

**Head breaks India hearts as Australia win sixth World Cup title**

Travis Head's spectacular 137 guides Australia to a convincing six-wicket victory over India in Ahmedabad | P12

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**Bahrain embraces 3D-printed homes, adopts GCC code P3**

# 'Two-state solution' earns royal support

**Israeli strike kills 41 members from one family in Gaza**  
 AFP | Gaza

**HM King hails HRH Prince Salman's speech at Manama Dialogue emphasising Palestinian rights**

TDT | Manama

The Hamas health ministry yesterday said 41 members of one family were killed in an Israeli strike on their home in Gaza City.

The ministry released a list of names of 41 members of the Malka family it said were killed by the strike at dawn in the city's Zeytoun district. Fierce fighting between Israeli troops and Palestinian militants occurred in the neighbourhood in the morning.

Around 13,000 people have been killed since hostilities began on October 7, officials in Gaza have said.

More than 5,500 children were among the dead, alongside 3,500 women, with 30,000 more people wounded.

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa commended the speech delivered by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, at the opening of the 19th edition of the Manama Dialogue, in which HRH emphasised that lasting peace will only be secured through a two-state solution that enshrines the rights of the Palestinian people.

The speech also asserted that the hopes and aspirations of the Palestinian people must be at the centre of post-crisis governance in Gaza.

HM the King was speaking as he received HRH Prince Salman.

His Highness Shaikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Personal Representative of HM the King, HE Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of the Royal Court, HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy, and HE Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, Minister of



HM the King receives HRH Prince Salman

Oil and Environment and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, were present at the meeting.

The meeting reviewed topics related to strengthening Bahrain's development process and the major projects and plans it includes in various sectors.

HM King Hamad praised the

efforts of HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister in driving Bahrain's development process; consolidating the kingdom's progress, competitiveness, and advanced rankings in development indicators; and leading the government's action towards more achievements, initiatives and

programmes to develop services offered to citizens and residents.

His Majesty praised the role and ongoing efforts of the Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF) in providing urgent humanitarian aid to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. He thanked all those involved in this noble effort, which

embodies Bahrain's firm stance on providing support during various circumstances.

**Regional security and stability**

HM the King reiterated the importance of ensuring security and stability in the region, affirming that the international community must work towards securing just and comprehensive peace, as a strategic option and the only path to security and stability for the people of the region and the world. His Majesty emphasised the firm position of the Kingdom on resolving disputes peacefully.

HM King Gamad also praised the Kingdom's successful efforts in organising and hosting specialised international exhibitions, conferences and sporting events. This includes the 19th edition of the Manama Dialogue, and a number of international trade exhibitions, as well as the fifth edition of the Bahrain International Trophy.

**Military-cyber threats warning**

## GCC calls for 'global action' to protect energy infrastructure

**Ashen Tharaka**  
 TDT | Manama

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General Jasem Albudaiwi called for international collaboration to safeguard essential energy infrastructure and transportation networks from potential military and cyber threats, emphasising the critical importance of energy security.

Speaking at the IISS Manama Dialogue 2023, Albudaiwi emphasised that energy security cannot be attributed solely to conventional conflict, lack of backup plans, or misguided narratives that energy resources

can be replaced with fuels. He asserted that investment in the oil and gas sector is essential and that the Gulf region remains a reliable oil partner for the world.

Albudaiwi pointed to the GCC's significant contributions during the Ukraine war, demonstrating the region's commitment to global energy security. He also highlighted the individual GCC countries' ambitious plans for renewable energy development.

Bahrain, for instance, aims to generate 5% of its energy requirements from renewable sources by 2025, as part of its Vision 2035 and Net Zero by 2060 initiatives. The United



Jasem Albudaiwi

Arab Emirates' Energy Strategy 2050 targets a diversified energy mix of 44% clean energy, 38% natural gas, and 12% clean coal. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2035

**"Investment in the oil and gas sector is essential and the Gulf region remains a reliable oil partner for the world."**

- JASEM ALBUDAIWI, GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL (GCC) SECRETARY GENERAL

aims to achieve 50% renewable energy by 2030, while Oman's Vision 2050 targets net zero emissions and positions the country as the sixth largest ex-

porter of hydrogen globally by 2030. Qatar has set a target of achieving full renewable energy by 2030, and Kuwait aims to generate 15% of its energy requirements from renewable sources by 2035.

He emphasised the urgent need to rectify the significant drop in oil and gas investments from 2014 to 2022, attributing it to policy-makers' decisions and the shift towards renewable energies.

Albudaiwi's call for international cooperation in protecting the oil and gas sector underscores the critical role of energy security in ensuring global stability and prosperity.

**(Continued on Page 2)**



# Regional and global cooperation key to achieve sustainable energy future



(Continuation from Page 1)  
**Ashen Tharaka**  
TDT | Manama

Osama Mobarez, Secretary General of the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF), addressed the ongoing global energy challenges, emphasising the importance of regional integration, climate change mitigation, and low-carbon gas supply at a recent energy forum.

Mobarez highlighted the EMGF's role in addressing the complex energy landscape, which has been impacted by the Russia-Ukraine war, the

“The energy security question is about security of supply, not fossil fuels versus renewables, it's about supply chains.”

- AMOS HOCHSTEIN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT AND SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE US PRESIDENT FOR ENERGY AND INVESTMENT



“For energy to make a contribution to regional security, we need flagship projects that nurture collaboration and goodwill.”

- DR. THANOS DOKOS, NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR, GREECE



“The ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza, and the climate change have huge impact on global energy security.”

- OSAMA MOBAREZ, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE EAST MEDITERRANEAN GAS FORUM (EMGF)

## GCC's comprehensive plan to address energy challenges

- Focusing on renewable energy sources
- Investing in sustainable energy resources
- Fostering energy-efficient practices
- Promoting private sector collaboration and joint projects

Israel-Hamas conflict, and the persistent climate crisis.

The EMGF, comprising eight-member countries and 38-member companies, is committed to fostering regional collaboration, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and ensuring a reliable supply of low-carbon gas

to meet global energy demands. In line with its COP27 proposal, the EMGF is actively advancing decarbonization initiatives to transition towards a sustainable energy future.

Amos Hochstein, Deputy Assistant and Senior Advisor to the President for Energy and

## IISS Manama Dialogue 2023 Concludes

- Participants: 568 delegates from 56 nations, including 51 governments and 18 ministers
- Reach: Over 75 million people, including 65 million from the Middle East and North Africa
- The IISS Manama Dialogue will celebrate its 20th anniversary next year.

Investment, US, underscored the dual challenges of accelerating energy security in the face of climate change and effectively managing the energy transition. He emphasised the crucial role of energy companies in making necessary investments in clean energy technologies.

Hochstein pointed to the widening gap between energy security and military security, emphasising the potential consequences of this divide. He advocated for increased focus on clean energy investments in the Middle East, recognising the region's cost-effectiveness and

efficiency in producing clean energy.

Dr. Thanos Dokos, National Security Advisor, Greece, highlighted the urgent need for pipelines, green energy development, and a robust energy security architecture. He stressed the importance of guidance from those with the expertise and resources to assist countries in addressing these energy challenges.

The EMGF's commitment to regional cooperation, climate change mitigation, and low-carbon gas supply positions it as a key player in shaping the future of energy in the East Mediterranean region and beyond.

## Bahrain thanked by Spanish Monarch

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, received cables of thanks from King Felipe VI of Spain in reply to their congratulations on Spain's National Day.

## Interior Ministry initiatives in line with royal visions

TDT | Manama

The Ministry of Interior's launch of a number of programs and initiatives aimed at consolidating the principles of peaceful coexistence and combating extremism through the use of education to promote tolerance, peace and mutual respect, most notably the program to combat violence and addiction "Together", is in line with the lofty royal visions of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

This was emphasised by Interior Minister, His Excellency General Shaikh Rashid bin Ab-



HE General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah with HE Major General Pilot Al Mughidi

dullah Al Khalifa, while receiving yesterday His Excellency Major General Pilot Mohammed bin Saeed Al Mughidi, Secretary General of the Islamic Military Coalition to Combat Terrorism, in the presence of His Excellency Lieutenant General Tariq

bin Hassan Al-Hassan, Head of Public Security, and Brigadier General Mohammed bin Dinah, Director General of Public Administration For Media and Security Culture.

