposed in Bangladesh after deadly unrest

AFP | Dhaka

Bangladesh yesterday announced the imposition of a curfew and the deployment of military forces after police failed to quell days of deadly unrest that has spread throughout the country. This week's clashes between student demonstrators and police have killed at least 105 people, according to an AFP count of victims reported by hospitals, and pose a momentous challenge to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's autocratic government after 15 years in office.

The curfew would take immediate effect. (Detailed report on World Page)

Global Gridlock

CrowdStrike major outage affects businesses around the world in unprecedented scale

AFP | Paris

Airlines, banks, TV channels and financial institutions were thrown into turmoil yesterday by one of the biggest IT crashes in recent years, caused by an update to an antivirus program.

Air passengers crowded into airports to wait for news as dozens of flights were cancelled and operators struggled to keep services on track, after an update to a program operating on Microsoft Windows crashed the system.

Microsoft said the issue began at 1900 GMT on Thursday, affecting Windows users running cybersecurity software CrowdStrike Falcon.

CrowdStrike said it had rolled out a fix for the problem and the firm's boss, George Kurtz, told US news channel CNBC he wanted to "personally apologise to every organisation, every group and every person who has been impacted".

US President Joe Biden's team was talking to CrowdStrike and those affected by the glitch "and is standing by to provide assistance as needed", the White House said in a statement.

Full impact

Reports from the Netherlands and Britain suggested health services may have been affected by the disruption, meaning the full impact might not yet be known.



Travelers navigate customer service and ticketing lines at Ronald Regan Washington National Airport in Washington, DC.

(AFP) Media companies were also struggling, with Britain's Sky News saying the glitch had ended its morning news broadcasts and Australia's ABC similarly reporting major difficulties.

Banks in Kenya and Ukraine reported issues with their digital services, supermarkets in Australia had problems with payments, mobile phone carriers were disrupted and customer services in a number of companies went down.

Unprecedented

"The scale of this outage is unprecedented, and will no doubt

go down in history," said Junade Ali of Britain's Institution of Engineering and Technology, adding that the last incident approaching the same scale was in 2017.

Experts suggested it could take days or weeks for systems to be patched up.

Shares in CrowdStrike slumped by nine percent in early trading in New York.

From Amsterdam to Zurich, Singapore to Hong Kong, airport operators flagged technical issues that were disrupting their services.

While some airports halted

all flights, in others airline staff had to check-in passengers manually.

Grounded

The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) initially ordered all flights grounded "regardless of destination", though airlines said they were re-establishing their services.

But AFP footage showed frustrated and stranded passengers in airports from Milwaukee Mitchell to New York LaGuardia.

In Europe, major airports including Berlin, which had sus-

Bahrain airport fully operational

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) confirmed that all technical systems at Bahrain International Airport (BIA) are fully operational and unaffected by the recent global technical issue.

BAC noted that it is proactively monitoring the global situation and working closely with the relevant authorities to implement any necessary precautionary measures.

BAC advised all passengers to check the status of their flights with their respective airlines before arriving at the airport.

The BAC added that in reference to recent local media reports regarding the cancellations, delays, or rescheduling of some flights, these disruptions were not related to BIA's technical systems and were due to external factors and are being actively managed by the respective airlines.

pending all flights earlier yesterday, said departures and arrivals were gradually resuming.

(Bahrain beats the bug - Page 3; Global stocks slide, investors rattled - Page 5)

UN top court 'advisory opinion'

Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory 'illegal'

AFP | The Hague

The UN's top court said in a sweeping opinion yesterday that Israel's decades-long occupation of Palestinian territory was "illegal" and needed to end as soon as possible.

The advisory opinion by The Hague-based International Court of Justice was immediately slammed as a "decision of lies" by Israel, but welcomed by the Palestinian presidency which called it "historic".

The ICJ's statement, called an

"advisory opinion", is not binding, but it comes amid mounting concern over the death toll and destruction in Israel's war against Hamas sparked by the group's brutal October 7 attacks.

It is also likely to increase diplomatic pressure on Isra-

el, whose lawmakers voted on Thursday to oppose a Palestinian state, calling it an "existential threat." In The Hague, ICJ presiding judge Nawaf Salam said: "The court has found that Israel's continued presence in the Palestinian Territories is illegal."

Israel is "under the obligation to bring to an end its unlawful presence as rapidly as possible," the judge said at the Peace Palace, seat of the ICJ.

The ICJ said Israel was "under an obligation to cease illegal activities immediately."



Bahrain's C-SIPA to go 'global'

HH Shaikh Nasser highlights Kingdom's leadership in regional peace efforts at Aspen Security Forum



HH Shaikh Nasser speaks at the event



C-SIPA will evolve from a bilateral agreement to a multilateral one with a wider scope. Beyond the Middle East, the US has many friends globally. This agreement will unite all these allies

LIEUTENANT GENERAL HIS HIGHNESS SHAIKH NASSER BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA, NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR AND ROYAL GUARD COMMANDER

● Impact of Abraham Accords on Middle Eastern Diplomacy

● Role in Red Sea Conflict Resolution

● Actions on National Identity

Ashen Tharaka
TDT | Manama

Lieutenant General His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, National Security Advisor and Royal Guard Commander, announced Bahrain's plans to expand the Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA) beyond its current bilateral framework with the US.

“C-SIPA will evolve from a bilateral agreement to a multilateral one with a wider scope,” HH Shaikh Nasser stated. “Beyond the Middle East, the US has many friends globally. This agreement will unite all these allies.”

HH Shaikh Nasser made this announcement at the 15th annual Aspen Security Forum in Colorado, USA, an event dedicated to driving global change through dialogue, leadership, and action to address society's greatest challenges. He emphasised that the C-SIPA represents the most significant agreement Bahrain has established with the US.

Unlike traditional military and defense arrangements, C-SIPA encompasses a broader scope, integrating comprehensive security measures with a focus on prosperity.

“It's not just a military and defense cooperation. It's a comprehensive security integration, and moreover, it has the prosperity element in the agreement,” HH Shaikh Nasser stated. HH Shaikh Nasser under-



scored the distinctive nature of this agreement, highlighting it as the first security guarantee provided to an Arab state.

He urged progress, referencing Article Five of the agreement as a call to advance the initiative.

Peace and Stability in the Middle East

Responding to questions about Saudi Arabia's normalisation process with Israel amid the ongoing conflict in Gaza, HH Shaikh Nasser underscored the collective push for peace observed at the Arab Summit.

“Our stance is clear; it's a two-state solution, but we have to proceed step by step. I must reiterate the importance of a ceasefire,” he stated.

In line with these efforts, His

Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has announced a forthcoming peace conference, with Bahrain's foreign minister embarking on a global diplomatic tour to advance this peace initiative.

