





WHAT'S ON IN CINEMAS THIS MONTH

See pages 43-45

REGAL FOODS

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Sisters of Strength

International Women's Day:
Survivors of domestic abuse take to the runway in celebration of empowerment

The much-anticipated return of The Fashion Brunch on March 8, International Women's Day, promised to be an extraordinary event showcasing resilience, empowerment, and diversity.

Founded by Creative Director Anisha Vasani, the event has once again proven its commitment to celebrating women who have overcome significant challenges.

Breaking away from traditional fashion shows and beauty pageants, The Fashion Brunch unites women from diverse backgrounds and faiths, encouraging them to embrace their uniqueness

Continued on page 8



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GAZA: Saving lives

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Charity travels to Jordan to support the youngest and most vulnerable

"With the generosity

of the people of West

Yorkshire and the

delivery of Human Relief

Foundation, we can make

a huge difference to

thousands of children in

Gaza, letting them and

their families know that

they are not alone."

Bradford-based international humanitarian aid charity Human Relief Foundation, with support from the charity's generous donors has recently travelled to Amman, Jordan to oversee packing and delivery supplies to thousands of Palestinians requiring urgent aid in Gaza.

The charity's latest initiative has been focussing on the dire need for baby milk formula in Gaza, with 10,000 tins packed and ready for distribution by local partners.

The need for baby milk formula is most prescient in Gaza as blockades have led to shortages, resulting in widespread malnutrition amongst newly born children and infants.

In many cases, these shortages have led to parents resorting to desperate measures to adequately feed their children, resorting to the use of alternatives, including diluted herbs or crushed biscuits. posing significant health risks.

The situation is further compounded by the malnutrition of nursing mothers, unable to breastfeed their children effectively due to insufficient food and water.

Reports from health professionals in Gaza have reported an alarming increase in cases of severe acute malnutrition and dehydration among children under five.

With many hospitals overwhelmed and lacking the necessary resources to provide adequate care, the need for aid organisations to respond has never been greater

In addition to the supply of baby milk formula, Human Relief Foundation is also ready to deliver food parcels to over 600 families in Gaza. Food parcels provided by Human Relief Foundation contains non-perishable essentials including rice, pasta, canned vegetables, sugar,

lentils, beans, pulses, tea, and

Human Relief Foundation Deputy CEO, Kassim Tokan is calling for urgent action to provide life-saving aid: "The devastation we've witnessed in the media highlights the unimaginable choices parents are forced to make just to feed their children amidst the chaos.

Working alongside our UNRWA partner in Jordan, we remain committed to delivering as much emergency assistance as possible.'

Mohammed Talhah, Human Relief Foundation's Fundraising Coordinator for the North added: "Visiting Jordan and seeing the scale of our delivery project has been a genuine eye-opener.

With the generosity of the people of West Yorkshire and the delivery of Human Relief

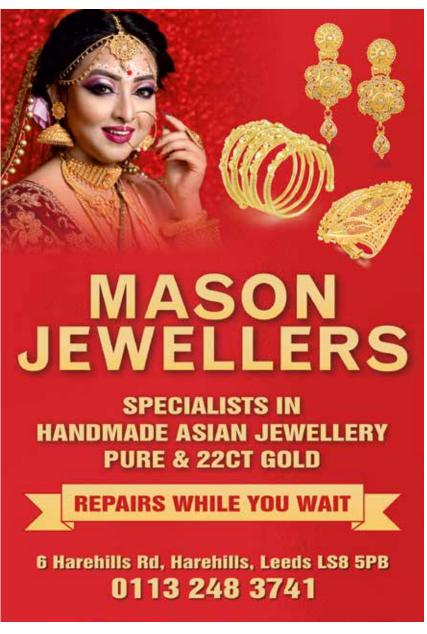
Foundation, we can make a huge difference to thousands of children in Gaza, letting them and their families know that they are not alone."

Join with Human Relief Foundation this Ramadan and give your support to those who are desperately in need at



Reports from health professionals in Gaza have reported an alarming increase in cases of severe acute malnutrition and dehydration among children under five







Tell Mama faces closure after Government pulls funding

Tell Mama, UK's leading non-governmental agency, which supports victims of Islamophobia, and which meticulously monitors and records cases across the country is at risk of closing after the government withdrew its funding.

The decision comes weeks after the service reported a record number of anti-Muslim hate incidents in the UK. Over 10,000 British Muslims report incidents into it just in the last two years - from 2023-2024.

Since its establishment in 2011, Tell Mama has been funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG), and has assisted over 50,000 British Muslims. The agency has been crucial in supporting victims of Islamophobia.

Tell Mama's funding for 2024/2025 was agreed by the previous Conservative Government and amounted to £1m. This was agreed to be paid by this Labour administration, but the Government has made no payment of the grant since April 2024

This means that Tell MAMA has received no funding for 12 months, thereby weakening the sustainability of the national project and adding unnecessary and undue pressures on the work.

The Government has informed Tell Mama that it will no longer receive any funding, without offering details on any alternative provisions.

Police sources have expressed concerns, noting that Tell Mama's data-sharing agreement has been instrumental in monitoring rising tensions and responding to threats.

The funding cut comes at a time when incidents of religious hate crimes are at an all-time high in England and Wales, with Muslims being the most targeted group. The Israel-Gaza conflict is believed to have contributed to the rise in these incidents.

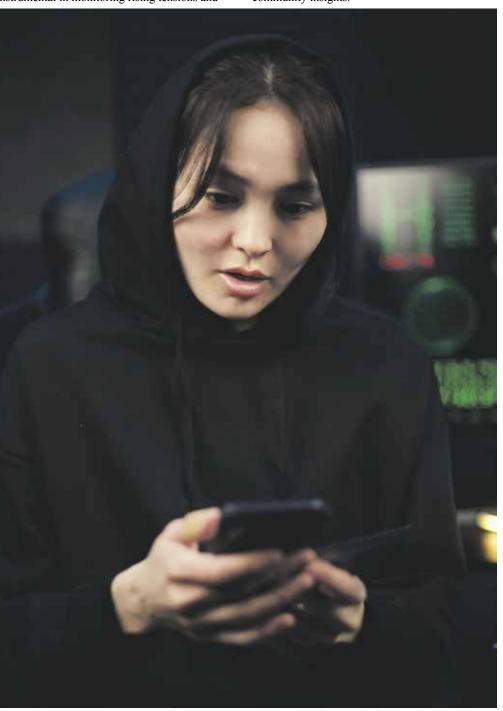
Several far-right plots have also targeted Muslims, including a neo-Nazi terror cell planning attacks on mosques and synagogues.

Fiyaz Mughal, founder of Tell Mama, criticised the government for cutting resources while the far-right grows across Europe. He warned that the move would leave vulnerable victims without support.

Mughal emphasised that Tell Mama is the only organisation currently offering nationwide support for victims and working with police to tackle Islamophobia.

He compared the organisation's work to the Community Security Trust's efforts to protect Jewish communities, but unlike the CST, Tell Mama's funding is now at risk.

Despite the government's announcement of a new working group on anti-Muslim hatred, Mughal accused them of inconsistency, noting the disconnect between their stated goals and actions. The National Police Chiefs' Council highlighted the importance of third-party reporting organisations like Tell Mama in addressing underreporting of hate crimes and providing vital community insights.



Appeal over Luqman Ishfaq murder, Bradford

Detectives investigating the murder of Luqman Ishfaq in Bradford last year have reappealed for information on what would have been his 24th Birthday.

Luqman Ishfaq died after being beaten and stabbed on Barlow Street on 21 October 2024.

The appeal was released on 15th March - the day tha) would have been his 24th birthday.

19 people have been arrested in connection with the murder investigation in total. 16 for murder and three for the violent disorder. All have been bailed pending

further enquiries.

A large scale investigation continues to be carried out by the Homicide and Major Enquiry Team including CCTV trawls, downloading mobile phone data, witness statements and house to house.