During the meeting, ways were discussed to enhance co-

operation and coordination in common areas, including combating terrorist financing and money laundering, in addition to developing joint work with regard to confronting violent extremism and combating it online, within the framework

of enhancing the exchange of experiences and confronting security threats.

At the beginning of the meeting, His Excellency the Minister welcomed the visit of His Excellency the Secretary-General of the Islamic Military Coalition to Combat Terrorism to the Kingdom of Bahrain to participate in the activities of the 19th edition of the "Manama Dialogue 2023" summit, which is considered a high-level international platform that discusses visions regarding security issues and challenges within the framework of enhancing joint action.

## We must work to find mechanisms for regional security and stability: Al-Dhaen

TDT | Manama

MP Dr. Maryam Al-Dhaen confirmed that including the "Manama Dialogue" as the focus of the future of the Middle East contributed to highlighting many issues of importance, given the geopolitical challenges that the region is witnessing during the current period.

Al-Dhaen stressed in a statement on the sidelines of the "Manama Dialogue" that achieving lasting security, peace and sustainable development for the countries of the region is a collective responsibility, pointing out the necessity of working to build strong alliances between brotherly and friendly countries.

She indicated that there is a close relationship between energy, peacekeeping operations, and the promotion of sustainable development, stressing the importance of expanding initiatives that fall within the framework of achieving the seventh



MP Dr. Maryam Al-Dhaen, second from left, at the event

development goal, "clean and affordable energy," as energy represents an essential element in all the challenges that the world faces today, including security. Addressing climate change or producing food, therefore access to energy is an essential issue for everyone.

### Prosperous future

Al-Dhaen noted the Kingdom of Bahrain's keenness to contribute to shaping a more pros-

perous future for the peoples of the world, and the role it plays in achieving the goals and working to preserve the security and safety of countries and their peoples, noting that the Arabian Gulf region is considered a cornerstone of the Middle East region in particular and the world in general.

"Therefore, we must work to find joint mechanisms that guarantee collective security in the region and achieve stability and development," she noted.

Al-Dhaen said that Bahrain



Achieving lasting security, peace and sustainable development for the countries of the region is a collective responsibility.

has a prominent, fundamental role in regional politics, and that it is keen to settle conflicts, establish international peace and security, pay attention to humanitarian issues that concern all countries of the world, and keep pace with international efforts to achieve sustainable development goals so that peace prevails in the world and everyone enjoys a dignified and safe life.

## Bahrain-UK military cooperation



Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), yesterday met Admiral Sir Antony David Radakin, Chief of the UK Defence Staff, and Air Marshal Martin Elliot Sampson, UK Defence Senior Advisor to the Middle East and North Africa, on the sidelines of the 19th edition of the IISS-Manama Dialogue. Lieutenant-General Abdulla bin Hassan Al Noaimi, Defence Affairs Minister, was present. The BDF Commander-in-Chief praised the distinguished long-standing Bahraini-UK relations, lauding the ongoing bilateral defence cooperation. They signed a Declaration of Intent between the BDF and the UK Armed Forces. The Declaration of Intent aims to develop military cooperation between both sides, through the signing of a cooperation agreement that would broaden joint relations.

# HM King's commendation a 'badge of honour' for RHF

TDT | Manama

His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, HM the King's Representative for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, has extended deepest thanks and appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Honorary President of the Royal Humanitarian Foundation for commending the role played the RHF.

HH Shaikh Nasser praised HM the King's commendation of the RHF's tireless efforts to deliver urgent humanitarian relief aid to the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, and thanking of all the Foundation's officials, embodying Bahrain's authentic stances and well-established approach of extending a helping hand to the Palestinians under various circumstances.

The royal praise is the greatest



HH Shaikh Nasser

honour for all those who contributed to the national efforts to support Gazans, he said.

"This is a badge of honour for all of us, and it will have a great impact on our hearts and give us incentive and encouragement to continue giving, exerting efforts, and working with all our energies to implement the royal initiatives to the fullest," he added.

HH Shaikh Nasser pledged

to continue exerting efforts to serve the kingdom, under HM King Hamad's leadership.

His Highness attributed the RHF's achievements to HM the King's great support, who, he said, is the first supporter for humanitarian work, reflecting the supportive stances of the kingdom's leadership, government and people towards the Palestinian cause in order to alleviate their suffering due to the

ongoing war in Gaza.

HH Shaikh Nasser commended the great support accorded to the RHF by the government, led by HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

His Highness lauded the efforts exerted by all the RHF's affiliates to implement HM King Hamad's directives, affirming that the National Campaign to Support the Palestinians in Gaza will continue.

# 'Future of Middle East' explored in concluding plenary session

International Institute for Strategic Studies members discuss key concerns and potential developments

Zahra Ayaz

TDT | Manama

In a thought-provoking concluding plenary session at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), esteemed members gathered yesterday to discuss the future of the Middle East.

Dr. Bastian Giegerich, the Director-General and Chief Executive of IISS, set the stage by challenging participants to ponder the overlooked aspects of the region, beyond the prevailing focus on the Israel-Hamas conflict.

Dr. Hasan Alhasan, Research Fellow for Middle East Policy at IISS-Middle East, focused on the Gulf perspective. During the panel discussion he emphasised that the conflict had disrupted the shared prosperity agendas of Gulf nations.

Alhasan pointed out that Saudi Arabia and the UAE had attempted to engage both Iran and



Dr. Hasan Alhasan

Israel, seeking a framework of shared interests as a means to foster peace. He also expressed concern over the perceived failure of the United States to deter Iran's actions in the region.

## Significant points

Rym Momtaz, Consultant Research Fellow for European Foreign Policy and Security at IISS, raised two significant points. Firstly, she noted the absence of



Rym Momtaz

the European Union (EU) and NATO in the ongoing conversation, despite the Middle East being their southern flank.

Momtaz underlined the potential repercussions of the conflict for EU member states, particularly those in the Eastern Mediterranean. Secondly, she highlighted the concerning issue of Syria becoming a major transit point for narcotics entering Europe, emphasising the critical connection between the south-



Emile Hokayem

ern flank and European security.

## Pattern of conflicts

Emile Hokayem, Director of Regional Security and Senior Fellow for Middle East Security at IISS, emphasised the pattern of freezing conflicts in the region, hoping that time would defuse the drivers of violence and allow for political settlement. However, he cautioned that these frozen conflicts had a



John Raine

tendency to reignite unexpectedly, citing examples such as Ukraine and the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Hokayem expressed his current concern over the escalating violence in Northern Syria, warning of the potential for another eruption of conflict in the region.

## Interesting junctures

John Raine, Senior Adviser

for Geopolitical Due Diligence at IISS, identified three states at interesting junctures. He highlighted Iran, which is nearing the end of its political cycle, raising questions about the future of the Middle East as the Iranian revolution reaches its conclusion.

Raine also mentioned Israel, which has been grappling with a middle-life crisis and the uncertainties it poses for the country's future. Lastly, he discussed Saudi Arabia's ambitious Vision 2030 program, which, if successful, could position the kingdom as a significant middle power in the region, bringing both challenges and opportunities.

The plenary session concluded with a thought-provoking exploration of the future of the Middle East. The insights shared by the IISS members shed light on key concerns and potential developments that will shape the region in the years to come.

## Bahrain embraces 3D-printed homes, adopts GCC code

● Boost to sustainability, affordability in construction

Mahir Haneef

TDT | Manama

The government of Bahrain yesterday announced the adoption of GCC building code for the construction sector in the country that allows popular and affordable technologies such as 3D printing.

Commonly known as the Gulf Building Code (GBC), it references over a thousand international standards and promotes sustainability and affordability in the construction of residential and commercial buildings. The GBC also allows the use of new technologies such as 3D printing and off-site construction as well as facilitates improved energy efficiency.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade issued a resolution (No. 102 of 2023) concerning the



Image used for illustrative purposes only

adoption of Gulf standard specifications for the construction sector and adopting them as national standard specifications.

