

Al Omari Shines at Paralympics

Bahrain's Rooba Al Omari lights up the Paris Paralympics with a top six finish in Women's Discus F55 | P12

WORLD **6** Israel air strike kills three Palestinians

THE DAILY tribune



Sandra Bullock admits she's 'too tired' since hitting 60

8 CELEBS

BUSINESS

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Over 304 shoppers take home prizes in LuLu's summer bonanza draw

Death toll from Israeli raid in West Bank hits 20 on third day of operation

AFP | Jenin, Palestinian Territories

The death toll from a three-day Israeli raid on the occupied West Bank rose to 20 yesterday, Israel and the Palestinian Red Crescent said, while violence raged on in the Gaza Strip.

It came as US-based aid group Anera said an Israeli strike killed four Palestinians accompanying its convoy on Thursday. The Israeli military reported it had struck armed assailants.

The UN's World Food Programme on Thursday said it had suspended aid operations after one of its vehicles was hit by an Israeli strike.



Zelensky dismisses Ukraine air force commander after F-16 crash

AFP | Kyiv, Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday dismissed the country's air force chief, a day after Kyiv said a US-made F-16 fighter jet had crashed in combat, killing the pilot.

In a video message Zelensky said he had "decided to replace the commander of the air force" to strengthen Ukraine's military leadership.

The crash of the F-16 was a high-profile setback for Kyiv, which had lobbied the West to send the advanced fighter jet for months.

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Turbocharged

Government services accelerated to new digital speeds



Ministers detail digitalisation initiative during Bahrain Television broadcast

● **Government services have become much faster, with notable reductions in processing times for tasks such as school appointments, maritime registrations, and commercial registrations.**

TDT | Manama

Earlier, it took 15 minutes; now it can be done in just 7.

In Bahrain, this is the new time required for booking postal packages.

Making this possible are the newly installed standalone electronic platforms at postal centres, confirms the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications.

And know what, this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Postal services are just one of the 90 services that have recently went supersonic, thanks to the directives of HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to develop 500 government services.

Education, maritime, civil aviation, as well as industry and commerce are other beneficiaries.

In total, the postal department has digitised five of its services.

This was revealed jointly by the Minister of Education Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak Juma, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications Mohamed bin Thamer Al Kaabi,

“Government services are now much faster and more efficient. The main difference is in processing time, which is now lower than ever”

MINISTER OF EDUCATION DR. MOHAMMED BIN MUBARAK JUMA

“Procedures are now easier for investors, whether individuals, companies, or global entities, aligning with the government's overall vision”

MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE ABDULLAH BIN ADEL FAKHRO

markers now requires just a week,” the minister added.

Flight Information

A new service now provides real-time flight information for departing flights. “With an average of 133 departing flights daily, the service utilises a mobile application to inform flight crews of weather and navigational data,” the Minister stated.

Investor-Friendly

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce has made a major leap by digitising 42 services across five departments.

Minister Fakhro said 33 services are for the Registration Department, three each for the Inspection and Standards, and Foreign Trade and Industrial Property Departments.

“We have also digitised two services in the Information Systems Department and one in the Consumer Protection Department,” he added.

Procedures are now easier for investors, whether individuals, companies, or global entities, “aligning with the government's overall vision,” he underscored.

Commercial Registration

By digitising commercial registration services, Fakhro said the ministry “aims to save time and effort for traders and investors, ultimately reducing project costs, especially in light of salary, bill, and bank loan obligations.”

“To achieve this, the ministry has reviewed all services and streamlined the application process, reducing steps and requirements,” he pointed out.

and Minister of Industry and Commerce Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, during a show on Bahrain Television.

They assured that government services are now much faster and more efficient. The main difference, Dr. Juma said, is in processing time, which is now lower than ever.

Jobs in private schools

Explaining further, he said the Ministry of Education has digitised 21 additional services, most importantly the appointment system for private schools. “Previously, this took months and extensive paperwork. But now, it takes just seven days or

less,” the minister said.

“Schools, kindergartens, and nurseries can now fill their vacancies much faster.”

Curriculum

“We have also developed a comprehensive curriculum database to help private schools get their curricula approved in record time,” Dr. Juma revealed.

“Previously, schools had to wait for months to ensure compliance with Bahraini laws, customs, traditions, values, and principles.”

Fishing

In the maritime sector, Al Kaabi said they have digitised 27 services, including registration for fishing and pleasure boats, renewals, and ownership transfers.

Previously, these processes required in-person visits to the registration office. They can now be completed in a day.

Port fees, which used to take two weeks, can now be processed in seven days.

“A task that once took 10 days to identify and locate marine

90

Bahrain has digitised 90 services, including education, maritime, and industry, with significant improvements in processing times across various sectors.

AGU, Education Ministry announce HM King Hamad Academic Chair Scholarship

TDT | Manama

The Arabian Gulf University (AGU), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, has announced the His Majesty King Hamad Academic Chair Scholarship for Digital Education for pursuing a Master of Science Degree in Digital Education.

This scholarship covers the programme fees for two academic years 2024-2025.

Interested applicants should submit a formal request for the scholarship to the email address Scholarship@moe.gov.bh, between today, Friday, August 30, and next Friday, September 6

Israeli tourists, Egyptian workers wounded in hotel fight: state-linked media

AFP | Cairo, Egypt

Three Arab-Israeli tourists and four Egyptian workers were wounded Friday in a hotel fight in the Egyptian seaside town of Taba, state-linked media reported.

One of the workers sustained “serious injuries” and was being treated at the local hospital, along with “three Arab 48 tourists”, a security source told Al-Qahera News.

“Arab 48” is a term that refers to Palestinians and their descendants who remained in Israel following its creation in 1948.

Friday's fight broke out between hotel staff and the tourists “who attempted to obtain services from the hotel without charge”, the channel reported.

Al-Qahera News, which is linked to state intelligence, reported security authorities were investigating the incident. A high-level security source denied Israeli media reports describing the altercation as a “stabbing operation”. The incident occurred in the Egyptian town of Taba in South Sinai.

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Rawan bint Najeeb Tawfiqi, Minister of Youth Affairs, met with Mohammad Salameh Al Nabulsi, Jordan's Minister of Youth, yesterday. Their discussion, held on the sidelines of the High-Level International Forum on Youth, Peace, and Security and the launch of the Arab Youth, Peace, and Security Strategy 2023-2028 in Jordan, focused on advancing youth cooperation. They explored ways to build on successful programmes, share expertise, and promote youth exchange visits to strengthen collaboration and create new opportunities. During the meeting, Tawfiqi praised the strong Bahrain-Jordan relations across various sectors.



Bahrain to enhance education with digital tutoring lessons

TDT | Manama

MP Dr. Maryam Al Dhaen has praised the decision by the Minister of Education Dr. Mohammed Juma to introduce digital tutoring lessons across Bahrain. This initiative, she noted, is a significant step towards improving the quality of education in the Kingdom.

Dr. Al Dhaen highlighted that the digital tutoring service will offer accessible and effective reinforcement lessons for students throughout Bahrain, aligning with His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa's vision for sustainable development and a brighter future for the nation. She emphasized that this move will ease the financial and emotional burden on parents, while also leveraging modern technology and digital transformation to enhance educational services.

She also referred to a proposal she had submitted in October 2023, suggesting the broadcast of tutoring lessons on a Bahrain TV channel. This proposal draws on successful international practices of using dedicated channels for educational content, aimed at boosting students' academic performance.



This move will ease the financial and emotional burden on parents, while also leveraging modern technology and digital transformation to enhance educational services.

MP DR. MARYAM AL DHAEN

Dr. Al Dhaen explained that digital tutoring would allow students to access a range of educational resources remotely, including videos and interactive tests. This approach offers personalized education, catering to individual student needs and enabling teachers to provide tailored support.

The initiative is part of Bahrain Vision 2030, which focuses on digital transformation and

technology's role in education. Dr. Al Dhaen described digital tutoring as a forward-thinking step that ensures high-quality education is accessible to all students, regardless of their location.

Dr. Al Dhaen commended the Minister of Education for his commitment to enhancing the educational process, noting that this decision reflects his dedication to the well-being and future success of students.



Hundreds of citizens and supporters of Ibrahim Al Sheikh, a businessman and candidate for the first district in Muharraq Governorate, gathered at his electoral headquarters in the Al Sayah area of Muharraq. The venue filled up well before the official opening, demonstrating their strong support for active participation in the elections and the reform initiatives of His Majesty the King. The organizing committee swiftly responded to the large turnout by managing the crowd and arranging seating.

Indian Embassy hosts Open House, addresses community concerns



Indian embassy open house

TDT | Manama

The Embassy of India held an Open House yesterday, chaired by Ambassador Vinod Kurian Jacob. The event, attended by over 70 nationals, featured the Embassy's Community Welfare team, Consular team, and legal advisors.

Conducted in English, Hindi, Tamil, and Malayalam, the meeting provided information on the e-Clearance for After-life Remains (eCARE) portal. This online system simplifies the Public Health Clearance

process for transporting mortal remains to India (<https://ecare.mohfw.gov.in/>).

Ambassador Jacob also expressed gratitude for the robust participation of the Indian community at the recent Flag Hoisting Ceremony celebrating the 78th anniversary of India's Independence.

The Ambassador highlighted recent successes, including the repatriation of a TB patient from Salmaniya Hospital to his hometown on August 23, facilitated with the support of the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA).

Additionally, of the 21 stranded workers who attended the previous Open House, 19 have successfully returned home after receiving their outstanding payments. The remaining two are expected to travel soon.

The Embassy continues to support distressed housemaids by offering boarding and lodging, issuing Emergency Certificates, and arranging tickets through the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF). Legal assistance is also provided on a means-tested basis to Indian nationals in need.

