

Bahrain eye World Cup under Pizzi

Argentinian Juan Antonio Pizzi officially unveiled as new head coach of Bahrain's senior men's national football team | **P12**

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Nominations open for Isa Award **P2**

HM King, HRH CP, PM congratulate Egypt's El-Sisi



TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday congratulated Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi on the anniversary of the July Revolution.

HM the King expressed deepest congratulations and good wishes to President El-Sisi, wishing Egypt and its people further progress and prosperity under his leadership.

King Hamad praised deep-rooted solid bilateral relations, stressing keenness to continue strengthening joint ties.

Separately, His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, also congratulated El-Sisi, on the anniversary of Revolution Day of Egypt.

His Royal Highness sent a similar cable to the Prime Minister of Egypt, Dr Mostafa Madbouly.

Yemen arrests suspect in UN staffer killing

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Authorities in Yemen have arrested a suspect in the killing of a World Food Programme staffer in Taz province, a security official told AFP on Saturday.

Moayad Hameidi, the head of the UN agency's office in Taz, was killed in a shooting Friday in the nearby city of Turbah, the Rome-based WFP has confirmed.

"The perpetrator of the criminal assassination of the United Nations employee in the city of Turbah in Taz (province)... has been in the city of Taz since 2017, after fleeing Aden due to security operations against Al-Qaeda operatives," the security official said late Friday.

220 fils (includes VAT)



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Tensions escalate as Kyiv strikes Crimea

Russia says Ukraine used cluster munitions on border village

Ukrainian army confirmed it blew up ammunition depot

Lukashenko arrives in Saint Petersburg

Moscow blames West and Kyiv for death of war correspondent

TDT | agencies



A picture shows detonation of ammunition caused by a fire at a military training field in the Kirovsky district of Crimea

A Ukrainian drone attack on Crimea yesterday blew up an ammunition depot, sparking evacuations on the Moscow-annexed peninsula just five days after drones damaged Russia's symbolic bridge across the Kerch Strait.

In a statement, the Ukrainian army confirmed it was behind an attack which blew up an ammunition depot in the annexed Crimean Peninsula yesterday.

"The strike on military installations in the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea was carried out by Ukrainian forces," an army source said on condition of anonymity.

Late yesterday, Belarus leader

Alexander Lukashenko arrived in Saint Petersburg, where he is due to meet the Russian president for the first time since he helped end a dramatic mutiny by Russian mercenaries from the Wagner group.

Putin and his closest ally plan to discuss the "strategic partnership and alliance" between their two countries today, according to the Kremlin.

Moscow meanwhile blamed the West and Kyiv for the death of a Russian war correspondent, saying he was killed by cluster munitions.

Russia alleged that Kyiv

had used cluster munitions on the Russian border village of Zhuravlevka and that the controversial weapon had killed one of its journalists in a front-line village.

"In the Belgorod region, 21 artillery shells and three cluster munitions from a multiple rocket launcher were fired (by the Ukrainian army) at the village of Zhuravlevka," Belgorod governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said on Telegram, referring to attacks the previous day.

The allegations came two weeks after US President Joe Biden faced fierce criticism from his own allies for sending the munitions, which pose a long-term risk to civilians.

The Russian army announced that Rostislav Zhuravlev, a war correspondent working for the state RIA Novosti news agency, died from his wounds after coming under fire from cluster munitions in occupied southern Ukraine.

Moscow blamed the West and Kyiv, vowing to respond after what the foreign ministry called "a heinous, premeditated crime".

Three other journalists were said to be stable in hospital after the attack.



News of the blaze came two days after Ukraine used waterborne drones to attack the Kerch bridge, a key military supply artery from Russia to annexed Crimea. Authorities ordered the evacuation of over 2,000 residents from areas near the military field.

An elephantine task



Cambodia's National Election Committee (NEC) officials transporting election materials to a polling station in Mondulokiri province. Cambodians will vote today in an election that longtime leader Hun Sen is all but guaranteed to win as he looks to secure his legacy by handing the reins to his eldest son. The 70-year-old former Khmer Rouge cadre has ruled since 1985 and faces no real contest in this vote, with opposition parties banned, challenger candidates forced to flee and freedom of expression stifled. His Cambodian People's Party (CPP) is likely to retain all 125 seats in the lower house

Timely action averts disaster as fire erupts at Al Hunainiyah park



TDT | Manama

The Civil Defence forces took swift action yesterday to prevent a potential disaster as a fire broke out in the wooden cabins at Al-Hunainiyah Park in East Riffa. Thanks to their timely response, the fire was promptly brought under control, resulting in no reported injuries. Investigations are ongoing to ascertain the cause and circumstances surrounding the fire's outbreak.

Five arrested with narcotic substances



TDT | Manama

The Anti-Narcotics Department, under the General Directorate of Investigation and Criminal Evidence, yesterday announced arresting five individuals, aged between 33 and 40, in two separate incidents for pending narcotic substances.

Police made these arrests based on a tip-off received regarding the suspects' involvement in illegal activities related to narcotics.

The General Department of Investigation and Criminal Evidence said it took the necessary legal measures to refer the suspects to the Public Prosecution.

Iraqis keep up Quran protests after book burnings
Baghdad, Iraq

Iraqi security forces yesterday dispersed about 1,000 supporters of cleric Moqtada Sadr who tried to march to Baghdad's Green Zone housing foreign embassies, believing a Koran had been desecrated in Denmark. The protesters were reacting to reports of an apparent desecration of the Muslim holy book for the third time within a month, with the first two in Sweden already raising diplomatic tensions.

Nominations open for Isa Award for Services to Humanity

Winner will receive a Royal Certificate of Appreciation, Gold medal and US \$1 million

● **Nominations will be accepted until January 20th**

TDT | Manama

The Isa Award for Services to Humanity has officially opened nominations for its sixth edition (2023/2024).

The Secretariat General of the Award said they welcomes submissions from individuals, organisations, scientific research centres, and pioneers who are funding humanitarian projects

worldwide.

To be eligible, the humanitarian work must positively impact a wide range of people without any discrimination, and it should be non-political and non-profit in nature.

Nominations will be accepted until January 20th.

The winner will be honoured with a Royal Certificate of Appreciation, a pure gold medal, and a grant of US \$1 million during a ceremony in Bahrain in June 2025.

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa established the award in 2009 as a tribute to His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman

Al Khalifa, who dedicated his life to serving humanity.

The Board of Trustees, led by His Highness Shaikh Mohamed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, the Special Representative of HM the King, oversees the Isa Award for Service to Humanity.

Ali Abdullah Khalifa, a member of the Board of Trustees and Secretary-General of the Award, emphasised that the award showcases the uniqueness of the Kingdom through pioneering global initiatives and the recognition and encouragement of humanitarian work.

Isa Award is presented biennially to individuals and pro-

jects in various fields, including disaster response and relief, education, community service, promoting dialogue among civilisations, human tolerance, social peace, urban development, climate change, environmental protection, scientific achievement, poverty alleviation, and any other field of humanitarian service.

A panel of experts from around the world will evaluate and judge the nominees' contributions in their respective fields.



HM King's speech further strengthens Bahrain's ties, says Dr Al Dhaen

TDT | Manama

MP Dr Mariam Al-Dhaen has expressed admiration of the speech delivered by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa during the 18th Consultative Meeting of the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and GCC-Central Asia Summit (C5).

The speech, she highlighted, reflects His Majesty's dedication to reinforcing bonds between Bahrain, Arab States, and friendly countries.

In his address, HM King had said: "The key to achieving sustainable collective renaissance requires us to take more serious and effective measures to advance comprehensive partner-



ships that strengthen human solidarity in the face of crises, to strengthen areas of security coordination, to protect and secure

freedom of navigation for oil and energy supplies and global trade, and to prohibit weapons of mass destruction."

HM had also underlined the importance of linking the outcomes of our strategic dialogue and political coordination with

international policies and UN commitments in accordance with institutional frameworks and mechanisms to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

In her remarks, Dr Al-Dhaen said the Royal speech recognised the deep historical ties and cooperation while prioritising development and peace. His Majesty's efforts align with safeguarding spiritual values and cultural gains.

"The King's commitment to promoting peace and tolerance, fostering dialogue among religions and civilizations, and denouncing hate speech while combatting hostile terrorist forces and their financing is instrumental in shaping a re-

gional society based on peaceful coexistence and mutual trust, preserving the sovereignty of states, and ensuring long-term development," Dr Al-Dhaen said.