GBC was issued by the Standardization Organization for the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GSO).

Through the resolution by the Ministry, it has also been decided to cancel all previous decisions issued regarding adoption of standard specifications for the construction sector. The new resolution, issued on November 15th, came into effect in the Kingdom yesterday.

GBC was developed in consultation with the International Code Council (ICC) and is being adopted across the GCC region. Adoption of the GBC is expected to bring the latest advances in building safety, affordability, and sustainability along with being a driving force for innovation and safety improvements in the building design and construction sector.

It was in 2016 that Washington DC-based ICC began collaborating with the GCC countries to develop a new common building code.

## Three Bahrainis convicted for fraudulent equipment seizure

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court sentenced three Bahrainis to three years in prison for seizing construction equipment from a rental store in a fraudulent manner using a missing ID card.

The three persons rented construction equipment for two days. After choosing the equipment, whose value is estimated at BD800, one of the three friends presented the store worker with an identity card belonging to another person.

He later confessed that he had obtained and kept the ID card until he could use it in the store.

Accordingly, the worker gave them the equipment so that they would return them in two days, as per the contract signed between them. After two days, the worker told the store owner that the three people had not returned the equipment.

## Identity card

The store owner reported it to the police, and handed them

the identity card given to the worker. The police contacted the owner of the ID card and informed him of the need to return the construction equipment that he rented from the construction equipment store.

However, he informed them that he had lost his identity card a long time ago and filed a case of losing the card. He added that he had not rented that equipment from the store, and that he did not know the identity of the people who used his card.

## GCC tourist jailed for resisting and assaulting policemen

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court sentenced a tourist from the GCC to six months in prison for resisting and assaulting two members of the Public Security Forces while they were performing their duties.

Details indicate that, while the security man was on duty, his work colleague brought a 27-year-old GCC tourist. In turn,

the colleague started the legal procedures with the convicted to transfer him to temporary detention.

In the checkpoint, and while the security man was conducting the search, the young man refused to comply with the instructions of the security man and tried to prevent him from being searched. The security man told him to adhere to the instructions, but the young man

pushed him and started hitting him in various parts of his body. His colleague intervened to save the situation and caught the young man.

The young man showed strong resistance and assaulted the colleague by slapping and kicking, but they were able to control him.

As a result, he was sent to trial on charges of assaulting on-duty police officers.

# Bahrain support for regional security and stability praised

TDT | Manama

US Ambassador to Bahrain, His Excellency Steven C. Bondy, has lauded the major role played by the Kingdom of Bahrain in supporting efforts to achieve regional security and stability.

Speaking on the sidelines of his participation in the 19th Manama Dialogue, the premier regional security summit, Ambassador Bondy highlighted the role of the forum in covering a wide range of topics and issues, adding that he is looking forward to the 20th edition.

On the importance of the Manama Dialogue, he said: "If you look around the region and see all of the challenges that are going on, you can definitely see

that this dialogue is needed now more than ever. It's incredible to me that Bahrain has established itself as a principal stop over the course of the year for serious policy individuals to come from around the world to discuss the most cutting-edge issues."

"The conflict that we are seeing now in Gaza reinforces the ultimate importance of the Manama Dialogue," he said.

## Talking

He noted that it was much better to be talking about the issues than for people to be engaging in an armed conflict.

"We have a certain number of priorities that we are working through, first and foremost is the release of the hostages, and sec-



HE Ambassador Bondy being interviewed at the event

ondly, the swift delivery of humanitarian assistance," he said.

He added: "Of course, we do not want the conflict to spread in any way. But also what we

are looking to do is to set the conditions so that, in the future, the Israelis and Palestinians can live side by side in peace and security for the benefit of both



**Bahrain and the US had recently signed the Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA), which provides a platform for the two nations to enhance their already strong relations.**

their nations."

## Boosting relationship

On the Bahrain-US relations, Ambassador Bondy said that the two countries had recently signed the Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA), which provides a platform for the two nations to enhance their already strong relations, noting that agreement adds a new momentum to boost bilateral relationship.

He indicated that the Bahraini and American sides are currently organising themselves in order to identify priority projects on which they will focus for implementation. He said that there are three basic elements of the agreement, which are defence and security, trade, investment and commercial relations.

## Bahrain work on Al Munther satellite reaches 55% completion rate

TDT | Manama

National Space Science Authority (NSSA) CEO, Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Al Aseeri, has affirmed that Al Munther, the first Bahraini satellite, is considered an incentive for innovation and a source of support to develop scientific research outcomes.

Dr. Al Aseeri explained that the Bahrain Space Team is working on the qualification and testing phase of the satellite and its locally-made payloads, with the completion rate reaching 55%.

He added that Al Munther is expected to be launched next year, expressing his pride in the efforts of the Bahrain Space Team, who represent leading national experts in the space sector.

The NSSA chief noted that Al Munther has been designed and constructed by the Bahraini team and it is the first of its kind in the Middle East to employ algorithms in analysing space images, creating a quantum leap in the space economy.

Al Munther is equipped with advanced technologies.

## Bahrain fully committed to protecting children's rights

TDT | Manama

Social Development Minister, His Excellency Osama bin Ahmed Khalaf Al Asfoor, affirmed Bahrain's keenness on supporting children rights, through applying advanced laws and legislation.

Those include the law on restorative justice for children and their protection from mistreatment, concerned with protecting children under the age of 18.

Al Asfoor was speaking as the Kingdom joined the international community in marking the World Children's Day yesterday.

He shed light on the progress made by Bahrain in protecting children rights which are guar-



HE Al Asfoor

anteed by the constitution.

The Minister noted the role of official, private and civil society entities to ensure the highest levels of protection for children, to safeguard their rights to education, health, and care in a safe environment, and ensure

a bright future for them.

Al Asfoor said that the law on restorative justice for children and their protection from mistreatment strengthened the role of the Child Protection Centre, which is under the Ministry of Social Development.

The centre is the main entity responsible for protecting children and the assessment and follow up on the cases of children who have been subjected to abuse. It also follows up on cases of juvenile delinquents facing potential risk; through policies, legislation, programmes and services that ensure the protection of children, in addition to raising the families and society's awareness on children's issues.

## Traffic accident



A traffic accident between two cars on Shaikh Isa bin Salman Street near the Bu Quwah area towards Saudi Arabia yesterday evening resulted in a fire igniting in one of the vehicles. As a result of the accident, traffic was temporarily diverted to Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Street while authorities began their procedures at the scene. The competent authorities are investigating the incident.

## iGA extends registration deadline for second batch of technical development program

TDT | Manama

The Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, announced the extension of the registration period for the second batch of participants in the Technical Development Program. Those interested

can register until Monday, January 15, 2024, through the iGA's website: [iga.gov.bh](http://iga.gov.bh).

The iGA affirmed that the extension aims to attract a broader group of ICT graduates and others with technical expertise who are seeking employment to join the program. It added

that the program offers a unique opportunity for participants to boost their skills and foster their creativity and innovation in technical fields.

The iGA explained that applicants must be Bahraini citizens aged between 21 and 30, and hold a bachelor's degree in

information technology, Computer Science, or an equivalent field. Applicants must also be registered as job seekers or are beneficiaries of unemployment benefits with the Ministry of Labour. The required documents include a copy of the applicant's university certificate, CV, and

any other relevant certificates which may support their application.

Launched by the Ministry of Labour and the iGA in December last year, the Technical Development Program provides intensive training within various iGA departments

## Third batch of female civilian volunteers undergo BDF training

TDT | Manama

The training session of the third batch of female civilian volunteers at the Reserve Force kicked off at the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) yesterday.

Major-General Muneer Ahmed Al Subaie, Royal Reserve Force Unit Commander, attended the opening of the course, held at the Isa Royal Military College.

Based on the interest of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al



Participants in the training session

Khalifa, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, in the status of Bahrain women, female civilian volunteers from the relatives of the military and civilian staff and retirees of the BDF and the National Guard are taking part in the training session.

