

Muharraq edge past Al Najma

Tony Mitchell scores 28 points to spearhead victors in match-up between title-contenders in Zain Bahrain Basketball League | **P16**

Indian Republic Day supplement

Kingdom condemns tearing of Quran copy in Netherlands

TDI | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain yesterday strongly condemned the tearing of a copy of the Holy Quran in The Hague, the Netherlands.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the heinous act represents an incitement to enmity, religious and racial hatred.

It reiterated Bahrain's rejection of such provocative and extremist acts which violate international principles and laws, as well as ethical expression of opinion.

In a statement today, the ministry stressed the need to respect all religions, beliefs, sanctities and religious symbols and combat Islamophobia crimes.

It also urged international cooperation in spreading the values of tolerance, peace and dialogue between religions and civilisations.

Philippines plane crash kills pilots



Rescuers retrieve the bodies of two military pilots

Manila

Two Philippine military pilots were killed when their plane crashed during a training flight yesterday, the air force said.

The SF-260 TP Marchetti was seen going down into a paddy field in Bataan province west of the capital Manila 40 minutes after take-off, and an investigation was underway into the cause of the accident, the air force said.

It has temporality grounded its fleet of SF-260 TP trainer planes.

220 fils (includes VAT)



Bahrain congratulates India on Republic Day

HM King greets President Murmu

TDI | 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, sent

cables of congratulations to Indian President Droupadi Murmu on her country's Republic Day.

HM the King and HRH Prince Salman expressed their best wishes of health and happiness to the president and further progress and prosperity to the people of India.

His Royal Highness sent a similar cable to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



HM the King



President Droupadi Murmu

His Majesty and HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister sent cables of congratulations to the Commonwealth of Australia Governor-General David Hurley on Australia Day.

HM the King and HRH Prince Salman expressed their best wishes of health and happiness to the Governor and wished Australian citizens further progress and prosperity.

HRH Prince Salman, Qatar Amir hold talks

Focus on strengthening bilateral relations, friendship and cooperation

TDI | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, held a phone call with Qatar Amir His Highness Shaikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations, friendship and cooperation.

During the call, HRH Prince Salman conveyed the greetings of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to HH Shaikh



HRH Prince Salman



Qatar Amir

HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad highlighted the brotherly relations that unite both countries and their peoples.

Tamim and HM's best wishes for further progress and prosperity to Qatar.

His Royal Highness and HH Shaikh Tamim emphasised the need to work together to settle issues in a way that meets the common goals of the people of

both nations, upholds the unity of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Arab states, as well as maintains the security and stability of the region.

They agreed to keep the channels of communication open for the benefit of both countries.

Despite concerns

US to send 31 Abrams battle tanks to Ukraine

Washington

The US will send 31 M1 Abrams battle tanks to Ukraine, senior administration officials said yesterday, reversing months of persistent arguments by the Biden administration that the tanks were too difficult for Ukrainian troops to operate and maintain.

The US decision came on the heels of Germany agreeing to send 14 Leopard 2 A6 tanks from its own stocks.

Germany had said the Leopards would not be sent unless

the US put its Abrams on the table, not wanting to incur Russia's wrath without the US similarly committing its own tanks.

Since then, both sides had participated in "good diplomatic conversations" that had made the difference and were part of the "extraordinary shift in Germany's security policy" over providing weapons to Ukraine since Russia invaded 11 months ago, said a senior administration official, who briefed reporters yesterday on the condition of anonymity to describe the new



M1 Abrams battle tanks

tank package in advance of the announcement.

The \$400 million package announced Wednesday also includes eight M88 recovery vehicles — tank-like tracked vehicles that can tow the Abrams if it gets stuck.

Altogether, France, the UK, the US, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden will send hundreds of tanks and heavy armored vehicles to fortify Ukraine as it enters a new phase of the war and attempts to break through entrenched Russian lines.

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'Key to security and investments'

TDT | Manama

Interior Minister, General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, has affirmed the Customs Affairs' key role in protecting national security and promoting investments to support the national economy.

In his speech on the occasion of the International Customs Day yesterday, General Shaikh Rashid hailed the Customs Affairs' efforts to develop high-quality services and strategy, as well as its affiliates for their competency and discipline in carrying out their role through dedication and expertise.

"Security and general safety protection come as part of various approaches, including coordination between security authorities and Customs Affairs

to reinforce border security. Preventative measures to limit trafficking and risks require full vigilance, law enforcement and strategic planning by determining goals and procedures," he said.

The Kingdom joined the rest of the world in celebrating the International Customs Day, which is marked annually on January 26.

The Minister emphasised that it is a good occasion to affirm the security role of Customs Affairs and efforts to reinforce trade, security and general safety.

"Customs Affairs is an essential part of the security strategy of the Interior Ministry through modern technology to protect borders and develop customs capabilities through the facilitation of travel, trade and society protection," he said.



General Shaikh Rashid

supported by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister. "

Confiscations and violations

The total number of confiscations and violations registered by Customs Affairs in 2022 reached 6,230, an increase of 31% from 2021. This reflects the national capabilities and professionalism in the use of modern technology.

The launch of the Customs Affairs strategy of 2021-2024 and its strategic goals come to meet government action plans and the Economic Vision 2030, strengthening customs work and building capabilities in facing challenges.

It also includes strengthening partnerships with the business community, based on the Kingdom of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030, which motivates government and private institutions to take practical steps to attract investments.

The Customs Affairs seeks to keep up advancement through signing international agreements and participating in conferences to benefit from international expertise and enhance the effectiveness of customs performance.

Future planning

"On International Customs Day, we assert the significance of future planning within the available potentials and ever-increasing challenges to look toward the best and overcome hinders to providing high-quality services through digital transformation expansion and development in the exchange of information and supervisory mechanisms," General Shaikh Rashid said.

"These efforts reinforce trade, security and general safety, and the role of Customs Affairs in supporting the national economy."

Through its outstanding performance in reinforcing the active role of Bahrain in international organisations, the President of Customs, Shaikh Ahmed bin Hamad Al Khalifa, earned the international trust by being elected as the Chairperson of the World Customs Organisation Council.

Bahrain Declaration to be highlighted in Rome today

Rome

The Kingdom of Bahrain Declaration will be highlighted in the Italian capital Rome today.

The Declaration that reflects His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's vision and approach to promote coexistence, peace and tolerance and combat terrorism in the



Dr Shaikh Khalid bin Khalifa

world was launched in the US in 2017.

"The Declaration, which was drafted by HM the King, is based on historical foundations about coexistence in Bahrain and the correct religious approach," King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Existence Chairman Dr Shaikh Khalid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa said.

The Indian Fine Arts Society Executive Committee

The Executive Committee for 2023-2024, headed by Mrs Nisha Rangarajan of The Indian Fine Arts Society, the oldest organisation in the Kingdom of Bahrain promoting classical form of Fine Arts. Seated from left, Mr Ganapathy Narayanan (Hon. Treasurer), Mr Balasubramaniam (Hon. Vice President), Mrs Nisha Rangarajan (Hon. President), Mr Anand Subramaniam (Hon. General Secretary). Standing from left, Mr Boban Idiculla (Excom member), Mrs Kavita Srinivasan (Excom member) and Mr Prakash subramaniam (Excom member).



HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY INDIA

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Rising concerns over low vision

One in every two children may need glasses, according to studies

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

Many parents in the Kingdom are increasingly concerned about the declining eye health of their children.

They attribute it to the whole online classes, quoting medical opinions, most often stretching longer hours during the two-year plus pandemic season.

They say online education paved the way for online addiction, which now seems to have no cure, leading to many eye illnesses among children.

According to medics, many eye disorders are increasing among children, including Glaucoma, Myopia, Cataracts, Diabetic Retinopathy, Amblyopia, Strabismus and others.

Shops selling spectacles attest to this fact, claiming increased sales of specks and eye lenses during the post-pandemic period.

Dr Ebtisam Al Alawi, Con-



Dr Ebtisam Al Alawi



Eldho Verghese



Mahwash Faraz

sultant Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Ophthalmology Department, told The Daily Tribune that "children's lifestyles have changed, contributing to an increase in short-sightedness.

"If we look at the western side, the weather is pleasant, and people are more into outdoor activities than sitting at home and using phones. In our region, the weather makes individuals prefer to spend their time indoors.

"Coronavirus has significantly impacted people's health, par-

ticularly the eyes. In addition, children are accustomed to spending hours on their phones at home, which is a problem worldwide."

Dr Ebtisam stated, "I have seen young children clutching mobile phones, iPads, and computers at ages 5 and 6. It is a serious problem that has to address before it is too late."

Speaking to The Daily Tribune, Mahwash Faraz, a resident, said, "I can see that my daughter Maryam, who is just 15 years old, has

specks, and she will always be on the phone despite my repeated warnings. Due to the lack of outside activities during Covid.

Eldho Verghese, General Manager of Clear Vision Optics, said, "We used to sell more spectacles to older people, but the trend is changing, and children and youngsters are becoming our significant customers. However, despite the increased sales of reading glasses, the demand for sunglasses was low during the pandemic."

10 years in jail for man who faked electricity meters' readings

TDT | Manama

A man who faked readings from electricity meters was sentenced by the High Criminal Court to 10 years in prison and fined BD5,000.

The defendant was serving in a company which was contracted by the Electricity and Water Authority (EWA) to record the meters' readings. The owner of the company was fined BD2,000 for hiring the first defendant without permission.

According to court files, the first defendant falsified the data of electricity meters via the use of the reader that was in his possession.