Operation Prosperity Guardian

HH Shaikh Nasser responded to a question regarding Bahrain's active participation in Operation Prosperity Guardian (OPG), a key initiative aimed at resolving conflicts in the Red Sea region, in this forum.

He highlighted Bahrain's role in OPG, emphasising that the kingdom's involvement is not directed against any single party, such as the Houthis, but focused on safeguarding global interests. “Bahrain is a part of OPG not

against one party, or let me say Houthis, but we are securing the world's interest,” he stated.

Bahrain's Leadership and Vision

In his address, HH Shaikh Nasser also emphasised Bahrain's dedication to national identity and proactive leadership.

“I am very much keen on our national identity. As a nation, we truly believe in action, not next week or tomorrow plans. Actions are more important,” he said.

The three-day Aspen Security Forum wrapped up yesterday with a speech by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who addressed urgent security concerns facing both the region and the world.

Celebrating enduring love affair with chess

Bahrain honours World Chess Day amid growing interest and international achievements

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

July 20th heralds World Chess Day, a global celebration of the centuries-old game.

This year's occasion carries extra significance, marking the centenary of the International Chess Federation (FIDE).

In Bahrain, chess has long held a special place, with a recorded history dating back to the 1940s.

The Bahrain Chess Club, established early on, initially attracted a modest group of enthusiasts who gathered out of sheer curiosity.

Momentum

The activity gained momentum in 1960, prompting the Bahrain Club's Sports Committee to invite the Chess Club to participate in matches.

Interest grew steadily, thanks in part to Bahraini poet Ibrahim Al Arrayed, who volunteered to train players, guiding them through chess puzzles and analyses of international games.

He was later joined by scientist and former minister Yousif Al-Shirawi.

Base

The Bahrain Chess Federation was officially established in 1981, headed by now Shura Council Member HE Dr Mohammed Ali Al-Khuzai, as the club's visitor

base grew and diversified with participants of various nationalities.

International Master Mohamed Tissir, Chairman of the Bahrain Chess Academy, spoke to The Daily Tribune, attributing the recent surge in interest to various factors.

“The COVID-19 restrictions led people to explore more mental sports and hobbies,” he explains. “Additionally, the success of the American miniseries ‘The Queen's Gambit’ has also reignited global fascination with the game.”

Growth

Tissir noted the significant growth of chess locally, crediting support from HE Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa and the Ministry of Education's initiatives in organising tournaments and training camps.

The Bahrain Chess Academy, established in 2014 by Tissir, is currently ranked sixth on FIDE's list of endorsed academies.

To mark World Chess Day, the academy will host tournaments and activities at its headquarters in Manama on July 20th.

Challenges

Despite the progress, challenges remain.

Tissir pointed out that financial support is still insufficient to cover the needs for coaches, event organisation, and devel-



Chess match at Bahrain Chess Club in 1962

oping a strong national team for international competition.

“The morale of Bahraini players improves when they represent the Kingdom and gain media attention and public support,” he remarked, indicating an area needing further enhancement.

Tissir also emphasised the numerous benefits of chess, including improved mental focus, problem-solving skills, and the development of discipline and courtesy.

These qualities, he argues, extend beyond the game itself and contribute to the overall well-being of individuals and society.

The Daily Tribune also spoke with Dr Bassem Mohsen, a prominent figure in Bahrain's chess scene since the 1980s.

Weekly classes

Dr Bassem invited the Tribune to the Al Oruba Social Club in Manama, where he and his brother hold weekly classes to train players. There, he showcased an archive of photos, achievements, and the early beginnings of chess in Bahrain in the 1960s.

Dr Bassem then took us on a journey down memory lane, recalling his own achievements in the 1980s, beginning with his first championship at the age of



The COVID-19 restrictions led people to explore more mental sports and hobbies. Additionally, the success of the American miniseries ‘The Queen's Gambit’ has also reignited global fascination with the game

INTERNATIONAL MASTER MOHAMED TISSIR, CHAIRMAN OF THE BAHRAIN CHESS ACADEMY

ahi, a star of that period, who became a FIDE Master at nine and later won championships at the Arab world level, including gold in the Arab Universities Championship.

As an emergency consultant, Dr Bassem emphasises the mental benefits of playing chess, viewing it as a break from the pressures of his work.

He advises practising chess as a mental activity that enhances planning and analytical skills, while also stressing the importance of complementing it with physical sports activities.

Preparations

Bahrain is stepping up preparations to organise the 2024 School Games, scheduled to be held next October under the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, with participation from 80 countries, including a prominent presence of chess.

Among the Kingdom's achievements is Maher Ayyad's victory, winning the Olympic gold medal in chess while representing Bahrain at the 2002 World Olympiad in Slovenia.

Additionally, Maliha Al Jamri, a Bahraini chess referee and coach, became the first woman in the country to receive international accreditation in chess arbitration, earning the title of International Arbiter (IA) in 2024.

Dr Bassem recalled Ziad Jan-

Bahrain beats the bug

Bahrain International Airport maintains normal operational capacity despite global technical disruptions

Ashen Tharaka
TDT | Manama

Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) confirmed yesterday that all technical systems at Bahrain International Airport (BIA) are fully operational and unaffected by the global technical issue.

BAC reassured passengers that the disruptions seen, including flight cancellations, delays, and rescheduling, are due to external factors and not related to BIA's technical infrastructure.

In light of the global issue, BAC has been proactively monitoring the situation and collaborating closely with relevant authorities to implement any necessary precautionary measures.

Meanwhile, Bahrain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement yesterday advising passengers to check the status of their flights with their respective airlines before arriving at the airport.

Widespread Disruptions

The Daily Tribune reached out to regional Artificial Intelligence expert and executive, Jassim Haji, to understand the technical situation behind this global issue.

According to Haji, a widespread computer outage has caused chaos across various sectors worldwide, including airlines, banks, media outlets, and other major companies.

The issue, which began on Thursday, has resulted in flight cancellations, TV stations going offline, and disruptions to banking services.

Windows PCs unexpectedly displayed the infamous "blue screen of death" error, rendering them unusable and causing



Bahrain International Airport

significant operational problems for businesses globally.

Haji explained that the root cause of this massive disruption appears to be a faulty cybersecurity update from CrowdStrike, a prominent cybersecurity company.

The problematic update led to Windows-based systems crashing, highlighting the delicate nature of software updates and the potential for widespread consequences when security measures fail.

The outage seems to have originated from a combination of factors. The problematic cybersecurity update was pushed out to numerous systems, which then encountered critical errors upon attempting to restart or update.

Additionally, issues with Microsoft's cloud services, particularly Microsoft 365 and Azure, compounded the problem for many organizations relying on these platforms for their daily operations.

Far-Reaching Impact

In the aviation sector, at least three major US airlines — Delta, United, and American — were forced to ground hundreds of flights, affecting an estimated 100,000 passengers.

Over 20 international airports reported significant disruptions.