Senior Investigating Officer Detective Chief Inspector Stacey Atkinson of the Homicide and Major Enquiry team said: "Extensive enquiries have been made into this serious and appalling crime in which Mr Ishfaq was chased and set upon by a group of males in the street "19 people have been arrested and we will continue to investigate and pursue every line of enquiry until we get justice for him.

"Luqman was cruelly taken away from his family, today they should have been celebrating his 24th birthday. We are continuing to support his family at this time.

"There were a lot of people in the area at the time who witnessed the incident and who were involved. I would urge them to speak to us. Any information however small, may be key to getting justice for Lugman and his family.

"Violence like this has no place

on our street, and we will continue to investigate and get people involved charged and through the

Anyone who has information that can help this investigation is asked to contact police via 101 or use the Live Chat options at www.westyorkshire.police.uk/ livechat quoting crime reference 13240574802

Information can always be given anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or online.



Over 2,000 illegal drivers caught in Kirklees road safety operation

A major road safety initiative in Kirklees has resulted in over 2,000 illegal drivers being dealt with in its first year, with multiple arrests

Operation Trimburg, aims to tackle dangerous driving and improve road safety in areas such as Batley, Spen, Dewsbury, and Mirfield.

Since its launch, officers have identified 2,298 traffic offences, including 410 cases of speeding, 162 instances of mobile phone use while driving, and 605 drivers failing to wear seatbelts.

Additionally, 91 drivers were stopped for careless driving, and nine were caught for suspected drink or drug driving. Arrests were also made for vehicle-related crimes, with six individuals apprehended for theft from vehicles and two for failing to stop for police.

The operation targets the #Fatal5 offences - speeding, driving without a seatbelt, using a mobile phone while driving, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and careless driving, which are known to be leading causes of serious and fatal road incidents.

Supported by local councillors in Dewsbury, Mirfield, and Batley, the initiative has involved increased police patrols and targeted enforcement to deter dangerous driving.

Chief Inspector Rebecca Calpin of Kirklees District Police emphasised the importance of the operation, stating: "This initiative was launched in response to community concerns about illegal driving. The results show a real impact, and we appreciate residents sharing intelligence about dangerous driving in their areas."

Chief Inspector James Farrar of

Chief Inspector James Farrar of West Yorkshire Police's Operational Support Unit added: "The tragic consequences of dangerous driving are all too apparent. More than half of the offences detected in Operation Trimburg fall under the #Fatal5, proving that targeting these behaviours is crucial to road safety."

With its success so far, Operation Trimburg will continue into 2025, with authorities determined to further reduce illegal driving and prevent serious accidents. Police urge the public to report dangerous driving and warn offenders that if caught, they will face prosecution.



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time

Wolverhampton plays host to first Kabaddi World Cup outside of Asia

Hundreds of fans turned out to celebrate start of the Kabaddi World Cup 2025 in Wolverhampton.

WV Active Aldersley staged the opening ceremony and first games of the tournament on Monday 17th March.

The opening ceremony featured live music by students from Wolverhampton Music Service, local dance acts and a parade of athlete from across the world who are taking part.

The host nation England men's team then got the live action underway with the first group stage game against Hungary. A number of other men's and women's games then took place featuring teams including India, Poland, China and the USA.

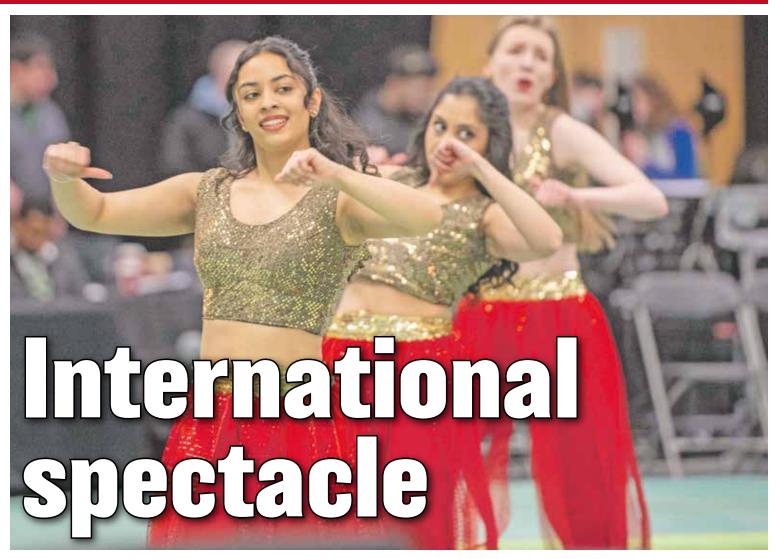
It's the first time that the Kabaddi World Cup has been hosted outside of Asia and Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal, the City of Wolverhampton Council's Cabinet Member for Resident Services, said it was a very proud moment for the city of Wolverhampton to host the festivities.

He said: "The ceremony and opening games were spectacular to witness. It's a real honour to have the Kabaddi World Cup taking place on our doorstep and we can't wait to host the semi-finals and finals this weekend.

"It's exciting to welcome fans not just from Wolverhampton but from far and wide to our city, as well as the millions tuning in online to watch the action. This is a global celebration of sport and cultures and we're proud to be the home for it."

Wolverhampton is also hosting day two of the tournament on Tuesday before the action takes to the road with games being hosted in Coventry, Birmingham and Walsall.

The tournament then returns to Wolverhampton on Saturday 22nd March for the semi-finals, and Sunday 23rd March for the finals, third place playoff and closing ceremony.





British Heart Foundation

"I thought I was just dealing with a pulled muscle. But after feeling intense pain, I realised something was seriously wrong. I found out later I was having a heart attack. Now, I'm committed to raising awareness about heart health. Donating to BHF is vital."

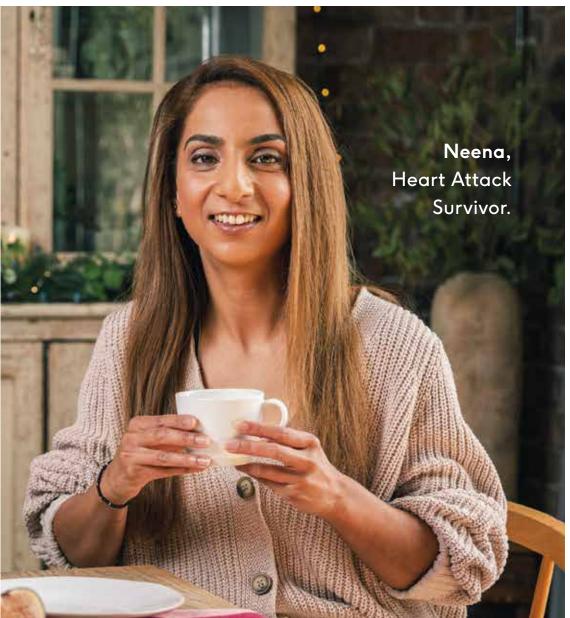
Find out how you can leave a gift in your Will to help give families more time with their loved ones.

Search 'BHF Wills' to download your free Will guide today or scan the QR code.



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International Women's Day: Survivors of domestic abuse take to the runway in celebration of empowerment

Cover story continued

This year, in line with the International Women's Day 2025 theme, Accelerate Action, the event will feature nine courageous women - survivors of domestic violence, mental, sexual, and emotional abuse - who will take centre stage, inspiring audiences with their strength and perseverance.

More than just a runway moment, each participant will share their personal stories of struggle and survival, aiming to break the silence surrounding domestic abuse and foster a culture of support and advocacy

Shining a light on a pressing issue

Domestic abuse remains a concerning issue, particularly within the South Asian community, where cultural stigma, fear, and shame often prevent women from seeking

A 2021 study revealed that 48% of South Asian respondents had experienced physical abuse, with women disproportionately affected. However, experts caution that these statistics likely underrepresent the true extent of the crisis.

By highlighting these survivors' journeys, The Fashion Brunch seeks to empower victims and provide a platform for change.