He also forged the readings of four other meters, which he took from four other em-

ployees. The second defendant was the owner of the company, which was contracted by EWA to record the readings of the meters. He tasked the first defendant to handle the employees' accounts.

The defendants' crime came to light after the EWA doubted several entries, as a result of which they launched investigations into the matter.

It was discovered that the first defendant manipulated the readings of the meters as he wanted to register them without visiting the properties to check them.

The employees confirmed that the first defendant requested their devices' pin codes, and they discovered that he entered the readings. The two were charged with forgery.

Dolphins released back into the sea

TDT | Manama

Dolphins caught by scrupulous individuals in Bahrain waters were released back into the sea in a first-of-its-kind operation in the Kingdom.

The Public Prosecution, Coast Guard General Administration, and Supreme Council

for the Environment worked with the International Fund for Animal Welfare to make it happen.

This followed an unprecedented court decision that found the suspects accused of hunting dolphins guilty.

Dolphin hunting is prohibited in the territorial waters of the Kingdom.

26 JANUARY HAPPY Republic DAY

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Bahrain-UAE relations

Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments Minister Nawaf bin Mohammed Al Ma'awda hailed the deep-rooted historic relations binding the Kingdom of Bahrain and the UAE, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and UAE President His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. During a meeting with UAE Justice Minister Abdulla bin Sultan bin Awad Al Nuaimi, he noted the advanced level of joint cooperation and coordination between both ministries. They reviewed ways of exchanging expertise and practices, focusing on joint judicial cooperation to support development projects, especially digital transformation applications.

Executive-legislative cooperation

Minister of Electricity and Water Affairs Yasser bin Ibrahim Humaidan received member of the Council of Representatives MP Abdulla Khalifa Al Romaihi. Humaidan stressed the importance of cooperation between executive and legislative branches of government towards supporting development across all fields. He praised the key role of the Council of Representatives, commending the efforts of the MPs to support the comprehensive development march towards more growth and prosperity.

Bahrain supports financial sector

TDT | Manama

Labour Minister Jameel bin Mohammed Ali Humaidan has affirmed the government's support for the financial sector to attract more investment opportunities and enhance the Kingdom's position. Humaidan stressed the ministry's priority to employ citizens in qualitative sectors by updating the professional training system in line with technological developments.

He highlighted the growth of non-banking financial companies in the Kingdom that support the national economy and provide quality investment opportunities.

Humaidan was speaking as he met with Arab Financial Services (AFS) CEO Samer Suleiman during his visit to the company.

The minister was briefed on



Humaidan visits the Arab Financial Services company



"The Ministry of Labour's priority is to employ citizens in qualitative sectors by updating the professional training system in line with technological developments."

- JAMEEL BIN MOHAMMED ALI HUMAIDAN, LABOUR MINISTER

the recruitment plan to employ Bahrainis.

The company employed 64 Bahrainis out of a total workforce of 148 in 2021-2022, while the percentage of Bahrainis in the company exceeds 66%.

Humaidan also reviewed the company's plan to train job-seekers and university students, which takes place periodically in the facility.

Final screening session, general meeting held for Miss Philippines Bahrain 2023



Candidates pose during the screening

TDT | Manama

The Miss Philippines Bahrain 2023, which was organised by the Filipino Club Bahrain, held a final screening session and general meeting on January 20 at the Majestic Hall of Arman Hotel in Juffair.

The four-woman screening committee for the evening included Jodel Nagunit (former Miss Philippines Bahrain 2006), Regina Apostol (former Miss Osamis City 1981 and chartered

president of the Philippine Nurses Association Bahrain), Dinah Sta Ana (current President of FC Pinay Ikaw) and Camille Carpio.

The general meeting, which was held after the screening, updated the contestants on the schedule of activities lined up prior to Coronation Night that include Personality Development Seminar, Swimwear and Talent Competition.

The contestants will also be involved in community service

projects to show their love and gratitude for the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Filipino Club President Ric Advincula and Vice President Rosemarie Hernandez were present in the meeting.

So far, seven women have joined in the running to be the next Miss Philippines Bahrain. The contestants will be introduced on January 27, 2023 at 7pm at the Philippine Festival, which will be held at the Oasis Mall in Juffair. Everyone is invited to attend.

It is hosted by the Philippine Embassy of Bahrain.

Screening is extended for another week and the organisers are encouraging others to join the contest. The event is a great platform to showcase one's passions, talents and leadership qualities.

To qualify, one must be a Philippine national passport holder, 18-28 years of age, a Bahrain resident, minimum of 163 cm in height, have never been married nor bore a child, and with a pleasant/positive personality.

Neon-Defender 23 joint drill successful



Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed arrives at the site of the joint drill

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) conducted the concluding stage of the joint drill, (Neon-Defender 23) yesterday.

Under the patronage of BDF Commander-in-Chief, Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, several BDF branches, the Interior Ministry's Coast Guard, the National Guard and the United States Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) participated

in the joint exercise.

Upon the arrival at the site of the joint drill, the BDF chief was welcomed by National Guard Commander, General His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa, Minister of Defence Affairs, Lieutenant-General Abdulla bin Hassan Al-Nuaimi, and Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Dheyab bin Saqr Al-Nuaimi.

Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed was briefed about the stages of the exercise.

Housing Minister takes part in Riyadh 'Foras'



Al Rumaihi with guests at the event

Riyadh

Housing and Urban Planning Minister Amena bint Ahmed Al Rumaihi participated in the second edition of the Municipal Investment Forum "Foras" in Saudi Arabia.

Al Rumaihi praised the objectives of the forum, which seeks

to raise the private sector's contributions to the development of cities, by stimulating local investments and attracting foreign investments that contribute to raising the quality of life in cities, and enabling the realisation of sectoral and regional strategies.

She appreciated Saudi efforts to host these international in-

vestments, which contribute to enhancing investment opportunities in Saudi Arabia and supplementing the national economy, in line with the economic vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030.

Bahrain is working on pursuing plans, programs and initiatives.

Parliamentary cooperation

Speaker Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam received German Ambassador to Bahrain Clemens Augustinus. The Speaker praised the deep Bahraini-German relations and the mutual keenness to enhance cooperation to achieve shared prosperity. Al Musallam stressed support to boosting cooperation in various sectors and the importance of strengthening parliamentary relations. Ambassador Augustinus expressed his country's keenness to develop cooperation in economic and scientific fields and stressed the importance of parliamentary cooperation.

Bahrain hosts global science and technology workshop

TDT | Manama

Riffa Views International School (RVIS) hosted Massachusetts Institute of Tech-

nology (MIT)'s International Science and Technology Initiative (MISTI) in its innovation center LEVEL 5.

The workshop is co-spon-

sored with the US Embassy and was the first of its kind in the GCC. The program was initiated and co-founded by three graduate MIT Bahraini students.

Boosting food security, private sector focus of Bahrain Chamber, says Kanoo

Chamber's sector committees unveil two-year action plans

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Chamber unveiled plans yesterday to boost food security and projects to support the Kingdom's health, education and other vital sectors.

Waleed Kanoo, the Head of the Committees Steering Group and vice-Treasurer, said the Chamber would encourage the private sector here to establish a food packaging and distribution factory and a manufacturing plant in the coming years.

The Chamber, he said, also aims to come up with projects in the education sector to help meet the job market demand.



Chairman of Bahrain Chamber Sameer Nass heads sector committees meeting yesterday

He also revealed that the Chamber intends to commission a regulatory authority for

the contracting sector and hold studies on the health sector. The studies will focus on the

impact of the National Health Insurance Program "Sehati" on the private sector and the short-

age of health cadres in specific sectors. The developments emerged

as the sector committees of the Bahrain Chamber discussed their two-year action plans in the presence of the board of directors headed by Chairman Sameer Nass.

The plans by the ten sector committees, Kanoo said, aims at enhancing coordination and cooperation among committees and keeping members of the executive and the administrative body informed of the goals and objectives. In this regard, Kanoo underlined the role of the committees in translating the Chamber's vision and goals into actionable plans to help revitalise the private sector and streamline its endeavours.

Al Baraka Islamic Bank launches "Spend and Win" Credit Card Campaign

TDT | Manama

In line with the ongoing efforts to reward its customers, Al Baraka Islamic Bank introduced its newest "Spend and Win" Mastercard campaign. The campaign will offer 20 customers every month the chance to win 10,000 rewards points.

The campaign provides exclusive opportunities to Al Baraka's credit card holders to enter the monthly raffle draw for the 10,000 rewards points with every payment transaction during the campaign's period.

Al Baraka Islamic Bank's Chief Retail Officer, Fatema AlAlawi, said: "Through the 'Spend and Win' campaign, we wanted to give our credit card holders, who constitute a large segment of Al Baraka Islamic Bank's customers, something to look forward to with each transaction they make and enrich their banking experience by providing these monthly rewards and prizes."



Eyad Alabbasi, Head of Cards Center at Al Baraka Islamic Bank



Fatema AlAlawi, Al Baraka Islamic Bank's Chief Retail Officer

"Therefore, we encourage customers to take advantage of using their cards when shopping to increase their chances of winning and wish them all the good luck" - stated Eyad Alabbasi, Head of Cards Center at Al Baraka Islamic Bank.

Credit card holders have the opportunity to increase their chances of winning by collect-

ing points when making local and international purchases, as they can instantly redeem points in a multitude of ways, which include flight reservations with more than 1,200 airlines, staying at more than 100,000 hotels around the world, car rentals, in addition to redeeming points by cash-back or shopping through the bank's website.