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Family's Plea for Help

Desperate family calls for action as Bahraini handball player remains trapped in Kuwait over rent dispute



Bahraini handball star faces an unexpected crisis in Kuwait—his brother's urgent plea highlights a dramatic rent dispute with the club

TDI | Manama

A Bahraini handball player has found himself stranded in Kuwait due to an ongoing dispute over unpaid rent that was supposed to be covered by his club.

Ahmed Al Maqaabi was stopped at the Kuwaiti border when officers informed him that he couldn't leave the country because of a case filed against him by a housing rental company. The company alleges that Al Maqaabi owes more than 20,000 Kuwaiti dinars in unpaid rent.

Back in Bahrain, his family, including his brother Nidal, is

deeply concerned and has called on Bahraini authorities to intervene and help resolve the situation. Al Maqaabi, who played for a Kuwaiti club between 2021 and 2022, has shared his side of the story, pointing fingers at his club for the predicament he's now in.

In an interview with Alayam, Al Maqaabi explained that the accommodation provided by the club was not up to standard, so he arranged for an alternative place to stay, believing the club would cover the cost.

"At that time, the club had also agreed to cover the costs of the accommodation I booked," he said. However, Al Maqaabi ad-

mitted, "I made the mistake of booking the accommodation in my name, instead of the club's." This oversight, combined with the club's failure to pay, has now led to the current standoff. Adding to the complexity, Al Maqaabi revealed that another Bahraini player, Mohammed Habib, is facing a similar issue with the same club. Despite his efforts to communicate and resolve the matter with the club, Al Maqaabi says he has received no response. He mentioned that the rented accommodation was only

meant to cover the first four days after the issue arose, until the club eventually arranged temporary housing for him.

Nidal Al Maqaabi has criticized the club's handling of the situation, highlighting that they had initially promised to provide suitable accommodation and cover all related expenses, which they failed to do throughout Ahmed's tenure. The family's plea for help reflects their frustration and urgency in seeking a swift resolution to bring Ahmed back home.

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INTERIM CONDENSED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS							
for the six months ended 30 June 2024							
Retail Bank, Bahrain							
INTERIM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION			INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS				
as at 30 June 2024			For the six-month period ended 30 June 2024 (reviewed)				
Bahraini Dinars 000's	30 June 2024 (reviewed)	31 December 2023 (audited)	Bahraini Dinars 000's	2024	2023		
Assets			Interest income	19,819	17,804		
Cash and balances at central bank	132,315	142,666	Interest expense	(4,889)	(3,104)		
Derivative financial instruments	8,012	8,244	Net interest income	14,930	14,700		
Loans and advances to banks	2,913	1,539	Fees and commission income	6,532	5,242		
Loans and advances to customers	361,673	300,237	Fees and commission expense	(2,708)	(2,610)		
Investment securities	106,454	101,991	Net fee and commission income	3,824	2,632		
Other assets	9,921	20,200	Net trading income	2,750	2,089		
Due from the Head Office and other branches	16,343	17,807	Other income	33	33		
Prepayments and accrued income	2,891	2,397	Operating income	21,537	19,454		
Intangible assets	1,367	1,068	Staff costs	(6,996)	(6,979)		
Property, plant and equipment	3,666	3,675	Premises costs	(363)	(345)		
Total assets	645,555	599,824	General administrative expenses	(6,026)	(8,168)		
Liabilities			Depreciation and amortisation	(336)	(381)		
Deposits by banks	11,448	14,361	Operating expenses	(13,721)	(15,873)		
Customer accounts	505,694	478,365	Operating profit before impairment losses	7,816	3,581		
Derivative financial instruments	7,207	8,047	Credit impairment	(209)	6,991		
Other liabilities	19,932	28,723	Profit for the period	7,607	10,572		
Due to the Head office and other branches	33,279	10,467					
Accruals and deferred income	5,569	5,799					
Provisions for liabilities and charges	425	534					
Retirement benefit obligations	2,606	2,600					
Total liabilities	586,160	548,896					
Head Office funds							
Head Office assigned capital	10,743	10,743					
Other reserves	35,128	34,268					
Retained earnings	13,524	5,917					
Total Head Office funds	59,395	50,928					
Total Head Office funds and liabilities	645,555	599,824					
INTERIM STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS			INTERIM STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
For the six-month period ended 30 June 2024 (reviewed)			For the six-month period ended 30 June 2024 (reviewed)				
Bahraini Dinars 000's	2024	2023	Bahraini Dinars 000's	2024	2023		
Net cash (used in)/generated from operating activities	(14,170)	21,233	Profit for the period	7,607	10,572		
Net cash (used in)/generated from investing activities	(7,858)	16,121	Other comprehensive income				
Net cash used in financing activities	(39)	(48)	Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss:				
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(22,067)	37,306	Equity instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income	83	39		
Foreign exchange adjustments	-	38	Items that may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss:				
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	142,534	125,825	Net valuation gain taken to equity	924	664		
Cash and cash equivalents at 30 June	120,467	163,169	Net impact of expected credit losses	(147)	(80)		
				777	584		
			Other comprehensive income for the period	860	623		
			Total comprehensive income for the period	8,467	11,195		
INTERIM STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN HEAD OFFICE FUNDS							
For the six-month period ended 30 June 2024 (reviewed)							
Bahraini Dinars 000's			Head Office assigned capital	General reserve	Fair value through other comprehensive income reserve	Unremitted profit to the Head Office/ (Accumulated loss)	Total
As at 1 January 2023	10,743	34,056	(964)	(9,582)	34,253		
Profit for the period	-	-	-	10,572	10,572		
Other comprehensive income for the period	-	-	623	-	623		
Foreign exchange adjustment	-	-	-	38	38		
As at 30 June 2023	10,743	34,056	(341)	1,028	45,486		
As at 1 January 2024	10,743	34,056	212	5,917	50,928		
Profit for the period	-	-	-	7,607	7,607		
Other comprehensive income for the period	-	-	860	-	860		
As at 30 June 2024	10,743	34,056	1,072	13,524	59,395		

From breakup to blaze

Man Jailed, fined for Setting Ex-Girlfriend's Car on Fire



Representative picture

TDI | Manama

A man has been sentenced to three years in prison for setting his ex-girlfriend's car on fire, following a dramatic breakup. The High Criminal Court also ordered him to pay BD 5,819 in damages to the woman.

The incident unfolded after the woman informed the man of her decision to end their two-year relationship and marry someone else. The news did

not sit well with the man, who accused her of infidelity and demanded the return of BD 800 he had given her.

Despite an agreed repayment plan, tensions escalated. The man, driven by rage, threatened the woman and ultimately set her car ablaze. Security camera footage captured him pouring gasoline on the vehicle before igniting it. The court, after reviewing the evidence, found the man guilty of arson.

Nightclub brawl lands three friends behind bars

TDT | Manama

A violent nightclub fight between three friends ended up with all of them landing behind bars, with the High Appeals Court confirming their jail term.

The primary defendant was sentenced to two years in prison, while the other two received one-month terms each.

The incident occurred in the early morning hours following a verbal dispute between the defendants and two victims. According to court records, the argument escalated, prompting intervention by security personnel. Despite their efforts, the situation deteriorated as the victims attempted to leave the premises.



Representative picture

The third defendant physically assaulted the second victim, resulting in injuries including

swollen ankles, bruising, abrasions, and a cut on the lip. Currently, the first defendant

lifted and forcefully threw the first victim to the ground, while the second defendant kicked

him as he lay on the floor. This assault caused the victim to lose consciousness and sustained se-

vere injuries, including a skull fracture, internal bleeding, and a subdural hematoma. He underwent surgery to reposition brain tissue and was left with a 10% disability.

During the investigation, the first defendant admitted to lifting and throwing the victim but claimed his intention was to break up the altercation.

The second defendant confessed to kicking the victim after he was thrown, and the third defendant acknowledged attacking the second victim. Security footage corroborated these statements, clearly showing the defendants' involvement in the assault.

Considering the gravity of the injuries and the corroborating evidence, the court affirmed the initial sentences.

Higher education sees record faculty growth, rising female representation in 2024: iGA

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's higher education institutions are experiencing a significant surge in faculty numbers, according to the Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA). This increase reflects both the rising demand for higher education and the expansion of the country's academic landscape.

As of 2024, the number of faculty members has reached 2,137, the highest level since 2019. Of this total, 65% (1,405) are employed in public institutions, while 34.2% (732) work in pri-



Representative picture

vate sector institutions.

A notable trend in the latest report is the growing representation of female faculty members. Women now make up 46.8% of the total faculty, amounting to 1,002 individuals. In contrast, male faculty members account for 53.1%, with a total of 1,135.

The distribution of male faculty is nearly equal across both public and private sectors: 52.5% (738 individuals) in public institutions and 54.2% (397 individuals) in private institutions. Female faculty representation is slightly higher in public insti-

tutions, at 47.4% (667 individuals), compared to 45.76% (335 individuals) in the private sector.

The overall growth in faculty numbers has been substantial, with an 8.5% increase from 2023 to 2024 and a notable 16.2% rise compared to 2019. Over the past five years, faculty numbers have steadily increased from 1,839 in 2019 to 1,969 in 2023.

The public sector has seen a 6.4% increase in faculty members from 2019 to 2024, while the private sector has experienced a more significant growth of 41% during the same period.