Furthermore, Dr Al-Dhaen praised the strategic dialogue and political coordination, which has enhanced Bahrain's international standing across various fields.

She also commended the Government of Bahrain's dedication to accelerating the adoption and integration of international goals into development projects and policies, as well as their commitment to achieving zero neutrality and aligning the government's program with sustainable development goals.

After Bahrain, Almond ice-cream is now taking Saudis by a storm

● **Normally, prices range from 3 to 4 dinars per kilo, gradually dropping to around two dinars by mid-month**

● **For one kilo, price has peaked to 10 dinars**

TDT | Manama

Almond ice cream, which has been a huge hit among Bahraini this season has started gaining new grounds across the border, with it now becoming a sensation among Saudis, particularly in Qatif.

The delightful treat, reports say, has paved the way for various new almond-based products, including almond juice and "Slash" almond ice cream, creating a surge in demand and prices for almonds.

According to a report by AlAyam, quoting Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, the mastermind behind the almond ice cream storm is Sami Al-Arajneh, an agricultural engineer. He described the current almond season as historic, with a significant surge in demand



Pictures courtesy of AlAyam

from countries like Bahrain, Qatar, and Kuwait.

The surge in demand has propelled almond prices to unprecedented heights, with one kilo now reaching 10 dinars.

Normally, the almond season commences in June, with prices ranging from 3 to 4 dinars per kilo, gradually dropping to around two dinars by mid-month. However, this year's situation has been reversed due

to the overwhelming demand, resulting in soaring prices.

The introduction of new summer products, especially almond ice cream, has further fuelled the high demand for this delightful fruit. Reportedly, Al-Arajneh, along with a dedicated team from Al-Mahrah, worked to create almond ice cream and other exciting products.

Almond ice cream has become a hit, attracting not only the Gulf



population but also the European and East Asian communities.

Beyond its delicious taste, almond ice cream is gaining popularity for its health benefits, being free of preservatives and milk derivatives.

Additionally, the product's versatility allows even those with dental issues, like the elderly or individuals wearing braces, to savour almonds in the form of ice cream or juice, which has

contributed to the to the widespread appreciation of this nutritious and delightful fruit.



Almonds contain lots of healthy fats, fiber, protein, magnesium, and vitamin E. The health benefits of almonds include lower blood sugar levels, reduced blood pressure, and lower cholesterol levels. They can also reduce hunger and promote weight loss.

Almonds need really hot weather and cool winters to grow

Almond growers rent bees for pollination and it significantly increases the cost for them



Twenty-year-old mom beats husband's mental illness claim, wins child's custody

TDT | Manama

After an intense court battle over the custody of their child, a 20-year-old mother emerged victorious, despite facing accusations of mental instability from her husband.

The husband had approached the court seeking custody of the baby, arguing that his wife was mentally unfit and incapable of caring for their child.

However, the court rejected his claims after verifying a medical report from a psychiatric clinic, which certified her as mentally sound.

Based on the medical report, the court ruled in favour of the wife, granting her custody of the child.

Additionally, the court ordered the husband to pay more than BD2000 annually for both



Representative picture

the wife and their child's expenses.

During the trial, the wife's

lawyer revealed that their client had been experiencing marital problems from the early stages

of their marriage.

These issues cropped up when the wife discovered her

husband's criminal records and multiple extramarital affairs. Furthermore, the lawyer asserted that the man's academic qualifications were fraudulent.

The situation worsened with the birth of their child.

The wife explained to the court that her husband began to torment her, pressuring her to accept his illicit relationships and inappropriate behaviour.

Feeling unable to live life according to the man's demands, she eventually decided to file for divorce.

The husband, in response, claimed that his wife had previously admitted to having mental health issues and being on psychiatric medication.

He also accused her of threatening to harm the baby and asserted that she struggled with anger issues.

The husband had approached the court seeking custody of the baby, arguing that his wife was mentally unfit and incapable of caring for their child.

In turn, the wife filed a counter-lawsuit, demanding a divorce and financial support for herself and the child, as the husband had been unwilling to provide for them.

The court carefully considered the evidence presented by both parties and ultimately ruled in favour of the mother, recognising her ability to care for the child and her rights to a stable life.

High Court of Appeals upholds drug peddler's five-year jail term

TDT | Manama

A drug peddler had his five-year prison terms confirmed by the High Court of Appeals after rejecting his appeal challenging the lower court's verdict in the case.

Police had arrested the defendant with over 120 drug-filled capsules in his stomach at Bahrain International Airport.

The incident leading to the arrest began with Airport customs officers growing suspicious of the man's actions during clearance procedures and deciding to subject the person to a detailed examination.

Despite finding nothing suspi-



Representative picture

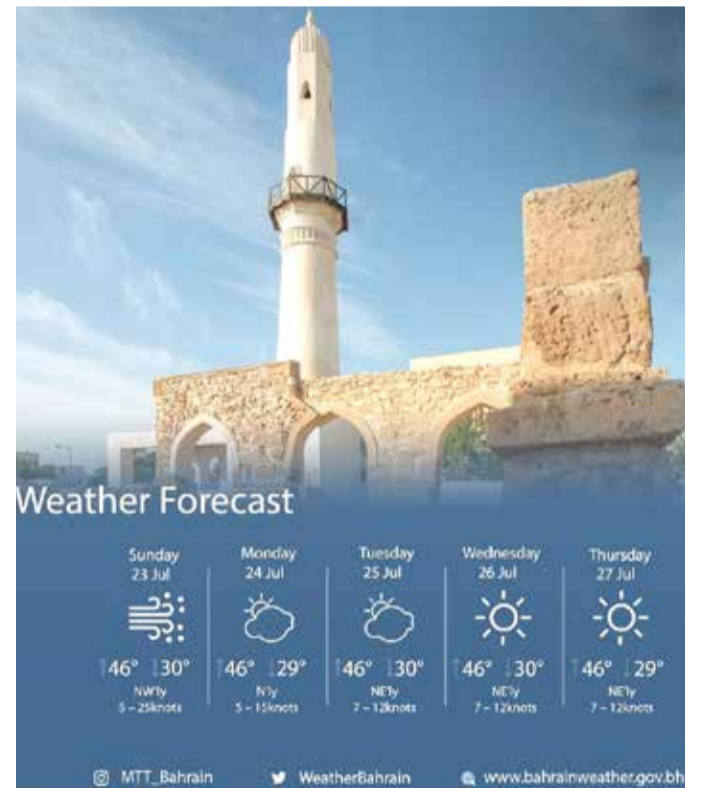
cious in his baggage, the officers still recommended to subject

him to an x-ray examination, for he displayed signs of extreme

fatigue and mental stress.

The x-ray examination confirmed their suspicions, revealing foreign objects inside his intestine. Upon questioning, the suspect confessed that the objects were capsules filled with narcotics. Further investigations revealed his involvement in a drug smuggling network that was attempting to smuggle drugs into the Kingdom.

As a result, the Public Prosecution charged him with drug trafficking and drug abuse, leading to his conviction. The Court of Appeals upheld the lower court's verdict, ensuring that the drug peddler will spend the next five years behind bars



Suspect remanded for stealing 16 phones by hacking payment info

TDT | Manama

A man accused of hacking into a delivery company's computer network to acquire mobile phones without payment has been remanded into custody, pending further investigation.

The suspect faces charges of stealing 16 mobile phones from the delivery company by manipulating their electronic data to evade payment.

The public prosecution has completed its investigation and has ordered the suspect to stand trial before a competent court.

The arrest was made after the delivery company filed a case against the suspect, alleging that the suspect tampered with their systems to receive deliveries without making any payments, as stated by the Deputy Head of the Cybercrime Prosecution. The complaint lodged by the



Representative picture

company revealed that the suspect placed orders for mobile

phones in batches, and they were delivered without any pay-

ment being made. The fraudulent activity came to light when

the company conducted a review of their computer systems and noticed discrepancies in their records.

Subsequent investigations conducted by officials confirmed that the suspect had manipulated the company's electronic data to bypass the payment process.

In response, the Public Prosecution collaborated with the Financial Crimes and Money Laundering Prosecution to launch a comprehensive investigation.

The company's officials mentioned that they had been monitoring the accused due to several previous suspicious attempts to breach their computing system in the past year. Although they had managed to block previous attempts successfully, the suspect reportedly discovered a vulnerability in their programme, allowing him to overcome their

firewall.

To substantiate their claims, the company presented a technical report to the court, tracing the origin of the cyber-attacks.