Google makes changes to Android in India after antitrust setbacks

Reuters | New Delhi

Google said yesterday it will allow device makers in India to license its individual apps for pre-installation and give an option to users to choose their default search engine, announcing sweeping changes to how it promotes its Android system.

The move comes after the country's Supreme Court upheld stringent antitrust directives last week, rejecting a Google challenge against a Competition Commission of India ruling that said the company abused its market position, ordering it to change how it markets its Android system in a key growth market.

Google also made some changes related to its in-app billing system, which was at the centre of another Indian antitrust decision recently where the company was found engaging in anti-competitive practices by restricting the use of third-party billing or payment processing services.

"Implementation of these



A view of the main lobby of building BV200, during a tour of Google's new Bay View Campus in Mountain View, California

changes across the ecosystem will be a complex process and will require significant work at our end and, in many cases, significant efforts from partners, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and developers," Google said in a blog post.

Google had been concerned about India's Android decision as the directives were seen as more sweeping than those imposed in the European Commission's landmark 2018 ruling against the operating system.

About 97% of 600 million smartphones in India run on Android, while in Europe, the system accounts for 75% of the

550 million smartphones, according to Counterpoint Research estimates.

The CCI ruled in October that Google, owned by Alphabet Inc (GOOGL.O), exploited its dominant position in Android and told it to remove restrictions on device makers, including those related to pre-installation of apps and ensuring exclusivity of its search. It also fined Google \$161 million.

Hoping to block the implementation of the CCI directives, Google had approached the Supreme Court, warning that growth of its Android ecosystem will stall. It said it would be forced to alter arrangements with more than 1,100 device manufacturers and thousands of app developers if the directives kick in.

But the Supreme Court refused to block the directives as Google sought. The court had also said a lower tribunal - where Google first challenged the Android directives - can continue to hear the company's appeal and must rule by March 31.

Gulf Air celebrates first batch of succession programme



In pictures, Gulf Air officials with the first batch of Succession Programme

TDT | Manama

Gulf Air celebrated the graduation of the first batch of its Succession Programme yesterday, which aims to prepare talented Bahrainis to lead the

company in higher positions in future.

Gulf Air Chief Executive Officer, Captain Waleed Al Alawi, said, "Gulf Air Human Resources is playing a vital role in implementing a challenging yet important people-centric

strategy to engage and retain our talent pool for future internal development and promotions."

"We have witnessed a cultural transformation within Gulf Air in recent years, with an emphasis on work-life balance, proudly rewarding and recognizing

achievements of staff, and providing opportunities for training and career progression."

Captain Al Alawi added: "I congratulate these graduates and look forward to the implementation of the skills they obtained in this program at their

workplaces, as well as their succession to higher positions in the future to further lead the national airline towards improvement and sustainable success."

"I also thank the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance

(BIBF) for collaborating with us to design this program that aims at equipping future generations of professionals that will contribute to the development of the national carrier and the advancement of its Bahraini workforce."





THE DAILY **tribune**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2023

QUOTE
OF THE
DAY

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE
UNIQUE. JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE
MARGARET MEAD

News in brief

◆ British Prime Minister

Rishi Sunak called on the Iranian government to provide answers about the death and burial of British-Iranian dual national Alireza Akbari who was executed by Iran earlier this month. "The regime is prolonging the suffering of the family and it is sadly typical of that disregard for basic human dignity," Sunak told parliament. "Iran must now provide answers about the circumstances of his death and his burial." On Jan. 14, Tehran defied calls from the UK and the U.S. and executed Akbari, who once served as Iran's deputy defence minister. That prompted London to impose a fresh round of sanctions on Iranian officials earlier this week. Labour lawmaker Andy Slaughter said he was due to meet a British foreign office minister on Thursday along with the family of Akbari, who had lived in Slaughter's constituency, to seek the government's help at "this time of greatest suffering."



UK PM Sunak says Iran must give answers on British-Iranian national Akbari

◆ Marooned for a decade

by engine failure, Palestinian fisherman Falah Abu Reyala will finally be able to return to sea with a new outboard motor for his boat after Israel eased curbs on the supply of parts to Gaza it feared could be used to make weapons. In November, Israel



Gaza fisherman gets new outboard engine after a decade's wait, as Israel relaxes curbs

allowed in enough fibreglass for the repair of 10 fishing boats and, last week, permitted the import of 12 outboard engines, said the United Nations. All the goods are paid for by the fisherman. Israel had previously barred their entry based on concern they could prove "dual use" - helping Hamas fighters with their military build-up. COGAT, an Israeli coordination unit, confirmed it had allowed the first entry in 15 years of dual-use materials such as epoxy glue, polyester, fibreglass and boat engines.

◆ Authorities in the North Korean capital

Pyongyang have ordered a five-day lockdown due to rising cases of an unspecified respiratory illness, the Russian embassy and Seoul-based NK News reported on Wednesday, citing a government notice. The notice, shared by the embassy on its Facebook page, said that a "special anti-epidemic period has been established" and it called on foreign delegations to keep employees inside. The order also called for individuals to measure their temperatures four times a day and report the results to a hospital by phone. The notice made no mention of COVID-19 though cited an "increase in winter cases of recurrent flu and other respiratory diseases".

North Korea locks down capital city over 'respiratory illness'

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

'Doomsday Clock' moves to 90 seconds to midnight as nuclear threat rises

Reuters | Washington

Atomic scientists set the "Doomsday Clock" closer to midnight than ever before on Tuesday, saying threats of nuclear war, disease, and climate volatility have been exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, putting humanity at greater risk of annihilation.

The "Doomsday Clock," created by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists to illustrate how close humanity has come to the end of the world, moved its "time" in 2023 to 90 seconds to midnight, 10 seconds closer than it has been for the past three years.

Midnight on this clock marks the theoretical point of annihilation. The clock's hands are moved closer to or further away from midnight based on scientists' reading of existential threats at a particular time.

The new time reflects a world in which Russia's invasion of Ukraine has revived fears of nuclear war.

"Russia's thinly veiled threats to use nuclear weapons remind the world that escalation of the conflict by accident,



The clock with the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

intention or miscalculation is a terrible risk. The possibilities that the conflict could spin out of anyone's control remains high," Rachel Bronson, the bulletin's president and CEO told a news conference in Washington on Tuesday.

The bulletin's announcement will for the first time be translated from English into Ukrainian and Russian to garner relevant attention, Bronson said.

A Chicago-based non-profit organization, the bulletin updates the clock's time annually based on information regarding catastrophic risks to the planet and humanity.

Germany's Leopards to boost Ukraine firepower

● Ukraine says tanks will be a 'punching fist' for democracy

● Russian envoy says tank shipments would be "blatant provocation"

● Russian-backed leader says Wagner force advancing on Bakhmut



Germany delivers its first Leopard tanks to Slovakia as part of a deal after Slovakia donated fighting vehicles to Ukraine, in Bratislava, Slovakia

Reuters | Berlin/Kyiv

Germany cleared the way yesterday for Europe to send scores of battle tanks to Ukraine, and Washington was poised make a similar announcement - moves hailed by Kyiv as a potential turning point in the war and condemned by Moscow as escalation.

Kyiv has been calling for months for Western main battle tanks that would give its forces greater firepower, protection and mobility to break through Russian defensive lines and potentially reclaim territory occupied by the invaders.

Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's administration, reminded Kyiv's allies that it wanted tanks in the hundreds, adding on Telegram: "This is what is going to become a real punching fist of democracy."

Germany, previously the West's holdout, said it would send an initial company of 14 of its Leopard 2 tanks from its own stocks, and also approve shipments by other European countries.

The overall aim would be to supply Ukraine with two battalions of Leopards, typically comprising three or four companies, each with around 14 tanks. Berlin said the first would arrive within three or four months, and that it would also provide training, ammunition and maintenance.

"This decision follows our well-known line of supporting Ukraine to the best of our ability. We are acting in a closely coordinated manner internationally," Chancellor Olaf Scholz said in a statement.

Germany's decision im-

mediately paves the way for pledges from other countries that also use the same tanks.

Spain and the Netherlands said they too could send Leopards and Norway was reported to be considering the matter. Poland and Finland had already pledged to send some as soon as Berlin approved. Britain has offered a company of 14 of its comparable Challengers and France is considering sending its Leclercs. Finland said it would send them, as did Poland, which has already sought Berlin's approval. Spain and the Netherlands said they were considering it, and Norway was reported to be discussing it. Britain has offered a company of 14 of its comparable Challengers and France is considering sending its Leclercs.



Last week, allies pledged billions of dollars' worth of new military aid including hundreds of armoured fighting vehicles and troop carriers - seen as more effective for attacking when used alongside tanks to burst through enemy lines.



Russia defence ministry says frigate tests strike capabilities in Atlantic

Reuters | Moscow

The Russian Defence Ministry said on Wednesday the frigate Admiral Gorshkov tested its strike capabilities in the western Atlantic Ocean.

In a statement, the ministry said the frigate had run a computer simulation on hypersonic Zircon missiles.

Zircon missiles have a range of 900 km (560 miles), and can travel at several times the speed of sound, making it difficult to defend against them. The statement did not say the frigate had launched a missile.

Tensions between the West and Russia have reached the



A still image from video released by the Russian Defence Ministry shows what it said to be frigate 'Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union Gorshkov' during an exercise in the Atlantic Ocean

highest point in years due to the conflict in Ukraine.