Financial institutions, including Visa, Mastercard, and at least six national banks, reported is-



The root cause of this massive disruption appears to be a faulty cybersecurity update from CrowdStrike, a prominent cybersecurity company

JASSIM HAJI, REGIONAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EXPERT AND EXECUTIVE

sues affecting millions of customer transactions.

Media outlets like Sky News in the UK, with its 107 million monthly viewers, faced broadcasting difficulties. Train operators across three countries experienced problems with their information systems, affecting over 1 million commuters.

Impact on Middle East

An outage of this magnitude could have severe implications for the Middle East, given the



Bahrain's resilience amidst the crisis underscores the country's pioneering role in digital transformation and its robust integration into the international information and communications community

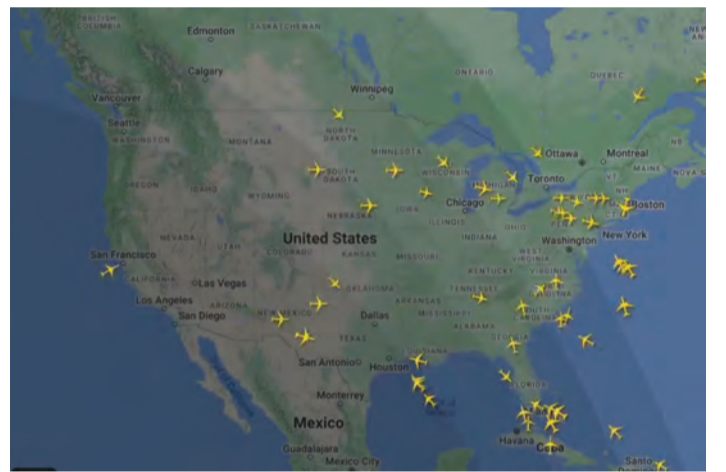
YAQOOB AL-AWADHI, CEO OF NGN INTEGRATED INFORMATION SYSTEMS

region's increasing reliance on digital technologies.

Critical infrastructure such as oil and gas facilities, financial services, and transportation networks could face significant disruptions.

The region's major airlines and airports, which serve as global hubs, would likely experience chaos similar to what was seen in other parts of the world.

Additionally, government services and healthcare systems that depend on digital platforms



Flights over the US before and after the technical glitch

could be severely impacted, potentially affecting millions of people across the region.

Actions

Microsoft has gradually fixed the problem affecting access to its 365 apps and services.

They worked on rerouting impacted traffic to alternate systems to alleviate the impact more quickly.

CrowdStrike has identified the issue with their update and has rolled it back, though affected computers still require manual intervention to resolve the issues.

Severe consequences

Meanwhile, Yaqoob Al-Awadhi, CEO of NGN Integrated Information Systems, confirmed that Bahrain had largely escaped the severe consequences of the recent "Crowd Strike" cybersecurity flaw that has disrupted systems and devices connected to the Internet worldwide.

Despite the global scale of the incident, Bahrain's government services, companies, institutions, and individuals have not experienced the extensive

damage seen in other countries and cities.

Al-Awadhi highlighted that Bahrain's resilience amidst the crisis underscores the country's pioneering role in digital transformation and its robust integration into the international information and communications community.

"This global imbalance reaffirms the significance of Bahrain's proactive cybersecurity measures and advanced technical solutions," Al-Awadhi stated.

Preparedness

The "Crowd Strike" defect has affected numerous systems globally, but Bahrain's preparedness has minimized its impact.

The incident has highlighted the effectiveness of the country's cybersecurity initiatives and the advanced measures in place to ensure operational continuity during emergencies.

However, Al-Awadhi emphasized the need for a thorough examination of the flaw to enhance Bahrain's cyber defenses across public and private sectors, as well as for individuals.

Teacher's appeal hearing set for sexual assault charges

TDT | Manama

The High Appeals Court has scheduled a hearing for September 30th to review the case of a 27-year-old teacher sentenced to 15 years in prison for sexually assaulting two young students. The teacher was initially convicted by the High Criminal Court for separate incidents involving a 12-year-old and a 7-year-old boy.

The defendant confessed to the crimes in the initial trial, expressing remorse and apologising to the community.

The case came to light after the Ministry of Interior's Northern Governorate Police

Directorate received a report alleging that the teacher had sexually assaulted a seven-year-old student outside of school grounds. The prosecution, led by the Deputy Public Prosecutor for Family and Child Affairs, investigated the incident.

The victim's father reported that the teacher had inappropriately touched his son, and the child confirmed the account, stating that the teacher had touched him in a private area while they were at a shopping mall. The teacher admitted to the charges. The investigation revealed physical evidence corroborating the victim's statements and the teacher's confession.

'Tough penalties' for Tamkeen fund abusers

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Misuse of labour incentives offered by the Labour Fund (Tamkeen) will be confronted with the full might of law under a proposed law set for debate in the upcoming convening period of Parliament.

Under this legislation, employers who benefit from Tamkeen funds to hire Bahrainis will be mandated to return these funds if they fail to uphold the condition of not terminating the Bahraini worker's contract unfairly.

This initiative, led by MP Basma Abdulkarim and supported by several other legislators,

targets employers who exploit Tamkeen funding to recruit Bahraini nationals, only to dismiss them unjustly afterwards.

According to the explanatory memorandum, this proposal seeks to uphold the principles of social justice enshrined in the constitution, specifically citing Article 13, which mandates the state to ensure fair employment conditions for its citizens.

The memorandum further points out that some employers have been exploiting the system, and this initiative aims to put an end to such practices.

The new law would require companies receiving Tamkeen subsidies to repay those funds if they dismiss Bahraini em-



MP Basma Abdulkarim

ployees without valid reasons approved by the Ministry of Labour.

Lawmakers believe this measure will deter businesses from abusing the government's labour support programme for mere financial gain.

Abdulkarim noted that Tamkeen was established to encourage the employment of Bahraini

nis and strengthen their position in the job market.

Purpose

However, many instances have been reported where employers take the money and then release these workers arbitrarily, which undermines the entire purpose.

The proposed amendment seeks to bring the Labour Law more in line with constitutional principles of dignified work and social justice.

Proponents are hopeful that the new measures will ensure Bahraini employees receive the protection they deserve, even when their employers have benefited from state support.

Voter list displayed for Muharraq by-election

Mohammed Darwish

TDI | Manama

The voter list for the Council of Representatives election in the first constituency of Muharraq Governorate has been displayed at the Supervisory Committee for Integrity.

This was announced by the Chairman of the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission, Chancellor Nawaf Abdullah Hamza and Executive Director of the By-Election for Membership in the Council of Representatives, Advisor Nawaf Abdullah Hamza.

This will take place from next Sunday, 21st July, until Saturday, 27th July.