Among the brave women sharing their stories are Mindset Coach Sandy Phgura, Amorfia Makeup Founder Sharan Dhillon, Empowerment and Spiritual Guide Rupi Dhillon, Life Coach and End Honour Killings Charity Founder Nina Aouilk, and Dr. Celeste Aouilk-Jaiyeola. Each of these women has endured various forms of abuse and emerged stronger, using their voices to inspire others.

Championing change through charity

This year, The Fashion Brunch is proud to partner with KindheART, a charity run by five female volunteers dedicated to transforming the lives of vulnerable women and children in the UK, Kenya, and India.

Over 80% of our KindheART's work is with vulnerable and orphaned children, young women from the slums, and survivors of

An inspirational lineup of speakers

Also featuring at the event is an esteemed panel of speakers, including actress Laila Zaidi, BBC Presenter Shay Grewal, sports coach Manisha Tailor, influencer Alisha Singh, radio host Nikita Kanda, journalist Raj Chohan, singer Sophie Choudry, and more. These accomplished women will share their personal and professional journeys, inspiring attendees to embrace empowerment and resilience.

Now in its sixth year, The Fashion Brunch has become a powerful platform for women's empowerment, attracting influential figures, celebrities, and changemakers

Last year's Bold & Beautiful - Plus Size concept won the Best Creative Campaign award for its groundbreaking impact, and Anisha Vasani remains dedicated to challenging conventional beauty standards

'International Women's Day is a celebration of strength, resilience, and empowerment," said Vasani

'Through this event, we aim to showcase the beauty, grace, and indomitable spirit of survivors. The Fashion Brunch is more than a fashion event - it's a movement that uplifts and celebrates women everywhere.

Set to take place at the stunning Courtyard by Marriott, London, The Fashion Brunch anticipates an audience of 300-350 dynamic women. The event will include networking opportunities, inspiring panel discussions, and exclusive salon privé fashion shows





NEW LOOK COMING SOON!

International restaurant, Sticker Lane flagship branch will be closed from Monday 3rd March 2025 to Sunday 16th March 2025 due to renovation.

We will be back open from Monday 17th March 2025.

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Hitting £1MILLION!

Yorkshire's famous Ramadan Runner smashes fundraising milestone, and now set for his 12th annual charity run

Renowned award-winning community champion Nazim Ali aka Ramadan Runner, has achieved a remarkable, awe-inspiring £1 million milestone in charitable fundraising, marking a significant legacy of generosity and service.

This incredible feat follows his latest lifechanging humanitarian deployment to Jordan ahead of Ramadan 2025, where he continued his mission to support the most vulnerable.

Now, his latest challenge is the return of his famous "Ramadan Run', where Nazim will run his 12th annual Ramadan 10K in Bradford - all while fasting for nearly 16-hours.

This incredible feat will take place on Sunday, 23rd March in his home city - Bradford - UK's City of Culture 2025, with the iconic Lister Park serving as the finish line.

For those unfamiliar with the gruelling challenge, imagine running 10 kilometers under the intense discipline of fasting - without food or water. To many, it sounds impossible, but to Nazim, it's all part of his mission to help the most vulnerable communities across the world.

Known for his remarkable dedication, Nazim's run is not just a personal challenge, but a call to action. His mission this Ramadan? To raise £55,000 for Green Crescent Aid UK's Burundi New Homes Project, providing 25 safe, secure homes for vulnerable families in Burundi.

Each new two-room home, complete with a kitchen and bathroom, costs just £2,200. Through this project, Nazim aims to build 25 homes for families living in makeshift shelters, vulnerable to extreme weather conditions and disease.

Nazim's work extends far beyond the annual run. For over 27 years, he's spearheaded humanitarian initiatives, raising nearly £1 million for causes worldwide. From house transformations in Malawi to aid for refugees in Syria, Iraq, and Bangladesh, his impact is global.



He's also a consistent presence in his local Bradford community, running the Khidma Community Kitchen and organising gift drives for children in hospitals.

In recognition of his tireless service, Nazim was named in the King's New Year Honours 2025 to receive a British Empire Medal (BEM). Yet, his focus remains on the people he serves, driven by a deep commitment to improving lives.

Despite a busy career as a Careers Adviser at three inner-city schools, and self-funded charity work, Nazim remains steadfast in his mission. "It's because of you that I'm able to do this," he says, expressing gratitude to his supporters.

This Ramadan, join Nazim in making a tangible difference. With your help, we can build homes, create lasting change, and give hope to families in need

To donate, visit: www.justgiving.com/page/



Jordan pre-Ramadan deployment

Working alongside Hayaat Welfare Trust, Ali and his team delivered vital aid to Palestinian and Syrian refugees living in four remote camps in the Jordan Valley.

The mission saw the distribution of 420 Ramadan food parcels, 420 hygiene packs, £12,000 in Zakat cash (split into 238 envelopes for widows, orphans, the elderly & disabled), essentials such as shoes and clothing, along with toys and sweet treats for children.



To donate, visit: **www.justgiving.com/page/naz700**

Community kitchen provides 8,500 meals in just one year

The Khidma Community Kitchen, run by the Nazim Ali Foundation, celebrated its 1st anniversary on 27th February 2025 at the Millan Centre, Manningham.

Over the past year, the initiative has served over 8,500 meals, averaging 160 meals per week, and engaged 69 volunteers, with 66% under 18.

The kitchen fills a crucial gap in food

provision on Tuesday evenings in Bradford, supporting people from diverse backgrounds affected by food poverty. The core volunteers have shown unwavering dedication, even during adverse weather and Eid celebrations.

The Khidma Community Kitchen runs every Tuesday (4:30–6 PM) at the Millan Centre, Bradford. Anyone in need of a meal is encouraged to attend.







A man has been found guilty of defrauding Leeds City Council out of more than £710,000 which was meant to support small businesses during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Aftab Baig, 47 from Glasgow, made fraudulent grant claims against thirty-two properties, which were branches of Greggs, arranging for the money to go into his business account.

He did this at the height of the pandemic while the country was locked down and small businesses struggled to stay afloat.

The money came from the Small Business Grant Fund, one of several schemes set up by the Government to help small businesses with business rates relief.

In May 2020, Baig contacted Leeds Council pretending to be a Group Property Manager at Greggs Head Office asking for business rates numbers for Leeds branches, details which he claimed he could not access himself due to lockdown.

Baig, who had no links to Greggs and was not employed by them, used the details to apply for rates relief to the tune of £710,000 which was paid into a bank account associated with his catering business.

In May 2020, with the council having realised the claims were fraudulent, action was taken which resulted in the account being frozen. While most of the money was later returned to the council, more than £90,000 was left outstanding.

The investigation was led by the National Investigation Service (NATIS) and Baig was arrested in Glasgow in July 2020 by Police Scotland officers.

At Baig's house, £16,000 in cash was found, as well as forged

remittance slips which officers believed that he was planning to use to try and persuade the bank to return the frozen money.