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CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT JUNE 30, 2024

	(Unaudited) June 30, 2024 BD	(Unaudited) December 31, 2023 BD
ASSETS		
Cash and deposits with the Central Bank of Bahrain	250,001,075	309,901,326
Balances with banks and financial institutions	558,182	380,359
Balances with Head Office and other branch	40,378,190	24,637,684
Investments at amortised cost	8,941,263	8,896,194
Financial assets measured at fair value through other comprehensive income ("OCI")	3,556,690	-
Loans and advances	145,129,599	101,582,283
Interest receivable	2,325,169	2,323,172
Other assets	124,181	65,224
Premises and equipment	349,085	143,684
Total assets	451,363,434	447,929,926
Liabilities and Head Office Funds		
Liabilities		
Due to banks and financial institutions	11,165,097	8,653,093
Due to the Head Office and other branch	196,449,512	194,116,784
Customers' deposits	214,792,824	217,447,248
Interest payable	2,341,430	2,540,825
Other liabilities	1,225,669	1,669,024
Total liabilities	425,974,532	424,426,974
Head Office Funds		
Head office capital	15,000,000	15,000,000
Unremitted profits to the Head Office	10,388,902	8,502,952
Total Head Office funds	25,388,902	23,502,952
Total Liabilities and Head Office Funds	451,363,434	447,929,926

CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME SIX-MONTH PERIOD ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

	(Unaudited) June 30, 2024 BD	(Unaudited) June 30, 2023 BD
Interest income	14,501,442	11,594,002
Interest expense	(11,789,910)	(9,259,267)
Net interest income	2,711,532	2,334,735
Fee and commission income, net	918,491	408,924
Operating income	3,630,023	2,743,659
Other income, net	93,226	36,156
General and administrative expenses	(1,753,889)	(2,181,016)
Allowance for expected credit losses, net	(83,410)	847,406
Profit for the period	1,885,950	1,446,205
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the period	1,885,950	1,446,205

CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN HEAD OFFICE FUNDS SIX-MONTH PERIOD ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

	Head office capital BD	Unremitted profits to the Head Office BD	Total BD
Balance at January 1, 2024 (Audited)	15,000,000	8,502,952	23,502,952
Profit for the period	-	1,885,950	1,885,950
Balance at June 30, 2024 (Unaudited)	15,000,000	10,388,902	25,388,902
Balance at January 1, 2023 (Audited)	15,000,000	4,329,304	19,329,304
Profit for the period	-	1,446,205	1,446,205
Balance at June 30, 2023 (Unaudited)	15,000,000	5,775,509	20,775,509

CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS SIX-MONTH PERIOD ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

	(Unaudited) June 30, 2024 BD	(Unaudited) June 30, 2023 BD
Cash flows from operating activities		
Profit for the period	1,885,950	1,446,205
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation on premises and equipment	40,291	52,099
Depreciation on right of use of asset	35,186	33,123
Allowance for expected credit losses, net	83,410	(847,406)
Investments at amortised cost	(8,368)	(8,367)
Interest expense on lease liabilities	5,531	1,309
Provision for end-of-service benefits	43,584	50,638
Net cash generated before changes in operating assets and liabilities	2,085,584	727,601
Changes in operating assets and liabilities		
Statutory reserve deposits	375,000	(590,000)
Balances with banks and financial institutions	(177,823)	-
Loans and advances	(47,260,177)	21,588,187
Interest receivable	(1,997)	345,841
Other assets	(58,957)	(26,086)
Due to banks and financial institutions	2,526,997	2,026,011
Due to the Head Office and other branch	2,332,728	36,550,858
Customers' deposits	(2,654,424)	(4,153,520)
Interest payable	(199,395)	(86,761)
Other liabilities	(699,563)	(96,131)
	(43,732,027)	56,286,000
Interest paid	(5,531)	(1,309)
Net cash flows (used in) / generated from operating activities	(43,737,558)	56,284,691
Cash flows from investing activities		
Redemption of bonds	-	13,267,878
Purchase of premises and equipment	(13,515)	(274)
Repayment of principal portion of lease liabilities	(33,672)	(37,977)
Proceeds from disposal of premises and equipment	-	2,210
Net cash flows (used in) / generated from investing activities	(47,187)	13,231,837
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	(43,784,745)	69,516,528
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	328,859,791	244,449,642
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	285,075,046	313,966,170

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Over 300 shoppers take home prizes in LuLu's summer bonanza draw

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Top prize of one kilo of gold shared by 20 top winners. LuLu Gift Cards & Happiness Points make shoppers come back for more

Prize distribution for the LuLu Summer Raffle Draw took place yesterday at the Lulu Dana Mall with over 304 winners whose collected valuable prizes.

The E Raffle Draw Promotion, which ended August 9, 2024, saw lucky shoppers collect top prizes of one kilo of gold, valuable LuLu Happiness Points for 500 winners and LuLu Gift Cards worth BD 50 each for 1000 winners.

The total value of the prizes exceeded BD 100,000.



GCC can have big role in bitcoin mining's green energy-driven future

TDT | Dubai, UAE

As bitcoin mining undergoes major changes, the GCC region can have an important role in the transformation, which is being driven by a focus on renewable energy and new technology.

Abdulmalik Mirakhmedov, Executive President of GDA, one of the world's largest bitcoin mining companies in terms of hash rate, says strong government support, an abundance of capital, and a commitment to sustainability are positioning the region as a growing force in the sector.

"Governments across the region are demonstrating enthusiastic support for the growth of bitcoin mining, recognizing its potential to drive broader sector development," said Mirakhmedov, speaking from GDA's Dubai office.

"They are ramping up their green energy initiatives in a move that could propel the region to the forefront of sustainable bitcoin mining, and potentially secure a significant portion of the network's hash



Representative picture

rate." The Oman government's investment of more than \$800 million in crypto-mining operations has been widely reported. Meanwhile, the UAE's estimated 400 megawatts of Bitcoin mining represent around 4% of the global Bitcoin mining hashrate, according to data from the Hashrate Index.

"A common misconception about bitcoin mining is its purported dependence on fossil fuels and consequent environmental impact, but this outdated

view no longer reflects reality," said Mirakhmedov.

"Current data shows that renewable energy sources now power more than 55% of all bitcoin mining operations globally."*

"Hydroelectricity, wind, and even captured methane gas have become go-to power sources for mining operations. This shift isn't temporary, but indicative of a long-term trend, as renewable energy costs continue to decline, making them the obvious

choice for miners worldwide."

Meanwhile, the adoption of advanced cooling technologies, such as liquid and immersion systems, promises to revolutionize operations, boosting energy efficiency and reducing costs.

"As these technologies become more widespread, they'll further enhance the sustainability of mining practices," says Mirakhmedov.

"While bitcoin mining strives to reduce its carbon footprint further, there are other benefits resulting from the industry's ingenuity.

"In Sweden, for instance, the excess heat from mining rigs is being used to warm greenhouses and de-ice vehicles, turning what was once waste into a valuable resource. This kind of innovation will help secure the industry's future, and the GCC region can play a big part in that."

One of the world's most experienced industrial-scale bitcoin mining companies, GDA operates 20 data centres across North America, South America, Europe, and Central Asia.

Apple in talks to invest in OpenAI: report

Washington, United States

iPhone juggernaut Apple is in talks to invest in OpenAI, the creator of ChatGPT and the biggest name in generative artificial intelligence, a news report said Thursday.

According to the Wall Street Journal, the company founded by Steve Jobs is at the funding table as OpenAI raises more money to help meet the heavy costs of building new technology.

Reports said that OpenAI is in talks to reach a valuation of \$100 billion in the funding round led



Representative picture

by venture capital firm Thrive Capital, which will pump in one billion dollars.

For months, news reports have said OpenAI has been in talks to raise the capital that would make it one of the most valuable tech companies in

the world. Microsoft, which is OpenAI's biggest investor and takes home half of the startup's profits, is also part of the new funding round.

The entry of Apple into OpenAI's ownership, if confirmed, would come as the company is

set to announce its new iPhones on September 9 that are expected to optimize AI innovations.

In June, Apple announced that it was making OpenAI's technology available as an option in the software for top-of-the-line iPhones, but added that AI tools made by other companies would also be available in time. Most of the AI features used by Apple users would use the company's own technology, but more complicated tasks would be deferred to OpenAI's powers if the customer chose to do so.

Stocks waver as investors weigh inflation data

AFP | Paris, France

US and European stock markets wobbled on Friday as investors digested inflation figures that raised the prospect of interest rate cuts in the two major economies next month.

Paris closed 0.1% lower while Frankfurt and London were marginally in the red after the indexes were in the green for most of the day.

In New York, the Dow opened higher but was down 0.1% around midday, a day after closing at a record high

following the release of data showing the US economy performed better than thought in the second quarter.

The broad-based S&P 500 index and the tech-heavy Nasdaq rose. Official data on Friday showed the US Federal Reserve's favoured measure of inflation -- the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index -- held steady on an annual basis in July at 2.5%.

It edged up on a monthly basis from 0.1% in June to 0.2% in July.