Russian officials have on several occasions suggested Russia

might use its nuclear arsenal, the world's largest, if it feels threatened by Western support for Ukraine.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



President @AIsiOficial and I discussed ways to augment cooperation in healthcare, environment and global supply chains. We also talked about issues pertaining to security and the need to end cross-border terrorism.

@narendramodi

02



German main battle tanks, further broadening of defense support & training missions, green light for partners to supply similar weapons. Just heard about these important & timely decisions in a call with @OlafScholz. Sincerely grateful to the Chancellor and all our friends in .

@ZelenskyyUa

03



Two years ago this week, 18 million people were out of work needing unemployment benefits. Today, that number is under 1.6 million - the lowest in decades.

@JoeBiden

04



A safe place for all, peaceful and democratic, which respects human rights. That's what the Internet must be and remain, especially for our children. It's one of our battles. Artists, join us, and speak out! Thank you @Pharrell for your commitment.

@EmmanuelMacron

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



It has been an amazing journey

Generations of people working in different fields deserve praise for their invaluable contribution in the development story of our Republic so far. I commend the roles of farmers, workers, scientists and engineers whose combined strength enables our country to live up to the spirit of "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan". I appreciate every citizen who contributes to the nation's progress. I also convey my greetings to our diaspora, the great ambassadors of India's culture and civilisation.

On the eve of the 74th Republic Day, I extend my heartiest greetings to every Indian, at home and abroad. We will now enter the 75th year as a Republic. From the day the Constitution came into effect to the present day, it has been an amazing journey that has inspired many other nations. Every citizen has reason to be proud of the Indian Story. When we celebrate the Republic Day, we celebrate what we have achieved, together, as a nation.

India is, of course, home to one of the oldest living civilisations. India is called the mother of democracy. As a modern Republic, however, we are young. In the early years of Independence, we faced countless challenges and adversities. Very high levels of poverty and illiteracy were just two of the many ill-effects of the long foreign rule. Yet, the spirit of India was undeterred. With hope and confidence, we began an experiment unique in the history of humankind. Such a vast and diverse multitude of people coming together as one nation remains unprecedented. We did so with a belief that we are, after all, one; that we are all Indians. We have succeeded as a democratic republic because so many creeds and so many languages have not divided us, they have only united us. That is the essence of India.

That essence was at the heart of the Constitution, which has withstood the test of time. The Constitution that started governing the life of the Republic was the outcome of the Freedom Struggle. The national movement, led by Mahatma Gandhi, was as much about winning Independence as about rediscovering our own ideals. Those decades of struggle and sacrifice helped us win freedom not only from colonial rule but also from the imposed values and narrow world-views. Revolutionaries and reformers joined hands with visionaries and idealists to help us learn about our age-old values of peace, brotherhood and equality. Those who shaped the modern Indian mind also welcomed progressive ideas from abroad, following the Vedic advice: आ नो भद्राः कर्तव्यो यन्तु बवश्वतः. "Let noble thoughts come to us from all directions". A long and profound thought process culminated in our Constitution.

Our founding document is inspired by the humanistic philosophy of the oldest living civilisation in the world as well as new ideas that emerged in more recent history. The nation will always remain grateful to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who headed the Drafting Committee of the Constitution, and thus had a critical part in giving it the final shape. On this day, we should also remember the role of jurist B.N. Rau, who had prepared the initial draft, and other experts and officers who helped in making of the constitution. We are proud of the fact that the members of that

assembly represented all regions and communities of India and that they included 15 women too.

India's Mars Mission was powered by a team of extraordinary women, and our sisters and daughters are not far behind in other areas too. Women's empowerment and gender equality are no longer mere slogans, as we have made great progress towards these ideals in recent years.

As a result of a series of initiatives in recent years to transform all aspects of governance and unleash creative energies of people, the world has started to look at India with a new sense of respect. Our interventions in various world forums have started making a positive difference. The respect that India has earned on the world stage has resulted in new opportunities as well as responsibilities. This year, as you know, India holds the presidency of the Group of 20 nations. With our motto of universal brotherhood, we stand for peace and prosperity of all. Thus, the G20 presidency is an opportunity to promote democracy and multilateralism and the right forum for shaping a better world and a better future. Under India's leadership, I am sure, G20 will be able to further enhance its efforts to build a more equitable and sustainable world order.

We are faced with the dilemma: To lift more and more people out of poverty, we need economic growth, but that growth also comes from fossil fuel. Unfortunately, the poor bear the brunt of global warming more than others. Developing and popularising alternative sources of energy is one of the solutions. India has taken a commendable lead in this direction by giving a policy push to solar energy and electric vehicles.

We need to modify our lifestyle if we want our children to live happily on this fragile planet. One of the changes suggested pertains to food. I am happy to note that the United Nations accepted a suggestion from India and declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets. Millets were essential ingredients of our diet and they are making a comeback among sections of society. Coarse grains like millets are eco-friendly as they require less water to grow and yet they provide high levels of nutrition. If more and more people turn to millets, it will help conserve ecology and also improve health. One more year has

Droupadi Murmu
The President of India



gone by for the Republic and another year commences. It has been a time of unprecedented change. With the outbreak of the pandemic, the world had changed within a matter of days. During these three years, whenever we have felt that we have finally put the virus behind, it raises its ugly head. However, there is no need to panic because we have learned in this period that our leadership, our scientists and doctors, our administrators and 'Corona Warriors' will make every possible effort to meet any situation. At the same time, each of us has also learned to not let our guard down and

remain alert.

Generations of people working in different fields deserve praise for their invaluable contribution in the development story of our Republic so far. I commend the roles of farmers, workers, scientists and engineers whose combined strength enables our country to live up to the spirit of "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan". I appreciate every citizen who contributes to the nation's progress. I also convey my greetings to our diaspora, the great ambassadors of India's culture and civilisation.

On the occasion of Republic

Day, I convey my special appreciation to our jawans who guard our borders and are ready to make any sacrifice for the country. I also express my appreciation for all the brave soldiers of paramilitary forces and police-forces who provide internal security to their fellow citizens. I salute all the brave-hearts of our armed forces, paramilitary-forces and police-forces who laid down their lives in the line of duty. I convey my blessings to all the dear children for their bright future. Once again, I extend my best wishes to all of you on this Republic Day.



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HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY



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Long live India-Bahrain friendship



Piyush Srivastava
Indian Ambassador
to Bahrain

India's G20 Presidency - 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, or 'One Earth. One Family. One Future'.
On the bilateral front, India and Kingdom of Bahrain continued its momentum and upward trajectory.
His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kingdom of Bahrain and Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi held telephonic conversation at the beginning of the year.
This was followed by a number of visits of senior political and official, trade and commercial, security and defence delegations, including that of Dr. Shaikh Abdullah, Undersecretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs to India for 34 Foreign Office Consultations, and Dy. Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Sanjay Mahindru to Bahrain.
H.E. Dr. Mohamed bin Mubarak bin Daina, Minister of Oil and Environment of Bahrain participated in the Voice of the Global South Summit', virtually hosted by India earlier this month.
Our economic and commercial cooperation is growing in education, health and pharma sectors, and has expanded to the new and emerging areas of IT, big data, fintech, space technology, food security and renewable energy.
India continues to be among top trading partners of Bahrain, with bilateral trade reaching its highest ever level of above USD 1.65 billion in 2021-22. Our economic collaboration as well as investments from both sides have

also increased, with about 10 physical and virtual B2B meetings covering diverse sectors held last year.
The year-long celebrations for the golden jubilee of establishment of diplomatic relations focussing on our deep bonds of friendship and rich and diverse cultural heritage saw enthusiastic participation of both Indian and Bahraini people. We are also committed to increasing cooperation in technology, start-ups and sports sector, involving youth of our two countries.
Our collaboration in regional and multilateral arena have also strengthened. In significant milestones last year, Bahrain joined International Solar Alliance as Member, and India joined Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), headquartered in Bahrain as Associate Partner.
With high level political, parliamentary, official and commercial engagements, we have an exciting year ahead. We also look forward to greater participation from Bahrain (as Dialogue Partner of SCQ) in various events being hosted by India as SCO Chair this year.
Indian community in Bahrain proudly represent the rich and diverse Indian culture and heritage. They have been integral part of journey of our bilateral relations. This was reflected in their participation, in large numbers, in the 17 Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas Convention, held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh from 8-10 January 2023.
The Government of India is committed to and is making continuous efforts to closely engage with Indian

diaspora, to work for their welfare and make them an integral part of India's growth story.
Thanks to Bahrain's policies of harmony and peaceful coexistence, our community here has done well professionally and made significant contribution to the development of this beautiful Kingdom. I join Indian community in thanking and expressing gratitude to the Leadership, Government and people of Bahrain for their warmth, care and affection.
I wish continued progress, well-being and prosperity to the friendly people of Kingdom of Bahrain.

Wishing everyone, once again, happy 74th Republic Day of India!
Long live India-Bahrain friendship!

Wishing everyone, once again, happy 74th Republic Day of India!

Long live India-Bahrain friendship!

Indian community in Bahrain proudly represent the rich and diverse Indian culture and heritage. They have been integral part of journey of our bilateral relations.

Its time to celebrate the key milestones Achieved by the nation as the biggest democracy In the world marks the day of the adoption of its Great constitution.

74th HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY

26 JANUARY

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On the occasion of Republic Day of India, The Management, Principal, Staff, Students and Parents of New Millennium School, congratulate and extend warmest greetings to The Indian Community in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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India Takes World Centre-Stage with G20 Presidency



Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar

[The writer is former Indian Ambassador to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia.]