Baig was found guilty of three counts of fraud at Leeds Crown

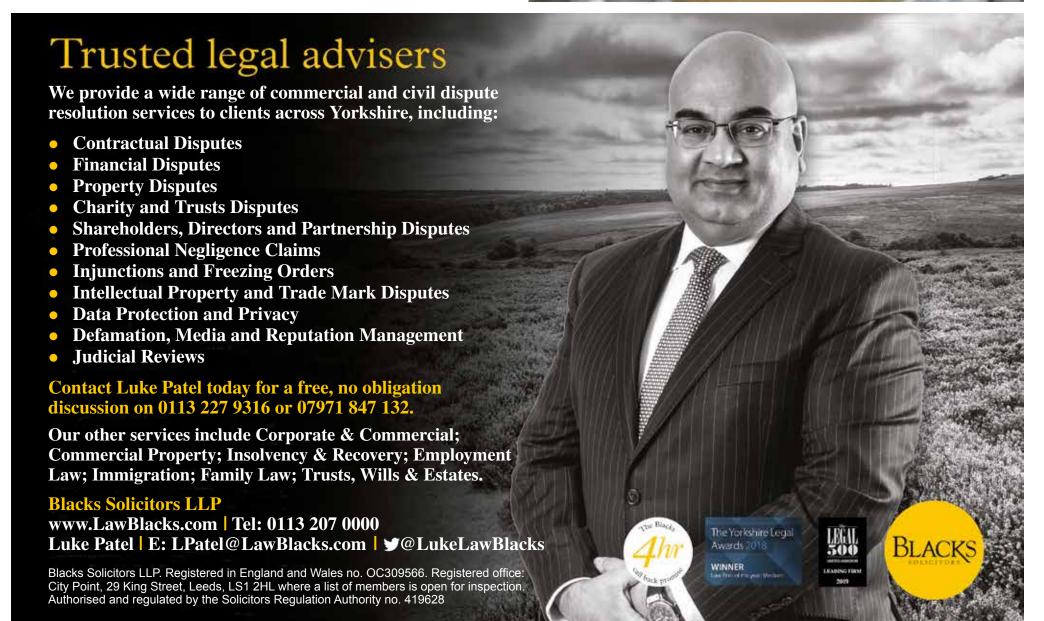
Kelly Ward from the Crown Prosecution Service said: "Baig took advantage of the difficult circumstances of the pandemic in 2020 to defraud the council out of taxpayers money.

"Those who cheat the public purse are stealing funds which should rightly go towards services and the community, or in this case towards supporting small businesses through an extremely challenging time.

"We will not hesitate to work together with investigators such as NATIS to bring offenders like Baig to justice.

"We will also be starting proceedings to recover any assets resulting from this criminality."







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Oncologist with incurable cancer on smarter, kinder treatments

One of the UK's most senior radiotherapy experts has spoken publicly for the first time about living with incurable cancer.

Professor Adrian Crellin was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2016, and devastatingly, scans showed the cancer had spread to his bones.

Professor Crellin, who was awarded a CBE for services to radiotherapy in 2019, is a Consultant Clinical Oncologist at the University of Leeds and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, and holds a senior role with NHS England and previously in Cancer Research UK.

He says people like him are living much longer thanks to research advances – and he now wants to start a conversation about the way we describe life with incurable cancer.

"My cancer cannot be cured, but it isn't 'terminal' because it still responds to treatment," he said. "The proof of the pudding – I am still here."

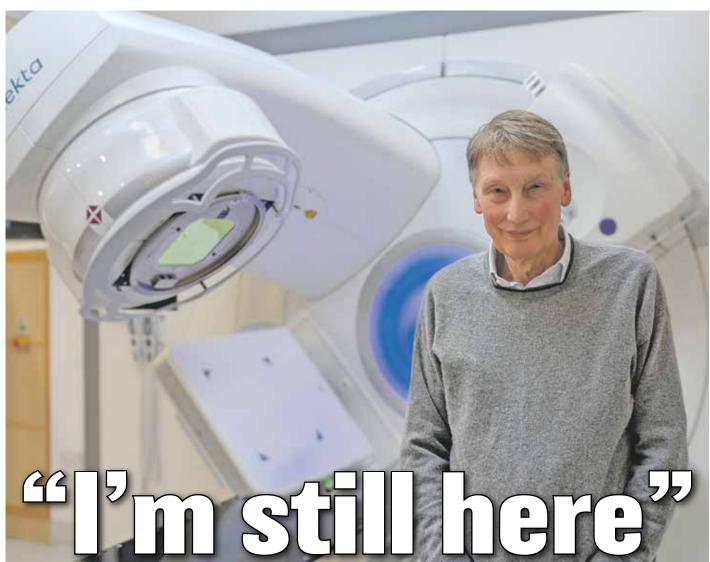
Crellin, a Consultant Clinical Oncologist at Leeds Teaching Hospitals and NHS England, has undergone chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and hormone therapy, keeping his disease under control. He emphasises that innovations like stereotactic radiotherapy, which delivers high-dose radiation with precision, are changing lives.

"Stereotactic radiotherapy doesn't just ease pain - it controls the disease," he explained. "After treatment, my scans and tests have gone back to normal."

A UK-wide trial confirmed that treating prostate cancer with targeted radiotherapy improves survival and quality of life. Crellin, awarded a CBE in 2019, played a key role in developing the Bexley Wing at St James's Hospital, where he now receives care. "Receiving treatment in a place I helped create is very emotional, but also reassuring. My colleagues are fantastic."

Leeds' Cancer Research UK Radiation Research Centre, recently awarded £2.94m for further research, aims to develop "smarter, kinder" radiotherapy. "The best way forward is through clinical trials and research," Crellin said.

He also calls for a shift in language around cancer. "'Terminal' and 'incurable' mean different things. Many people live longer with controlled cancer—so we must focus on quality of life and reducing side effects."







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Food running out in Gaza as Israel intensifies total

siege during Ramadan

Food is now running out in Gaza as Israel steps up its policy of starving civilians during the holy month of Ramadan. For the past ten days, Israel has completely blocked the entry of food, fuel, medicine and other vital supplies for civilians.

It is now also shutting off electricity – yet another cruel act of collective punishment and a flagrant violation of international law - which will prevent people accessing clean drinking water, force hospitals to shut down and lead to outbreaks of disease. Many bakeries and community kitchens have already been forced to close as they have run out of fuel and supplies.

Deliberately depriving civilians of food, water, and medical care is a war crime and can never be morally or legally justifiable. The UK government must take decisive action to hold Israel accountable for its ongoing and systematic breaches of international law, including ending all arms sales, or risk being complicit in these crimes.

It is inevitable that children and some of the most vulnerable people in Gaza will die, unless international governments exert serious pressure on Israel to allow supplies in. Words of concern are not enough, immediate action is necessary to stop people from starving

starving.
One Islamic Relief aid worker in Gaza, whose name is withheld for their safety due to attacks on humanitarian workers, says: "Babies are going to starve as a result of this total siege. Nothing is allowed to enter and every day there is less available in

the markets. There's now very little protein, meat is almost non-existent and now many vegetables are running out. A lot of bakeries have closed over the past couple of days because they don't have fuel or flour, so it's almost impossible to get bread.

"It's Ramadan but it doesn't feel like it. It's normally a time for celebration and spirituality, but everyone is grieving and now everyone is terrified of what's going to happen in the coming days. We fear there will soon be a return to the famine conditions and starvation that we saw before the ceasefire."

Islamic Relief and local partners are continuing to distribute hot meals, water and hygiene items for displaced families – using whatever supplies we can find in local markets – but every day it is getting harder to source essential and stocks are rapidly running out. Aid trucks loaded with food and other essential aid are ready and waiting to enter Gaza but are being blocked just a few miles from desperate civilians.

Gaza's entire infrastructure has been systematically destroyed by Israeli attacks, including its ability to feed itself. More than 80% of Gaza's agricultural land and more than two thirds of its agricultural wells have been damaged or destroyed, and most cattle have been killed. Families in Gaza are now almost entirely dependent on imported supplies – supplies that are being deliberately withheld by Israel.

The scarcity has caused prices in local markets to skyrocket, making even the most basic necessities unaffordable for the poorest







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Mayor doubles down on serious violence with new police and crime plan

Tackling serious violence is the cornerstone of the Mayor of West Yorkshire's new Police and Crime Plan, which will build on the region's innovative approach on the safety of women and girls, as well as combatting gangs, drugs and knife crime.

Launched at an event in Leeds today (24/02), it sets out Tracy Brabin's bold vision on community safety for the years ahead and follows widespread consultation with the public and partners, including the Police, victim groups and rehabilitation organisations.

As well as focusing on the safety of women and girls, the new plan will also prioritise support for 'at risk' men and boys, preventing them from becoming victims, including through

'county lines' gangs and knife crime. It also places children and young people at the heart of decision making through a pioneering 'child first' approach. Other priorities include the aim to end road deaths and serious injuries through West Yorkshire Vision Zero.