Key figures around 1610 GMT

New York - Dow:	▼ 0.1% at 41,283.97 points
New York - S&P 500:	▲ 0.2 at 5,603.49
Nasdaq Composite:	▲ 0.3% at 17,576.50
London - FTSE 100:	■ at 8,376.63
Paris - CAC 40:	▼ 0.1% at 7,630.95
Frankfurt - DAX:	■ at 18,906.92
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▲ 0.7% at 38,647.75 (close)
Hang Seng Index:	▲ 1.1% at 17,989.07 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▲ 0.7% at 2,842.21 (close)
Dollar/yen:	▲ at 145.96 yen from 144.93 yen
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.1058 from \$1.1077
Pound/dollar:	▼ at \$1.3127 from \$1.3170
Euro/pound:	▲ at 84.23 pence from 84.11 pence
West Texas Intermediate:	▼ 2.6% at \$73.96 per barrel
Brent North Sea Crude:	▼ 1.4% at \$78.80 per barrel

RAFIDAIN BANK BAHRAIN BRANCH			
INTERIM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	Reviewed	Audited	
	30 June 2024	31 December 2023	
30 June 2024 (Reviewed)	BD	BD	
ASSETS			
Cash and balances with the Central Bank of Bahrain	7,594,260	9,333,062	
Investments	20,935,530	20,681,061	
Amounts due from banks and financial institutions	2,649,185	1,020,605	
Loans and advances	22,580	21,111	
Amounts due from the Head Office and other branches	1,225,471	1,225,471	
Other assets	377,392	334,208	
TOTAL ASSETS	32,804,418	32,615,518	
LIABILITIES AND HEAD OFFICE FUNDS			
Liabilities			
Amounts due to banks and financial institutions	107,038	110,573	
Customers' deposits	1,750,686	2,163,649	
Amounts due to the Head Office and other branches	5,385,639	5,368,222	
Other liabilities	1,317,949	1,275,949	
Total liabilities	8,561,312	8,918,393	
Head office funds			
Head office account	17,500,000	17,500,000	
General reserve	243,043	243,043	
Unremitted profit due to Head office	6,500,063	5,954,082	
Total head office funds	24,243,106	23,697,125	
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND HEAD OFFICE FUNDS	32,804,418	32,615,518	
INTERIM STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	Reviewed	Reviewed	
Six-months ended 30 June 2024 (Reviewed)	2024	2023	
Six-months ended 30 June 2024 (Reviewed)	BD	BD	
Interest and similar income	829,400	821,271	
Interest and similar expense	(16,927)	(11,980)	
NET INTEREST INCOME	812,473	809,291	
Net (loss) / gain on foreign currencies	(358)	1,540	
Other income	830	2,033	
TOTAL INCOME	812,945	812,864	
Staff expenses	(110,940)	(69,744)	
Other operating expenses	(127,119)	(103,023)	
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	(238,059)	(172,767)	
OPERATING PROFIT BEFORE PROVISION FOR CREDIT LOSSES	574,886	640,097	
(Provision for) / Reversal of expected credit losses - net	(28,905)	3,630	
NET PROFIT AND TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD	545,981	643,727	
INTERIM STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS	Reviewed	Reviewed	
Six-months ended 30 June 2024 (Reviewed)	2024	2023	
Six-months ended 30 June 2024 (Reviewed)	BD	BD	
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Net profit for the period	545,981	643,727	
Adjustments for non-cash items:			
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	9,612	7,292	
Depreciation on equipment	12,958	7,253	
Interest on lease liabilities	1,477	944	
Gain on termination of lease	237	-	
Provision for / (Reversal of) expected credit losses - net	28,905	(3,630)	
Operating profit before changes in operating assets and liabilities	599,170	655,586	
Mandatory reserve with the Central Bank of Bahrain	(3,000)	(5,000)	
Investments	(255,396)	(1,087,326)	
Amounts due from banks and financial institutions	(1,600,000)	(1,000,000)	
Loans and advances	(929)	2,868	
Other assets	(22,097)	20,420	
Amounts due to banks and financial institutions	(3,535)	45,654	
Amounts due to the Head Office and other branches	17,417	59,254	
Customers' deposits	(412,963)	(293,944)	
Other liabilities	52,026	(4,514)	
Net cash flow used in operating activities	(1,629,307)	(1,607,002)	
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of equipment	(43,657)	(81,092)	
Payment of lease liability	(11,740)	(7,920)	
Cash flow used in investing activities	(55,397)	(89,012)	
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Amount remitted to the Head Office	-	(47,137)	
Cash flow used in financing activities	-	(47,137)	
NET CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(1,684,704)	(1,743,151)	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	9,347,381	16,122,908	
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE PERIOD	7,662,677	14,379,757	
Shahlaa Ismail Yaseen General Manager	Ernst & Young Auditors		

QUOTE OF THE DAY
A GREAT DEAL OF INTELLIGENCE CAN BE INVESTED IN IGNORANCE WHEN THE NEED FOR ILLUSION IS DEEP
SAUL BELLOW

TODAY IN HISTORY

1142
Possible date for establishment of the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) League [disputed date - other research places date between 1450 and 1660]

1854
Major outbreak of cholera occurs in Soho, London; Physician John Snow goes on to call it "the most terrible outbreak of cholera which ever occurred in this kingdom."

1888
The body of Jack the Ripper's first victim, Mary Ann Nichols, is found in Whitechapel in London's East End

1997
Diana, Princess of Wales, dies in a car crash in a road tunnel in Paris



News in brief

Turkey says over 100 suspected IS members arrested
Turkey arrested over 100 suspected members of the Islamic State (IS) group this week, authorities said yesterday, the latest mass detention targeting the terror organisation. The country has been hit by several major attacks claimed by IS, including a 2017 nightclub shooting that killed dozens of people. The fresh raids took place across the country, including in the capital Ankara and Turkey's largest city Istanbul. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya posted on social media platform X. The arrest of 119 people this week follows other mass detentions, including 99 announced in early August.

The king of New Zealand's indigenous Maori people died yesterday while recovering from heart surgery at age 69, with aides saying he had "passed to the great beyond". King Tuheitia passed away peacefully surrounded by family, a spokesperson said, just days after celebrating the 18th anniversary of his coronation. "The death of Kingi Tuheitia is a moment of great sadness," the spokesperson added in a statement. "A chief who has passed to the great beyond. Rest in love."

New Zealand's Maori king dies, aged 69
A car plowed into a caravan of US-bound migrants traveling along a highway in southern Mexico on Thursday, killing three people including a girl, authorities said. Seventeen more people were injured in the incident in Oaxaca state, the National Migration Institute said in a statement. A man and a girl from Nicaragua and a woman from Ecuador were killed, it said. Local media reported the driver had lost control of the vehicle.

Car hits migrant caravan in Mexico, killing three
A car plowed into a caravan of US-bound migrants traveling along a highway in southern Mexico on Thursday, killing three people including a girl, authorities said. Seventeen more people were injured in the incident in Oaxaca state, the National Migration Institute said in a statement. A man and a girl from Nicaragua and a woman from Ecuador were killed, it said. Local media reported the driver had lost control of the vehicle.

Venezuela hit by nationwide power outage



People walk in front of closed shops in Caracas
AFP | Caracas

A blackout left most of Venezuela without power yesterday in what authorities blamed on sabotage of the national electrical grid -- the latest crisis to hit the oil-rich country after a disputed presidential election.

Venezuela experiences frequent blackouts, which President Nicolas Maduro's government routinely attributes to unproven conspiracies to overthrow him. "We are reporting that at approximately 4:40 am (0840 GMT) today, yesterday, August 30, an electrical sabotage took place in Venezuela... which has affected almost the entire national territory," Communications Minister Freddy Nanez told the state-run VTV channel.

"All 24 states are reporting total or partial loss of electricity supply," he said. The worst countrywide outage to strike Venezuela, in March 2019, lasted several days.

Israel air strike kills three Palestinians on third day of West Bank raid

Death toll rises to 19 as large-scale Israeli military operation enters third day

UN aid official questions "basic humanity" amid Gaza crisis

Harris pledges continued US weapons support for Israel

WHO announces "humanitarian pauses" for Gaza vaccination drive

AFP | Jenin



A Palestinian woman stands in the doorway of her house along a street from which Israeli bulldozers dug out the asphalt, in the Nur Shams refugee camp

Israel said it killed three Hamas fighters in an air strike in the occupied West Bank yesterday, taking the death toll from a large-scale military operation now in its third day to at least 19. A top UN aid official meanwhile questioned "what has become of our basic humanity", as the war raged on in Gaza where humanitarian operations struggled to respond. In the United States, Vice President Kamala Harris pledged she

will not change Washington's policy of supplying weapons to Israel if elected to the top job in November. But she stressed it was time to "end this war" in Gaza. Israel has described its raids on towns and refugee camps across the northern West Bank as "counter-terrorism" operations. They have killed at least 19 Palestinians since Wednesday, the military and the Palestinian health ministry said. Palestinian armed groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad have said at least 13 of those killed were their fighters. The military said it killed three Hamas fighters in an air strike near the northern city of Jenin yesterday. Witnesses told AFP the strike hit a car in the town of Zababdeh, southeast of the city. Israeli troops pulled back from other West Bank towns late

Thursday but fighting raged on around Jenin.

An AFP journalist reported loud explosions from the city's refugee camp and thick plumes of smoke rising from the area.

Vaccination 'pauses'

In Gaza, Israeli artillery pounded western areas of Gaza City early yesterday, an AFP journalist said, while a medical source at the southern Nasser Hospital said an Israeli strike killed three people near the southern city of Khan Yunis.

The World Health Organization said Israel had agreed to at least three days of "humanitarian pauses" in parts of Gaza, starting Sunday, to facilitate a vaccination drive after the territory recorded its first case of polio in a quarter of a century.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the measures were "not a ceasefire" in the nearly 11-month war. The Israeli assault on the West Bank has caused significant destruction, especially in Tulkarem, whose governor Mustafa Taqatqa described the raids as "unpre-

YOU KNOW WHAT
The World Health Organization secured Israel's agreement for at least three days of "humanitarian pauses" in parts of Gaza to facilitate a vaccination drive after the territory recorded its first polio case in 25 years

cedented" and a "dangerous signal". The Palestinian Prisoners' Club advocacy group said at least 45 people had been detained in the West Bank since Wednesday. An Israeli military spokesman said "10 wanted individuals were arrested".

Britain yesterday said it was "deeply" concerned by the raids, urging Israel to "exercise re-

straint" and adhere to international law.

France said the Israeli operations "worsen a climate of unprecedented instability and violence", while Spain denounced "an outbreak of violence which is clearly unacceptable". Violence has surged in the West Bank since Hamas's unprecedented October 7 attack on Israel triggered war in Gaza.

The United Nations said on Wednesday that at least 637 Palestinians had been killed in the territory by Israeli troops or settlers since the Gaza war began.

Nineteen Israelis, including soldiers, have been killed in Palestinian attacks or during army operations over the same period, according to Israeli official figures.

Israeli shelling in the Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza killed two people yesterday, the civil defence agency in the Hamas-ruled territory said.