The training session aims to provide military training for the participants to enable them to carry out their patriotic role in serving and defending the nation, alongside their brethren from the BDF.

## Manama to host 7th EU-GCC Business Forum

Forum to focus on Redefining Economies for a Sustainable and Diversified Future

TDT | Manama

Businesses and government leaders from the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council will convene at the 7th EU-GCC Business Forum - a pivotal event set to redefine economic collaboration in the post-pandemic era.

Scheduled for Tuesday in Manama, this forum presents an opportunity for policymakers, industry leaders, entrepreneurs, and visionaries to explore how to further develop business opportunities between the EU and the GCC.

With the theme "Redefining Economies - Building a Sustainable and Diversified Future," the forum focuses on collaboration and innovation as key drivers of economic growth, social prosperity, and environmental responsibility.

Michael Hager, Head of Cabinet of the European Commission Executive Vice-President Dombrovskis, also responsible for trade, said ahead of the forum: "Total trade in goods between the two regions grew more than 54% from 2021 to 2022 and reached 175 billion EUR, which shows the impor-

ance of the trade relationship between the EU and the GCC. I look forward to opening this year's edition of our joint Business Forum, a great opportunity to collaborate further for a sustainable future. The EU is fully committed to working alongside the GCC to meet our shared goals and build a resilient economy."

Special Representative of the European Union for the Gulf region, Luigi di Maio, expressed his joy to be able to attend the forum: "I am impressed by the scale of joint business opportunities against the back-

ground of the different national transformative visions and the recently agreed India-Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC)."

Key topics at the forum will include sustainable energy mix and energy security, circular economy, green logistics and transport, and economic empowerment of women. The event aims to increase trade and investment opportunities, foster access to new markets, share knowledge and best practices, expand the green economy, and encourage SMEs and entrepreneurship.

## TRA takes centre stage at ITU's Radiocommunication Assembly



Officials representing Bahrain at the ITU Assembly

TDT | Manama

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) actively engaged in the 23rd International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) Radiocommunication Assembly (RA-23) with the goal of strengthening global collaboration in radiocommunications and digital technology advancement. The event, hosted in the United Arab Emirates, emphasised the promotion of industry standards and solutions.

In addition to proposing agenda items for the upcoming World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-23), the assembly endorsed sector recommendations and confirmed chairs for various committees. The candidates for deputy

chair positions in study groups included the TRA's Mohammad Abu Saif as the nominee for Deputy Chairman of the first study group and Ahmed Hamada for the fifth study group. These nominations are set for further evaluation during the committees' forthcoming initial sessions.

The meeting concluded with the adoption of decisions focused on enhancing the ITU's processes. These decisions encompassed the regulation of sustainable radio frequency spectrum usage and associated satellite orbits employed by space services. Additionally, there was a commitment to promoting gender equality by empowering women to actively participate and contribute within the ITU radiocommunications sector.

## CBB unveils ESG requirements module

Aims transparency and Sustainability in Bahrain's Financial Landscape

● Entities should commence reporting these requirements from the financial year 2024.

TDT | Manama

The Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) has unveiled its new Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) requirements module, underscoring a steadfast commitment to transparency, robust corporate governance, and objectives related to social and climate considerations.

The ESG module is designed to be a valuable resource for companies for producing reliable, informative, and comparable reports. The directive mandates that all relevant entities commence reporting these requirements from the financial year 2024.

The module released on the 5th of this month aims listed companies, banks, financing companies, insurance firms, and category 1 and 2 investment firms. It furnishes comprehensive guidelines for reporting requirements pertaining to environmental, social, and corporate governance factors.

Abeer Al Saad, Executive Director of Financial Institutions Supervision at the CBB, highlighted the evolving busi-

ness landscape, emphasizing that financial metrics alone no longer suffice for evaluating companies. She stated, "Shareholders and investors now expect companies to demonstrate greater transparency regarding their impact on the environment, society, and governance practices."

Derived insights from the CBB's ESG Reporting Survey in 2022, involving diverse entities such as listed companies, insur-

ance firms, banks, and investment firms, were incorporated into the module. Additionally, the module took into account industry feedback received during the consultation on the draft guidelines conducted in mid-2023.

The CBB actively encourages companies to proactively adopt strategies that enhance their environmental and social performance while maintaining the highest governance standards. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of addressing ESG-related risks in alignment with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## Foreign firms race to open Saudi offices before deadline

● So far, 162 regional headquarters licenses have been granted

AFP | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

A wave of ribbon-cutting ceremonies is sweeping the Saudi capital as multinationals face a January deadline to open regional headquarters in the Gulf kingdom or lose out on government contracts.

In what has become a common scene, executives in suits and Saudi officials in white robes gather to inaugurate the new offices, sipping Arabic coffee in a haze of incense smoke. Announced in February 2021, Saudi Arabia's regional headquarters (RHQ) programme is widely seen as a bid to compete with Dubai in the neighbouring United Arab Emirates, a favour-



Workers in the King Abdullah Financial District (KAFF) in Riyadh

ite base for global firms with business in the Middle East.

"Multinational companies that are part of the RHQ Program will be well positioned to bid for projects funded by the Saudi Government," the Saudi investment ministry told AFP in a written response to questions.

So far, 162 regional headquarters licenses have been granted in sectors including pharmaceuticals, IT and construction, "with many others being processed", the ministry said.

The big question, analysts say, is whether participating firms are merely ticking a box to retain access to Saudi funds or genuinely embracing the government's vision of Saudi Arabia as the centre of the region.

### 'Jumping through hurdles'

Riyadh defines a regional headquarters as an office that provides "strategic direction, management, and support services for company subsidiaries,

branches, and affiliates in the (Middle East and North Africa) region", the investment ministry said.

One firm, IHG Hotels & Resorts, placed its new office on the 12th floor of a skyscraper in the capital's financial district, staffing it with 25 employees from departments including revenue management, sales, marketing, design and engineering.

IHG has been present in Saudi Arabia for nearly 50 years, actively bids for government projects including developments along the Red Sea Coast and plans to open 20 hotels across the kingdom in 2024 and 2025, Haitham Mattar, managing director for the Middle East and Southwest Asia, said during the office's ribbon-cutting ceremony in October.

But the company also has offices in Dubai and elsewhere in the region, and "we will continue with those offices", Mattar

told AFP. As for the process of establishing a Saudi regional headquarters, he acknowledged there were some kinks to work out.

"It took us a bit of time and jumping through hurdles to achieve our licence for this office. However we are there now which is great and that's what we're happy and positive about," he said. "This is all new to Saudi Arabia, right? So we have to really be conscious of that. There's a lot of trial-and-error, there's a lot of perfecting some of the processes, and sometimes some of the processes have maybe one too many steps."

### 'Ambitious' targets

Laurent Germain, CEO of French construction engineering firm Egis Group, nevertheless told AFP he had no regrets about establishing a regional headquarters in Saudi Arabia last year, and that he advised other French firms to do the same.

"We've come into a situation where now it is in Saudi Arabia that we have the most activities in the Middle East, and probably so for the next 10 years. It was a natural step," he said.

Germain added that he did not necessarily see the regional headquarters programme in the context of a budding Riyadh-Dubai rivalry, but rather as a broader bid to hit "very ambitious" foreign investment objectives. "They are taking all the measures they can to increase the attractiveness of the kingdom," he said.

## BBK and BIBF launches second cohort of "Women on Board"



Participants during the event



Dr. Ahmed Al-Shaikh  
TDT | Manama



Dr. AbdulRahman Saif

entry into corporate boards of directors and leadership positions." Dr. Ahmed Al-Shaikh, the Chief Executive Officer of BIBF highlighted the importance of the Women on Board program, which comes as a direct response to the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister and is aligned with the regulatory requirements of the CBB and the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Anood Abbas, Head of the Leadership and Management Center at the BIBF, said: "The representation of women on the boards of companies is instrumental to ensure diversity and inclusion in strategic decision-making processes, and contributes to elevating the overall performance of any institution."