Mayor of West Yorkshire, Tracy

Brabin said: "Serious violence remains a scourge on society both locally and nationally, which is why I have made this a top priority for our

region.
"We are known for our innovative approach to tackling male violence towards women and girls. But it is crucial that we also work together to support vulnerable men and boys and clamp down on issues like gang violence and knife crime.

"We will continue to work with our partners and communities to ensure West Yorkshire remains a safer, fairer place to live and work.

The showcase event also saw the announcement of a brand-new flagship campaign called 'I Took a Seat'. Co-produced by members of the West Yorkshire Youth Commission and Violence Reduction Partnership, it responds to their 'Big

Conversation' report.

This covers key issues including:
• Gangs, Drugs and Knife Crime
• Attitudes and Violence Towards

Women • Rehabilitation and Prevention

• Community Relationships and

Director of the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership, Detective Chief Superintendent Lee Berry added: "This event really represents how much we can achieve when we work together in partnership to address priority issues like serious violence

"The 'I took a seat' campaign with our Youth Commission is a fantastic example of how we can change lives, listening to and acting upon the concerns of our

young people.
"This all supports the bold vision in the Mayor's latest Police and Crime Plan, ensuring our communities remain protected from harm.







Four jailed over UK's largest money-laundering plot

Criminals who laundered hundreds Leeds Crown Court. of millions of pounds of criminal cash through a West Yorkshire scrap jewellery business have been found

In what is believed to be the largest money laundering case ever in the UK four people were today found guilty of their part in channelling £266 million through Bradford-based company Fowler Oldfield.

Gregory Frankel, 47, Daniel Rawson, 47, Haroon "Harry" Rashid, 54, and Arjun Babber, 32, were found guilty of money laundering following a trial at

The case, led by West Yorkshire Police's Economic Crime Unit, uncovered a sophisticated operation that used Bradford-based Fowler Oldfield as a front to clean vast amounts of illicit money from criminal networks across the UK.

The police investigation found that cash was delivered to Fowler Oldfield in bulk, with couriers arriving daily from cities such as Glasgow, Manchester, and Merseyside carrying heavy bags filled with banknotes.

At its peak, the business was

receiving an average of £1.7 million per day, concealed in sports bags, carrier bags, toy boxes, and even takeaway containers.

The cash was counted using professional money-counting machines and deposited into banks by legitimate cash-in-transit companies before being used to buy gold grain, which is untraceable and easier to conceal than bullion. Much of this gold is then believed to have been taken out of the

The scale of the operation triggered suspicion in 2016 when a cash-in-transit company flagged the massive increase in cash deposits at Fowler Oldfield.

At times the amount of cash being banked by the company in one day was said to be similar to sums banked by a Premier League football club following a big match.

Investigators then conducted a meticulous review of financial records, emails, and 8,000 hours of CCTV footage, ultimately revealing that over £266 million had been laundered through the company between 2014 and

When officers executed a search

warrant at Fowler Oldfield's Bradford premises in September 2016, over £2.1million was seized.

No-one has ever come forward to claim any of the cash belongs to them.

All four were found guilty of money laundering offences at Leeds Crown Court last week: Gregory Frankel, 47, from Shipley, was sentenced to 11 years, eight months; Daniel Rawson, 47, from Scarcroft in Leeds, was sentenced to 10 years, ten months: Haroon Rashid. 54, from Bradford, was sentenced to 10 years; Arjun Babber, 32, from London, was sentenced to 11 years.









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A call to action

First groundbreaking conference to address housing crisis for BME women

A first-ever event aims to tackle the escalating housing crisis disproportionately affecting BME women, who are increasingly locked out of essential government benefits and housing support.

Asian Women's Resource Centre (AWRC) charity is set to ignite a transformative dialogue with its conference, "Unlocking Doors: Sustainable Solutions to the Housing Crisis for BME Women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)," on March 14, 2025, at the Royal Society of Arts.

Since 2024, 86% of the women that AWRC has supported were affected by NRPF

As the nation grapples with a worsening housing emergency, AWRC's conference

promises a convergence of experts, advocates, policymakers, and survivors, all united in pursuit of innovative solutions for BME women facing NRPF.

Among the featured speakers is Dame Nicole Jacobs, the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales, who will shed light on the national landscape for NRPF survivors and the urgent need for policy reform.

Additionally, Pragna Patel, a celebrated women's rights campaigner, will deliver a powerful keynote on the intersection of housing justice, anti-racism, and advocacy.

The conference will give a voice to NRPF survivors themselves, providing them a platform to share their harrowing experiences and the stark barriers they face in securing safe housing. This

Survivor Panel aims to motivate action and spotlight the crucial need for change and is joined by a Partner Panel consisting of other led by and for organisations.

Sarbjit Ganger, Director of AWRC, emphasises the urgency of this initiative, explaining: "Together, we can break down the barriers to preventing access to safe and secure housing and ensure all women, regardless of immigration status, have a safe place to call home."

She continues: "AWRC invites policymakers, service providers, community advocates, and members of the public to join this critical conversation. Help us drive change and explore sustainable solutions to ensure every woman has access to safe and secure housing."



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Reinstatement value



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19 LEICESTER (DE MONTFORT HALL)

21LONDON (OVO ARENA, WEMBLEY)

25BIRMINGHAM

27 LEEDS (FIRST DIRECT ARENA)

29GLASGOW (GLASGOW CONCERT HALL)































On 29 March, St George's Hall in Bradford will host a spectacular concert that promises to be a landmark event for music lovers.

Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra and Bradford Festival Choral Society will present an unforgettable evening featuring two extraordinary works: the evening will begin with Reena Esmail's 'This Love Between Us', a powerful piece that intertwines Indian and European classical traditions, featuring sitar, tabla, symphony orchestra, and choir.

With its themes of unity and cultural harmony it's an apt reflection of Bradford's diverse community.

Following the interval, audiences will be treated to Carl Orff's Carmina Burana, one of the most exhilarating choral works ever written. With its dramatic intensity and iconic O Fortuna, this piece will showcase the sheer power and brilliance of the assembled forces.

Headlining the evening are four outstanding South Asian soloists who have made their mark on the global stage. British-Indian soprano Natasha Agarwal, known for her "presence of real note" (Seen and Heard International), brings her powerful vocals to this performance. Natasha has performed with Opera North, Welsh National Opera, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Joining her is Shivani Rattan, a versatile mezzo-soprano and choral conductor. With expertise in both Western and Indian choral traditions, Shivani has worked with the National Youth Choir and leading ensembles such

as Papagena. She has also composed Three Indian Celebration Songs, which have been performed worldwide and celebrated for their contribution to diversifying choral music.

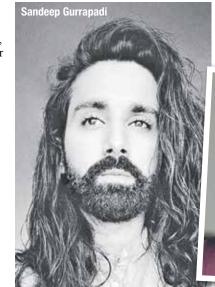
The tenor soloist, Sandeep Gurrapadi, is an Indian-American artist who has performed across the UK, India, China, and the US. A contemporary classical specialist, Sandeep has premiered works at prestigious venues like the Barbican Centre and the London Festival of American Music.

Completing the quartet is Oscar Castellino, an operatic baritone originally from Mumbai who transitioned from software engineering to a thriving international singing career. An alumnus of the Royal College of Music, Oscar has performed with Welsh National Opera and Scottish Opera and is pioneering operatic compositions in Indian languages.

This concert is more

than just an evening of world-class music; it is a celebration of South Asian talent coming together with musical forces who are part of Yorkshire's cultural heritage. With standard ticket prices ranging from £17.75 to £35.75, great offers for families, school groups and under 30s, this event is accessible to all music

Secure your tickets now at bradford-theatres.co.uk and be part of this extraordinary celebration of unity through music.





British-Indian soprano Natasha Agarwa



A Bradford-born food manufacturer with global success is staying true to its roots, proving that family values and business excellence can go hand in hand.