As part of the ongoing investigation, prosecutors ordered a forensic examination of the accused's phone, which allegedly played a role in breaking the company's firewall.

Experts who analysed the phone confirmed that it was indeed used by the suspect to conduct illegal activities.

During the interrogation, the suspect confessed to the crime, admitting that he had an accomplice involved in the illicit activities.

The prosecutors have charged the suspect with distorting the IT system of a private party and committing electronic fraud, leading to his trial before a competent court.

Municipal council gives green light to 153 recommendations

TDT | Manama

Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture, announced approving 153 recommendations and decisions put forth by the Capital Municipality and other municipal councils, during the first session of the sixth municipal session.

The most prominent areas covered by these recommendations include urban plan-



Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak

ning, road design and maintenance, municipal regulations, and public services and utilities.

Minister Al Mubarak emphasised that the Ministry collaborated closely with relevant government entities to implement the recommendations and transform them into actionable municipal programs and plans.

Twenty percent of the requests were for urban planning and design, while the same per-

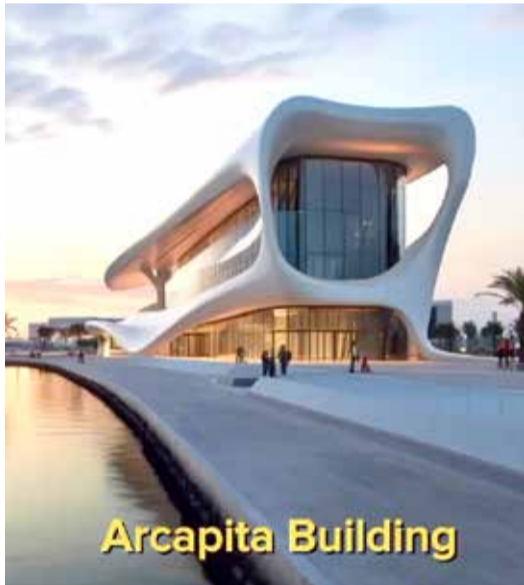
centage was also dedicated to road maintenance and development. Proposals for regulations and decisions accounted for 19% of the total requests, while 16% were directed towards municipal services and utilities, including the development of parks, walkways, markets, and other facilities.

The rest of the recommendations pertained to the establishment of housing or educational projects, public health, electricity, water affairs, and

the organisation of places of worship.

Throughout the first session, which operates under the framework of Article (20) of the Municipal Law, the Capital Municipality Council and the municipal councils of the Muharraq, northern, and southern regions collectively presented 274 decisions and recommendations. Only a minor portion, comprising 19%, was rejected, signifying a robust acceptance of the proposed measures.

Bahrain's iconic buildings reimaged through the vision of Zaha Hadid spark online debate



TDT | Manama

What if some of Bahrain's iconic buildings were designed by the one and only Zaha Hadid?

Interesting, isn't it? But, is it even possible? If the answer is "nay," wait a minute, as mish3alyousif has already done that!

Reimagined versions of some of the Kingdom's iconic landmarks through the eyes of Zaha Hadid are already making the internet explode with frenzy.

For those who don't know who Hadid is: Zaha Hadid, in full Dame Zaha Hadid, is an Iraqi-born British architect known for her radical deconstructivist designs.

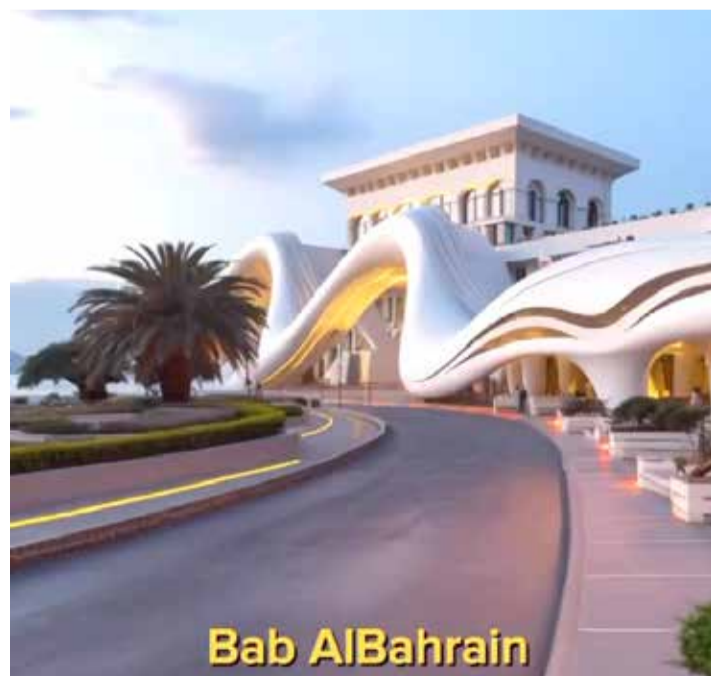
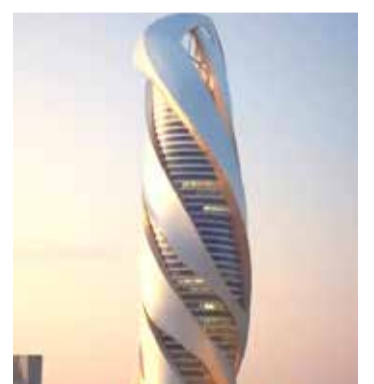
In 2004, she became the first woman to be awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize. Hadid's extraordinary accomplishments were all the more remarkable considering she was working in an industry largely dominated by men.

The reimaged versions of the Bahraini landmarks take into account this prowess of Hadid, with a pinch of magic.

But, as in all cases, the coin has two sides.

While some see it as an insult to the original designers, others are full of praise, calling the designs "inspiring" and cool.

Whatever the internet says, one would have to say that the futuristic makeover has given the icons a newfound verve, which is also attracting tons of



Seen in pictures above are some of the reemaged and original versions of the iconic buildings in the Kingdom

comments. The buildings that were part of Zaha's imagination are Arcapita Building, Bahrain National Stadium, Bahrain International Circuit, Four Seasons Hotel, Bahrain World Trade Centre,

United Tower Bahrain, Clock Roundabout, Bab Al Bahrain, Bahrain Financial Harbour, Seef Mall, and Al Fateh Mosque.

The video garnered several thousand likes and interesting

comments. "Zaha forms an inspiration in architecture. She is one of the best. The Arab world should be proud. Sad she had to pass before she was accepted in the Arab world," reads a comment.

Yet another wrote: "Most of

them look like melted versions due to the summer heat..."

"Love them all, looks amazing," a user wrote.

"Kinda disrespectful for the original designer, if you think about it. Every architect is

unique in their own way, and they wouldn't want their designs to be redone to look like someone else's," reads another comment.

Now, it's your turn to tell us what do you think about it.

President Biden secures tech safety pledges over 'enormous' AI risks

● The companies agreed to develop "robust technical mechanisms," such as watermarking systems

● Top representatives from Amazon, Anthropic, Google, Inflection, Meta, Microsoft and OpenAI took part

AFP | Washington



US President Joe Biden (L) speaks about artificial intelligence (AI), in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington

President Joe Biden evoked AI's "enormous" risk and promise Friday at a White House meeting with tech leaders who committed to guarding against everything from cyber-attacks to fraud as the sector revolutionizes society.

"It is astounding," Biden said, highlighting AI's "enormous, enormous promise of both risk to our society and our economy and our national security, but also incredible opportunities."

Standing alongside top representatives from Amazon, Anthropic, Google, Inflection, Meta, Microsoft and OpenAI, Biden said the cutting-edge

companies had made commitments to "guide responsible innovation" as AI rips ever deeper into personal and business life.

"We'll see more technology change in the next 10 years or even in the next few years than we've seen in the last 50 years. That has been an astounding

revelation to me," Biden said. "The group here will be critical in shepherding that innovation with responsibility and safety."

Ahead of the meeting, the seven AI giants committed to a series of self-regulated safeguards that the White House said would "underscore three principles that must be funda-

mental to the future of AI: safety, security and trust."

Although AI -- in which computer programs learn to do many jobs currently performed by humans -- is seen as a hugely empowering tool, it also poses potentially nightmarish risks.

In their pledge, the companies agreed to develop "robust

technical mechanisms," such as watermarking systems, to ensure users know when content is from AI and not human-generated.

Worry that content created by artificial intelligence will be used for fraud and misinformation has ramped up as the technology improves and the 2024 presidential election gets closer.