The acting head of the UN humanitarian office, Joyce Msuya, said "more than 88 percent of Gaza's territory has come under an (Israeli) order to evacuate at

Brazil judge, Musk standoff intensifies as Starlink assets frozen



Alexandre de Moraes
AFP | Brasilia



Elon Musk

A standoff between a Brazilian Supreme Court judge and Elon Musk intensified as the billionaire's Starlink company said its assets had been frozen in the country amid a feud over the fate of his social media platform X.

The episode began Wednesday when Brazilian Supreme Court Judge Alexandre de Moraes threatened to suspend X, formerly known as Twitter, unless Musk named a new legal representative for the company in Brazil within 24 hours.

Then on Thursday, Musk's satellite internet operator Starlink said it had received an order from Moraes that "freezes Starlink's finances and prevents Starlink from conducting financial transactions" in the country.

Starlink, which operates in Brazil, particularly in the Amazon, alleged that the order "is based on an unfounded deter-

mination that Starlink should be responsible for the fines levied -- unconstitutionally -- against X."

The company said on X that it intended "to address the matter legally." Moraes, who also presides over Brazil's Superior Electoral Tribunal, has spearheaded a battle against disinformation in South America's largest nation, clashing with Musk along the way.

Several of the X accounts he ordered suspended belonged to supporters of Brazil's former far-right president Jair Bolsonaro, who tried to discredit the voting system in the 2022 election, which he lost.

Moraes's Wednesday decision escalated the months-long feud.

Already in April, Moraes had ordered an investigation of Musk, accusing him of re-activating some of the banned accounts.



TOP 4 TWEETS

01



Many remote schools and hospitals depend on SpaceX's Starlink! SpaceX will provide Internet service to users in Brazil for free until this matter is resolved, as we cannot receive payment, but don't want to cut anyone off.
@elonmusk

02



More than one in three women in our nation live in a state with an abortion ban. This is a health care crisis. We will never stop fighting to protect reproductive freedom.
@VP

03



For the first time in 5 years, the number of overdose deaths in the United States has started to decline. But even one death is one too many, and far too many Americans continue to lose loved ones to the scourge of illicit fentanyl.
@POTUS

04



25 years since the people of Timor-Leste overwhelmingly chose independence, we cannot forget the courage and sacrifice of the Timorese resistance. I was moved and honoured to meet a few of the brave women veterans who risked everything to see independence realized.
@antoniogeteres

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

Japan scraps idea to woo women out of city with cash



People wearing yukata taking pictures at Sensoji temple in Tokyo's Asakusa district
AFP | Tokyo

A widely ridiculed Japanese government idea to woo Tokyo women into marrying men in rural areas by offering cash payouts and train tickets to matchmaking events has been scrapped, officials said yesterday.

Bureaucrats had envisioned payments of up to 600,000 yen (\$4,140) for women who got married and settled outside of Tokyo as part of efforts to reduce a yawning countryside gender gap, local media reported.

Hanako Jimi, minister of state for regional revitalisation, said yesterday she had instructed officials to "review" the plan, and insisted that reports about the size of payments were "not true".

Media leaks about the scheme this week drew scorn on social media, where critics saw it as typical in a country where men dominate politics and other areas, more than in any other major industrialised economy. "Did they think independ-

ent, motivated and educated women in the city would think, 'What? If I marry a local man and move to a countryside, I'll get 600,000 yen! I'll do it!?' ... Are they serious?" said one user on X.

Another said: "Do they still not get it? This is something people who see women as valuable only if they give birth would come up with."

As they age, many rural areas in the world's fourth-biggest economy are facing a depopulation crisis, with some small towns having hardly any -- or even zero -- children.

One cause is that more young women than young men leave the villages and small towns they grew up in and move to big cities, especially Tokyo, for better opportunities in higher education and work.

More than 40 percent of Japanese municipalities are at "risk of disappearing" due to the expected drop in the number of women in their 20s and 30s, a study by a private-sector expert panel suggested in April.

Shootings, roadblocks shake Mexican cartel stronghold

AFP | Mexico City

Gunfire, roadblocks and arson on Thursday shook a Mexican city home to one of the country's most powerful drug cartels, authorities and local media said.

Vehicles were set on fire in Culiacan, capital of the northwestern state of Sinaloa -- the bastion of jailed drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman and his sons.

Gunmen attacked a military patrol on the outskirts of the



Burned trucks blocking a highway during heavy gunfights on the outskirts of Culiacan, Sinaloa state

city, the Sinaloa state security secretariat reported on social media.

Roadblocks were later reported in another district where Ovidio Guzman, one of

El Chapo's sons, was arrested in January 2023 before being extradited to the United States. The unrest, as well as a string of recent murders in Sinaloa, follow the dramatic arrest on US soil of a Sinaloa Cartel boss in circumstances worthy of a crime thriller.

Cartel co-founder Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada claimed in a statement released through his lawyer that he had been kidnapped in Mexico and delivered into US custody against his will.

Pacific bloc rebuffs call to cut ties with Taiwan



Prime Minister of Tonga (C, front row) Hu'akameilliku poses for a group picture with Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Leaders
AFP | Nuku'alofa

Pacific leaders yesterday rejected a Beijing-backed call to break ties with Taiwan, saying a regional bloc would continue a decades-old policy of engagement.

Members of the Pacific Islands Forum gathering in Tonga for an annual summit batted aside a push by one of China's allies to stop treating Taiwan as a development partner.

In a final communique the bloc leaders "reaffirmed" a 1992 agreement that allowed talks with Taipei.

Beijing has aggressively sought to exclude Taiwan -- a self-governing island of more than 23 million people -- from international fora and rejects its claims to autonomy.

Solomon Islands, China's main partner in the South Pacific, had lobbied for Taiwan to be stripped of partner status with the Pacific Islands Forum.

The move had angered some of Taiwan's allies.

The Pacific Islands Forum is split between countries that have diplomatic relations with Beijing and others like the Marshall Islands, Palau and Tuvalu which are allies of Taipei.



A worker in Japan removes debris blown away by strong winds caused by Typhoon Shanshan

case, "the relation to the typhoon was being studied". Two more were feared dead and two others were missing, Hayashi said.

Eight people were seriously hurt and 70 others had light injuries, he said, with many hurt by broken glass after the typhoon smashed windows and ripped tiles off roofs when

it slammed into Kyushu on Thursday with gusts up to 252 kph.

Almost 200 buildings were damaged. Typhoons in the region have been forming closer to coastlines, intensifying more rapidly and lasting longer over land due to climate change, according to a study released in July.

US Army criticizes Trump staff over 'push' at cemetery visit

AFP | Washington

The US Army took aim at Donald Trump's staff over a visit by the Republican presidential candidate to the country's most hallowed resting place for its war dead.

The incident has mushroomed into an uncharacteristically public dispute between the military and a former US commander in chief, with Trump lashing out and accusing President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris of having "killed" American soldiers through "gross incompetence" in Afghanistan.

Trump went to Arlington National Cemetery just outside Washington with family members of some of the 13 service members killed in a 2021 bombing during the last hours of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. His campaign posted photos



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump during a visit to Arlington National Cemetery

Harris says in first interview US ready to turn page on Trump

AFP | Washington

Kamala Harris declared that Americans are ready to turn the page on Donald Trump as she reached out to centrist voters in her first interview since her dramatic entry into November's presidential election.

The 59-year-old Democrat insisted on CNN that she would be tough on illegal immigration and support controversial oil and gas fracking -- while sticking to her liberal background by pledging a fairer economy.

"I am the best person to do this job," Harris said in a joint interview with her running mate Tim Walz while on the campaign trail in the swing state of Georgia. The first female and Black and



US Vice President Kamala Harris waves as she walks to board Air Force Two prior to departure from Savannah Hilton Head Airport in Savannah, Georgia

South Asian vice president described Trump as "diminishing the character and the strength of who we are as Americans, really dividing our nation."

from the visit, including one showing him giving a thumbs-up gesture while standing with relatives at the grave of one of the US Marines killed.

The Army said an Arlington employee was "abruptly pushed aside" when she sought to ensure a law prohibiting political activity on cemetery grounds was followed.

"This incident was unfortunate, and it is also unfortunate that the (Arlington National Cemetery) employee and her professionalism has been unfairly attacked," an Army spokesperson said in a statement.

"I think people are ready to turn the page on that," she said. "People are ready for a new way forward."

The Democrat also said that

she would name a Republican to her cabinet if she wins, in another sign that she is reaching out to wavering middle-of-the-road voters.

"Trump branded the interview 'BORING!!!' in a post on social media."

The Republican former president called Harris the "greatest flip-flopper" as he addressed a rally in the swing state of Michigan, before mocking her appearance in the interview.

"She didn't look like a leader to me," he said later.

Harris rejected criticism that she has shifted positions on politically sensitive issues including fracking, which she once opposed but now supports, and illegal migration over the Mexican border, where she has taken a harder line.

House collapse in monsoon rains kills 12 in Pakistan



Commuters wade through flood waters after heavy monsoon rains in Multan
AFP | Islamabad

Twelve people died yesterday when a landslide triggered by heavy rains destroyed their house in Pakistan, rescue officials said, with more than 300 killed since the start of monsoon season.

The family, including three women and a child, were sleeping when their house collapsed in the remote area of Patrak, in the Upper Dir district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

"The landslide in Patrak completely destroyed the house, killing all 12 individuals inside," Bilal Faizi, a spokesman for the rescue service 1122, said.

Large parts of the country have been hit by heavy rains since Thursday night, with thunderstorms predicted throughout yesterday, Pakistan's meteorological department said.



celebs

Selena Gomez shares why she was 'nervous' to join the cast of Only Murders in the Building

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Selena Gomez was "nervous" about joining the cast of 'Only Murders in the Building'.

The 32-year-old actress made her name as a teenager on the Disney Channel in the leading role of 'Wizards of Waverly Place' but carved out a pop career in the years that followed and when she agreed to star in the Apple+ series alongside Steve Martin and Martin Short, it proved to be a major comeback

Selena Gomez

to the small screen for her.