Introduction

India assumed the Presidency of G20 (the Group of 20 countries comprising 19 large economies and the European Union) for 2023 from Indonesia on 1st December, 2022. While accepting this responsibility, PM Narendra Modi said that India's G20 presidency will be "inclusive, ambitious, decisive and action-oriented."

India's assumption of the G20 presidency has decisively signaled its emergence as a significant player on the global stage. While most countries in the world, both developed and developing, have found it difficult to effectively handle the challenges thrown up by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, India, through its bold leadership and prudent policies, has been able to successfully navigate the headwinds it has encountered over the last three years.

What is the G20?

The G20 is an international forum which represents the world's biggest economies encompassing both industrialized and developing nations. Its core mandate is to address the major challenges related to the global economy, developmental issues and financial architecture, such as international financial stability, climate change mitigation, sustainable development etc.

Together, the G20 members represent 85% of the global gross product; 75% of international trade, and two thirds of the world population.

Because the G-20 is a forum, its agreements or decisions are not legally binding but they do influence countries' policies and global cooperation.

The Setting

The Bali G20 Summit in November, 2022 was held at a particularly difficult and uncertain moment in international politics and economics.

The world has been subjected to huge instability and volatility over the last 3 years inter-alia due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has had global implications through high inflation, shortages of food, fertilizers and energy, unsustainable debts, supply chain disruptions and more. In addition, the challenges of climate change, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and others continue to unsettle the global economy and community. It is in these circumstances that India has been entrusted with the responsibility of steering the activities of the G20.

The Summit

India emerged as a "leader,

solution provider and consensus builder" at the Bali Summit. The shadow of the Russia-Ukraine conflict loomed large over the deliberations in the run up to the Summit. It was not found possible to arrive at a mutually acceptable language on the conflict in several of the G20 meetings that preceded the Summit. India was able to act as a bridge between the opposing sides on the issue. A compromise solution was achieved which reiterated the assertion by PM Modi to Russian President Vladimir Putin in Samarkand on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit that "today is not an era of war," and that the solution to the conflict should be found through "dialogue and diplomacy."

The Declaration, a 19-page document addressed in considerable detail, the major challenges confronting the global economy and financial system.

In his remarks in the first session on Energy and Food Security, PM Modi clearly stated that the United Nations had failed to resolve the political and economic challenges afflicting the world. It is because of the failure of the multilateral organizations that the significance of G20 has increased. PM Modi exhorted the countries to evolve a new world order as had been done after the Second World War.

While speaking on the need to make digital connectivity truly inclusive, PM Modi asserted that "digital transformation is the most remarkable change of our era. The proper use of digital technologies can become a force multiplier in the decades-long global fight against poverty. Digital solutions can also be helpful in the fight against climate change." PM Modi asserted that India's experience of the past few years has shown that if digital architecture is made 'inclusive', it can bring about socio-economic transformation. He declared that the principle of "Data for development" will be an integral part of the overall theme of India's Presidency "One Earth, One Family, One Future". Batting for sustainable growth, PM Modi stated that LIFE i.e. 'Lifestyle for Environment' campaign can make a big contribution to this. He encouraged the global community to make sustainable lifestyle a mass movement.

India's Presidency

During its Presidency, India will aspire to deliver outcomes in areas of critical interest such as integrating the climate and development agenda, accelerating progress towards achieving the SDG 2030 mandate, furthering development cooperation, supporting small and marginal farmers, enhancing food security and nutrition, addressing global skill gaps, women empowerment, promotion of blue economy and coastal sustainability, digital health solutions, green hydrogen and tech-enabled learning.

India hit the ground running

on assuming the Presidency of the G20. Even before taking over charge, India organized a Special Briefing for envoys of G20 and invitee countries and International Organisations in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on 26th November, 2022. Starting with the first 4-day Sherpa meeting in Udaipur on 4th December, 2022, India has already organized several substantive meetings including the first Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting in Bengaluru; first Meeting of the G20 Development Working Group in Mumbai; first Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion in Kolkata, and several more.

India has also emerged as a strong and clear voice of the global South. There is a persistent feeling among several small countries that their concerns and problems do not get the attention they deserve. In a remarkable path-breaking initiative, India organized the "Voice of the Global South for Human-Centric Development" virtual Summit on 12th-13th January, 2023. The theme of the Summit was "Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose." The Summit brought together 125 countries of the global South to share their perspectives and priorities on a common platform across a whole range of issues. The Summit, as is evident from the numbers, received a strong, positive response across the world. This initiative was inspired by PM Modi's vision of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' (the support of everyone, development for everyone, trust of everyone with everyone's effort), and was also underpinned by India's philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The World is One Family). The Summit was a platform to exchange ideas and solutions, and to unite in voice and purpose, the issues of concern and priorities for the Global South.

In his Opening Address, PM Modi declared that the Voice of the Global South will be the Voice of India and the priorities of the developing countries will be India's priorities. PM Modi gave a call for 4Rs - 'Respond, Recognize, Respect and Reform' in context of various priorities of the developing world. Prime Minister also announced a number of new initiatives by India. These include - AarogyaMaitri whereby essential medical supplies will be provided to any developing country affected by natural disasters or humanitarian crisis; Global South Centre of Excellence for research on development solutions to be implemented around the world; Global South Science and Technology Initiative to share expertise in areas such as space technology and nuclear energy; Global South Young Diplomats Forum; and Global South Scholarships.

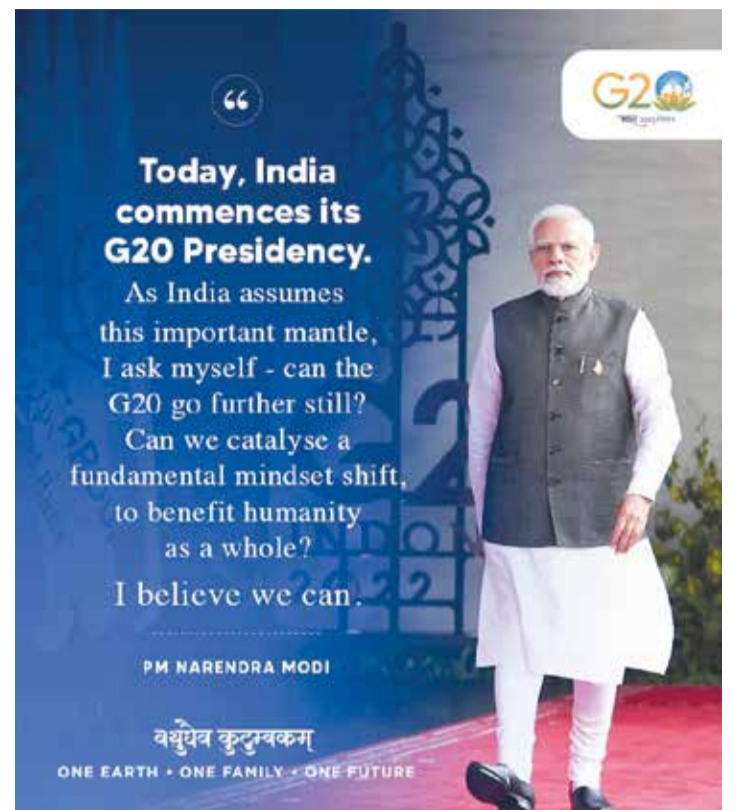
While assuming the Presidency, PM Modi had said that India's G20 priorities would be shaped in consultation with not just G20 partners, but also

with our fellow travellers in the Global South, whose voice often goes unheard. This Summit was an opportunity for those countries that are not part of the G20 process to share their ideas, concerns, aspirations and expectations. Several developing countries like Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Nigeria, Oman and the UAE have also been invited as "guest countries" by India to the G20 Summit in September this year.

Conclusion

Accepting the G20 Presidency, PM Modi declared that India will organize more than 200 G20 meetings in 55 different cities on 35 different themes around the country. Visitors to India will get the full experience of its amazing diversity, inclusive traditions, and cultural richness. He invited all G20 members and international organizations "to participate in this unique celebration in India, the 'Mother of Democracy'".

Assuming charge of the G20



at this critical moment is a huge challenge. It is also a great opportunity. The world is looking at India with hope and expectation to effectively deal with the turbulence engineered by the Covid-19, Russia-Ukraine conflict, global economic downturn, and climate change. India is committed to reach out to all countries of the North and the South, the East and the West to ensure as PM Modi said at the Bali G20 Summit that "next year when the G20 meets in the holy land of Buddha and Gandhi, we will all agree to convey a strong

message of peace to the world." India will hand over the baton to Brazil at the end of November, 2023. It is for the first time that the troika comprising of the current, past and future Presidencies of G20 will comprise of three major developing and emerging economies. This provides a unique opportunity to India, supported by Indonesia and Brazil, to make a significant contribution to peace, security, stability and prosperity in the world. India looks forward to its Presidency of the G20 with determination and confidence.

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ILA starts new year by celebrating 74th Indian Republic Day

Julia Cassano
TDT | Manama

After overcoming the difficult times of the pandemic, ILA is excited to kick-off its activities in high spirits and hopes to follow new plans and developments.

Indian Ladies Association is back with another celebration today to celebrate the 74th Indian Republic Day, including a patriotic live entertainment programme. The afternoon will be filled with festivities, such as quizzes, games, and prizes, for members and non-members at the Ramee Grand Hotel in Seef.

ILA, one of the oldest expatriate non-profit organisations in the Middle East, has worked on numerous projects to help children with special needs.

While speaking to the Tribune Shipra, Dhir Passi, President of The Indian Ladies Association, said, "This year, we aim to relocate Sneha recreation centre and the ILA office to a better premise.