Regal Foods, named as one of the nation's top bakers (The Grocer), and listed in The Times top 100 fastest growing companies, has been solidifying its reputation as a powerhouse in the food industry, all while maintaining the community spirit it was built upon.

But for Regal, basking as a recipient of the prestigious and much-coveted Queen's Award, along with dozens of industry accolades, the recognition is more than just awards - it's a testament to a journey that started over two decades ago in a small local setting.

Founded in 2001, Regal Foods began by supplying a handful of bakery products to local grocery stores.

The company's rapid expansion saw it launching its own product range and, by 2005, securing a place on the shelves of a major supermarket chain.

Today, the business produces and distributes more than 400 food and drink items, reaching over 3,000 retail outlets in the UK and exporting to more than 40 countries worldwide.

But success isn't just measured in sales and expansion. Regal Foods is also deeply committed to giving back to the Bradford community. It's a really grounded company, regardless of its multi-million-pound successes and international status.

Yes, they are known for producing great food and drink, but Regal Foods also support charity initiatives on a national and international level through the ongoing work and support with the Shahid Afridi Foundation. Regal deliver a school meals programme through SAF to

children living in poverty who attend the Wadoodia Muhallah School in Karachi.

Despite its international success, Regal remains a family-run business at its core. The journey began with Regal's CEO Younis Chaudhry 20-years ago, and the board of directors is still made up of the family.

Regal Foods' story is one of resilience, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to its hometown. While its products may be found in far-reaching corners of the world, its heart remains firmly in Bradford.





The Business

Providing employment opportunities and employing over 350 people from the Leeds and Bradford community, Regal now hosts an impressive portfolio of brands and sites across the region.

The Regal Group now own and run Love Handmade Cakes – a Leeds-based bakery supplying food services and wholesalers with cakes, traybakes, muffins and many bakery treats.

Just Desserts Yorkshire – based in Shipley, baking premium handcrafted gateaux, cheesecakes and tarts for farm shops, garden centres, delis, restaurants and food halls.

Yorkshire Baking Company, located behind Regal House, bake a selection of traditional sponge cakes for Morrisons, Asda, Tesco and Sainsbury and sits on the mainstream cake aisle alongside other household names.

Both Regal Bakery and Yorkshire Baking Company are officially listed by The Grocer as one of top 20 UK cake brands in terms of growth and market share.

Despite its global success, the Regal family still run the company and oversee its day-to-day operations across its sites. The family have never forgotten their roots of Bradford and where it all started, and the community remains an important factor in the business.

Regal not only financially supports and donates thousands of products to its joint-run food bank (Bradford Community Kitchen), but supports many charitable causes and grass roots sporting clubs monthly. They say "our community is at the heart of everything we do".

From humble beginnings in Bradford with one bakery product and one van, Regal is now a multi-million-pound global food group.

The Team

A structure was needed for the quickly growing company and so Younis Chaudhry, the founder of Regal became CEO, which was followed by other family members who now sit on the board of Regal – to this day the business is family owned and one to be very proud of.

Fast forward 20+ years and Regal now manufacture over 400 bakery and snacking products which are distributed to over 3,000 retail and foodservice outlets around the UK, these included all major retailers, wholesalers, and convenience stores.

In 2022 Regal Foods was awarded a Queen's Award for Enterprise for International Trade in recognition of its services to overseas where it distributes to over 50 countries around the world.





Regal Food Products Group

2001

REGAL FOODS IS FOUNDED IN THE HEART OF BRADFORD, WEST YORKSHIRE.

The Regal brand is established as a partnership and work on creating its first set of bakery products started.



2001

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Regal started baking and began rolling out cake rusk, puffy pastry fingers and other bakery treats to convenience stores in the north of England.





ON THE SUPERMARKET SHELF

In 2005 Regal saw its first major supermarket listing in Asda stores nationwide.

Later that year, other listings in Morrisons, Tesco and Sainsbury's soon followed.

2005

PAKSTAR

Regal continued to add more brands to its repertoire, Pakstar was acquired and soon after launched spices, tinned foods and kitchen cupboard essentials.



2003

KB FOODS

The taste for Regal soon spread and with the aim of diversifying its product range, Regal acquired KB Foods, an established brand from the 70s.



2008

REGAL OVERSEAS

The demand for Regal and its products soon became international with products distributed to 6 countries across Europe.



2009

THE BOARD ROOM

In 2009 the company reached new heights, Younis Chaudhry acquires the Regal Group and is appointed CEO.



2010

Yorkshire Baking Company

Regal founded its largest sub-brand to date, the Yorkshire Baking Company – the famous Mega Loaf was born!

44,000 SQ FT FACILITY

2003

REGAL HOUSE

Regal moved to a new 44,000sqft facility where the brand continued to go from strength to strength.



- A journey in Bringing food to life

2011

EXPANDING PRODUCT PORTFOLIO

For the next few years, Regal focused on growing its product portfolio, adding juices, sweet and savoury snacks, sauces, marinades and may more products to its range.

As the brand grew stronger, so did the fleet of vehicles delivering to independent convenience stores and supermarkets nationwide and



TOP 10

2018

A NATION'S FAVOURITE

The Grocer ranked Regal among the top 10 nations favourite bakeries.



2019

REGAL WORLDWIDE

Regal continued to make waves overseas, adding USA, Canada, along with 50 countries to its export's portfolio.

2021

A MILESTONE

Regal Food Products Group celebrates 20 years of bringing food to life.



2022

A ROYAL SEAL **OF APPROVAL**

Regal Foods are awarded a Queen's Awards for Enterprise for International Trade - The UK's highest accolade in British business.



2019

just food to life

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Regal acquires new 50,000sqft distribution centre and works on a 20,000sqft state of the art warehouse begins.

THOUSAND SQUARE FOOT DISTRIBUTION CENTRE



2022

JUST DESERTS YORKSHIRE

Regal Foods acquires premium desserts manufacturer, Just Desserts Yorkshire.



2023

PACKAGING R US

Regal group acquire Packaging R Us – a leading manufacturer and supplier specialising in food packaging solutions.



LOVE HANDMADE CAKES

Regal group acquire Love Handmade Cakes – a specialist bakery, creating a range of over 100 cakes, traybakes, individual cake bars and muffins for food service wholesalers, coffee shops, distributors.



2024

REGAL ACQUIRE 45,000 SQ FT WAREHOUSE

The new warehouse facility will support, boost and grow Regal's operations.



2024

LOVE CHEESECAKES

Regal acquire Love Cheesecakes, a desserts business specialising in cheesecakes for wholesale, food services and the hospitality sector.

The Regal journey continues...









"We take pride in serving and supporting our communities at every opportunity. Giving back isn't just a responsibility - it's a privilege."

CHARITY:

A commitment that never wavers

As a leading food manufacturer and distributor, Regal Foods has embedded itself at the heart of the local community, with a commitment to making a lasting impact both in the UK and globally.

The bakery kings continue to contribute financially to local charities and donates thousands of products to support fundraising activities. Whether through food banks, youth outreach, community engagement, or international relief efforts, the company remains steadfast in its dedication to giving back.

"Charity work is not just an extension of the business - it is a core value that drives the company's mission," says company spokesperson.

"At Regal Foods, charity is at the heart of everything we do.

"We take pride in serving and supporting our communities at every opportunity. Giving back isn't just a responsibility - it's a privilege."

From local initiatives to international advocacy, Regal Foods exemplifies the power of businesses making a difference, proving that corporate success and community support can go hand in hand.

Combating isolation and mental health challenges

Regal Foods recently sponsored and hosted a community lunch for women over 50 in collaboration with the Millan Centre

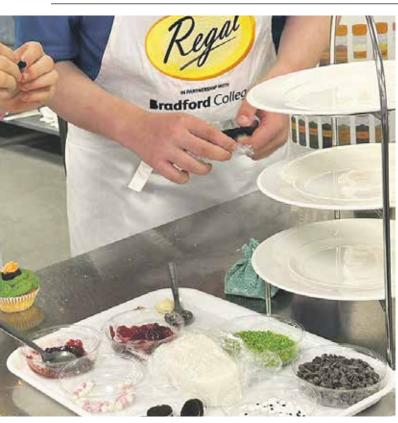
Over 30 women, many facing isolation and mental health challenges, attended the event, which was held at a Bradford restaurant. The initiative aimed to create a welcoming space where attendees could relax, connect, and socialise.