BBK, Bahrain's pioneer in retail and commercial banking and in collaboration with the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF), announced the launch of the second cohort of the 'Women on Board' program. This initiative, supported by the Tamkeen Labour Fund, is dedicated to empowering Bahraini women to rise to leadership roles, including membership on board of directors. A rigorous selection of 20 skilled women from a pool of over 300 candidates was made based on a meticulous selection criterion.

BBK's Group Chief Executive, Dr. AbdulRahman Saif stated, "This specialized and qualitative program is designed to facilitate women's



The investment ministry has touted benefits for firms setting up regional headquarters in Saudi Arabia, including the ability to apply for unlimited work visas and a 10-year waiver on quotas for hiring Saudi nationals. But it has not specified what kind of tax relief the firms might receive, a major question for executives.



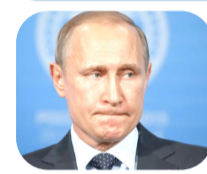
News in brief

◆ **Police have arrested** a 22-year-old Italian university student on the run in Germany after allegedly kidnapping and killing his ex-girlfriend, the man's lawyer said yesterday. Filippo Turetta, a 22-year-old university student from Padua, was found Sunday driving in his car near Leipzig in Germany following a week-long manhunt by Italian authorities, his lawyer, Emanuele Compagno, confirmed to Italy's Ansa news agency. Turetta and his former girlfriend and fellow student, Giulia Cecchetti, went missing last weekend. On Saturday, her body was found in a gully near Lake Barcis, about 120 kilometres north of Venice, her head and neck covered with stab wounds. The manhunt was front-page news in Italy over the past week -- when the victim had been due to receive her degree in biomedical engineering from the University of Padua -- and represented the latest episode of femicide in Italy.



Italian man suspected of femicide found in Germany: lawyer

◆ **Russian President Vladimir Putin** will take part in a virtual G20 leaders' summit on Wednesday, after skipping the flagship in-person meeting in New Delhi in September. "Vladimir Putin will take part in the virtual G20 summit," Russia's Vesti TV show said in a social media post Sunday, citing Putin's schedule for the upcoming next week. Putin did not travel to the last two G20 meetings -- hosted by India in September and Indonesia last year, sending Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in his place. In a statement, India said Saturday its Prime Minister Narendra Modi would chair a virtual summit on Wednesday to "take forward key, select outcomes / actions points from the New Delhi summit." Putin has taken few trips outside Russia since the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for the Russian leader over the unlawful deportation of Ukrainian children.



◆ **The Ukrainian army** said yesterday that it has pushed Russian forces back "three to eight kilometres" from the banks of Dnipro river, which if confirmed would be the first meaningful advance by Kyiv's forces months into a disappointing counteroffensive. Ukrainian and Russian forces have been entrenched on opposite sides of the vast waterway in the southern Kherson region for more than a year, after Russia withdrew its troops from the western bank last November. Ukraine has staged multiple attempts to cross and hold positions on the Russian-controlled side -- with officials in Kyiv finally reporting a "successful" breakthrough last week.

Ukrainian army says advancing at Dnipro river as drones target capitals



SPOTLIGHT

India considering new shaft to free trapped tunnel workers



Rescue workers stand at an entrance of the under construction road tunnel, days after it collapsed in the Uttarakashi district of India's Uttarakhand state

AFP | Dehradun, India

Indian rescuers are considering opening a vertical shaft to free 41 men trapped in a collapsed tunnel after drilling at the site was paused over fears of further cave-ins and as efforts stretched into a second week. Excavators have been removing earth, concrete and rubble from the under-construction tunnel in the northern Himalayan state of Uttarakhand since last Sunday after a portion of the tunnel collapsed.

Rescue efforts have been slowed by continued falling debris as well as repeated breakdowns of the crucial heavy drilling machines, with the air force having to twice airlift in new kit. Drilling through the tonnes of debris was paused late Friday, after a cracking sound created a "panic situation", officials said. Operations were then halted due to the possibility of "further collapse", said the government's highways and infrastructure company, NHIDCL. "Every possible effort is being made," Minister of Road Transport Nitin Gadkari said Sunday, after visiting the site. He said if the drilling machine was fixed, they could reach the men by Tuesday, but said teams were also considering multiple alternative routes. Relatives of those trapped, who spoke to the men via radio, said conditions were grim and morale low. "They are in tears... they have started asking us whether we are lying about the rescue efforts being made to save them," one relative told reporters late Saturday, without giving their name.

# 31 premature babies evacuated from Gaza 'death zone' hospital

Evacuation from Al Shifa confirmed by PCRS

WHO describes the hospital as a "death zone"

Al-Shifa's director said Israeli army ordered for it to be emptied

AFP | Khan Yunis, Palestinian Territories

A top health official in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip said all 31 premature babies at Al-Shifa hospital had been evacuated yesterday from the facility which the WHO has described as a "death zone".

The move was confirmed by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PCRS), which said its teams carried out the evacuation in coordination with UN agencies including the World Health Organization.

Mohammed Zaqt, director general of hospitals in Gaza, told AFP "all 31 premature babies in Al-Shifa hospital... have been

## 'Horrendous events' in Gaza in past days 'beggar belief': UN rights chief

Geneva, Switzerland

The level of violence ravaging Gaza in recent days is unfathomable, the UN rights chief said yesterday, with attacks on schools harbouring displaced people and a hospital turned into a "death zone".

"The killing of so many people at schools turned shelters, hundreds fleeing for their lives from Al-Shifa Hospital, amid continuing displacement of hundreds of thousands in southern Gaza, are actions which fly in the face of the basic protections civilians must be afforded under international law," Turk said.

He described the images purportedly taken in the aftermath of the reported Israeli strike on the UN-run Al-Fakhura school as "horrifying", and "clearly showing large numbers of women, children and men severely wounded or killed".

The UN rights chief pointed out that in Khan Yunis in southern Gaza, the Israeli military "are dropping leaflets demanding residents go to unspecified 'recognised shelters'", even as strikes take place across Gaza.

"Irrespective of warnings, Israel is obliged to protect civilians wherever they are", he said, pointing to the principles under international law of distinction, proportionality and precautions when carrying out attacks. "Failure to adhere to these rules may constitute war crimes," Turk said.



en, children and men severely wounded or killed".

The WHO said it had sent an assessment team to the hospital and described it as a "death zone", saying it was "urgently developing plans for the immediate evacuation of the remaining patients, staff and their families".

The visit came after hundreds fled the hospital, Gaza's largest, following what Al-Shifa's director said were Israeli army orders for it to be emptied.

In an overnight announcement, the WHO said it had sent an assessment team to the hospital and described it as a "death zone", saying it was "urgently developing plans for the immediate evacuation of the remaining patients, staff and their families".

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) strongly condemns the series of mass massacres and successive crimes committed by the Israeli occupation, the latest of which was



Relatives bid farewell to Amer Abu Shwarb, a Palestinian toddler killed when the family home was hit by an Israeli strike, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip

most of them a number of premature babies.

Since then, the Hamas health authority says Israel's military campaign has killed more than 12,300 people, mostly civilians. The PCRS confirmed its teams had "successfully evacuated... 31 premature babies from Al-Shifa" in a statement that said they were "transported by PCRS ambulances to the south".

In an overnight announcement, the WHO said it had sent an assessment team to the hospital and described it as a "death zone", saying it was "urgently developing plans for the immediate evacuation of the remaining patients, staff and their families".

## Qatar PM says only 'minor' challenges to hostage deal



AFP | Doha, Qatar

A deal to free hostages Hamas seized in its October 7 attack on Israel now hinges on "minor" practical issues, Qatar's prime minister said yesterday, without giving details or a timeline.

"The challenges that remain in the negotiations are very minor compared to the bigger challenges, they are more logistical, they are more practical," Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told a joint press conference with EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell.

"The deal is going through ups and downs from time to time throughout the last few weeks," the premier said. "I think that I'm now more confident that we are close enough to reach a deal that can bring the people safely back to their homes."

In his letter Saturday, Biden also threatened sanctions against settlers committing violence against Palestinians in the West Bank amid the conflict in Gaza.

"I have been emphatic with Israel's leaders that extremist violence against Palestinians in the West Bank must stop and that those committing the violence must be held accountable," he said.