Our building has two floors where some children have claustrophobia, especially when taking an elevator. We are looking for a single-floor spacious villa with more outdoor space."

"We provide children from families of humble backgrounds who could not send their children to school due to financial reasons. We train such children to become more independent and help them develop essential life skills like learning numeric and speech skills.

"We also organised workshops to train workers in handling sanitising equipment and

scientific hygiene measures during the pandemic with the support of the Ministry of Interior.

"During the pandemic, ILA helped workers by providing regular health check-ups and counselling. In addition, we donated 500 masks made by ILA members, dry ration, and sanitisation kits to labour camps.

"ILA is not just another social club or an association where members join to profit or socialise with one another. Our work is very demanding, and it takes enormous selfless volunteering and dedication to help those who need it most,

"We have high operational costs that amount to 25,000 BD a year. Therefore, the fundraisers and events are crucial to us. We would not survive without the enormous help from our com-



munity, including the support we receive from the sponsors and donors," she added.

Sneha recreational centre provides free services intending to develop the children's confidence by teaching daily life skills to find a comfortable space in society. In addition, they aim to provide an environ-

ment where the children do not feel judged.

ILA also conducts many other charity initiatives for blue-collar workers through its worker's welfare sub-committee to provide basic needs such as medical assistance and provide home-cooked meals to expatriate workers.

Shipra thanked the Indian Embassy for its continuous support. She cherished the hospitality extended by the Indian Embassy officials to the children from Sneha on the children's day during the pandemic. I L A managed to conduct Dandiya Night, the most prominent Indian dance festival, with a participation of more than 1600 people.

The tickets are available for BD6 for ILA members, friends and their families.

Sneha recreational centre provides free services intending to develop children's confidence by teaching daily life skills to find a comfortable space in society.



HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY

On the occasion of Republic Day of India, the Management, Principal, Staff, Students and Parents of Al Noor International School, congratulate and extend warmest greetings to the Indian Community in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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Half of US mass attacks sparked by personal, workplace disputes - report

Reuters | Washington

Half of the mass attacks in the United States from 2016-2020 were sparked by personal, domestic or workplace disputes, according to a new US Secret Service report that aims to prevent violence by identifying warning signs.

The attackers were overwhelmingly men, often with histories of mental health symptoms, financial insecurity or engaging in domestic violence. Guns were typically the weapon of choice.

The report comes days after a pair of mass shootings in California took the lives of 18 people and as authorities searched



The names of the eleven people killed are written on hearts as people gather for a candlelight vigil after a mass shooting during Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations in Monterey Park, California

for motives in the attacks, both linked to older men. Mass shootings have become a regular occurrence in the United States in recent decades, but lawmakers remain divided on the solutions, with Democrats calling for more gun control measures while Republicans focus on mental health and increased security.

The 70-page report, issued on Wednesday by the Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Centre, examined 173 incidents where three or more people were harmed. The attacks targeted workplaces, schools, religious institutions and public transportation, among other locations, killing 513 people and injuring 1,234.

Lina Alathari, the centre's chief, told reporters that it is common to see behaviours among perpetrators that might



The attackers were overwhelmingly men, often with histories of mental health symptoms, financial insecurity or engaging in domestic violence. Guns were typically the weapon of choice.

have helped others identify a problem beforehand.

"Interest in violence, interest in previous mass attackers, posting about them, talking to people about them, bringing a weapon to [their] workplace, bringing a weapon to school, coworkers fearing them, grievances," she said. "These are themes that we do see over and over again."

The report found that firearms were used in 73% of incidents, including by some prohibited from owning them.

State-level "red flag laws" that allow for the court-ordered removal of guns from someone presenting a risk could limit such attacks, the report said.

India, Egypt will seek to deepen military co-operation - foreign secretary

Reuters | New Delhi

India and Egypt will seek to deepen military cooperation, including between their defence industries, India's foreign secretary said yesterday.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi held talks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi as part of a state visit where he will meet business leaders and be a guest of honour at India's Jan. 26 Republic Day.



Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi shakes hands with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi before their meeting at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi, India,

Classified documents found at former US VP home

Reuters | Washington

Documents marked as classified were discovered at former US Vice President Mike Pence's Indiana home last week, and he has turned those classified records over to the FBI, his attorney said in letters seen by Reuters on Tuesday.

The attorney, Greg Jacob, sent a letter to the National Archives on Jan. 18 notifying them of the documents and in a separate letter on Jan. 22 notified the Archives that the FBI came



Former US Vice President Mike Pence

to the former vice president's home to collect them.

Jacob said in the letter dated

Jan. 18 to the National Archives that "out of an abundance of caution" Pence had engaged outside counsel to review records stored in his home after reports about the materials found at Biden's residence.

Biden, whose documents dated from his time as vice president, and Trump, who resisted turning over the items, leading to an FBI raid, are both facing special counsel investigations by the Justice Department over improper handling of classified materials.

Microsoft cloud outage hits users around the world

● **Outage impacts Microsoft cloud platform Azure for hours**

● **Multiple Microsoft services including Teams and Outlook hit**

● **Microsoft says most customers now have service restored**

Reuters

Microsoft Corp (MSFT.O) said yesterday it had recovered all of its cloud services after a networking outage took down its cloud platform Azure along with services such as Teams and Outlook used by millions around the globe.

Azure's status page showed services were impacted in Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa. Only services in China and its platform for governments were not hit. By late morning Azure said most customers should have

seen services resume after a full recovery of the Microsoft Wide Area Network (WAN).

An outage of Azure, which has 15 million corporate customers and over 500 million active users, according to Microsoft data, can impact multiple services and create a domino effect as almost all of the world's largest companies use the platform.

Businesses have become increasingly dependent on online platforms after the pandemic caused a shift to more employees working from home.

Earlier, Microsoft said it had determined a network connectivity issue was occurring with devices across the Microsoft WAN. This impacts connectivity between clients on the internet to Azure, as well as connectivity between services in data centres, it said.

Microsoft later tweeted that it had rolled back a network change that it believed was causing the issue and was using "additional infrastructure to expedite the recovery process".

Microsoft did not disclose the number of users affected by the disruption, but data from

Microsoft Teams, used by more than 280 million people globally, forms an integral part of daily operations for businesses and schools, which use the service to make calls, schedule meetings and organise their workflow.

outage tracking website Downtime detector showed thousands of incidents across continents.

The Downtime detector site tracks outages by collating status reports from various sources including users.

Microsoft's cloud business had helped shore up its fiscal second-quarter earnings on Tuesday. It forecast third-quarter revenue in its so-called intelligent cloud business would be \$21.7 billion to \$22 billion despite worries that the lucrative cloud segment for big tech companies could be hit hard as customers look to cut spending.

Azure's share of the cloud computing market rose to 30% in 2022, trailing Amazon's AWS, according to estimates from BofA Global Research.

Heavy snow causes havoc in Japan as cold snap sweeps through Asia

Reuters | Tokyo

Heavy snow blanketed wide swathes of Japan yesterday, snarling traffic, forcing hundreds of flight cancellations, disrupting train travel and leaving at least one person dead.

An unusually cold weather front and extreme low pressure systems set snow falling and strong winds blowing across Japan from Tuesday after causing havoc in other Asia countries earlier this week.

At least 124 people died in freezing temperatures in Afghanistan earlier this week, according to media reports, while the temperature in Mohe, China's northernmost city, dropped to a record -53 degrees Celsius (-63.4 degrees Fahrenheit) on Sunday.



Vehicles are stuck due to heavy snowfall and snowplow cars are seen on a highway in Koga, Shiga prefecture, Japan

In South Korea, the country's harsh winter weather. Japan reported that snow was particularly heavy on the side of its airport on Tuesday amid the country facing South Korea,

with the city of Maniwa hit with a record 93 cm (36 inches) in just 24 hours.

One person died as a result of

the storm and two other deaths were being investigated as related to the storm as of Wednesday morning, chief cabinet secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told a news conference. No further details were immediately available.

Domestic airlines including ANA (9202.T) and Japan Airlines (9201.T) cancelled 450 flights, while 490 highway areas were blocked and 57 railway services including a high-speed rail service were suspended nationwide, the transport ministry said.

Toyota Motor Corp (7203.T) said it was suspending the second shift at all 14 factories in Japan on Wednesday due to disruption from the heavy snowfall around the country.

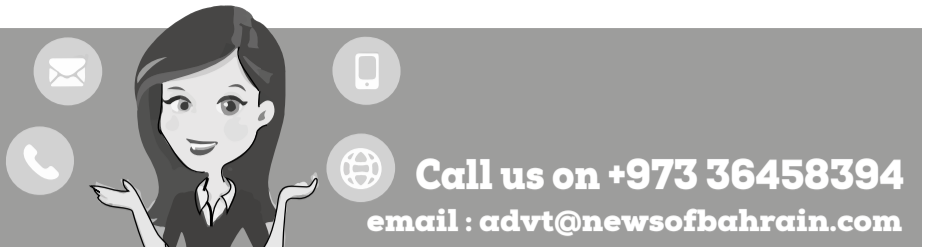
Some 3,000 people were

stranded at two train stations in the western city of Kyoto after snow and high winds forced service to be suspended on Tuesday. Some passengers were forced to sleep on the floor at Kyoto's main station. Others were stuck on at least 15 trains between stations, in some cases from late on Tuesday to the early hours of Wednesday.