Making a global impact

The company's commitment to charitable work extends beyond national borders.

On World Refugee Day, the company welcomed UK for United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees CEO Emma Cherniavsky and Advisory Board Member Nyra Mahmood to discuss Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts on both national and international levels. These discussions highlighted the company's passion for making a global impact through its initiatives.





Empowering the next generation

Beyond food support, Regal Foods is also dedicated to inspiring young people and shaping future career paths.

In a recent collaboration with Dixons Academies Trust, Regal employees engaged with Year 3 and Year 6 students, sharing insights into the food

and drink sector, the company's community initiatives, and their personal career journeys.

The students also participated in an interactive session, designing and decorating their own fairy cakes using various techniques.

The company has also

partnered with Bradford College to host taster days and workshops for students at primary, secondary, and college levels. These initiatives provide valuable exposure and hands-on learning experiences for young individuals exploring career opportunities.

Championing sports and community engagement

Understanding the power of sports to inspire and uplift, Regal Foods is dedicated to supporting grassroots sports

National Asian Cricket Council Women's



Supporting local communities through food initiatives

One of Regal Foods' most impactful projects is its support for Bradford Community Kitchen, which was honoured with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2023.

reach to those struggling to put food on the table.







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business power

Open Justice

he civil judicial system in England operates on the basis of "open justice". In practice this means that the courts are open to the public and, further, the public can access certain court documents and apply for further access to other court documents or documents referred to in court. This often comes as a surprise to litigants who are unfamiliar with the court system.

Once proceedings have been issued anyone can access details of the claim number, the name of the parties and their legal representatives and once those proceedings have been served and the defendant has filed an Acknowledgment of Service, non-parties, such as the press, can access and obtain copies of the statements of case; these



Non-parties to the proceedings are also able to access other documents on the court file with the permission of the Court. These include documents attached to a statement of case or a witness statement (which may contain confidential information), expert's reports and skeleton arguments. In addition, where there has been a hearing in public, the public can also request copies of any documents put before the Judge and referred to during the hearing.

An applicant seeking permission for such

An applicant seeking permission for such documents will need to explain why they are seeking access and that it accords with the principles of open justice. When the Court is considering whether and how to exercise its discretion to grant permission for a non-party to obtain copies of court documents, it has to balance the reasons for seeking copies of the documents against the interests of the party in the proceedings.

If a party in proceedings wishes to restrict access to any documents, then they will need to apply for an order restricting access either before or at the time they commence proceedings or if they are the defendant in the proceedings, when they acknowledge the claim.

As a general rule, hearings in English courts are held in public and, in principle, anyone can attend a hearing that is

held in public. In exceptional circumstances, for example, in cases where commercially sensitive information or personal financial information is involved, a hearing in private may be permitted. However, such cases are rare and private hearings are often seen as a last resort.

If you are

If you are involved in any civil or commercial dispute, then Blacks Solicitors can assist. Please contact Luke Patel by telephone on 0113 227 9316 or by email at "LPatel@ LawBlacks.com".

Please contact Luke Patel on 0113 227 9316 or by email at LPatel@LawBlacks.com

BLACKS



Women leaders honoured at interfaith dinner kicking off community drive against knife crime

n interfaith event brought together diverse communities, faith leaders, and local organisations to launch 'Step In', a vital new programme tackling knife crime in Bradford.

Held on International Women's Day, Saturday 8th March, the event was also an occasion to recognise and honour outstanding women making a difference in their communities.

The Bradford Interfaith Dinner marked Muslim Aid's 40th-anniversary celebrations, and featured distinguished speakers from faith communities, local government, and grassroots organisations, all of whom came together to promote dialogue, inclusivity, and actionable solutions to pressing social issues, including the rise of knife crime among young people in Bradford.

Central to the event was the launch of 'Step In', a programme specifically designed to support youth who have found themselves in the youth justice system. 'Step In' seeks to steer young people back towards self-worth,

self-development, and away from crime and gang culture. The programme aims to discourage knife crime, county lines drug dealing, and postcoderelated conflicts by engaging young people in a positive environment.

Set to be delivered in a gym setting, 'Step In' will provide participants with boxing training, counselling, career guidance, and both educational and vocational training. This holistic approach aims to inspire, build confidence, and instil self-belief, empowering young people to become positive role models in their communities.

In recognition of International Women's Day, six awards were to six exceptional women for their remarkable contributions to society:

- Dignity in Action Naz Shah MP
- Compassion in Action Dr Sofia Buncy MBE
- Excellence in Action Asma Iqbal
- Justice in Action Baroness Sayeeda Warsi
- Service in Action Humma Nizami
- Special Recognition Award Abigayle Andre





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March 2025 - 2nd Edition www.asianexpress.co.uk Life & Style 37



The sweet surprise that led to a honey revolution



What started as a simple backyard beekeeping hobby in London has blossomed into a mission to change the way people experience honey.

When Hive & Keeper founder discovered the ever-changing flavours of honey straight from the hive, she realised something was missing from supermarket shelves - real, raw, and unrepeatable honey.

Unlike mass-produced honey, which is often blended for consistency, each jar from Hive & Keeper is a time capsule of nature. "Honey is like a photograph," she explains. "It captures the exact moment it was made - the flowers in bloom, the weather, and the bees' needs at that time. A week later, it's a completely different honey."

And that's not surprising when you hear that it takes more than a million visits to flowers to make one jar of honey. It's impossible for bees to replicate that mix of flowers ever again.

Hive & Keeper's realisation of the uniqueness of each jar of honey sparked a mission: to support small-scale British beekeepers and celebrate the uniqueness of each harvest.

Every jar is labeled with the beekeeper's name, location, the date the honey was collected, and how many jars were made.

With a growing network of small-scale beekeepers across Britain, Hive & Keeper is about more than just honey - it's about sustainability, local craftsmanship, and protecting Britain's natural landscapes.

All of Hive & Keeper's beekeepers are good custodians of their bees and the woodlands, meadows, gardens and fields they keep them in; working closely with farmers, landowners, and councils to encourage pollinator-friendly environments, from wild meadows to city gardens.

Based just outside Leeds, Hive & Keeper packs its honeys in hay from nearby fields, adding an extra sensory treat when opening a box - the scent of a Yorkshire summer.

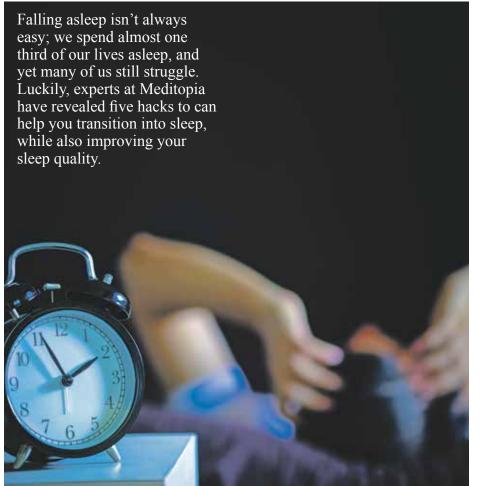
For those looking to taste honey as nature intended, Hive & Keeper is offering 10% off with the code UKBEES at www.hiveandkeeper.com.

Each jar tells a story - one that can never be repeated, only savoured.



Trouble falling asleep?

... Try this 89p trick that experts swear by





Swap coffee for camomile

If you're a coffee person and are having difficulty falling asleep, you may have been drinking too much caffeine during the day.