Already, supporters of Republican candidate Ron DeSantis have gotten attention with an attack ad featuring an artificially generated voice like that of party frontrunner Donald Trump.

The White House initiative demonstrates an early effort to get in front of the snowballing problem of how to regulate an industry developing faster than Congress may be able to handle.

Among the measures pledged by the seven companies ahead of the Biden meeting is agreeing to independent "internal and external security testing of their AI systems before their release" for threats to biosecurity, cybersecurity and "broader societal effects."

Officials said Biden is also already working on an executive

YOU

KNOW WHAT

Artificial intelligence is the umbrella term for computer systems that can interpret, analyze, and learn from data in ways similar to human cognition. The field of AI is vast, encapsulating numerous subfields and applications related to machine intelligence.

China envoy calls Kenya economic ties a 'win-win'

China is the second-largest donor to Kenya after the World Bank.

AFP | Nairobi

China's top diplomat Wang Yi during a visit to Kenya yesterday praised the two countries' economic partnership as a "win-win", according to a statement from the Chinese authorities.

Kenya and China have "become good friends with mutual trust in politics and good partners with win-win economic cooperation", according to the statement from the Chinese embassy in Kenya.

With the most dynamic economy in East Africa, Kenya is considered by the international community as a stable democracy in a troubled region.

China is the second-largest donor to Kenya after the World Bank. In Mombasa, on the Kenyan coast, China is financing the construction of a new terminal



Wang Yi

in East Africa's largest port.

China has also loaned \$5 billion (4.7 billion euros) toward the most expensive infrastructure project in the country since its independence in 1963: a train line that since 2017 has connected the port city Mombasa with Naivasha, in the Rift Valley, via

the capital Nairobi.

"The landmark project of the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway has completely changed the face of Kenya," the embassy's statement said.

Kenyan President William Ruto, elected last year, in a tweet, stressed "our commit-

ment to strengthening the Kenya-China strategic partnership centred on infrastructure development, climate change"

But China is often accused of using its creditor status for gaining diplomatic or trade concessions, raising concerns about many African countries' ability to assume the debts contracted.

China, the world's number two economy, rejects practising "debt-trap diplomacy" as an unfair criticism from Western rivals who have themselves burdened nations with huge debts

Kenya's economy is particularly burdened by debts of \$70 billion, around 67% of its GDP.

After visiting Kenya, Wang will visit South Africa on July 24 and 25 ahead of the BRICS summit next month, a group that includes South Africa, Brazil, China, India and Russia.

ECB to tighten monitoring of banks' liquidity

● The shift comes just after the bankruptcy of regional banks in the United States in March

Berlin

The European Central Bank (ECB) announced yesterday it wants to monitor the liquidity of banks in the eurozone more frequently to reduce the future risk of a financial crisis.

"We decided to send banks, starting in September, a request for information on a weekly basis, in order to have more recent data to allow us to better monitor liquidity developments," said the chair of the body in charge of supervising banks in Europe, which is part of the ECB, in an interview published on the ECB site.

"It's a question of sending, with greater frequency, the information on liquidity that banks already send us on a monthly basis," Andrea Enria said. The data include details such as the maturity of liquidi-

ty in the bank's accounts, their counterparties and refinancing transactions with the ECB.

This should make it possible to better control the development of "the most liquid assets and liabilities, like deposits", Enria added.

The shift comes just after the bankruptcy of regional banks in the United States in March, followed by the collapse of Credit Suisse, which triggered fears of a global financial crisis.

The measure responds to a June recommendation by the European Banking Authority (ABE), the regulator for the sector.

The European Union also adopted at the end of June new stricter regulations on banks to avoid a repeat of the 2008 financial crisis.

In this context, the chair of the supervisory board called for greater cross-border consolidation of the European banking sector

"A more integrated market" of European banks "would be beneficial because it would be more capable of withstanding possible shocks", he said.

Nations aim to ink deep-sea mining rules by 2025

United Nations

The International Seabed Authority's member nations on Friday agreed on a two-year roadmap for the adoption of deep sea mining regulations, despite conservationists' calls for a moratorium on mineral

extraction they say would avert marine threats.

The ISA, an intergovernmental body tasked with protecting the seabed, and its member states have spent the last decade trying to hash out a mining code for the possible exploitation of

nickel, cobalt and copper in deep seabed areas that fall outside of national jurisdictions.

But an agreement has so far been elusive.

In Friday's decision, the ISA Council, which had been negotiating in Jamaica for the past

two weeks, said it "intends to continue the elaboration" of regulations "with a view to their adoption at the 30th session of the Authority" in 2025.

"This is an indicative target," rather than a deadline, said council chairman Juan Jose

Gonzalez Mijares.

Since July 9, after the expiration of a deadline triggered by the small Pacific state of Nauru in 2021, the ISA is obligated to consider -- though not necessarily grant -- licenses for potentially environmentally dev-

astating mining operations if governments request them.

That would go beyond the status quo, which has so far only seen the body grant exploration permits, as the deep sea mining sector itches to take off in earnest.

News in brief

Rockets in Sudan's Darfur kill 16 civilians: lawyers ♦ At least 16 civilians have been killed by rocket fire that hit their houses in war-torn Sudan's western Darfur region, a local lawyers' union said yesterday. The vast region, already ravaged by brutal conflict in the early 2000s, has seen some of the worst of the violence since fighting erupted in mid-April between Sudan's rival generals vying for power.

"During an exchange of rocket fire between the army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), 16 civilians were killed on Friday, according to a preliminary toll, in Nyala," the South Darfur state capital, the union said. And at least one man was killed by a sniper, it added.

♦ The number of migrants passing through Panama on the way to the United States keeps climbing, far outpacing the record numbers reached in 2022, a top authority said. "Today we add 227,000 migrants who have passed through our territory, and this month we are going to exceed the history-making 2022, when there were 248,000 migrants," Security Minister Juan Manuel Pino told reporters. Migrant passages are tallied at a border checkpoint in the Darien Gap, the muddy jungle that separates Panama and Colombia, which migrants traverse on foot as they head toward the United States.

Portugal tightens border checks ahead of Pope's visit ♦ In preparing to welcome Pope Francis along with a million young people for World Youth Day, Portugal has reinstated random border security checks yesterday. The "exceptional" measure has been implemented "to prevent possible threats to public order and internal security", which will last until Aug 7, according to a government decision. The identity checks at the borders will be "random and not systematic", said Interior Minister Jose Luis Carneiro on Friday, adding there will be coordination with the Spanish, French and Italian authorities.

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Fur-ever after: Indonesians sorry after lavish dog 'wedding' backlash



Two Alaskan Malamutes don traditional Javanese costumes alongside their owners in a "wedding" widely panned in Indonesia

AFP | Jakarta

Two Indonesian women have apologised after a lavish "wedding" for their dogs sparked a backlash in the middle-income country, where wealth distribution is one of the most unequal in the world.

Two Alaskan Malamutes were wedded Friday at a mall in the capital Jakarta, donning traditional Javanese costumes alongside their owners and relatives at a fake ceremony that reportedly cost 200 million rupiah (\$13,350).

A social media uproar followed after images emerged of the wolf-like dogs taking each other's paws in marriage at the extravagant ceremony, forcing the owners into a contrite news conference.

"We regret it very much and we would like to apologise for the Javanese culture enthusiasts and all Indonesians who were uncomfortable and hurt by the event," Indira Ratnasari, owner of female dog Luna, said Wednesday.

"We had no intention to insult the Indonesian and the Javanese culture," she said,

according to footage posted on her makeup artist's Instagram account.

Ostentatious displays of wealth in the world's fourth-most populous country are frowned upon and often criticised because of its widening income gap.

The minimum monthly wage in Jakarta is 4.9 million rupiah (\$327) and the World Bank last year said nearly a tenth of Indonesia's 270 million people still live below the poverty line.

YOU KNOW WHAT

The minimum monthly wage in Jakarta is 4.9 million rupiah (\$327) and the World Bank last year said nearly a tenth of Indonesia's 270 million people still live below the poverty line

30,000 people moved as Rhodes wildfire

AFP | Athens, Greece

Officials on the Greek island of Rhodes said Saturday they had moved 30,000 people threatened by wildfires to safety -- including 2,000 who had to be ferried off beaches.

George Hadjimarkos, regional governor of the South Aegean, told Skai television that the operation, which was still ongoing, had been hampered by fires cutting off some road access.

"The aim is to protect human life," he said.

Tourists and some locals were being taken to gyms, schools and hotel conference centres on the island where they will stay overnight, while firefighters battle the blaze.