Strong winds connected to the storm may have caused the sinking of a Hong Kong-registered cargo ship between western Japan and South Korea's Jeju island early on Wednesday. Thirteen of the 22 crew members had been rescued by noon on Wednesday and the search was continuing.

The bitter weather is expected to continue through Thursday.

Classifieds



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IQRA AC WORKSHOP has a vacancy for the occupation of WORKER, suitably qualified applicants can contact 33240114 or ALIALALLALI90@GMAIL.COM

Wimbledon shorten men's doubles to three sets



Matthew Ebden (L) and Max Purcell (R) celebrate winning Wimbledon men's doubles final
AFP | London

Wimbledon will shorten men's doubles matches from best-of-five sets to best of three from this year's championships, the All England Club announced yesterday.

The traditional five-set format had been criticised in the past for discouraging more singles specialists from entering the doubles.

Wimbledon was the only grand slam tournament to stage five-set doubles matches, but will now move into line with the Australian Open, French Open and US Open.

"The decision was made following a wide-ranging consultation and the change brings Wimbledon into line with the other grand slams which stage the gentlemen's doubles in a best-of-three format," the AELTC said in a statement.

Modric, Kroos key despite Madrid 'transition' - Ancelotti

Carlo Ancelotti says Luka Modric and Toni Kroos understand the need to refresh Real Madrid's midfield

● **Modric and Kroos found themselves on the bench for last week's win at Athletic Bilbao**

AFP | Madrid

Carlo Ancelotti said yesterday veteran midfielders Luka Modric and Toni Kroos are still key for Real Madrid even though he dropped the pair last weekend.

Los Blancos won 2-0 at Athletic Bilbao on Sunday and the duo appeared from the bench, with Eduardo Camavinga and Dani Ceballos starting ahead of them.

Modric, 37, and Kroos, 33 -- both out of contract at the end of the season -- face stiff internal competition this season, with Ancelotti highlighting that Madrid are in a period of transition.

"They are professionals and understand what this club means," Ancelotti told reporters ahead of Thursday's Copa del Rey quarter-final with Atletico



Luka Modric and Toni Kroos of Real Madrid warm up during a training session

Madrid.

"They know the quality this squad has and I don't think I have to explain anything.

"We've been speaking from the start of the season about this topic, it's a moment of transition and everyone has to understand it, the young players and the veterans."

Modric joined Real Madrid in 2012 while Kroos arrived in 2014

“They know the quality this squad has and I don't think I have to explain anything. We've been speaking from the start of the season about this topic, it's a moment of transition and everyone has to understand it, the young players and the veterans

CARLO ANCELOTTI

this season.

Ancelotti said despite being dropped against Athletic, the duo will still play an essential role for Madrid.

"Of course they can play together, they are performing this season and have been key, and they will keep on being so," added the coach.

Ancelotti admitted that Federico Valverde, another midfield option, has not hit his best form again after the World Cup.

The Uruguayan was spectac-

BETTER YOU KNOW

Modric joined Real Madrid in 2012 while Kroos arrived in 2014 and together they have formed an essential part of the team's success

ular in the first half of the campaign but is struggling to return to those heights.

"He's not at his best level, he's progressing, he's performing -- not like in the first half of the season, I consider that normal given the World Cup," said Ancelotti.

"We have to be patient. We're not asking him to score goals, we're asking him to deliver defensively and in attack, and when he's back to his best he will score again."

Union Press claim Verminex La Liga Inter-kulay title

TDI | Manama

Union Press (UP) downed Zenjex 87-63 in their winner-take-all Game 3 best-of-three series to bag the title in the Verminex La Liga 2022 Inter-kulay Division of Filipino Club Basketball Group (FCBG).

The victors relied heavily on finals Most Valuable Player (MVP) Jasper Melaño and their backcourts Quinto, Sangalang and Bandoja to seal the win.

Union Press took advantage of



Union Press celebrate with their trophy

the absence of Zenjex's center UP's big men Tiqui, Liwanag and 6'4" stalwart Saloh Yusuf, as Santosidad highlighted their

inside presence in the game.

Olet Mariano came off the bench to score 10 points, grab four rebounds, and issue two assists, as Union Press completely dominated the Exchange Masters.

Union Press, perennial title contenders in the FCBG's basketball league, claimed their fourth championship throughout the history of Bahrain's premier Filipino basketball league. FCBG is registered under the Filipino Club Bahrain.

Ten Hag urges Rashford to fulfil his ambitions with Man Utd



Manchester United's manager Erik ten Hag (R) congratulates striker Marcus Rashford (L) after a match (file photo)

AFP | London

Erik ten Hag has told Marcus Rashford to stay at Manchester United because he wants to transform them into the world's best team.

United have failed to win the Premier League since Sir Alex Ferguson retired in 2013 and their last major trophy was the Europa League in 2017.

It is their worst trophy drought in 40 years, but United boss Ten Hag is showing signs of being able to rebuild the club after a positive start to his reign this season.

England forward Rashford

“He's improving and that's about him because he's working on the good things. He's giving 100 per cent energy, he has a good plan and I think also in this team he can bring in his qualities

ERIK TEN HAG

has emerged as a key figure in United's climb to fourth in the Premier League.

After two years of poor form, the 25-year-old has been revitalised by Ten Hag and United hope he will extend a contract that has 18 months to run.

French giants Paris Saint Germain were linked with Rashford last season but, on the eve of United's League Cup semi-final first leg at Nottingham Forest yesterday, Ten Hag made a confident pitch to the forward to remain at Old Trafford.

Opener Gill's maturity impresses India captain Rohit

Reuters | New Delhi

It might be premature to say Shubman Gill has nailed down the India opener's slot for the Cricket World Cup on home soil later this year but skipper Rohit Sharma has been impressed by the 23-year-old's understanding of the role.

With veteran Shikhar Dhawan's patchy form effectively taking him out of the running for a place at the tournament, India have zeroed in on Gill and Ishan Kishan as Rohit's potential opening partners.

Gill has grabbed the opportunity with both hands and his 112 against New Zealand on Tuesday was his third hundred in four innings, which include a double hundred in the series opener in Hyderabad.

Gill and fellow centurion Rohit forged a 212-run stand on Tuesday to set up a 3-0 series sweep as India dethroned New Zealand as the top-ranked one-day team.

"He understands his batting, he paces his innings well," Rohit



Rohit Sharma applauds Shubman Gill on his century

“He understands his batting, he paces his innings well. That is what you want in one-day cricket. You want to go big, you want to go deep in your innings. He has shown that. He has got big hundreds

ROHIT SHARMA

said after their victory in Indore.

"That is what you want in one-day cricket. You want to go big, you want to go deep in your innings. He has shown that. He has got big hundreds."

Gill smashed a career-best 208 against New Zealand on a flat track in Hyderabad and was adjudged Player of the Series for his aggregate of 360 from three innings.

"No matter how flat the pitch is, to get a double hundred is not easy. In that game, the next best score (by a team mate) was 34,"

YOU KNOW WHAT

Gill smashed a career-best 208 against New Zealand on a flat track in Hyderabad and was adjudged Player of the Series for his aggregate of 360 from three innings

Rohit said.

"It shows that he was calculating and he knows that he needs to bat deep.

"A set batsman needs to bat for as long as possible... He has got great maturity in the way he thinks about his game, the way he approaches the game."

Rohit's 101 off 85 balls was his 30th ODI hundred, bringing him level with Australian Ricky Ponting.

17

goals have been scored by Rashford in all competitions for United this season

Bahrain's Mahmoud wins shot put silver in Portugal indoor meet

● **Bahraini Noora Salem Jasim narrowly misses out on podium in women's shot put**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's elite athlete Abdelrahman Mahmoud claimed an impressive silver medal for the men's shot put at the Meeting Moniz Pereira in Pombal, Portugal.

Mahmoud claimed his runner-up finish after registering a throw of 20.26 metres.

It was not far behind the gold medal-winning mark of 20.40m by Roman Kokoshko from Ukraine. They were the only two participants to throw



Abdelrahman Mahmoud, right, with his silver medal at the meeting

beyond 20m.

Jose Lorenzo Hernandez of Spain won the bronze with a throw of 16.55.

Mahmoud's performance was his best for the year so far but it was not his personal best for the indoor shot put. That mark is 21.10m, which he set in 2021 as both a Bahrain record and an Asian record.

Meanwhile, also in Pombal, Bahrain's Noora Salem Jasim narrowly missed out on a podium in the women's shot put.

She had a best mark of 13.89m. Winning gold was Jessica Include of Portugal with a 17.81m throw.

Noora's effort was her first competition of the year. Her personal best for the indoor shot put is 17.45m, which she set in 2017 as a Bahrain record.

Bayern's Salihamidzic calls Gnabry 'amateurish' for Paris fashion 'frolic'

AFP | Munich

Bayern Munich sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic criticised forward Serge Gnabry for his "amateurish" Paris Fashion Week visit, saying "the title is at stake".

Gnabry jetted to Paris after Bayern's 1-1 away draw with Leipzig on Friday, sharing pictures of the trip on social media.

Salihamidzic reacted after Bayern drew 1-1 at home against Cologne on Tuesday.

Gnabry was subbed off at halftime. Coach Julian Nagelsmann said after the match he wanted to bring in "a breath of fresh air."

Salihamidzic later suggested



Serge Gnabry

the Germany forward was not fully focused.

"That's amateurish, that's exactly what Bayern Munich isn't, frolicking somewhere when you have a day off," the sporting director said, hinting that the former Arsenal forward may face consequences.

"A day off is to rest so that you can step on the accelerator in the next game.