Hamza stated that, in accordance with the provisions of Decree-Law No. (14) of 2002 concerning the exercise of political rights, which mandates the display of the voter list for a week and at least 45 days before the scheduled election date, the executive management of the elections has completed all technical, logistical, and administrative preparations to welcome voters at the Supervisory Committee for the Integrity of the Council of Representatives election in the first constituency of Muharraq Governorate, located at Al-Busaiteen Intermediate Girls'



Chancellor Nawaf Abdullah Hamza

School, during the announced period from 5pm to 9pm.

Available online

He also pointed out that the voter list will be available online on the official elections website vote.bh, enabling voters to check their constituency and submit requests for changes and corrections to their information without needing to visit the centres in person.

He emphasised the necessity for voters to ensure their ID card information is up-to-date, including the expiry date, and to submit registration or correction requests during the display period before the final approval stage by the judges, making the list unchallengeable.

Research rethink

Government calls for review of bill aiming to boost scientific studies

TDI | Manama

The government has urged the Council of Representatives to reconsider a draft law designed to encourage scientific research, recognise the contributions of national workforce in the public sector, and enhance government performance.

The proposed legislation aims to incentivise government employees with higher qualifications, improve the quality of public service, and provide opportunities for ambitious talents.

It also seeks to replace government-funded scholarships with a new system of academic qualification bonuses.

The draft law, apart from its preamble, consists of two articles.

The first article proposes



adding a new clause, numbered (15) bis, to the Civil Service Law issued by Decree Law No. (48) of 2010.

This clause would entitle every Bahraini employee holding a recognized academic qualification from an accredited university to receive a bonus

known as "Academic Qualification Bonus."

Bonus amounts

The bonus amounts would be as follows: BD20 for a higher diploma, BS40 for a master's degree, and BD60 for a doctorate. This bonus cannot be com-

bined with any other existing academic qualification bonus, and it would not apply to positions where a specific academic qualification is a prerequisite for employment or promotion.

The second article of the draft law is purely procedural.

The government has highlighted that the draft law contradicts the established legislative policy governing the enactment of laws and regulations related to the civil service.

Policy

It emphasises that lawmakers must adhere to this policy, ensuring that when regulating a specific matter, they define its general framework while leaving the details to executive regulations and ministerial decisions.

This approach allows for flexibility and ease of amendment in response to evolving circumstances that may necessitate swift legislative intervention.

Conversely, laws require more time-consuming procedures for amendments, as mandated by constitutional provisions, the government stated.

The aim of the proposal, as suggested by the lawmakers who drafted it, is to encourage scientific research, support national talents among government sector employees, and appreciate their efforts through incentive measures that enhance and develop their work, as well as attract ambitious competencies.

Trust shattered, wallet adjusted

Court orders man to repay BD7,000 to friend in loan dispute

TDI | Manama

A local court has ruled in favour of a plaintiff who filed a lawsuit against a friend for failing to repay a loan within the agreed-upon timeframe.

The court ordered the defendant to repay the full amount of the loan, along with legal interest and legal fees.

According to lawyer Iman Hassan, the plaintiff filed a lawsuit against the defendant, seeking an injunction preventing the defendant from traveling and compelling him to repay the BD7,000 loan, plus 10% legal interest from the date of demand until full repayment.

The plaintiff argued that the defendant, a 40-year-old man, acknowledged his debt of BD7,000 through a signed confession of debt.

Despite repeated requests, the defendant failed to repay



the loan, prompting the plaintiff to file the lawsuit.

The court, in its ruling, relied on the principle of proof outlined in Article (1) of the Evidence Law, which states that "the creditor is obligated to prove the obligation, and the debtor is obligated to prove its discharge."

Confession of debt

The court also considered the

fact that the confession of debt, signed by the defendant, was a valid legal document.

The court found that the defendant had not presented any evidence to refute the plaintiff's claim or to show that he had repaid any portion of the loan.

Consequently, the court ruled in favor of the plaintiff, ordering the defendant to repay the full BD7,000, along with legal interest and legal fees.

Man sentenced to one year in prison for injuring friend during car argument

TDI | Manama

A Bahraini court has sentenced a 29-year-old man to one year in prison for causing a permanent injury to his friend during a heated argument in a car.

The defendant, who is a retired individual, was found guilty of assault resulting in a 3% permanent disability, even though he did not intend to cause such harm.

The incident occurred on March 27th when the defendant and the victim, who were

friends, engaged in a verbal altercation while riding in the victim's car.

The argument escalated into a physical confrontation with the defendant punching the victim in the nose and continuing to assault him.

The victim testified that the defendant, after stopping the car, grabbed him by the neck and bit his left ear with force, holding him for approximately 15 seconds.

The victim managed to break free and seek help from passersby who inter-

vened to separate the two men.

The defendant admitted to the assault, stating that he had bitten the victim's ear but did not intend to cause any permanent injury.

A medical report confirmed that the victim's left ear injury, a 3% permanent disability, was consistent with a bite wound.

The court, considering the defendant's prior convictions for similar offenses, sentenced him to one year in prison for the assault resulting in permanent injury.

Court fines drunk driver BD1,000 for damaging public property

TDI | Manama

A court has fined a man BD1,000 for causing damage to public property while driving under the influence of alcohol.

The court found the defendant guilty of reckless driving and causing damage to a public barrier.

According to the case details, the incident occurred on Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Highway when the defendant, while driving under the influence of alcohol, failed to exercise due care and attention, resulting in a collision with a metal barrier.

The collision caused damage to both the defendant's vehicle and the barrier.

Confession

The court relied on the defendant's confession during the trial and the results of a blood

alcohol test conducted by the Ministry of Interior's health centre.



The test revealed a high level of alcohol in the defendant's blood, confirming his inability to control his vehicle.

The court con-

sidered the defendant's confession, deemed it reliable, and found that the evidence presented proved beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant committed the crimes charged.

Sentence

The court then sentenced the defendant based on Articles 1/12, 10, 9/45, and 2, 1/51 of the Traffic Law No. 23 of 2014, and Article 256 of the Criminal Procedures Law.

The court further determined that the offenses committed by the defendant were interconnected and could not be separated, thus considering them as one single crime.

Consequently, the court imposed the maximum penalty for the combined offenses, fining the defendant BD1,000.

Successful Ashura season praised

TDI | Manama

Northern Governorate Governor Ali bin Shaikh Abdul Hussain Al Asfoor commended the departments of funeral halls and mourning processions for their exemplary cooperation, coordination, and community partnership efforts during the Ashura season.

He highlighted their crucial role in maintaining security, order, public cleanliness, and ensuring the safe conduct of Hussein rituals, thereby re-

flecting Bahrain's commitment to the freedom of practicing religious rituals within legal frameworks.

Governor Al Asfoor emphasised the government's directives aimed at facilitating services for funerals and mourning processions, enhancing the season's success.

He stated, "Ashura is our sublimity... Ashura is the noblest of morals," underscoring the virtues of the Prophet's honorable family and the embodiment of love, sacrifice, and solidarity for

the homeland.