In addition, three passenger ferries have been moored at the port of Rhodes to accommodate those rescued, Athens News Agency reported.

Members of the coastguard, the armed forces and local authority workers used dozens of buses to help move people away from the fires, said Rhodes municipality official Teris Hatzioannou.



Tourists are evacuated from hotels during a wildfire on the Greek island of Rhodes

Where the fires had cut off road access, some tourists had to walk to safety.

Panagiotis Dimelis, head of the Archangelos village council, told Skai TV that many locals had rushed to help the tourists.

"It is an unprecedented situation for the island," he added.

For the beach operation, the coastguard said three of its boats led more than 30 private vessels to pick up people from the Kiotari and Lardos beaches on the east of the Mediterranean island.

A Greek navy boat was also headed to the area to help, according to the coastguard.

Later Saturday, fire services spokesman Yannis Artopoulos told ERT that new evacuation orders had been issued for the villages of Gennadi and Kiotari with direction to Plimiri on the eastern side of the island.

And one boat owner involved in the beach evacuations told Skai TV: "We have received an order from the Port Authority to head back to Gennadi for new evacuations."

"There are a lot of people at the beach. More than 500 people."

Monkey business in Pakistan court during smuggling case

AFP | Karachi

A baby monkey caused chaos in a Pakistan court after escaping from a troop presented as evidence in a case of wildlife smuggling, officials said.

Two men were intercepted outside Karachi Thursday trying to smuggle 14 baby monkeys in crates usually used to transport mangos.

But when they were brought to court on Friday, one of the monkeys escaped -- causing chaos as staff tried to tempt it down from a tree.

"The monkeys were kept in the boxes in a bad condition...



A monkey trainer gives water to his monkey along a street in Rawalpindi

animals is illegal in Pakistan, but laws are routinely ignored and there is a lively market in exotic pets. Monkeys are frequently kept by street entertainers to attract customers, and in some cases have been trained by criminals to enter houses to steal.

The smugglers were each fined 100,000 rupees (around \$350) on Friday and the court ordered the monkeys to be handed over to Karachi Zoo -- a step immediately criticised by wildlife officials.

"The monkeys should have been returned to their natural habitat from where they were captured," Mahar said.

they could hardly breathe," said Wildlife Department. Javed Mahar, chief of Sindh The trade or keeping of wild

Around 2,000 penguins wash up dead on Uruguay coast

AFP | Montevideo

Around 2,000 penguins have appeared dead on the coast of eastern Uruguay in the last 10 days, and the cause, which does not appear to be avian influenza, remains a mystery, authorities said.

The Magellanic penguins, mostly juveniles, died in the Atlantic Ocean and were carried by currents to Uruguayan shores, said Carmen Leizagoyen, head of the Environment Ministry's department of fauna.

"This is mortality in the water. Ninety percent are young specimens that arrive without fat reserves and with empty stomachs," she said, and stressed that all samples taken have tested negative for avian influenza.



Dead penguins are scattered on a beach in Uruguay

undetermined reasons.

Hector Caymaris, director of the Laguna de Rocha protected area, said that he counted more than 500 dead penguins along six miles (10 kilometres) of Atlantic coast.

Environmental advocates attribute the increase in Magellanic penguin deaths to overfishing and illegal fishing.

"From the 1990s and 2000s we began to see animals with a lack of food. The resource is overexploited," Richard Tesore, of the NGO SOS Marine Wildlife Rescue, said.

A subtropical cyclone in the Atlantic, which hit southeastern Brazil in mid-July, probably caused the weakest animals to die from the inclement weather, he added.

Magellanic penguins nest in southern Argentina. In the southern hemisphere winter, they migrate north in search of food and warmer waters, even reaching the coast of the Brazilian state of Espirito Santo. "It is normal for some percentage to die, but not these numbers," Leizagoyen said, recalling that a similar die-off occurred last year in Brazil, for

1215

Frederick II crowned King of the Romans (King of the Germans) in Aachen



1777

American Revolution: Louis XVI of France and his Foreign Minister clandestinely agree to supply US with munitions

1829

William Austin Burt patents America's first "typographer" (typewriter)

1840

Union Act passed by British Parliament, uniting Upper & Lower Canada

...d to safety ...es rage



Members of the coast-guard, the armed forces and local authority workers used dozens of buses to help move people away from the fires

had missed their flights off the island after the fires cut off normal transport routes, according to media reports.

Elsewhere, firefighters are still trying to bring the blaze on the island under control.

Deputy Fire Chief Yannis Artopios said the blaze on Rhodes, which broke out on a mountain in the centre of the island, was the toughest his force had had to face.

Five helicopters and 200 firefighters fought the blaze during the daytime, but the air support was called off as the light failed.

The battle to extinguish the fire in Rhodes continues in the area of Laermon and Lardos, where it is raging out of control.

ERT TV reported that some firefighters were stranded in the Ypseni Monastery, near Lardos, on the eastern side of the island as they tried to convince the nuns living there to leave the area.

But they were reported to be safe.

Further inland, the fires had reached the village of Laerma and was burning houses and a church there, the ANA news agency and ERT TV reported.

North Korea fires 'several cruise missiles' into sea

AFP | Seoul

North Korea has fired "several cruise missiles" into the Yellow Sea between China and the Korean peninsula, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said yesterday.

The launches, which the military said took place around 4 am (1900 GMT), come as relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points ever.

"South Korean and US intelligence authorities were analysing the launches while monitoring signs of additional activities," the JCS said.

North Korea fired two ballistic missiles into the sea on its opposite coast toward Japan just three days earlier.

The recent weapons tests are the latest in a series by Pyongyang and come as Seoul and Washington ramp up defence cooperation in the face of soaring tensions with the North.

Diplomacy between Pyongyang and Seoul has stalled and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called for ramping up weapons development, includ-



People watch a television screen showing a news broadcast with file footage of a North Korean missile test, at a railway station in Seoul

ing tactical nukes.

In response, Seoul and Washington have staged joint military exercises with advanced stealth jets and US strategic assets, while an American nuclear-armed submarine this week made a South Korean port call for the first time in decades.

On Thursday, North Korea's defense minister Kang Sun Nam said the Ohio-class submarine's deployment may have fallen "under the conditions of the use of nuclear weapons specified in the DPRK law on

the nuclear force policy," using an acronym for North Korea's official name.

A day later, South Korea's defence ministry reiterated that any use of nuclear weapons by the North would prompt an "immediate and decisive response" resulting in the "end" of the Kim regime.

Yesterday's incident also comes as a US soldier is believed to be in North Korean custody after breaking away from a tour group visiting the Demilitarized Zone.

China told to stop tankers in its waters reaching N. Korea

AFP | New York

The Group of Seven nations, the European Union and three other countries are urging China to expel oil tankers from its waters that appear to be taking fuel to North Korea in defiance of UN sanctions, according to a letter seen by AFP on Friday.

"We have concerns regarding the continuing presence of multiple oil tankers... that use your territorial waters in Sansha Bay as refuge to facilitate their trade of sanctioned petroleum products to the DPRK," the letter said, using initials for the formal name Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Ambassadors from the G7 nations -- Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the United States -- signed the letter addressed to China's UN envoy Zhang Jun.

Also signing were envoys from the European Union,



An oil tanker ship unloads crude oil at the port in Qingdao, in China's eastern Shandong province (file photo)

South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

In the letter, the ambassadors told Zhang they "would like to provide your government with additional information and satellite imagery that clearly indicates these practices continued to occur within China's jurisdiction in 2022 and have continued in 2023."

"We reiterate our previous request that China inspect the vessels for evidence of illicit oil smuggling, deny them all services, and ultimately expel them from your waters as quickly as possible," it added.

A source said the letter had been sent to the Chinese envoy, though there was no confirmation it had been received.

Greece facing longest heatwave on record while record highs hit US



A mother cools off from the heat with her child playing with water around a fountain in Athens

AFP | Athens

Greece was yesterday facing its hottest July weekend in 50 years, with temperatures forecast to soar above 40 Celsius (104 Fahrenheit), while a record-breaking heatwave stretching across the southern United States was expected to expand in the coming days.

Tens of millions of people in the northern hemisphere have been suffering through intense heat this summer as the world appears headed for its hottest July on record.

As temperature records tumble, experts have pointed the finger at climate change driven by the burning of fossil fuels, saying global warming is playing a key role in destructive weather.

Already 11 days into its heatwave, Greece's national weather institute warned reprieve was still days away, setting this up to be the longest hot spell the country has ever seen.