"We will talk about that yesterday, for sure. Of course there is a need to talk about it."

The 27-year-old Gnabry had already been criticised in the German media.

Speaking on Monday, Nagelsmann said the striker had not broken any rules but needed to "give the right answer (to the criticism) on the pitch."



That's amateurish, that's exactly what Bayern Munich isn't, frolicking somewhere when you have a day off. A day off is to rest so that you can step on the accelerator in the next game

HASAN SALIHAMIDZIC

Tottenham sign winger Danjuma on loan from Villarreal

AFP | London

Tottenham have made their first signing of the January transfer win-

dow as Netherlands winger Arnaut Danjuma joined on loan from Villarreal for the rest of the season.

Antonio Conte's side

swooped for Danjuma after the 25-year-old had looked set to join Premier League strugglers Everton.

Danjuma will give Conte

another attacking option as he looks to lift fifth-placed Tottenham back into the Premier League's top four after their recent struggles.



Serge Gnabry

Djokovic is no 'villain' - took me 10 years to get over cheat storm: Azarenka



Victoria Azarenka plays a backhand return to Jessica Pegula

AFP | Melbourne

Victoria Azarenka said it took her 10 years to get over being accused of cheating when she last won the Australian Open, and defended Novak Djokovic who has been accused of dramatising his injury during this year's tournament.

The 33-year-old two-time champion rolled back the years at Melbourne Park on Tuesday night, dismissing Jessica Pegula 6-4, 6-1 to reach the semi-finals for the first time since 2013.

During her run to the second of her back-to-back Australian titles that year, Azarenka took a nine-minute medical timeout in the semi-final against Sloane Stephens after failing to convert five match points.

Azarenka went on to turn the match around and eventually lift the trophy, but she had to defend herself from accusations of gamesmanship and cheating.

The Belarusian revealed later she had suffered a panic attack on court and couldn't breathe, which caused the long delay.

Djokovic, Sabalenka roll into Australian Open semi-finals

Novak Djokovic crushes Andrey Rublev in style, romps on towards 10th Australian title

● **Ominous Sabalenka sets up Australian Open semi-final with Linette**

● **Paul downs Shelton in all-American clash to make semis**

AFP | Melbourne

Novak Djokovic was two wins away from a 22nd Grand Slam crown after bulldozing into the Australian Open semi-finals yesterday, while Aryna Sabalenka was equally impressive in reaching the women's last four.

Serbia's Djokovic delivered a masterclass to crush Russian fifth seed Andrey Rublev 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 on Rod Laver Arena and set up a meeting with Tommy Paul for a place in Sunday's final.

Djokovic's quest to go level with great rival Rafael Nadal on a leading 22 major titles carries an air of inevitability.

The 35-year-old struggled with a hamstring injury in the early rounds at Melbourne Park but was dominant during his fourth-round demolition of Alex de Minaur and was equally clinical against the outclassed Rublev.

"Last two matches, playing against two guys who were in form and to beat them dominantly in three sets is something that I definitely want in this moment, something that sends a message to all my opponents,"



Novak Djokovic in action during his match against Andrey Rublev

said a buoyant Djokovic.

"With this kind of game the confidence level rises, so I feel better on the court as the tournament progresses."

Victory for the red-hot favourite propelled him into a 44th Grand Slam semi-final to close the gap on Roger Federer's all-time record of 46.

Anything other than a rampant win for Djokovic against unseeded Paul would amount to a massive upset, albeit at a tournament that has seen numerous shocks in the men's and women's draws.

Paul defeated his fellow American Ben Shelton 7-6 (8/6), 6-3, 5-7, 6-4 to reach his first major semi-final.

But former world number one Djokovic, who can return to the top of the rankings if he wins the Australian Open for a record-extending 10th time, will

be a whole new prospect.

Paul, ranked 35, and the Serb great have never played each other before.

"I saw him in the locker room after I finished my match. He said, 'congrats,'" said the 25-year-old, adding they had practised together before.

"Obviously he's pretty comfortable here in Australia," the American added. "It's going to be a challenging match but I'm playing some of my best tennis, so it's a good time."

The other semi-final is between third seed Stefanos Tsitsipas and Russian 18th seed Karen Khachanov.

Ominous Sabalenka

Sabalenka set up a semi-final with surprise-package Magda Linette after once again displaying the kind of form and finesse that have made her favourite for



Last two matches, playing against two guys who were in form and to beat them dominantly in three sets is something that I definitely want in this moment, something that sends a message to all my opponents

NOVAK DJOKOVIC

the women's title.

The Belarusian fifth seed defeated Croatia's Donna Vekic 6-3, 6-2 as she closes on a first Grand Slam title.

The match was closer than the score suggested, but Sabalenka is playing scintillating tennis -- she is yet to drop a set so far this year.

It is a far cry from a year ago, when she struggled badly with her serve and was reduced to tears at an Australian Open warm-up tournament.

The 24-year-old is benefiting from a different approach when facing adversity on court.

"Before I was trying to go for aces, go for crazy shots to get easily out, to get out easily from those situations," she said.

"Right now I keep saying: 'No, work for it, it's not going to be easy.'"

Sabalenka will play unseeded Linette for a place in Saturday's final after the Pole marched into her first major semi-final at the age of 30.



Tommy Paul is only the third active American man to reach a Grand Slam semi-final, joining John Isner (2018 Wimbledon) and Frances Tiafoe (2022 US Open) but will have to register a seismic shock if he is to go any further

Linette stunned former world number one Karolina Pliskova 6-3, 7-5 to continue flying the flag for Poland after the shock exit of world number one Iga Swiatek.

"I'm so emotional, I can't really believe it," said Linette, ranked 45 in the world.

"It's a dream come true. I'm super grateful and happy. Thank you for cheering and supporting, I really needed this.

"So we keep going. I don't want to get too excited because we are still in the tournament," added the Pole.

Two-time Melbourne champion Victoria Azarenka, also from Belarus, will face Moscow-born Kazakh Elena Rybakina in the other semi-final.

Both women's semi-finals are today.

Muharraq edge past Al Najma

Tony Mitchell scores 28 points to spearhead victors in match-up between title-contenders in Zain Bahrain Basketball League

● Muharraq lead by as many as 11 points in third quarter

● Mohammed Hussain scores 27 to pace Najma in defeat

TDT | Manama

Muharraq posted a narrow 66-61 victory over Al Najma last night in the 2022/2023 Zain Bahrain Basketball League.

The week 18 contest between two of the Kingdom's title contenders was played at Zain Basketball Arena in Um Al Hassam.

Muharraq enjoyed leads as big as 11 points in the second-half but Najma roared back and regained the advantage momentarily. The two rivals battled hard in the final canto until Muharraq closed the game out on a 9-1 run, sparked by a Tony Mitchell three-pointer that tied the game at 60-apiece.

Bader Abdulla Malabes then made back-to-back baskets to push his team in front, including an off-balanced shot from the baseline that beat the shot-



Muharraq's Ali Shukrallah goes for a lay-up against Al Najma during their game

clock, and then two free-throws by Hussain Salman pegged the final score. Mitchell finished as the game's leading scorer with 28 points. Malabes and Salman chipped in with 10 apiece, while Ali Jaffar had eight in the win. Ali Shukrallah also put in a fine effort, scoring six points and taking down 15 rebounds while registering four steals.

Najma were paced by the 27 of Mohammed Hussain. He buried three triples, but missed a crucial shot from beyond the arc in an attempt to tie the game with only seconds left on the clock. Ali Jaber chipped in with 12 points and 16 rebounds, while Mohammed Buallay and Abdulrahman Ghali each scored eight.

Muharraq improve to a 12-4 win-loss record with the result to move into the top three of the league table, while Najma suffer their sixth loss to go with nine wins

Standings

	P	W	L	PTS
Al Ahli	16	13	3	29
Manama	15	13	2	28
Muharraq	16	12	4	28
Al Ettihad	16	11	5	27
Bahrain Club	17	8	9	25
Al Najma	15	9	6	24
Al Hala	15	8	7	23
Nuwaidrat	15	6	10	22
Sitra	16	4	12	20
Samaheej	16	2	14	18
Isa Town	16	1	15	17

Muharraq improved to a 12-4 win-loss record with the result to move into the top three of the table. Najma suffered their sixth loss to go with nine wins.

Najma opened the game as the aggressors and took a slim 20-16 lead at the end of the first quarter. The two sides then matched each other point-for-point in the second period, with Najma taking a 36-32 advantage into the half.

In the third, Muharraq turned the tables and took a 40-38 lead on a Salman three-pointer. They went up by as many as 11 points, 53-42, but Najma closed the period strong, scoring five unanswered to get back to within 47-53.

Najma continued their spurt to start the final quarter and posted the first seven points, capped by a Hussain three-pointer to take the lead. The game remained close the rest of the

way leading up to the 60-all tie, and Muharraq's decisive plays to end the clash.

League action continues tomorrow with just one game on schedule. Defending champions Manama are set to take on Al Hala at 7.30pm.

Manama head into the contest with a 13-2 win-loss record as they look to regain first place on the league standings, while Hala will be aiming to improve their 8-7 record.

Manama are coming off a victory in the Gulf sub-zone of the FIBA West Asia Super League on Tuesday, when they overpowered Al Nassr from Saudi Arabia in a game played at home.

HAPPY INDIAN REPUBLIC DAY

On this historic occasion, we celebrate with pride the glorious nation of India and salute with utmost admiration its' visionary leaders, for leading us towards greater peace and prosperity.

#LongLiveBahrain-IndiaFriendship



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