Selena - who has been nominated for an Emmy for her role in the series - told Extra: "I was nervous. This was my second TV show that I'd ever done. I was really excited, but I have to be genuine, the first day we shot I felt I could take a deep breath because I knew I was in good company."

The 'Lose You To Love Me' songstress is part of the 'Wizards of Waverly Place' reboot as an executive producer and will also

"I was nervous. This was my second TV show that I'd ever done. I was really excited, but I have to be genuine, the first day we shot I felt I could take a deep breath because I knew I was in good company"

SELENA GOMEZ

appear in the first episode and as she prepares to return to the role of Alex Russo on the magical show, admitted that she is "honoured" to be going back to her roots.

She said: "It took years, honestly. It was just an idea and then after probably four years we came up with an idea. I was immediately on board, and I can't wait to bring this show to a whole new generation. And I'm honored to pay homage to where I started."

Selena's Emmy nomination is

the first time she has been up for any major award in the field of television and recently revealed that she had no clue about her sudden career milestone until her friend texted her.

She said: "I actually just got a text from one of my friends saying congratulations and I responded and I said, 'For what?' And then she just laughed at me, and so for an hour I didn't really get it, and then my team called me. So, I just heard it from them and I was very, very excited."

Sandra Bullock admits she's 'too tired' since hitting 60

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Sandra Bullock is "too tired" since hitting 60.

The 'Speed' actress, who celebrated the milestone on 26 July, has been through a horrific year as she was left devastated when her model-turned-photographer partner Bryan Randall died aged 57 in August 2023 after his three-year battle with motor neuron disease ALS.

She said in a birthday message recorded for the 'Today' show for her friend Hoda Kotb - who turned 60 on 9 August: "Hoda, Hoda, Hoda, Hoda... I had so many brilliant and funny things prepared for you, for this message, that were just gonna slay it, but you know girl, I'm just too tired!"

"Tired because I had to make my way up that mountain before

you got there so I could check out the terrain and see what things look like and you know just get the feel so I could fill you in.

"And it's weird, because people seem to want us to be afraid of what it might look like when we get there."

But Sandra added about ageing: "It turns out it's pretty damn great - it's pretty awesome."

She then made a string of swears that were bleeped out of her daytime TV message.

Sandra added to Hoda: "And for (bleeped) like you - can we say (bleeped) in the morning?"

"Because I know you can say it in the afternoon, right? You can definitely say it at night and on streaming, but (bleeped), I know you can't say that."

Hoda and her co-host Jenna Bush Hager, 42, laughed as

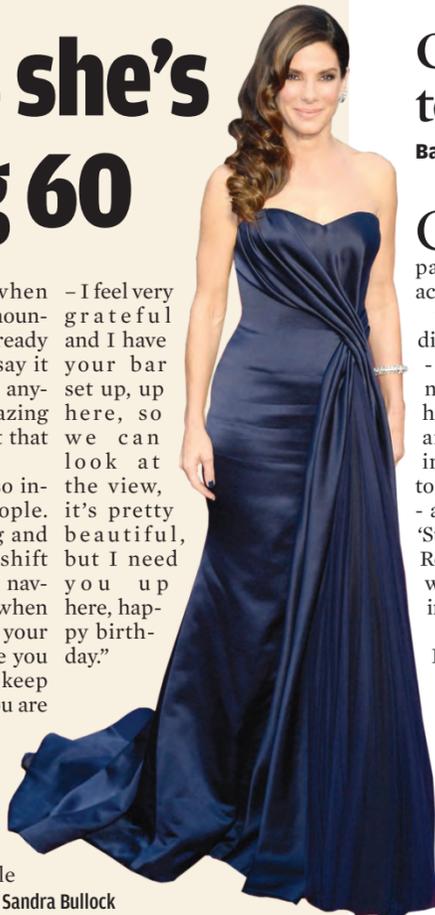
Sandra went on: "But when you get to the top of the mountain where you're getting ready to go, you're allowed to say it because it doesn't matter anymore - everything is amazing because you have made it that way."

"Thank you for being so incredible to so many people. What you do for a living and how you have to shapeshift every single day, how you navigate your kindness, even when that's not what's coming your way, how you are to those you care about and how you keep them safe, and just who you are as a human being."

"We're all pretty lucky to have you, especially your kids. So, happy birthday my sweet friend."

"Thank you for allowing me to be in your circle

- I feel very grateful and I have your bar set up, up here, so we can look at the view, it's pretty beautiful, but I need you up here, happy birthday."



Sandra Bullock

Christopher Reeve wanted to die after being paralysed

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

Christopher Reeve wanted to die after he was left paralysed in a horse-riding accident.

The 'Superman' star - who died in 2004 at the age of 52 - suffered a life-changing spinal injury when he fell from his horse during an equestrian competition in Virginia in 1995 leaving him unable to move from the neck down - and now new documentary 'Super/Man: The Christopher Reeve Story' has revealed he was left contemplating death in the time after the accident.

In a trailer for the film, Reeve says: "[I thought] 'I ruined my life and everybody else's. I won't be able to [son] Will. Won't be able to make love to [wife] Dana. Maybe we should let me go.'"

However, the actor revealed kind words from his wife Dana helped change

his outlook. He added: "And then she said the words that saved my life: 'You're still you. And I love you.'"

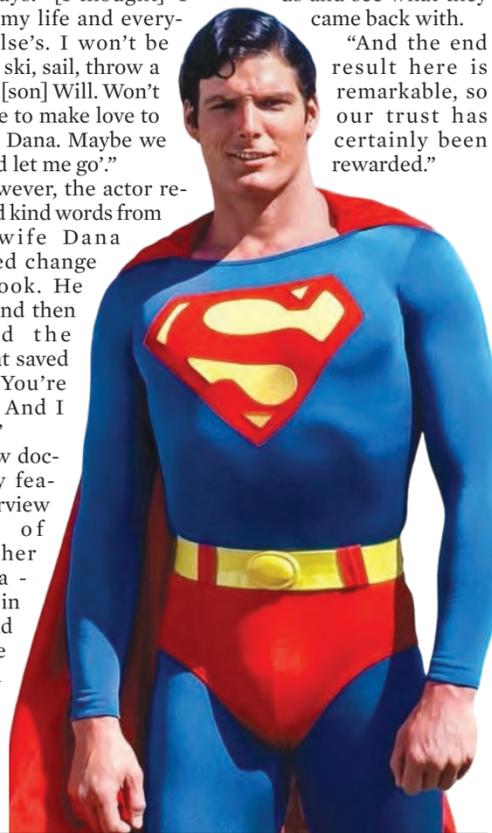
The new documentary features interview footage of Christopher and Dana - who died in 2006 - and their three children Matthew, 44, Alexandra, 40, and Will,

32, as well as famous friends including Whoopi Goldberg, Susan Sarandon, Jeff Daniels and Glenn Close.

The film premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January and Will Reeve revealed the family was thrilled with the end result.

Speaking at the screening, he told the audience: "We knew... if we were ever going to do this, it had to be the right time and the right team and that we were going to give over our archive, our home movies, sit for some raw and vulnerable interviews, and then place all of our trust and faith in the team that had assembled around us and see what they came back with."

"And the end result here is remarkable, so our trust has certainly been rewarded."



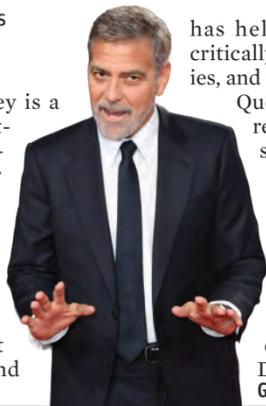
Christopher Reeve

George Clooney 'little irritated' with Quentin Tarantino for branding him 'not a movie star'

Bang Showbiz | Los Angeles

George Clooney is a "little irritated" with Quentin Tarantino for branding him "not a movie star".

The actor-turned-director, 63, is still one of Hollywood's most bankable stars and



has helmed a string of critically acclaimed movies, and has now hit out at Quentin, 61, who he recently said "some s***" about his Hollywood status.

George - who starred alongside Quentin in Robert Rodriguez's 1996 vampire comedy-horror 'From Dusk Till Dawn' - told the September issue of GQ magazine: "Quentin said some s*** about me recently, so I'm a little irritated by him."

"And then he literally said something like, 'Name me a

movie since the millennium'.

"And I was like, 'Since the millennium? That's kind of my whole f***** career.'" George has two Oscars to his name and also told GQ how he is now setting his sights on Broadway.

The 'Confessions of a Dangerous Mind' director, who has two children with his human rights lawyer wife Amal, 46, said: "I wrote a Broadway play, 'Good Night, and Good Luck'."