Al Asfoor praised the role of all service agencies, expressing gratitude for the voluntary participation of Royal, Kims, Al Hilal, and Bahrain Specialist Hospitals, as well as the Nabdat Hayat and Paramedic Academy teams.

These groups provided first aid services, addressed stress-related cases, handled emergencies, and transferred some cases to hospitals, demonstrating a high level of community solidarity.

Stocks slide as global tech outage rattles investors

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Stock markets slid yesterday after computersystems crashed worldwide, with sentiment also hit by US election uncertainty and Chinese economic worries.

The London Stock Exchange saw a delayed start to trading due to the glitch -- the result of an update with a bug -- which also affected airports, airlines, trains, banks, shops and even doctors' appointments.

Later, the calculation of London's blue-chip FTSE 100 index was frozen during part of the afternoon, as was the main index for the LSE-owned Milan stock exchange. Trading in stocks was unaffected.

"Risk aversion is taking hold yet again, with news that banks, airports, train companies, TV stations including Sky News, stock exchanges including the LSE, Microsoft's cloud services and cyber security services have all been hit by major online outages," said Kathleen Brooks, research director at XTB.

The crash was caused by an update of CrowdStrike antivirus software on Microsoft's cloud computing service.

Shares in CrowdStrike, which has already issued a software fix, tumbled 14.2% but recovered part of the loss during morning trading.

Microsoft's shares were

Key figures around 1530 GMT

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| New York - S&P 500: | ▼ 0.6 at 5,512.71 |
| Nasdaq Composite: | ▼ 0.6% at 17,760.94 |
| London - FTSE 100: | ▼ 0.6% at 8,155.72 (close) |
| Paris - CAC 40: | ▼ 0.7% at 7,534.52 (close) |
| Frankfurt - DAX: | ▼ 1.0% at 18,171.93 (close) |
| EURO STOXX 50: | ▼ 0.9% at 4,827.24 (close) |
| Tokyo - Nikkei 225: | ▼ 0.2% at 40,063.79 (close) |
| Hang Seng Index: | ▼ 2.0% at 17,417.68 (close) |
| Shanghai - Composite: | ▲ 0.2% at 2,982.31 (close) |
| Euro/dollar: | ▼ at \$1.0886 from \$1.0900 on Thursday |
| Pound/dollar: | ▼ at \$1.2914 from \$1.2946 |
| Dollar/yen: | ▲ at 157.36 yen |
| Euro/pound: | ▲ at 84.29 pence at 84.17 pence |
| West Texas Intermediate: | ▼ 1.3% at \$81.77 per barrel |
| Brent North Sea Crude: | ▼ 1.2% at \$84.11 per barrel |



A woman walks past an electronic board displaying the numbers of the Tokyo Stock Exchange share price in Tokyo

down 0.7% approaching midday. Wall Street's main stock indices tried to push higher in morning trading but failed to hold onto gains.

European shares closed lower across the board, as did most Asian markets.

"A global IT outage led to risk off sentiment," said Axel Rudolph, senior market analyst at online trading platform IG.

Aviation officials in the United States briefly grounded all planes and airlines elsewhere cancelled or delayed flights, as systems running Microsoft Windows crashed.

"The world grinding to a halt because of a global IT meltdown shows the dark side of technology and that relying on computers does not always make life easier," noted Dan Coatsworth, investment analyst at stockbroker AJ Bell.

Prior to the news, investors were already on edge after a report said the White House was considering a crackdown on firms supplying chip technology to Beijing.

Political worries

They were also nervous after Donald Trump's call for Taiwan to pay Washington for help defending itself against China.

Markets have been enjoying a healthy run-up as Federal Reserve officials have lined up in recent days to suggest they are

ready to begin reducing rates.

However, the tech sector -- which has led the surge in stocks this year -- has taken a hefty hit after the report of the White House's warning over supplying China and Trump's remarks about Taiwan, home to some of the world's biggest chip producers.

The tech stock rally has also resulted in excessive valuations, according to many analysts, but investors are apparently mostly shifting into other sectors rather than pulling money from the equity market.

But the broadest US stock market index, the Russell 2000, also fell sharply on Thursday.

"It appeared that investors were happier taking some profits following the week-long rotation out of tech and into value, than adding to their exposure," said David Morrison, senior market analyst at Trade Nation.

Patrick O'Hare at Briefing.com said: "Market participants will be watching today's price action closely to see if there is a buy-the-dip inclination or a continued bid to take some money off the table."

There is also growing uncertainty over who will run against Trump in November, as calls for President Joe Biden to step aside continue to grow owing to questions about his health.

Renewable electricity to outstrip coal next year: IEA

Paris, France

The amount of electricity produced from renewable sources worldwide is set to surpass output from coal-fired plants for the first time in 2025, the International Energy Agency said Friday.

The forecast comes as electricity demand is set to rise four percent this year and next, up from 2.5 percent in 2023.

That would be the highest annual growth since 2007, excepting spikes seen after the global financial crisis that began that year and during the Covid-19 recovery, the Paris-based agency said. Soaring demand reflects "the growing role of electricity in our economies as well as the impacts of severe heatwaves," said Keisuke Sadamori, the IEA's director of energy markets and security.

Hydroelectric, solar, wind and other renewable sources are forecast to provide 35 percent of global supply next year, up from 30 percent in 2023, the agency said.

Solar alone is set to supply half the demand growth through 2025, with wind a further 25 percent.

Coal use is not expected to decline, however, as electricity use soars in China and India in particular, the IEA said.

Heatwaves across India are expected to lift electricity demand in the country by eight percent this year, while China's demand is expected to grow six percent.

European demand is set to climb 1.7 percent. In the United States, where mild weather saw demand decrease last year, electricity use is set to rise three percent this year -- not least as the development of artificial intelligence spurs the creation of massive data centres.

"It's encouraging to see clean energy's share of the electricity mix continuing to rise, but this needs to happen at a much faster rate to meet international energy and climate goals," Sadamori said in a statement.

Massive global IT outage: what we know

AFP | Paris, France

Airlines, banks, TV channels and other businesses were disrupted worldwide on Friday following a major computer systems outage linked to an update on an antivirus program.

What do we know at this stage?

What caused the outage?

The outage was linked to a faulty update on Windows systems of an IT solution from the American cybersecurity group CrowdStrike.

"CrowdStrike is actively working with customers impacted by a defect found in a single content update for Windows hosts. The issue has been identified, isolated and a fix has been deployed," CEO George Kurtz said in a message on social media platform X.

The problem did not affect users of Mac and Linux systems.

The update bug was triggered on Thursday from 1900 GMT, according to a Microsoft publication, and many companies



around the world began reporting malfunctions on Friday morning.

"There are a lot of systems that go live at night and have

updates in the morning," Carole Winquist, marketing director of IT security company GitGuardian, told AFP.