"The United States is prepared to take our own steps, including issuing visa bans against extremists attacking civilians in the West Bank."



Palestinian medics care for premature babies evacuated from Al Shifa hospital to the Emirates hospital in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip

## Napoleon's hat sells for record 1.9 mn euros in French auction

AFP | Paris, France

declining to give the identity or nationality of the eventual buyer. It was last owned by businessman Jean-Louis Noisiez who died last year.

The final price was more than double the estimate of 600,000 to 800,000 euros, and nearly four times the reserve price, the auction house based in Fontainebleau south of Paris said. Napoleon is believed to have owned around 120 such hats in total, most of which are now lost.

"The hat in itself represented the emperor's image," auction house expert Jean-Pierre Osenat told AFP ahead of the sale.

## Yemen rebels say they seized Israeli vessel, Israel denies

AFP | Hodeida, Yemen

Yemen's Iran-backed Huthi rebels said yesterday they had seized an Israeli ship in the Red Sea, a claim immediately denied by Israel.

The allegation came days after the rebel group had threatened to target Israeli vessels in the Red Sea over Israel's war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

"We took an Israeli cargo ship to the Yemeni coast," an unidentified Huthi official said in a statement, adding that further details would be released later.

A Yemeni maritime source said the Huthis "seized a commercial vessel" and took it to the port of Salif in the coastal city of Hodeida which the rebels control, without specifying its nationality.

Israel's military denied the ship was Israeli. A statement by the army on X, formerly Twitter, said: "The hijacking of a cargo ship by the Huthis near Yemen in the southern Red Sea is a very grave incident of global consequence."

"The ship departed Turkey on its way to India, staffed by civilians of various nationalities, not including Israelis. The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also denied the ship was Israeli but denounced, in a statement, "the Iranian attack against an international vessel".

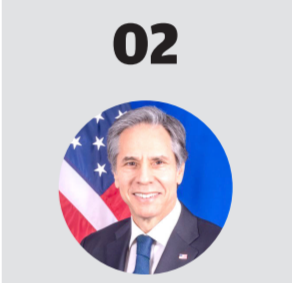


The Hamas government in Gaza says 12,300 have been killed in Israel's relentless aerial bombardment and ground operations in the territory in retaliation.

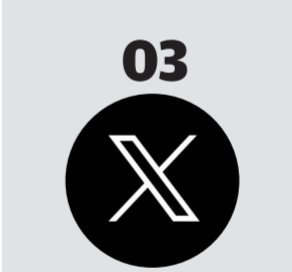
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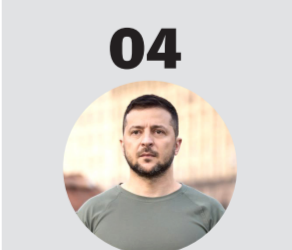
01 Congratulations to Australia on a magnificent World Cup victory! Theirs was a commendable performance through the tournament, culminating in a splendid triumph. Compliments to Travis Head for his remarkable game today. @narendramodi



02 Proud to pass the @APEC host year torch to our Peruvian friends. I look forward to working closely with Peru in 2024 to build on our achievements this year and continue to facilitate a future that helps our citizens across the Asia-Pacific region thrive. @SecBlinken



03 X Corp investors will own 25% of XAI @elonmusk



04 I am grateful to everyone who makes Ukraine stronger and the enemy's losses greater. Our drone operators are consistently effective. @ZelenskyyUA

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

LEGAL VIEWPOINT

## Basics of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)



DR. ABDELGADIR WARSAMA GHALIB awarsama@warsamaic.com

It is important in this "data" era, to protect the personal data of all, everywhere. On the face of it, to protect the personal data indicated a high good respect to any person and to all his personal belongings and this is a good initiative to protect personal rights. To fulfill this good stand the European Union (EU) took major steps and issued an important regulation (GDPR). The General Data Protection Regulation, applies to different types of data processing to be carried by organizations operating within or without the EU. It applies on entities outside EU, offering goods or services to individuals in EU. Good, also, Bahrain issued its law to govern personal data protection. More important to say that, Bahrain legislation in this important issue is well advanced and in line with the global standards. Your personal data protection is well protected in Bahrain. This is an advantage and privilege to all in Bahrain.

GDPR is mainly to apply for protection of personal data, however, there is an exemption as GDPR does not apply to certain activities including certain instances of data processing if they are covered by the law enforcement directives, processing for national security purposes and processing carried out by individuals purely for personal activities.

The regulation for more clarity, specifies types of exemptions for application whenever required. To streamline the process, GDPR applies to 'controllers' and 'processors'. Controller is the authorized body to say how and why personal data is processed, whereas, the processor is the body that acts on the controller's behalf and control. If you happened to be a processor, GDPR places specific legal obligations on you. For example, you are required to maintain records of personal data and the processing activities undertaken. As a processor, you have more legal liability if responsible for any breach. Obligations for processors are new requirements under GDPR and they confirm the firm strategy of the EU towards stringent rules to regulate the personal data to curb the huge destructive misuse we are facing. However, controllers are not relieved of their obligations where a processor is involved. GDPR places further obligations on the controllers to ensure that contracts with processors comply with the provisions of the GDPR.

As a general rule, GDPR applies to 'personal data'. However, the GDPR's definition is more detailed. The definition provides for wide range of personal identifiers as personal data, reflecting changes in technology and the way organizations collect info about persons. I believe, the justification behind covering automated and manual filling systems, is to cover all data processing, otherwise there could be escape room by manual data processing. It is necessary to say, GDPR of EU gives great boost to protect personal data everywhere in our world and it is good that it has been taken as benchmark by countries in the region, including Bahrain, when issuing relevant laws. Need less to say that, all are required to comply with the personal data protection regulations, otherwise to be ready for heavy fines and other legal actions. Everyone shall give full care for the personal data of others to the same degree he expects form others when dealing with his personal data. Doing this, will automatically help in good protection for the personal data of all.

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

# CAMPUS

## Scholars of Bhavans BIS clinch 65 medals in World Scholar's Cup 2023 at Yale University

TDT | Manama

Twelve scholars from Bhavans- Bahrain Indian School (BIS) participated in the World Scholar's Cup Tournament of Champions (TOC) 2023 from November 2 to 8 at Yale University in Connecticut, USA.

The World Scholars Cup, a global initiative, proved to be a platform for young minds to not only test their knowledge but also hone their creative writing and debating skills.

Beyond the competitive aspects, the scholars were engaged in a spectrum of enriching activities, from scavenger hunts and keynote speeches to cultural fairs, the Scholar's Ball, and tours of prestigious institutions



such as MIT and Harvard.

The BIS scholars demonstrated exceptional prowess, clinching an impressive total of 65 medals, including 42 Gold and

23 Silver. Their performance positioned the BIS delegation among the 950 champion teams from 65 countries, marking a triumphant entry into the World

Scholar's Cup TOC.

The school Management extended their congratulations to the young delegates for their achievement.