SUDOKU

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Yesterday's solution

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

How to play
Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

CROSSWORD

Across
1- Dutch export; 5- Sever; 8- Cake finisher; 12- Chart anew; 14- Nothing special; 15- Pineapple vendor; 16- Replay option; 17- Again; 18- Madame Bovary; 19- Exasperating; 21- Tooth layer; 23- No-win situation; 24- ... man ... mouse?; 25- Upper limb; 26- Deadly; 30- Madonna role; 32- Benefit; 33- Protein building block; 37- Gull's cousin; 38- Undercover operation; 39- Stockings; 40- Extirpate; 42- Skin layer; 43- Russian range; 44- Totter; 45- Part of UNLV; 48- Completely; 49- Wood of the Rolling Stones; 50- Black Sea port; 52- Motorcade; 57- Lends a hand; 58- Magic stick; 60- Stately; 61- Nipple; 62- End in ... (draw); 63- Trap; 64- Vandals; 65- Mousse alternative; 66- Corner;

Down
1- Formerly, formerly; 2- Sandwich shop; 3- Latin love; 4- Auntie of Broadway; 5- Circle at bottom, point at top; 6- Application; 7- Lofty; 8- Think tank product; 9- Punctuation mark; 10- Fudd of cartoons; 11- Domain; 13- Mail-related; 14- Ditto; 20- Lubricate; 22- Defense grp. since 1949; 24- Sheepish?; 26- Delayed; 27- Always; 28- Scarlett's home; 29- Veda devotee; 30- Gives off; 31- Oohed and ...; 33- In any way; 34- Firewood measure; 35- Woe ...; 36- Honeybunch; 38- Dirty rotten scoundrel; 41- Nest eggs, briefly; 42- Givers; 44- Speck; 45- Reluctant; 46- Old French expression meaning "goodbye"; 47- Four-door; 49- Kind of awakening; 51- Concordes; 52- Indigo source; 53- Red coin?; 54- Food thickener; 55- Be bold; 56- Gen. Robert ...; 59- Supped;

Yesterday's solution

B	R	I	C	A	T	E	A	M	M	O	J	O		
O	U	C	H	D	E	E	R	E	A	D	O	S		
R	E	B	A	E	L	L	E	N	R	O	T	A		
A	D	M	I	R	A	L	A	S	H	T	R	A		
N	O	M	S	G	L	I	E	V	A	L	E	T		
A	S	E	A	S	E	T	T	L	E	A	R	I		
N	O	T	W	I	T	H	S	T	A	N	D	I	N	G
A	L	E	S	E	A	M	A	N	E	R	I	E		
S	E	R	T	A	R	E	S	R	I	S	E	R		
H	A	T	L	I	E	T	O							
E	N	T	I	C	E	S	A	G	E	N	D	A	S	
B	E	A	R	L	E	A	S	E	I	R	O	N		
A	R	T	S	L	E	A	S	T	Z	O	N	E		
Y	O	S	T	A	S	A	N	A	E	P	E	E		

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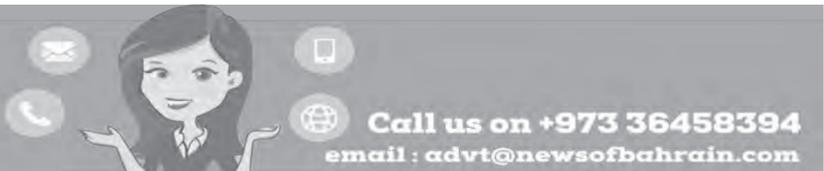
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Alcaraz, Osaka crash out of US Open

Former champions Carlos Alcaraz and Naomi Osaka knocked out in second round upsets

● **Alcaraz falls to world No. 74 van de Zandschulp**

● **Osaka loses to 52nd-ranked Muchova**

● **Sinner and Swiatek advance comfortably**

● **Rybakina withdraws due to injuries**

AFP | New York

Former champions Carlos Alcaraz and Naomi Osaka were knocked out of the US Open on Thursday as the final Grand Slam of the year lost two of its biggest crowd-pullers.

Alcaraz, the world number three and 2022 champion in New York, was stunned by Dutch world number 74 Botić van de Zandschulp 6-1, 7-5, 6-4.

Osaka, who counts the 2018 and 2020 US Opens amongst her four career majors, slipped to a 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) loss at the hands of 52nd-ranked Czech Karolina Muchova.

Alcaraz had made at least the quarter-finals in his three previous appearances in New York. Thursday's defeat was his earliest at a Grand Slam since a second round exit at Wimbledon in 2021.

Defeat ended his dream of becoming only the third man in the modern era to win the French Open, Wimbledon and the US Open in the same season.

"The tennis schedule is so tight. I've been playing a lot of matches lately with Roland Garros, with Wimbledon, Olympic

Games," said Alcaraz who lost a draining Olympics final to Novak Djokovic in Paris just over three weeks ago.

"I took a little break after the Olympic Games. Probably it wasn't enough. Probably I came here with not as much energy as I thought that I was going to come. But I don't want to put that as excuse."

Van de Zandschulp said he was lost for words after only his second career win over a top five player.

"It was an incredible evening out here in my first time in the night session on Arthur Ashe," he said.

"I tried to stay calm.

You have to keep your head against these guys otherwise they will take advantage."

He broke twice in the opening set to

stake his claims in front of a shell-shocked crowd.

He was breaks to the good in sets two and three, leaving Alcaraz to counter-punch before surrendering his hard-earned foothold.

His fate was sealed when he committed his 27th and final unforced error of the night as van de Zandschulp pulled off one of the biggest upsets in recent Grand Slam history.

The Dutchman, who had lost his two previous matches with Alcaraz, will next face 25th-seeded Jack Draper.

For Osaka, her comeback from maternity leave remains stalled.

She missed last year's tournament after giving

“The tennis schedule is so tight. I've been playing a lot of matches lately with Roland Garros, with Wimbledon, Olympic Games. I took a little break after the Olympic Games. Probably it wasn't enough. Probably I came here with not as much energy as I thought that I was going to come. But I don't want to put that as excuse

CARLOS ALCARAZ

birth to daughter Shai but made up for that absence in the first round when she brushed aside Jelena Ostapenko for a first top 10 win in four years.

However, on Thursday the 26-year-old went down to a straight sets loss to 2023 semi-finalist Muchova, leaving her without a third round ap-

pearance at the majors since the 2022 Australian Open.

Osaka blew three set points in the second set before a wild forehand handed her Czech rival victory.

"It's been a little difficult because obviously I can only gauge how I'm doing by results. I feel faster. I feel better, but I lost in the second round. So it's a little rough," said Osaka.

Muchova will meet Russia's Anastasia Potapova for a last 16 spot.

"Honestly this year the biggest win for me is that I could play again," said Muchova who picked up a wrist injury at last year's US Open which sidelined her for nine months.

Alcaraz's defeat removed a major title barrier from the path of top seed Jannik Sinner, who had been scheduled to meet the Spaniard in the semi-finals.

World number one Sinner won his 50th match of the year when he defeated America's 49th-ranked Alex Michelsen 6-4, 6-0, 6-2 to make the last 32 for a fourth successive year.

The 23-year-old Italian unleashed 28 winners and broke serve eight times. He will face Australia's Christopher O'Connell for a place in the last 16.

Women's world number one Iga Swiatek charged into

the third round, routing 217th-ranked Ena Shibahara of Japan 6-0, 6-1 to record her 55th match win of 2024.

Poland's Swiatek, the 2022 US Open winner who is seeking to add a second title in New York to her four French Open triumphs, overwhelmed the 26-year-old qualifier, who was in the main draw of a Grand Slam for the first time, in just 65 minutes.

She goes on to face 25th seed Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova who was a quarter-finalist in New York 13 years ago.

Rybakina withdraws

Swiatek then saw likely semi-final opponent Elena Rybakina withdraw from the tournament

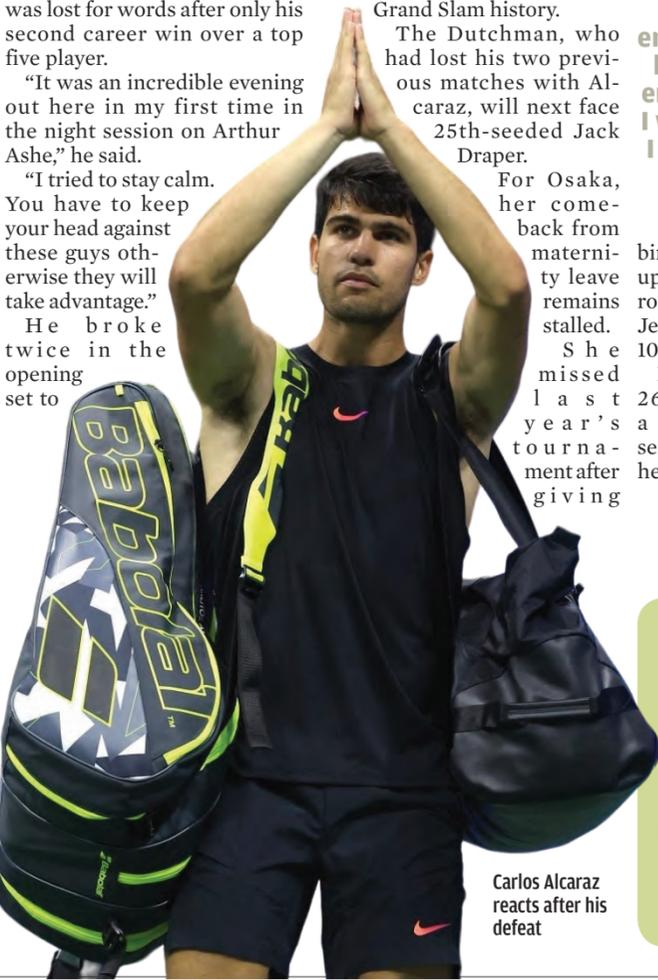
ahead of her second round clash with 143rd-ranked French qualifier Jessica Ponchet.

Rybakina issued a statement saying she was forced to withdraw "because of my injuries".

Karolina Pliskova, the

2016 runner-up, suffered a left ankle injury and was forced to retire from her match with fifth-seed Jasmine Paolini after just three points.

Fourth seed and 2021 champion Daniil Medvedev defeated Hungary's Fabian Marozsan in straight sets.



Carlos Alcaraz reacts after his defeat



Carlos Alcaraz's defeat ended his dream of becoming only the third man in the modern era to win the French Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open in the same season

Japan's Naomi Osaka warms up ahead of her match



Rain washes out opening day of Pakistan-Bangladesh second Test

AFP | Rawalpindi

Heavy rain washed out the first day of the second and final Test between Pakistan and Bangladesh in Rawalpindi yesterday.

Overnight downpours delayed the toss and after more monsoon rains, umpires abandoned play for the day shortly after midday.

"The first day's play has been called off due to persistent rain and wet outfield," Pakistan Cricket Board said. Neither team left their hotels.

Hosts Pakistan are desperate



Dark clouds loom over Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium

to square the two-match series after Bangladesh won the first Test, also in Rawalpindi, on Sunday.