What happened?

The CrowdStrike security software is called Falcon Sensor and is similar to an anti-virus. Its update suddenly prevented the computers from starting up.

"Imagine you have a little bracelet that protects you from mosquitoes, and all of a sudden this anti-mosquito bracelet starts sending electric shocks through your wrist," Kayssar Daher, a cybersecurity expert at GitGuardian, told AFP.

"You can't walk, you can't move, you're totally paralysed. That's exactly the situation in which systems equipped with CrowdStrike have found themselves", he said.

For Alexander Liskin, from the cybersecurity company Kaspersky, the group ignored "all the processes required to manage the risks of their software".

A company that sells security

software must always "test the quality of its updates before deploying them" to avoid finding itself in this situation, noted the expert.

CrowdStrike's shares were down by nearly 17 percent at around 1000 GMT on Friday in electronic trading before the opening of the New York Stock Exchange.

Who was affected?

The outage impacted the airline industry worldwide.

Major US airlines, such as Delta, United and American Airlines, grounded their planes due to "communications issues".

Air France said it was facing IT-related disruption on several of its services, but not at the Charles de Gaulle and Orly airports serving the Olympics host city Paris.

Britain's largest rail operator also announced it was affected, as did the London Stock Exchange, Australian and French media and the accreditation system for the Paris Olympics, which begin in a week.

"This is one of the rare occasions when security software has been found to be the cause of such a huge outage," said Daher.

The scale of the phenomenon can be explained by the fact that "Windows is extremely widespread and so is CrowdStrike", he added.

Microsoft is present "everywhere in companies that structure our lives", Winquist added.

When will things be back to normal?

Fixing the bug is simple: "you have to go into the system and delete a file so that the system can restart", said Daher.

However, all the ex-

perts interviewed agree that this is a manual process that needs to be carried out on each affected device.

"For large companies that have IT infrastructures with thousands and thousands of Windows computers, it will be very hard to restore", said Liskin.

There could be "people stranded for several hours, even several days", said Winquist.

However, some companies, such as American Airlines, announced as early as Friday that they were resuming operations.



Sri Lanka scraps plan to sell loss-making national airline

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has scrapped plans to sell off its indebted national airline despite shortlisting three potential buyers, the government's privatisation agency said yesterday.

Colombo called for bids in September to sell Sri Lankan Airlines, a key IMF demand when granting a bailout loan to the country last year.

Six firms had initially expressed interest in taking a stake in the airline, which owed more than \$2.0 billion at the end of the 2022/2023 financial year.

Norris tops Hungarian GP practice

Lando Norris sets pace ahead of Max Verstappen in second free practice session amid close competition

● Lando Norris clocks fastest time of 1:17.788

● Verstappen second, 0.243 seconds behind

● Leclerc suffers minor crash, causing brief red flag

AFP | Budapest



McLaren's British driver Lando Norris (R) drives during the first practice

McLaren's Lando Norris outpaced world champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull to top the times in yesterday's second free practice session, run in hot conditions, ahead of this weekend's Hungarian Grand Prix.

The 24-year-old Briton, who trails the three-time champion by 84 points in the drivers' title race, clocked a best time of one minute and 17.788 seconds to beat his friend and rival by 0.243

seconds in a tightly-contested session.

Carlos Sainz was third for Ferrari, one-tenth down, ahead of an improving Sergio Perez in the second Red Bull, George Russell of Mercedes and Haas's Kevin Magnussen, who is set to leave the team at the end of the year.

Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton, hoping to claim a record-increasing ninth Hungarian victory, was seventh ahead of RB's Daniel Ricciardo, Alex Albon of Williams and two-time champion Fernando Alonso of Aston Martin.

Eight different teams were

represented in the top ten, signalling how close the field has become -- only Red Bull and Mercedes providing both drivers -- and how a tight race is in prospect for Sunday.

The session began with Nico Hulkenberg leading the way in searing heat amid temperatures of 32 celsius (air) and 60 (track), setting the first lap time on mediums before being usurped by Perez in 1:18.568, the Mexican at last finding some pace.

On his first run, Verstappen complained that his brakes were "not working, they're not biting". He was fifth and then went second behind his Red Bull team-mate.

After a promising first session, Ferrari's fortunes dipped when the luckless Leclerc lost control and ran wide at Turn Four, ran over the kerbs and hit the barriers.

"I touched the wall," he reported, having damaged his car and the advertising hoardings.

The session was red-flagged



The session highlighted how close the field has become, with eight different teams represented in the top ten. Only Red Bull and Mercedes had both their drivers in the top positions, signaling a potentially tight race on Sunday

screens on the pit-wall during opening practice.

Russell and Hamilton were first out on the re-start with the leading contenders all taking softs for some qualifying simulation runs.

Russell clocked 1:18.294 to go top ahead of Hamilton by 0.069 seconds before Norris took over in 1:17.788, four-tenths clear of Sainz who had set the pace for Ferrari in the opening session until Verstappen slotted into second.

After this flurry of action, most returned to mediums for race preparation while Piastri returned to McLaren for repairs to the floor of his car, his second lengthy absence of the day.

In this period, Perez showed he was back on form in race trim, making it important for him to recover some pure pace in qualifying on Saturday.

"I think this was Sergio's best Friday performance since China," said Red Bull team chief Christian Horner.

For Mercedes, it was also a troubled day following technology problems arising from partner CrowdStrike's global IT glitch which had resulted in them working with blank

for 14 minutes before resuming.

FA identify 'number of candidates' to replace Southgate as England boss

● FA has identified "number of candidates" but is open to applications

● FA looking for a manager to "win a major tournament"

AFP | London



England's head coach Gareth Southgate and players greet Britain's Prince William after the UEFA Euro 2024 final match

The Football Association have identified a "number of candidates" to replace Gareth Southgate as they search for an England manager capable of "winning a major tournament".

Southgate resigned on Tuesday in the aftermath of England's Euro 2024 final defeat against Spain.

The end of Southgate's eight-year reign has forced the FA into a selection search that has seen them linked with a host of candidates.

Among the bookmakers' favourites are Newcastle manager Eddie Howe, former Chelsea bosses Graham Potter, Mauricio Pochettino and Thomas Tuchel, as well as Tottenham coach Ange Postecoglou.

However, the FA insist the process is open to anyone who

meets the criteria it published yesterday in a job profile detailing the qualities required in the next England manager.

The text of the role profile stated: "Our succession planning process has already identified a number of candidates; in addition to this we are committed to open recruitment processes in the football industry."

While Southgate earned plaudits for restoring England's tarnished reputation, he failed to end the country's wait for a first major trophy since the 1966 World Cup.

After successive European Championship final defeats

and a 2018 World Cup semi-final loss, finally winning a major prize with a squad packed with world-class talent is clearly the top priority for Southgate's successor.