## Bhavans- Bahrain Indian School celebrates Children's Day



To reciprocate the love and affection teachers have for their students the teachers of Bhavans-Bahrain Indian School (BIS) crafted three special assemblies for kindergarten, primary, and for higher grades. The special assemblies included dances, skit, songs, and hilarious poetries. BIS Director Himanshu Verma and Ritu Verma opined that the students are the catalyst and future leaders too. Principal Saji Jacob reminded the students of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's vision, emphasizing their role as the nation's future

## New Millennium School marks Children's Day

Students and teachers of the New Millennium School- Bahrain celebrated Children's Day on November 14 with special assemblies and a number of class activities. Teachers performed in the special assemblies conducted on the theme, 'Towards A Prosperous Tomorrow'. They pledged to continuously strive to work for the welfare of the students. The students of Grades 9 to 12 participated in a friendly football match on the day. Principal, Arun Kumar Sharma, Chairman Dr. Ravi Pillai and the Managing Director Geetha Pillai extended their best wishes and blessings for the children



## Indian School clinch 31 gold medals in CBSE Cluster meet



The Indian School Bahrain (ISB) students excelled in CBSE Cluster sports and games tournaments held recently. The school won 31 gold, 13 silver and 2 bronze medals in athletics. ISB students also won the football tournament in the Under 19 Boys category. The school clinched the Under 19 Boys Volleyball title and were runners-up in the Under 19 Girls event. In the Under 17 Boys and Under 17 Girls Badminton the ISB emerged runners up. The school were also runners-up in the Under 19 Boys chess. ISB Chairman Prince S Natarajan, Secretary Saji Antony, EC Member Sports Rajesh MN and Principal VR Palaniswamy congratulated the team members, coaches and the entire PE Department led by HoD Saikat Sarkar for their outstanding performance



## ISB football team advances to pre-quarters in national championship



The Indian School Bahrain (ISB) football team has showcased an impressive performance in the CBSE nationals held in Kerala, securing a spot in the pre-quarters. Emerging as leaders in group D, they have earned the right to compete among the top 16 teams in the league

# Classifieds



Call us on +973 36458394  
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## Verstappen battles through to win Las Vegas Grand Prix thriller

● **Ferrari's Charles Leclerc overtook Red Bull's Sergio Perez on the last lap to grab second place**

AFP | Las Vegas

World champion Max Verstappen claimed the 18th win of his record-breaking season, overcoming a five-second penalty to power to victory in a thrilling Las Vegas Grand Prix on Saturday.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc overtook Red Bull's Sergio Perez



Max Verstappen of Red Bull celebrates in parc ferme

on the last lap to grab second place ahead of the Mexican with French driver Esteban Ocon of Alpine finishing fourth at the end of a race which saw multiple lead changes and plenty of overtaking.

Verstappen had been highly critical of the return of Formula One to Vegas after a 41-year absence, saying the event was "99 percent show", but as he drove past the finish line he celebrated with a chorus of 'Viva Las Vegas' on the team radio.

"He loves a race like that. Even though he was on the end of a penalty. When he came back... the way he fought. I think he changed his mind about Vegas,"

said Red Bull team principal Christian Horner.

The show was certainly evident with pre-race grid packed with a host of celebrities from the world of music, sport and entertainment as memories of the embarrassment of the opening practice session on Thursday being stopped early due to a loose water valve on the track, faded.

When the race was under way, the low grip on the track made sure there was no shortage of incident, overtaking and lead changes, as the night race delivered the entertainment the American promoters had craved from the new event.



Verstappen, initially critical of F1's return to Vegas after 41 years, celebrates the victory with the iconic phrase 'Viva Las Vegas' on the team radio

### Bahraini Business Leaders Cheer at ICC World Cup Final



From left, Mirwais Ashraf Khan, Afghan cricketer, Muhammad Zaka Ashraf, chairperson of Pakistan Cricket Board, Salman Naseer, COO of Pakistan Cricket Board, Mohammad Mansoor, Founder and CEO of Saara Group, Rashpal Yadav, Cricket Canada president, Mubashshir Usmani, General Secretary of Emirates Cricket Board and Anurag Thakur, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports of India, watch the ICC World Cup final in Ahmedabad



Juzer Rupawala, Director of Lulu Group at the stadium during the ICC World Cup final



Clifford Lima, Businessman in Bahrain (L), Mohammed Mansoor, Founder and CEO of Saara Group (C) and Alok Gupta, CEO of YK Almoayyed & Sons during the ICC World Cup final

# Bahrain gear up for UAE test

Kingdom's senior men's national team continue final preparations for FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifier tomorrow

● **Bahrain football chief directs free entrance for fans in general stands**

● **UAE national team name 27 players for Group H qualifier tomorrow**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain continued their final preparations yesterday for their upcoming continental qualifier against the UAE tomorrow for the FIFA World Cup 2026.

The game is scheduled for a 6.45pm kick-off at the National Stadium in Riffa.

It will be their second contest in Group H in the second round of qualification under the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). The match follows the Bahrainis' 2-0 victory over Yemen last week in Abha, Saudi Arabia.

Tomorrow's clash is also a qualifying affair for the AFC Asian Cup 2027.

The Emiratis were scheduled to arrive in the Kingdom yesterday ahead of the highly anticipated contest. Led by head coach Paulo Bento from Portugal, the UAE have a 27-player squad for the game.



Jassim Al Shaikh in action during national team practice



Ali Madan and Mahdi Humaidan doing drills during training last night

The visitors head into the game high on confidence, having won their opening qualifier last week 4-0 against Nepal.

In order to generate maximum support for Bahrain's national team in the qualifier, Bahrain Football Association (BFA) president Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa directed that Bahrain's fans be given free entry for the match in the general stands. There are also tickets for VIP seating that cost BD5 apiece.

BFA officials also held a meeting yesterday with officials from local clubs, in order to coordinate the attendance of spectators in the game.

Bahrain head coach Juan Antonio Pizzi has a squad of 30

players ready for tomorrow's fixture.

The team that started their game against Yemen featured Abdulla Al Hashash and Hazza Ali in a strike partnership; Mo-

ammed Al Hardan, Ebrahim Al Khattal, Mohammed Abdulwahab, Komail Al Aswad and Mohammed Jassim Marhoon forming a five-man midfield; Waleed Al Hayyam, Mohammed

Adel and Amine Hasan in defence; and Ebrahim Luthfallah between the posts.

There are five rounds in the FIFA World Cup qualification format for the AFC, which will

## SQUADS

**BAHRAIN:** Ali Madan, Mohammed Marhoon, Abdulla Yusuf, Moses Atede, Mahdi Humaidan, Ahmed Bughammar, Mohammed Adel, Mohammed Al Hardan, Abdulkarim Al Fardan, Ali Hassan, Sayed Mahdi Baqer, Hussain Al Aker, Komail Al Aswad, Jassim Al Shaikh, Mohammed Abdulqayoom, Hazza Ali, Sayed Mohammed Jaafar, Amine Hasan, Waleed Al Hayyam, Abdulla Al Khalasi, Mubarak Mohammed, Ebrahim Luthfallah, Abdulla Al Hashash, Ebrahim Al Khattal, Mohammed Abdulwahab, Ebrahim Al Wali, Salem Hussain, Hussain Abdulkareem, Hamad Al Doseri and Jassim Khelaif.

**UAE:** Khaled Issa, Ali Khasif, Hassan Hamza, Khaled Al Hashimi, Mohammed Al Attas, Khalifa Al Hammadi, Omar Hussein Heikal, Khaled Al Dhanhani, Abdullah Idris, Zayed Al Zaabi, Abdulrahman Saleh, Khaled Butti, Ali Salmin, Abdullah Ramadan, Yahya Nader, Majed Rashid, Muhammad Abbas, Hazem Muhammad, Harib Abdullah, Tahnoon Al Zaabi, Ali Saleh, Caio Canedo, Yahya Al Ghassani, Fabio Lima, Ali Mabkhout, Sultan Adel and Issa Khalfan



Bahrain aim to continue their winning start to their FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifying bid when they take on the UAE tomorrow night. The nationals had previously beaten Yemen 2-0 in their opening game last week

have eight teams book their tickets to the global showcase, plus potentially another following an inter-confederation play-off.

Thirty-six nations are directly in this second stage, divided into nine groups of four. The teams will play against each other on a home-and-away basis. The nine group winners and group runners-up advance to the third round. In addition to this, they will also automatically qualify for the AFC Asian Cup 2027.

Aside from FIFA World Cup qualification, Bahrain are also gearing up for the next edition of the AFC Asian Cup, to be held in Doha in January of next year.

## BIC set for back-to-back nights of drag racing, drifting and physical fitness fun

TDT | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) continues its wide array of exciting fan activities this week with the Ebrahim K Kanoo Drag and Drift Nights and Batelco Fitness on Track, taking place on successive evenings in Sakhir.

Both events are amongst the most popular of the public offerings at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East", and they are set to attract participants of various interests.

The Ebrahim K Kanoo Drag and Drift Nights is scheduled to take place tonight from 6pm to 11pm and the Batelco Fitness on Track will be held Tuesday from 6pm to 10pm.