Bangladesh's 10-wicket victory was their first in 14 Tests against Pakistan.

Pakistan have left out pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi from their 12-member squad, allowing him time to spend with his newly born son.

Bangladesh are aiming to win only their third away series since gaining Test status in 2000, having beaten the West Indies (2009) and Zimbabwe (2021).

Chelsea handed trips to Germany, Athens in Conference League

AFP | London

Chelsea will face trips to German Bundesliga side Heidenheim and to Athens to play Panathinaikos in the league phase of this season's UEFA Conference League, the draw for which took place yesterday in Monaco.

The Stamford Bridge side are playing in the Conference League for the first time in their history after finishing sixth in last season's Premier League.

They will play home games against Gent of Belgium, Shamrock Rovers of Ireland and FC Noah of Armenia, who came through four qualifying ties to reach the league stage.

Enzo Maresca's Chelsea will go to Heidenheim, who qualified after finishing eighth last season in their first ever German Bundesliga campaign.

Chelsea will also visit former European Cup runners-up Panathinaikos and Astana of Kazakhstan.

Man Utd to come up against Mourinho's Fenerbahce in new-look Europa League

AFP | London

Manchester United will travel to Turkish giants Fenerbahce, now coached by Jose Mourinho, among their eight games in the league phase of the new-look Europa League, the draw for which took place in Monaco yesterday.

The Old Trafford club won the Europa League with Mourinho as coach in 2017. He recently became coach of Fenerbahce, who were knocked out of the Champions League in the third qualifying round.

United will also notably play at home to 2022 Europa League



Manchester United's players celebrate a goal (file photo)

runners-up Rangers and go to Portugal to play Porto, another of Mourinho's old sides.

Tottenham Hotspur, the other English representative in the competition, will also take on

Rangers, in their case away from home.

In addition, Ange Postecoglou's side will play at home to Roma and go to Istanbul to face Turkish champions Galatasaray.

The format of the Europa League has changed for this season, along the same lines of the new-look Champions League.

The number of clubs in the competition proper is now 36, all of whom are placed into one league but split into four pots of seeds. Each participant plays eight games, facing two clubs from each pot, one at home and one away.

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Al Omari Shines at Paralympics

Bahrain's Rooba Al Omari lights up the Paris Paralympics with a top six finish in Women's Discus F55

● Al Omari throws 23.24 meters in fierce competition

● Rigorous training in Kazakhstan prepared her for Paralympics

● Athlete overcame challenging qualification process

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Rooba Al Omari delivered a strong performance amidst fierce competition at the Paris Paralympics, marking a proud moment for the Kingdom.

Competing against top athletes from different parts of the world, Al Omari secured a commendable sixth-place finish with a best throw of 23.24 meters.



Videograb shows Rooba Al Omari in action

Reflecting on Her Journey

Speaking to Ashen Tharaka of TDT, Rooba reflected on her journey to the Paralympics by saying she took great pride in representing Bahrain on the

world's biggest stage. "I feel proud to represent the Kingdom of Bahrain in the largest forum in the world," she shared.

Her participation carries a powerful message: "Bahraini women can achieve great things



I feel proud to represent the Kingdom of Bahrain in the largest forum in the world. Bahraini women can achieve great things and even reach the Paralympics

ROOBA AL OMARI

and even reach the Paralympics."

Preparation and Support

Al Omari's road to Paris was marked by intense preparation. "We did intense exercises in the morning and afternoon," she said, detailing her rigorous training regimen in Kazakhstan.

The support she received was crucial to her success. "The support from our wise leadership, my family, the Paralympic Committee, and the coaches, Hassan Muftah and Abdullah Al-Shammari, who closely fol-

lowed my training, made all the difference."

Competitors' Standings

The event saw impressive performances from athletes worldwide. Erica Maria Castano Salazar of Colombia won gold with a throw of 26.70 meters.

China's Dong Feixia followed with silver, setting a new Area Record (AR) with a throw of 26.67 meters. Mexico's Rosa Maria Guerrero Cazares earned bronze with a season-best (SB) throw of 25.81 meters.

Overcoming Challenges

Although the qualification process was challenging, Al Omari stayed positive and determined. "The recent period of qualifying for the Paralympics has become difficult in terms of achieving the required numbers, participation, and competition," she acknowledged.

"But thank God, in the end, we were able to achieve what we wanted and reach the Paralympics."



Al Omari's participation in the Paralympics sends a powerful message to Bahraini women, inspiring them to pursue their dreams and achieve great things

Inspiring Future Generations

Rooba Al Omari's performance at the Paris Paralympics is a testament to the resilience of Bahraini athletes.

As she continues to compete on the global stage, her achievements will undoubtedly inspire future generations of Bahraini sportswomen to pursue their dreams.

Man City have taken risk over Alvarez exit says Guardiola

AFP | London

Pep Guardiola admits Manchester City have risked making a "mistake" by letting Julian Alvarez join Atletico Madrid without replacing the Argentina striker.

Alvarez moved to Atletico in an £81 million (\$106 million) deal earlier in August after Guardiola accepted his wish to leave in search of more regular playing time.

Erling Haaland is well established as City's first-choice striker but Guardiola had initially hoped to replace Alvarez to ensure there was sufficient depth behind the Norway star.

The Premier League champions were linked with FC Co-

penhagen's Orri Oskarsson and Celtic's Kyogo Furuhashi, but neither deal had come to fruition in the final hours before the transfer window shut yesterday evening.

"I'm happy with the squad. We didn't expect Julian to leave, although he had conversations a long time ago with other clubs and his agent, so it could happen and in the end it happened," Guardiola told reporters yesterday.

"We saw what we have, if we have



many injuries it will be a problem, but in a few months Oscar Bobb will be back (from injury) and Phil (Foden) is in that position,

McAtee can play in that position.

James McAtee has also re-joined City after spending the last two seasons on loan at Sheffield United.

"When everyone is involved with a chance to play the performance of the teams is always

position.

"They are different players to Erling of course. Maybe it is a mistake, I don't know but I don't like leaving players without playing for a long time."

In keeping with Guardiola's preference for a small squad, German midfielder Ilkay Gundogan's return to the club from Barcelona and the signing of Brazilian forward Savinho from Troyes have been City's only close-season deals.

James McAtee has also re-joined City after spending the last two seasons on loan at Sheffield United.

"When everyone is involved with a chance to play the performance of the teams is always

Ronaldo in Portugal squad for Nations League games

AFP | Lisbon

Cristiano Ronaldo has kept his place in the Portugal squad for next month's UEFA Nations games against Croatia and Scotland despite an ineffective display at Euro 2024.

The 39-year-old failed to score as he appeared at a record sixth European Championship, with Portugal exiting in the quarter-finals, but he retains the backing of coach Roberto Martinez.

"When I quit the national team, I won't tell anyone in advance... At the moment what I want is to be able to help the Selecao," Ronaldo said in an interview with Portuguese TV this week.

Southampton sign Arsenal keeper Ramsdale

AFP | London

Southampton signed England goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale from Arsenal in a deal worth a reported £25 million (\$32 million) ahead of yesterday's transfer deadline.

Ramsdale lost his place to David Raya last season, making just six appearances in the Premier League after the Spaniard's arrival in 2023.

The 26-year-old had been linked with Wolves but that move fell through and paved the way for his

switch to St Mary's.

"I'm absolutely delighted. The way the manager wants to play, the way he was when I spoke to him, he was just full of so much enthusiasm," Ramsdale said.

"I'd never met him before, but he made me feel about eight feet tall, which is just what you want."

Ramsdale joined Arsenal from Sheffield United in 2021 and made 89 appearances in all competitions.

He was voted into the PFA's Premier League Team of the Year for the 2022-23 campaign, but was surprisingly axed to make way for Raya as Mikel Arteta looked to improve a team that eventually finished as runners-up to Premier League champions Manchester City for a second successive season.

Ramsdale's father was critical of the way the Arsenal manager handled the situation after the keeper was dropped.

Arteta still paid tribute to Ramsdale for his contribution during three years at the Emirates Stadium.

"Aaron has been a top professional since joining in 2021 and has made many contributions during his time with us," Arteta said.

"We thank Aaron for everything he gave to Arsenal and we wish him and his family the best of health, success and happiness in his new opportunity with Southampton."



Aaron Ramsdale

Hamilton top of the pile in Italian GP second practice



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton drives during first practice session

● Hamilton clocks fastest lap, just 0.003sec ahead of Norris

● Verstappen finishes 14th in second practice after leading first

AFP | Monza

Lewis Hamilton topped the times for Mercedes in yesterday's second practice session for the Formula One Italian Grand Prix by the finest of margins in front of Lando Norris.

Seven-time world champion Hamilton clocked a fastest lap of one minute, 20.738 seconds at Monza, just 0.003sec ahead of McLaren's Norris who is the closest challenger to Max Verstappen's current F1 supremacy.

Norris trails Red Bull's championship leader by 70 points in the drivers' championship after a stunning win at last weekend's Dutch GP.

That was the fifth straight race not to be won by Verstappen, who was fastest in yesterday's first practice ses-

Lewis Hamilton has won two of the last four GPs and is racing at the home track of his future team Ferrari, a good sign for the rest of the weekend

sion but was 0.872sec behind Hamilton in the second back in 14th place.

Hamilton's display in a session disrupted for over 10 minutes by Kevin Magnussen crashing his Haas at the Lesmo corners is a good sign for the rest of the weekend, as he has won two of the last four GPs and is racing at the home track of his future team Ferrari.

The 39-year-old will join the Scuderia next season, replacing Carlos Sainz who was third in the second session, 0.103 off the pace.

Hamilton's current teammate at Mercedes George Russell finished the session 0.348sec back in sixth, a decent result after his car was badly damaged by rookie Andrea Kimi Antonelli earlier in the day.