The FA said they are looking for a manager able to "lead and develop the England senior men's team to win a major tournament and be consistently ranked as one of the top teams in the world".

The right person would also provide "inspiring leadership" to the FA's technical team and develop and maintain strong relationships with clubs who employ English-qualified players.



The FA's job profile includes an email address for applications, potentially opening the way for fans to submit offers alongside genuine candidates, highlighting the high-profile nature of the position

The successful candidate would need to hold a UEFA Pro Licence, possess "significant experience" of English football and have "a strong track record delivering results in the Premier League and/or leading international competitions".

In a pointed reference to the criticism Southgate endured during his time in a role once dubbed the "impossible job" by then England boss Graham Taylor, the FA highlighted the need for an "exceptional leader", "highly resilient" and "comfortable in a very high-profile role with intense public scrutiny".

Euros champion Morata signs for AC Milan

AFP | Milan

Alvaro Morata signed for AC Milan from Atletico Madrid yesterday, the Spain striker returning to Serie A days after winning Euro 2024.

The 31-year-old has signed a four-year deal with Milan who brought him in to replace departed Olivier Giroud following the former France in-

ternational's transfer to Los Angeles FC.

"Morata has signed with the Rossoneri until 30 June 2028, with an option to extend for an additional year," said Milan in a statement.

Italian media report that Milan paid Morata's 13-million euro (\$14.2M) release clause and that the player will earn around 4.5M euros per season.

Japan gymnast Miyata pulled from Olympics for smoking, drinking

AFP | Paris

Teenage gymnast Shoko Miyata has been pulled from Japan's team for the Paris Olympics after being caught smoking and drinking, officials said yesterday.

The 19-year-old, a world bronze medallist and captain of Japan's women's gymnastics team for the Games, was sent home from their training camp in Monaco and admitted she had violated their code of conduct.

"With her confirmation and after discussions on all sides, it has been decided that she will withdraw from the Olympics,"



Shoko Miyata

Japan Gymnastics Association (JGA) secretary general Kenji Nishimura told reporters in Tokyo.

Nishimura said the association had been told that Miyata was seen smoking in a private setting in Tokyo some time at the end of June or beginning of July.

Australia hockey player amputates part of finger for Olympics

AFP | Sydney

Australian hockey player Matt Dawson has made the ultimate sacrifice to be at the Paris Olympics by having part of his finger amputated in order to play.

The 30-year-old, who was a member of the silver medal-winning team three years ago in Tokyo, recently broke the ring finger on his right hand, plunging his bid to compete at a third Olympics into doubt.

Doctors advised him to put it in a cast and let it recover or have the top cut off.

He opted for the latter, undergoing surgery this week.

"I made an informed decision with the plastic surgeon at the time not only for the opportunity to play in Paris but for life after



Australia's Matt Dawson in action

as well," he told Australia's Channel Seven as he boarded the plane to France.

"The best option was for me to take the top of my finger off. It's a bit of a change at the moment and an exciting challenge, I guess."

Australian coach Colin Batch said it was an incredible show of commitment.

"It's not something a coach can decide for a player," he told the broadcaster.

"Full marks to Matt. Obviously he's really committed to playing in Paris. I'm not sure I would have done it, but he's done it, so great."

Australia, who lost to Belgium in a penalty shootout in the Tokyo final, face 2016 Olympics champions Argentina in their first match in Paris on July 27.



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Pogacar dominates Stage 19

Tadej Pogacar extends lead, nearing historic Tour-Giro double with two stages remaining

● **Tadej Pogacar wins stage 19 of the Tour de France, leads by 5min 03sec**

● **Remco Evenepoel remains third at 7min 01sec**

● **Two stages left, Pogacar eyes historic double**

AFP | Paris

Tadej Pogacar climbed to a convincing victory on stage 19 of the Tour de France yesterday, extending his overall lead over defending champion Jonas Vingegaard to close on a historic Tour-Giro double. With two tough stages remaining, the 2020 and 2021 Tour de France champion Pogacar leads Vingegaard by 5min 3sec. Remco Evenepoel

“It helps that I live near here, I’ve trained here a lot and well, I also had good legs. Coming second in the Tour gave me a lot of motivation to get better. This is no chance thing that I’m here here

TADEJ POGACAR

remains third, now at 7min 1sec. Pogacar is also two stages away from a Giro d’Italia and Tour de France double, which would be a first in 26 years.

A dominant and confident Pogacar had promised to attack here on the “Queen” stage with its massive mountains. He came into stage 19 with a 3min 11sec lead over Vingegaard, with Evenepoel at 5min 11sec in third.

“He set a terrible pace, he was just stronger,” said Belgian Evenepoel. “I was hoping Vingegaard might wilt, but he

did well.”

A happy Pogacar, who lives in nearby Monaco, celebrated at the line with his girlfriend.

“It helps that I live near here, I’ve trained here a lot and well, I also had good legs,” said Pogacar, who raced sparingly this spring.

“Coming second in the Tour gave me a lot of motivation to get better. This is no chance thing that I’m here.”

Cool day

Previous weak moments for the Team UAE rider have come at altitude and in hot weather as he let slip the last two Tour de France titles to the Dane Vingegaard.

So the 25-year-old will have been happy riding under overcast skies as the mercury dipped to 18.5 Celsius (65 Fahrenheit).

There was plenty of altitude on the menu however as the pack first crossed the fan-packed Col de la Bonette, a 23km climb at 7 percent average gradient to the dizzying altitude of 2,800m. The final climb to Isola 2000



Tadej Pogacar, the 2020 and 2021 Tour de France champion, is now two stages away from achieving a Giro d’Italia and Tour de France double, which would be a first in 25 years

nepoel fifth with Vingegaard on his wheel.

Vingegaard won his two titles by tailing Pogacar doggedly, wearing the more attack-minded rider down.

But yesterday, Vingegaard looked haggard as he slumped over his handlebars at the Isola ski resort.

The 27-year-old suffered a life-threatening accident at the Tour of the Basque Country in March, and has raced with courage under the circumstances.

Saturday is also mountainous with two climbs and a downhill finale.

The final stage, which could shake up the standings even more, is a 34km individual time trial from Monaco to Nice.

Eritrean break-out star Biniam Girmay retained the green sprint jersey ahead of Jasper Philipsen as the escape group took the intermediate sprint points way ahead of the peloton.

Girmay and Philipsen have both won three stages on this year’s race, while Pogacar has four.

ski resort is hardly less crushing and Pogacar attacked with a jaw-dropping 10km to go.

He left his rivals trailing and chewed up the attackers in quick succession.

Matteo Jorgenson ended up second on the stage at 21sec. Simon Yates, who had led much of the way, dropped to third at 40sec. Richard Carapaz was fourth at 1min 11sec and Eve-

Indian players ‘trust’ Suryakumar more than Pandya: report

AFP | New Delhi

The Indian cricket board’s choice of Suryakumar Yadav as T20 captain over Hardik Pandya has been attributed to him having the backing of players, according to a report.