Already 11 days into its heatwave, Greece's national weather institute warned reprieve was still days away, setting this up to be the longest hot spell the country has ever seen

"According to the data, we will probably go through 16-17 days of a heatwave, which has never happened before in our country," Kostas Lagouvardos, the director of research at the National Observatory, told ERT television yesterday.

The previous heatwave record in Greece was set in 1987, when scorching temperatures of over 39C lasted 11 days.

Across the southern United States, about 80 million Americans will swelter in temperatures of 41C and above this weekend, the National Weather Service (NWS) said.

'Extreme' Indonesian market ends dog, cat meat trade

AFP | Jakarta

A notorious Indonesian animal market has ended the sale of dog and cat meat after years of activist pressure to stop the trade and its brutal methods of slaughter, according to campaigners.

Canine and feline meat were on the menu alongside bats, rats, snakes and monkeys at the Tomohon Extreme Market on Sulawesi island, known for its disturbing culinary spread until a ban was imposed on Friday.

The previously uncompromising bazaar is the first such market in the country to finally back down and stop the trade of cat and dog meat, animal rights group Humane Society International (HSI) said in a statement Friday.

It called the ban a "historic agreement that will spare thousands of animals from being bludgeoned and blowtorched to



Activists look at dogs at a slaughterhouse in Tomohon

Indonesia remains one of the few countries in the world that still permits the sale of dog and cat meat due to local traditions and culture

death for human consumption." Indonesia remains one of the

few countries in the world that still permits the sale of dog and cat meat due to local traditions and culture.

The market's six remaining dog and cat meat traders signed an agreement to stop the sale, and the mayor of Tomohon city signed into law a ban on future trade at the market, the group said in a statement.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Heat waves are becoming more frequent, more intense and longer - all due to the impacts of the climate crisis. #ClimateAction can't wait.

@antoniogetterres

02



Let's be guardians of truth in the digital age. Verify sources, question narratives, and empower ourselves with accurate knowledge. By sharing responsibly and promoting credible information, we can build a stronger, more informed society. Let's stand united against misinformation and disinformation!

@DrTedros

03



Our Administration is committed to realizing the promise of AI by managing the risks with new laws, regulations, and oversight. And in the weeks ahead, I'll continue to take executive action and work with Congress to help America lead the way towards responsible innovation.

@POTUS

04



Good call with President @ZelenskyyUa on #Russia's withdrawal from the Black Sea grain deal. We strongly condemn Moscow's attempt to weaponise food. Allies stand with #Ukraine for as long as it takes & following #NATOSummit, Ukraine is closer to #NATO than ever before.

@jensstoltenberg

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

MAHARASHTRA CULTURAL SOCIETY SUMMER CAMP

Maharashtra Cultural Society Bahrain arranged a summer camp for children aged 4-14. Camp includes various activities to engage the children with weekly field trips and many fun-filled activities. The summer camp will end on 18th August with a finale.



CONDOLENCE MEETING FOR FORMER KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

A condolence meeting was held at the Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam on the demise of former Kerala Chief Minister and Senior Congress leader Oomen Chandy. P V Radhakrishna Pillai, President, BKS presented the condolence resolution. Varghese Karakkal, General Secretary, BKS and representatives from various expatriate organisations expressed their condolences on the event.



BLOOD DONATION DRIVE

MM Team Malayalee Manasu, a leading charity group of Keralites in Bahrain conducted a mega blood donation drive at the Salmaniya Blood Bank. About 70 people participated in the camp. Various social workers also visited the camp and expressed their wishes.



'THIRST-QUENCHERS 2023'

Indian Community Relief Fund (ICRF) in association with India in Bahrain (Embassy of India, Bahrain) organised the 3rd summer awareness camp of the 'Thirst-Quenchers 2023' to create awareness towards a healthy & safe summer. Nearly 250 workers from Dilmunia worksite were distributed Summer kits. Mr Ravi Shanker Shukla, Second Secretary represented the Embassy. The Thirst Quenchers program which started this month will continue till the end of August.



FAMILY MEETING BY CANCER CARE GROUP

A family meeting was organised by Cancer Care Group at the Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam. The meeting discussed the preparations for the upcoming medical seminar scheduled for early August in association with King Hamad American Mission Hospital in Aali and the annual celebrations in November.



Classifieds



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Mbappe's omission from PSG's tour fuels speculation of Madrid move



Kylian Mbappe (left) and his younger brother Ethan at PSG training ahead of the club's Japan tour

AFP | Paris

Paris Saint-Germain have left Kylian Mbappe out of their squad for a pre-season tour of Japan and South Korea, casting further doubt on the forward's future at the French champions.

PSG gave no reason for the omission of France's captain but 24-year-old Mbappe has said for weeks that he is refusing to sign a new contract.

His omission will fuel fresh speculation that he could leave to join Real Madrid before next season.

The forward declared in May that he did not want to extend his PSG contract, which expires next year, but indicated he wanted to remain at the club for a final season.

"I still have a year left on my contract and I am going to honour my contract," he said. That would allow him to become a free agent next summer and leave PSG for nothing, a prospect that club president Nasser al-Khelaifi said was "impossible".

"We can't let the best player in the world today leave for free," Khelaifi said.

Khelaifi even gave Mbappe an ultimatum of a "maximum two weeks" to make his decision -- sign a new contract or



leave this summer. That date corresponds roughly with the departure of the team for Asia yesterday.

When training resumed on July 15, Khelaifi again asked the Mbappe camp to clarify the situation. But he has not received a response, a source with knowledge of the negotiations said.

Mbappe has been taking part in the club's pre-season preparations and played the last 30 minutes and scored as PSG entertained Le Havre in a training ground friendly on Friday.

Mbappe, the club's all-time top scorer with 212 goals in 260 appearances, remains the second most expensive player in history.

He was still a teenager when he joined PSG on a season-long loan from Monaco in August 2017.

Messi makes magical start to Miami career with late winner on debut

AFP | Miami

Lionel Messi made a Hollywood start to his American adventure, scoring a last-second winner with a curling free-kick in his debut game for Inter Miami on Friday.

Deep in the fourth minute of stoppage time, with the Leagues Cup match against Mexican club Cruz Azul standing at 1-1, Messi won a free-kick just outside the box, in perfect range for his famous left foot.

The script had been written and Messi delivered his line perfectly.

The seven-times Ballon d'Or winner took a glance at the position of Cruz Azul goalkeeper Andres Gudino, then put his head down before curling his shot high to the keeper's right and into the top corner to deliver the 2-1 triumph.

The capacity 20,000 crowd at Miami's DRV PNK Stadium went wild, with some fans running on to the field before being apprehended by security. Smoke bombs in Miami's trademark pink went off in the area behind the goal, occupied by the team's most passionate supporters.

"We wanted to start like this by giving these people a victory," said Messi.

"We knew that it was very



Inter Miami's Argentine forward Lionel Messi celebrates after scoring a goal

"We wanted to start like this by giving these people a victory. We knew that it was very important for us to start this championship in winning fashion and luckily we were able to do it in the end, and I am very happy"

LIONEL MESSI

important for us to start this championship in winning fashion and luckily we were able to

do it in the end, and I am very happy," he added.

Miami are rock bottom of Major League Soccer and without a win in 11 games in league play, so Messi said the victory was sorely needed.

"It is a huge joy to get this first victory after how we have done in the league," he said. "It is important to start winning, beyond the fact that it is another championship, for confidence it is very good to get victories."

Miami and Major League Soccer hope that the arrival of the Argentine World Cup winner and all-time great will transform the sport and push it into

BETTER YOU KNOW

Even before his wonderful goal Messi had looked sharp and alert, his touch belying the fact that until little over a week ago he was vacationing on a Caribbean beach with his family

the American mainstream.

If Messi's debut was any guide, the former Barcelona star still has plenty to offer.

Even before his wonderful goal he had looked sharp and alert, his touch belying the fact that until little over a week ago he was vacationing on a Caribbean beach with his family.

Sergio Busquets, the Spanish midfielder and former Barca team-mate, who has joined Messi for his American adventure, also made a strong impression after they both entered the contest in the 54th minute as part of a triple change with Venezuelan Josef Martinez.

Mukesh claims maiden Test wicket for India as rain arrives

AFP | London

Debutant Mukesh Kumar claimed a maiden Test wicket for India as West Indies reached 117 for two in reply to 438 at lunch on a rain-hit third day of the second and final test at Queen's Park Oval yesterday.