In the EK Kanoo Drag and Drift Nights, this high-octane activity gives speed enthusiasts the opportunity to take their very own cars or motorbikes and push them to their limits down BIC's world-class quarter-mile drag strip, or put on an amazing display of power sliding along BIC's vast vehicle dynamics area.

There is also the option for participants to enjoy both, making for twice the thrills in a single action-packed event. Registration for those interest-



Action from a previous Drag and Drift Nights at BIC

ed to take part can be done on site from 5pm.

The BIC strip is highly regarded as one of the best in the world of drag racing. It is a part of the prestigious Worldwide Network, under the banner of the US-based National Hot Rod Association (NHRA).

The vehicle dynamics area, meanwhile, features a specially configured layout for drifters. It is surrounded by safety barriers, and it is one of the largest open tarmac areas in Bahrain, making for an ideal venue for drifting enthusiasts to showcase their skills within a secure environment.

In addition to the drag and drift, also available Monday night is the Dragster Experience, BIC's most adrena-

line-pumping passenger activity also known as "the Fastest Ride on Earth!" Fans will have a chance to get a taste of pure speed as they are taken from zero to 100kph in just one second while seated in a Top Dragster.

Meanwhile, the Batelco Fitness on Track offers a fun, physical experience, and is an ideal opportunity for the whole family to exercise either on foot or on a bicycle within the unique and world-class setting of the renowned Sakhir race track.

Tuesday's Batelco Fitness on Track will be held under BIC's bright, state-of-the-art floodlights, making for a stunning environment beneath the stars that is also safe and controlled.

The running and cycling will take place on separate track layouts. Runners and walkers will be utilising BIC's 2.550-kilometre Inner Track, while cyclists will be able to ride their bikes along the 3.543-kilometre Outer Circuit, with another dedicated area for children's cycling.



Action from a previous Fitness on Track event at BIC

## Djokovic eyes ATP Finals record after last-four demolition of Alcaraz

AFP | Turin

Novak Djokovic closed in on a record-breaking seventh ATP Finals title on Saturday after sweeping past Carlos Alcaraz 6-3, 6-2 in a dominating semi-final display he hailed as his best of the tournament.

World number one Djokovic will face home favourite Jannik Sinner on Sunday in the final in Turin, as the 36-year-old attempts to cap an age-defying year with yet another major triumph.

"The best match of the tournament for me, without a doubt. It came at right time really, after spending a lot of hours on the court in the first three matches," said Djokovic.

"Tonight, from the very beginning, I felt the ball well. I approached the match with the right attitude, the right mentality."

The Serb came into the Finals at the end of a year which has brought three Grand Slams, taking his total to an all-time best of 24, and a 40th Masters 1000 title.

Now only Sinner stands between Djokovic and victory, which would take him past his old foe and retired great Roger Federer for season-ending tournament titles.

Sunday's final promises to be a tough proposition for Djokovic as he lost to Sinner in the group stage and will have to deal with a partisan Italian crowd that, unusually for him, won't be on his side.

"He's been playing fantastic



Novak Djokovic in action



Sunday's final promises to be a tough proposition for Djokovic as he lost to Sinner in the group stage and will have to deal with a partisan Italian crowd that, unusually for him, won't be on his side

tennis, arguably the best tennis of his life. On this stage, against top 10 players," added Djokovic.

"We played a very tight match the other night, the atmosphere was electric. I don't expect anything less than what we had in

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NOVAK DJOKOVIC

the group stage matchup." Djokovic now has the better of his five matches with Wimbledon champion Alcaraz, who at 20 is already a two-time Grand Slam winner and was bidding to become the youngest finalist since Pete Sampras won the title back in 1991.

# Head breaks India hearts as Australia win sixth World Cup title

Travis Head's spectacular 137 guides Australia to a convincing six-wicket victory over India in Ahmedabad

● **Chasing 241, Australia stumbles at 47-3 before Travis Head leads a comeback**

AFP | Ahmedabad

Opener Travis Head hit a sparkling 137 to power Australia to a record-extending sixth World Cup title with a convincing six-wicket win over India in Ahmedabad yesterday.

Chasing a tricky 241 for victory in the final, Australia slipped to 47-3 before the left-handed Head hit his second century of the tournament to steer the team home with seven overs to spare.

Head's knock and his marathon stand of 192 with Marnus Labuschagne, unbeaten on 58, ended India's dominant run of 10 unbeaten matches at the event.

Head fell after his 120-ball knock laced with 15 fours and four sixes before Glenn Maxwell hit the winning runs to trigger wild celebrations in the Aussie camp.

"Just thrilled to be a part of it," man-of-the-match Head told Star Sports.

"It's a lot better than seeing the World Cup on the couch at home (on his injury). I was a little bit nervous but Marnus played exceptionally well and soaked all the pressure."

India's chances of ending a global trophy drought since their 2013 Champions Trophy win went up in smoke once Head got going with Labuschagne.

Head's century was the seventh in a World Cup final and third by an Australian after Ricky Ponting (140 not out v India in 2003) and Adam Gilchrist (149 v Sri Lanka in 2007).

The bowlers set up victory for an Australian side that bounced



Australia celebrate their sixth men's ODI World Cup win



Mitchell Starc and Virat Kohli have a post-match chat



India's players react after an unsuccessful appeal

been the team of the tournament, but you know if you play your best cricket, you have a chance. Our bowlers were sensational and Travis put on one hell of a display."

Warner said, "Our bowlers were fantastic, they set the tone from ball one. The fielding supported that."

Australia elected to field first and the players backed up Cummins' decision with disciplined bowling and



Mitchell Starc and Virat Kohli have a post-match chat

back after two losses to win nine in a row as Mitchell Starc (3-55) and Pat Cummins (2-34) helped bowl out India for 240.

India hit back when Mohammed Shami shared the new ball with Jasprit Bumrah and struck on his second delivery to get David Warner caught behind for seven.

But it was Bumrah's double strike in quick succession that raised the roof as he had Mitch-

ell Marsh caught behind for 15 and Steve Smith lbw for four.

Head stood firm with Labuschagne for company to thwart the Indian attack despite captain Rohit Sharma rotating his bowlers in a hunt for a breakthrough.

**'Unbelievable' achievement**

Head, who suffered a fractured hand in South Africa in September, was in danger of missing the World Cup but Australia kept him in the squad until he was fit to play.

He hit a match-winning century against New Zealand in the team's sixth league game and after a few low scores hit an attacking 62 in his team's nervy three-wicket semi-final win over South Africa in Kolkata.

He turned India's nemesis a second time this year after his 163 proved decisive in Australia's World Test Championship triumph at the Oval in June.

Head reached his 100 in 95 balls and raised his bat to an applauding Australian dressing room.

"What we've achieved today is unbelievable," said Labuschagne.

"It's the best achievement I've ever been part of. India have



Australia's Travis Head plays a shot

**YOU KNOW WHAT**

It's a lot better than seeing the World Cup on the couch at home (on his injury). I was a little bit nervous but Marnus played exceptionally well and soaked all the pressure

Travis Head, overcoming a fractured hand, played a crucial role in Australia's World Cup victory, turning into a nemesis for India with both Test and ODI match-winning performances

impressive fielding. Virat Kohli and KL Rahul hit 54 and 66 respectively after Rohit's attacking 47 but the ball dominated the bat on a slow, dry pitch.

Head took a stunning catch while running back from cover point to cut short Rohit's innings off spinner Maxwell.

Cummins bowled Kohli, who

ended as the leading batsman in tournament with 765 runs, to silence the crowd of 92,453 fans, who like the home team in the middle had a forgettable day.



Pat Cummins celebrates with the trophy

**Pro-Palestinian pitch invader disrupts Cricket World Cup final**



A pro-Palestinian protester in India broke through security cordons to invade the pitch at the Cricket World Cup final yesterday, stopping play briefly while he hugged superstar batsman Virat Kohli.

Wearing a face mask in the colours of the Palestinian flag,

and a T-shirt with the slogan "Stop Bombing Palestine", the unnamed young protester ran onto the pitch in the 132,000-seat mega-stadium in India's western city of Ahmedabad.

He was escorted off the pitch by security officers, and play swiftly resumed.