Suryakumar, 33, was named Rohit Sharma’s successor in the T20 format as selectors late Thursday announced the squads for India’s white-ball tour of Sri Lanka starting July 27.

Suryakumar will lead a 15-member squad in three T20 matches in Pallekele, but has not been selected to play the following three ODI matches.

Rohit, who along with Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja quit T20 internationals after India’s World Cup triumph last month, will continue to lead the ODI team, which will face Sri Lanka on August 2, 4, and 7 at Colombo’s R. Premadasa Stadium.

The 30-year-old Pandya, who was Rohit’s deputy during the T20 showpiece, lost out in the captaincy race to a player who made his debut five years later than the star all-rounder.

A report in the Indian Express newspaper said, “feedback received by the board was that

players trusted Surya more than Pandya and were more comfortable working under him”.

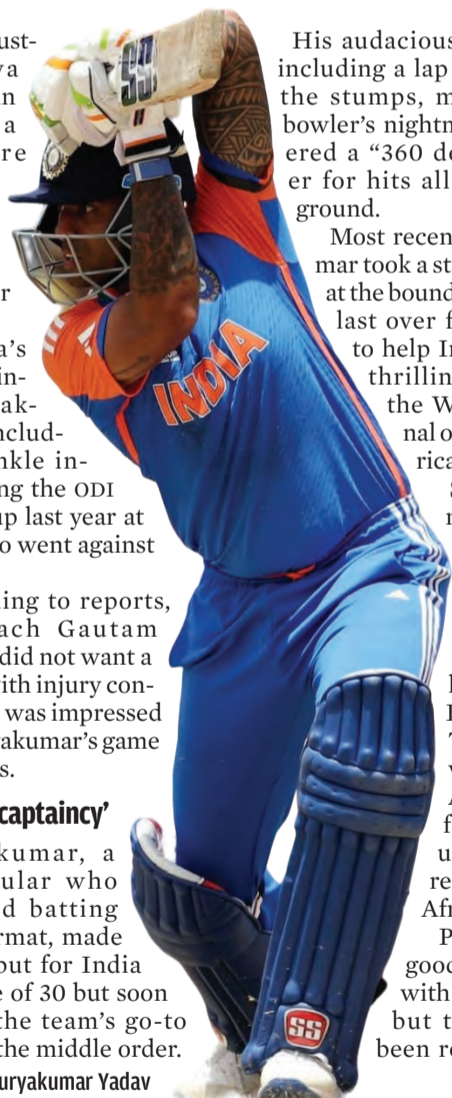
Pandya’s frequent injury breakdowns, including an ankle injury during the ODI World Cup last year at home, also went against him.

According to reports, new coach Gautam Gambhir did not want a captain with injury concerns and was impressed with Suryakumar’s game awareness.

‘Circle of captaincy’

Suryakumar, a T20 regular who redefined batting in the format, made a late debut for India at the age of 30 but soon became the team’s go-to batter in the middle order.

Suryakumar Yadav



His audacious strokeplay, including a lap shot behind the stumps, makes him a bowler’s nightmare, considered a “360 degree” player for hits all around the ground.

Most recently, Suryakumar took a stunning catch at the boundary in a tense last over from Pandya to help India clinch a thrilling victory in the World Cup final over South Africa in Barbados.

Suryakumar, who previously captained Mumbai in domestic cricket, last year led India to a 4-1 T20 series win over Australia and followed it up with a 1-1 result in South Africa.

Pandya had a good World Cup with bat and ball, but the ride has been rough for the

YOU KNOW WHAT
Suryakumar, a T20 regular who redefined batting in the format, made a late debut for India at the age of 30 but soon became the team’s go-to batter in the middle order

Indian star, who replaced Rohit as IPL captain at Mumbai Indians.

He was booed across venues by fans of Rohit, and Mumbai ended bottom of the 10-team table in the T20 tournament.

Pandya has also struggled on the personal front, and on Thursday announced his separation from his wife and Serbian model Natasa Stankovic. They will co-parent a son from their four-year marriage.

Nadal reaches Bastad semis after four-hour marathon

AFP | Bastad

Rafael Nadal fought into the semi-finals of the Bastad Open yesterday as he defeated Argentina’s Mariano Navone 6-7 (2/7), 7-5, 7-5 in three hours and 59 minutes.

The 22-time Grand Slam champion is through to the last four of a tournament for the first time since Wimbledon two years ago.

“It was very close, long and tiring,” said Nadal, whose near four-hour victory was the second longest three-set match of his career -- after the 2009 Madrid semi-final against Novak Djokovic, which lasted 4hr 3min.

“For moments he was in control. For moments I was in control. At the end, no one was in control. That’s the truth,” added Nadal.

“I was able to hold physically till the end. Let’s see how I am tomorrow. Today I’m alive and I’m in the semi-finals. So that’s super important.”

Nadal had to overcome a poor start

“I was able to hold physically till the end. Let’s see how I am tomorrow. Today I’m alive and I’m in the semi-finals. So that’s super important

RAFAEL NADAL

against the fast-rising Navone, now ranked 36th in the world after beginning the year outside the top 100.

He dropped serve three times in a row against an opponent who became the first man in the Open era to be seeded in his maiden Grand Slam appearance at this year’s French Open.

The Spaniard trailed 4-1 and was down a double break but battled his way back into the set, saving two set points in the 10th game before eventually moving 6-5 ahead.

Nadal himself had two set points as Navone served to stay in it, the fourth seed showing his mettle to force a tie-break in which he won the first five points to take charge.

Navone secured the first set when Nadal sprayed a forehand wide, but the Spaniard quickly regrouped and raced into a 3-0 lead in set two.

His advantage was swiftly erased though by Navone who pocketed four games on the spin before Nadal stopped the rot.

Rafael Nadal



Marseille sign Greenwood from Man Utd amid controversy

AFP | London

Marseille have signed striker Mason Greenwood from Manchester United, the Ligue 1 side announced, despite the objection of some of the French club’s fans.

The 22-year-old, who has played once for England, was suspended in January 2022 by Manchester United following allegations of attempted rape



Mason Greenwood

and sexual assault but prosecutors dropped charges in Febru-

ary 2023. He spent last season on loan at Getafe in La Liga.

“Olympique de Marseille are delighted to announce the signing of Mason Greenwood from Manchester United. The 22-year-old striker has signed for the club following a successful medical,” said the French club on their website.

Marseille made no mention of the allegations in their state-

ment. They called Greenwood “a precocious talent” and an “English nugget”.

The southern club, eighth in Ligue 1 last season, said their new striker will wear the number 10 shirt but did not specify the length of his contract or mention any fee to Manchester United.

However the deal is reported to be worth an estimated 30 million euros (\$32.7m).