Resuming at 86 for one on an increasingly benign surface, Kraigg Brathwaite and Kirk McKenzie made serene progress almost to the end of the first hour.

But then left-handed McKenzie wafted at a wide delivery



Ishan Kishan (2R) hugs Mukesh Kumar (R) of India after taking a catch

from Kumar to give the seamer his first test wicket as he edged a catch to wicketkeeper Ishan Kishan.

Dismissed for 32 off 57 balls in an innings featuring four fours and a six, the 22-year-old's dejected walk back to the pavilion coincided with the arrival of steady showers which grew in intensity to force an early lunch interval.

West Indies captain Brathwaite will resume on 49 in conditions which are very much his element. He has so far faced 161 deliveries, stroking four fours.

Hamilton ends pole drought

Lewis Hamilton takes shock pole position for Hungarian Formula 1 Grand Prix after stunning lap

● **First pole of the season for Mercedes driver**

● **Verstappen second, with Norris third and Piastri fourth**

AFP | Budapest

Lewis Hamilton claimed his first pole position since 2021 after edging Max Verstappen in qualifying yesterday for the Hungarian Grand Prix.

The seven-time world champion ended a barren run stretching back 33 races by claiming a record-increasing 104th pole of his career and his record ninth at the Hungaroring circuit.

His success with a last-gasp lap was greeted with cheers by the crowd and ended defending double world champion Verstappen's run of five straight poles for Red Bull.

"I didn't expect this, for us to be fighting for pole position here this weekend," said a hoarse and emotional Hamilton, who had described his car as being "at its worst" on Friday.

"But hats off to the team.



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton drives during the third practice session

They've done a fantastic job" added Hamilton, back on the front of the grid for the first time since the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix in 2021.

The Briton outpaced Verstappen by just 0.003 seconds in a thrilling conclusion to their contest.

Verstappen, whose Red Bull car ran with an updates package, was disappointed.

"We've not been on it so far this weekend," he said, but with a 99-point lead ahead of team-mate Perez in the title race, he could afford a rare off day.

Lando Norris was third ahead of his McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri, Alfa Romeo's Zhou Guanyu and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc with Valtteri Bottas taking seventh for Alfa Romeo.

Two-time champion Fernando Alonso was eighth for Aston Martin ahead of Red Bull's Sergio Perez, back in the top-ten shootout for the first time in six outings, and Nico Hulkenberg of Haas.

The session began in warm sunshine with an air temperature of 27 degrees Celsius with the teams busy calculating their

BETTER YOU KNOW

The introduction of F1's new Alternative Tyre Allocation had reduced supplies to drivers and ensured that the first qualifying session was run using only hard compound, Q2 only mediums and softs for the top 10 shoot-out - another puzzle for them to solve

options for tyre strategy on a circuit known for high attrition rates.

The introduction of F1's new Alternative Tyre Allocation had reduced supplies to drivers and ensured that the first qualifying session was run using only hard compound, Q2 only mediums and softs for the top 10 shoot-out - another puzzle for them to solve.

Hamilton's team-mate George

"I didn't expect this, for us to be fighting for pole position here this weekend. But hats off to the team. They've done a fantastic job

LEWIS HAMILTON

Russell, pole-man last year, failed to make it out of the first qualifying session, blaming heavy traffic for his elimination.

His comments on team radio were muted out by broadcasters.

Russell, disappointed by his early exit and 18th place on Sunday's grid, blamed poor preparation and timing for his lap.

He said: "We got punished... We were fast and the car felt great, but we were out of synch for the whole session.

"I'm really disappointed. We didn't need to take so many risks - you get what you deserve if you don't do things right."

Out with Russell went Williams' Logan Sargeant, who was 20th, Haas's Kevin Magnussen, Yuki Tsunoda of Alpha Tauri and Williams' Alex Albon.

Tense finale

Daniel Ricciardo, back in F1

as replacement for the luckless Nyck de Vries at Alpha Tauri, showed his potential by squeezing into Q2 in 15th place, out-qualifying his established team-mate at the first attempt.

The 'mediums' second qualifying segment began with Perez quickly on top only to be overhauled by Verstappen whose lap was promptly deleted for exceeding track limits at Turn Five.

This gave McLaren their chance to shine and Norris and Piastri rose to first and second while Zhou Guanyu, fastest in Q1, rose to sixth, showing just how open the competition had become.

With Verstappen 15th, Red Bull sent him out alone for another run which resulted in a cautious lap for P2 with two minutes remaining.

In a furious final flurry, Sainz, who started second for Ferrari last year, was knocked out in 12th along with Alpine's Esteban Ocon, Ricciardo, Aston Martin's Lance Stroll and Pierre Galsly in the second Alpine.

Perez began the final session but he was quickly topped by Norris and then Alonso, who went second, before Verstappen and Hamilton took over in P1 and P2 on their first hot runs ahead of a tense finale.

US and Japan make fast World Cup starts but England labour to victory

AFP | Brisbane

England squeezed past Haiti 1-0 as they began their Women's World Cup title bid in unconvincing fashion yesterday, but holders the United States and former champions Japan were far more comfortable.

European champions England have been touted as the prime challengers to a United States team chasing an unprecedented third World Cup crown in a row.

But they will have to do far better than the display they put on in front of nearly 45,000 spectators in Brisbane, where a Haiti side making their World Cup debut could have snatched a point at the end.

A Georgia Stanway penalty in the first half put Sarina Wiegman's side ahead, but despite having more of the ball and more shots, England had goalkeeper Mary Earps to thank for preserving their narrow lead.

She made a superb save with



Vietnam's goalkeeper Thi Kim Thanh Tran in action against the Americans

her left leg as the time ticked down after Roseline Eloissaint found herself all alone with only Earps to beat.

England, who have been embroiled in a dispute with the FA over bonuses in the lead-up to the tournament, are aiming to add the World Cup to the European crown they won at

Wembley last year.

China and Denmark, the other teams in the group, were to meet in the final match of a bumper day of four games yesterday.

In contrast to England's laboured performance, the United States and Japan were rampant against other supposed minnows.

The United States cruised to a 3-0 win over Vietnam -- it should have been many more -- before Japan crushed Zambia 5-0.

Sophia Smith was the star of the show for the US team at Eden Park in Auckland, scoring twice and setting up captain Lindsey Horan for the third in front of just over 41,000 fans.

The only sour note for Vlatko Andonovski's side, which featured six World Cup debutants at kick-off, was that they were not more ruthless in front of the goal.

They had 27 attempts to none for Vietnam and Alex Morgan missed a penalty.

"At the end, I just felt we needed to be a little bit better with the final shot," said the coach.

"We created opportunities, we had a penalty kick, obviously enough to score a few more goals, but there are lots of positives from game one going into game two."

Root removes Labuschagne as rain frustrates England's Ashes push

AFP | Manchester

Joe Root dismissed Australian century-maker Marnus Labuschagne but rain returned to Old Trafford to frustrate England's hopes of forcing a series-levelling win in the fourth Test yesterday.

Only 30 overs had been bowled during the fourth day when the wet weather swept back in during the revised tea break.

Play was officially abandoned for the day at 1727 GMT.

Australia are 214-5 in their second innings, still 61 runs behind England, who scored 592



Marnus Labuschagne plays a shot

in their first innings. Australia batsman to lose his wicket yesterday, but not before Labuschagne was the only

he had kept England at bay with an innings of 111 -- his first Test century on English soil.

England, currently 2-1 down in the five-match series, must win at Old Trafford if they are to maintain their hopes of regaining the Ashes.

Worryingly for the home side, the weather forecast for Sunday's final day in Manchester is terrible.

Pat Cummins' tourists thwarted England's bowlers, with Labuschagne and all-rounder Mitchell Marsh (31 not out) putting on 103 for the fifth wicket.

Vingegaard virtually assures back-to-back Tour triumphs



UAE Team Emirates' Slovenian rider Tadej Pogacar (R) cycles to the finish line ahead of Jumbo-Visma's Danish rider Jonas Vingegaard

AFP | Paris

Jonas Vingegaard survived the mountains in yesterday's penultimate stage of the Tour de France to virtually clinch his second successive title.

Two-time champion Tadej Pogacar won the 20th and penultimate stage but Denmark's Vingegaard leads the Slovenian by 7min 29sec ahead of Sunday's ceremonial ride to the finish line on the Champs Elysees in Paris.

"I would have liked to win the stage, but the most important thing for me was to keep the yellow jersey and that was the case," said Vingegaard.

"I knew that I had no chance in the sprint against Pogacar. I tried a surprise attack, it didn't really work!"

Adam Yates is in third place and his twin brother Simon is fourth, while Spain's Carlos Rodriguez rounds out the top five.

Pogacar raised his arms and celebrated at the line despite not having been able to shake off Vingegaard, which he re-

"I would have liked to win the stage, but the most important thing for me was to keep the yellow jersey and that was the case

JONAS VINGEGAARD

peatedly tried to do on the last hill.

"I finally felt myself again today after a bad week," said the 2020 and 2021 champion.

"I felt good from start to finish, after several very difficult days on the bike."

There were six mountains to negotiate yesterday with the last two being category one climbs.

Pogacar had promised an explosive finale, but he was tracked every kilometre of the way by his Danish rival.

Vingegaard and Pogacar have thrilled fans with their struggle for supremacy on the 21-day race which started in Bilbao in the rolling hills of the Basque Country.

Bahrain eye World Cup under Pizzi

Argentinian Juan Antonio Pizzi officially unveiled as new head coach of Bahrain's senior men's national football team

● **Juan Antonio Pizzi signs two-year contract with Bahrain Football Association**

● **Bahrainis eye start of 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers and next AFC Asian Cup**

TDT | Manama



Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa speaks to the Press



Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa presents Juan Antonio Pizzi a commemorative jersey during yesterday's unveiling alongside officials



Juan Antonio Pizzi during the event

Bahrain is hopeful that new senior men's national football team head coach Juan Antonio Pizzi can help the Kingdom realise its dream of one day playing in the FIFA World Cup—global football's showpiece event.

This was declared yesterday by Bahrain Football Association (BFA) president Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa at the official unveiling and contract signing of Pizzi, held at the BFA headquarters in Riffa.

"Coach Pizzi has won the Copa America, he coached Saudi Arabia in the World Cup in Russia; he has good experience, which this team needs for us to go to the next level," Shaikh Ali told TDT.

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SHAIKH ALI BIN KHALIFA BIN AHMED AL KHALIFA

Shaikh Ali singled out qualifying for the 2026 World Cup as Bahrain's main target under the renowned Argentinian tactician. The national team will be vying for one of the expanded eight direct slots for Asia in the tournament, or look to make it through the inter-confederation

play-offs.

Bahrain advanced to that last hurdle of the World Cup qualifiers twice in the past—first facing Trinidad and Tobago for a berth in the 2006 World Cup and then against New Zealand for a place in the 2010 competition—but narrowly lost by a single goal both times.

Shaikh Ali is encouraged that Bahrain can make history for the 2026 event with Pizzi at the helm.

"We've been through to the end of the qualifiers twice; we succeeded until the last mile against Trinidad and Tobago

and then New Zealand," Shaikh Ali recalled.

Opportunity

"We failed in the previous World Cup qualifiers, so overall I think this opportunity is high. There are eight teams that will qualify, plus one, so it's an opportunity for us. We must support him and help Bahrain reach the World Cup as an objective, which every Bahraini wants."

Also in attendance at yesterday's unveiling were BFA vice-president His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Isa Al Khalifa, BFA secretary gen-

eral Rashid Al Zoubi, and other officials.

Shaikh Ali said that Pizzi was one of their top choices to take over the national team in place of departed Portuguese head coach Helio Sousa.

"We had a long list of coaches, we started negotiating with them one by one, and Coach Pizzi was one of our high choices," Shaikh Ali explained.

"He is a well-known coach. For the Kingdom of Bahrain, for our upcoming programme with the World Cup qualifiers and the Asian Cup coming ahead, it's important to have someone with

his background."

According to Shaikh Ali, Pizzi has signed a two-year contract with Bahrain.

One of his first duties will be to approve the senior men's national team's training plan in preparation for the AFC Asian Cup, which will be held in Doha in January of next year. Bahrain are one of 24 teams who have qualified for the continent's premier tournament.

Prior to the Asian Cup, the Bahrainis will begin their World Cup qualifying campaign this November. They will play directly in the second round of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) qualifiers. The draw for the groupings will be held on Thursday.

There are five rounds in the qualification format for Asia.

2 Seas impress in British GT3 qualifying

● **James Cottingham, Jonny Adam qualify in second in 2 Seas' #4 Mercedes-AMG GT3**

● **Ian Loggie, Phil Keen in team's #1 contender book third on start grid for 2.25pm race**

TDT | Manama

Bahraini-British motor racing team 2 Seas Motorsport enjoyed an impressive qualifying yesterday for round seven of the 2023 Intelligent Money British GT Championship, being held at Autodromo do Algarve in Portugal.

Both of 2 Seas' cars secured places in the top three on the start grid, with James Cottingham and Jonny Adam in their #4 Mercedes-AMG GT3 challenger on the front row along-



2 Seas' #1 Mercedes-AMG GT3 in action during yesterday's qualifying

side pole-sitters Miguel Ramos and Marvin Kirchhoefer of Garage 59.

2 Seas' Ian Loggie and Phil Keen in their #1 contender took third on the grid.

Cottingham and Adam posted a best time of three minutes 24.637 seconds on the GT3 combined qualifying timesheet—just

0.166 seconds off the leading pace. Loggie and Keen were 0.436s back amongst the 17-car field.

Today's race is scheduled for a 2.25pm start, Bahrain time, around the 4.653-kilometre track.

Heading into this weekend's round, 2 Seas have a healthy

lead in the GT3 Teams Championship. They are on 191.5 points, while their closest challengers from Century Motorsport are on 96.5 points.

Cottingham and Adam are also leaders in the GT3 Drivers Championship with 102 points apiece, with Loggie and 2 Seas' other driver Jules Gounon currently third on 89.5 points each.

Furthermore, Cottingham and Adam are in first place on the GT3 Pro-Am standings with 110.5 points apiece, while Loggie and Gounon are tied-second on 96.5 points each with Darren Leung and Dan Harper of Century Motorsport.

The 2023 British GT campaign features nine rounds in all. This weekend's action marks the season's only round outside of the UK.

The championship will then race at Brands Hatch on September 9 and 10, and then at Donington Park for the season-finale on October 21 and 22.

Bilbao in top 10 on Tour de France penultimate stage



Pello Bilbao rides behind teammate Mikel Landa amongst other competitors in yesterday's stage

● **Spaniard Pello Bilbao hoping to secure sixth place overall on general classification at end of today's race**

TDT | Manama

Team Bahrain Victorious rider Pello Bilbao finished in the top 10 yesterday on the penultimate stage of the 2023 Tour de France.

The Spaniard was classified eighth overall in the 133.5-kilometre leg, 33 seconds behind winner Tadej Pogacar of the UAE Team Emirates.

Bahrain Victorious teammate Wout Poels was 13th yesterday while Mikel Landa came 33rd. Jack Haig finished 45th, Fred Wright 74th, Nikias Arndt 129th and Matej Mo-

horic 133rd, just a day after claiming a famous victory on stage 19.

With yesterday's result, Bilbao went sixth on the general classification with just today's final leg to go. Both he and Mohoric are also in the top 10 in the points ranking, with Mohoric eighth on 106 points and Bilbao ninth on 103.

Bahrain Victorious stayed fourth overall on the teams ranking, nearly 30 minutes behind leaders Jumbo Vista.

Today's final stage will be over 115.5km, starting from Saint-Quentin-En-Yvelines and ending at the Champs-Élysées in Paris.

This year's Tour de France features a total of 3,404km. The race is the second of three Grand Tour events on this year's Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) World Tour.

Guardiola has 'incredible doubts' despite treble success

AFP | London

Pep Guardiola laughed off claims that he was the greatest coach of all time yesterday, saying he lives with "incredible doubts" despite leading Manchester City to the treble last season.

Under the Spaniard, City became only the second English team after rivals Manchester United to win the Champions



Pep Guardiola

League, Premier League and FA Cup in the same season.

But Guardiola said he was "not a god" when asked if he

was the greatest of all time after arriving in Japan for City's pre-season tour.

"I live with incredible doubts in my head," said Guardiola.

"If I had success in my career, I've said many times I was in Barcelona with the players that you know perfectly, I was in Bayern Munich, and we are here."

"We are building and doing something incredible I would

not expect when we arrived," he added.

City have won seven Premier League titles since 2012 -- including five in the last six seasons under Guardiola.

They won their first Champions League title when they beat Inter Milan 1-0 in Istanbul last month.

Guardiola warned that "with football you cannot be sure of anything".