Try not to drink more than 2 cups, especially later in the day. To keep your energy up during the day, try getting some fresh air, or doing some stretches rather than refilling your coffee cup. Caffeine can disrupt your sleep cycle,

Chamomile tea, which can be found for as little as 89p in shops like Aldi, is a great alternative hot drink that will help you wind down and relax at bedtime. In the evening, make the switch from coffee to chamomile and see the difference in your sleep.

Blue light and sleep

Many of us want to watch something on TV or spend some time scrolling through social media in the evening. However, research shows that devices that emit blue light aren't good for our eyes or our sleep.

A study found that individuals who use blue light filtering lenses compared to regular lenses two hours before sleep show fewer symptoms of insomnia and have better sleep quality.

In light of these findings, it's best for you not to look at your phone, computer, or television at least one hour before bed. Instead, you can try listening to the radio, or a podcast, or a sleep story.

There are lots of alternatives, but if you need to use screens, it's best to turn on the night screen mode in order to help filter the blue light.





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Ease your mind into sleep

Now that you feel clean, calm, and rested, you may notice your mind wandering among thoughts, plans, hypothetical arguments, and so on. You're not alone, as that's something many of us experience.

One thing that can help with this is meditation. There are lots of sleep meditations online to guide you on your way to a peaceful, rest-filled sleep. Alternatively, try listening to calming music or sleep stories.

Another way to relax is by trying some low-impact stretching. Our bodies and minds are interconnected, which is why moving your body if you feel tired or anxious can be helpful. You can try moving your head gently side to side, rolling your shoulders while taking deep breaths, and stretching your hamstrings and hips by reaching for your toes in bed.

Breathing exercises go hand in hand with stretching. Breathing connects your body and mind, helping you to stay present. With each breath, let go of intrusive thoughts and allow your body to get heavier on your bed.

Get helpSleeping is essential to our daily routines, and it's important to find something that helps you. Last but not least, don't hesitate to seek out professional help for your sleep struggles. You can visit your doctor or see a therapist about any difficulties you're having.



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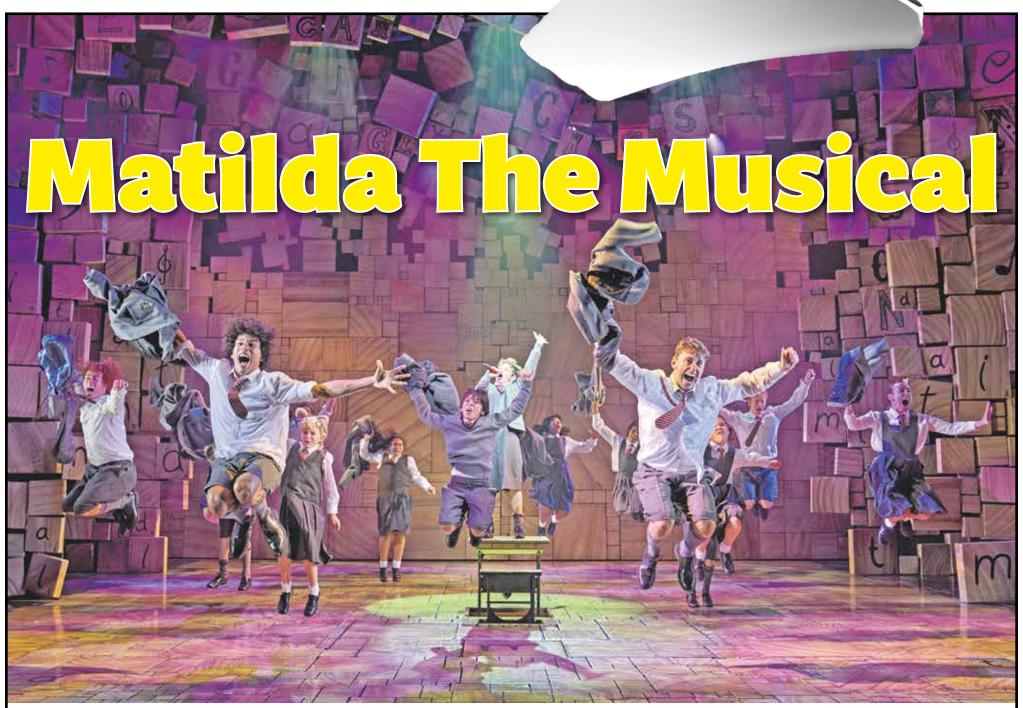
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THE LATEST ENTERTAINMENT AND CELEBRITY NEWS FROM BOLLYWOOD & HOLLYWOOD



New talent joins the magical world of Roald Dahl's epic story at London's Cambridge Theatre

The excitement continues to grow for Matilda The Musical at the Cambridge Theatre, as the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) introduces a talented new cast of young performers to join the iconic production.

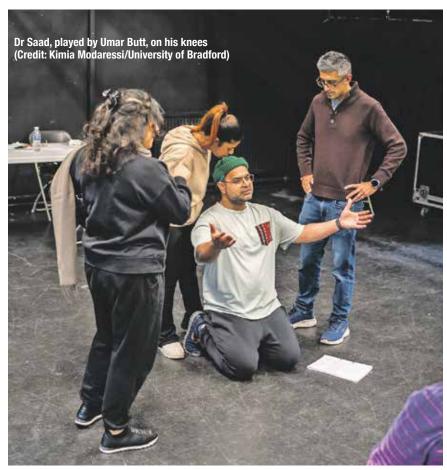
The award-winning show, which has captivated audiences around the globe, is gearing up for an even more dazzling experience as it welcomes Suki Hillier, Mia Rogers, and Alexis Whitehead to take on the role of

Matilda The Musical, the West End phenomenon that's captured hearts worldwide, continues to be a showstopper.

With a whopping 101 international awards - including 24 for Best Musical, this powerful, anarchic tale of a clever and courageous little girl with a vivid imagination shows no signs of slowing down.

The production is currently the 15th longest-running show in the West End and has already attracted over 12 million viewers across 100 cities!

Continued on page 42



A Teaspoon of Shampoo

Fake doctor who prescribed bizarre remedies inspires play

The story of a man who falsely posed as a doctor for 30 years is the inspiration behind a new play produced by Theatre in the Mill, an arts organisation based on the University of Bradford campus.

Muhammed Saeed treated thousands of patients from the practice he ran in Darfield Street, Manningham, Bradford, but he was not medically qualified.

He prescribed one patient suffering from a cold with shampoo to be taken twice a day. Another was prescribed a substance similar to creosote [normally used to preserve timber] to treat toothache.

'Teaspoon of Shampoo', from Theatre in the Mill, based on the University of Bradford campus, is a dramatisation based on Mr Saeed's life.

Written by Dr Shabina Aslam, Artistic Director at Theatre in the Mill, the play, performed on campus from Wednesday 5 March to Saturday 8 March, follows the recording of a true-crime podcast inspired by this true story.

It features dramatic recollections of key moments in Mr Saeed's life, known as Dr Muhammed Saad in the play. At the end of the production, the audience is asked to decide if its main character was ultimately innocent or guilty.

Mr Saeed was finally exposed in 1990 and a subsequent police investigation discovered he had taken on the medical qualifications of a Pakistan-based doctor who shared the same name.

He was jailed for five years in 1992 after being convicted of four charges of obtaining pay by false pretences and property by deception. He died in 2003.

Dr Aslam, who grew up in Bradford, was told about the story by a family member in 2020 and then researched archive newspaper coverage of the 1992 trial, initially writing a short story based on the case before the new play.

Dr Aslam said: "I could not believe that

I had stumbled on such an amazing story. I spent hours researching it.

"I originally wrote it as a short story for myself, but I got it published as a 'zine and then I thought it was a really good opportunity to turn it into a piece of theatre. The play is a South Asian feminist perspective of the story.

"The play is inspired by true events. It is a dramatisation. It shows him in different ways including arrogant and falling apart. The audience is offered different views of one character. The play looks at the doctor as a fallible human being."

The production sees community collaborators from Manningham supported by practice-led research from the University of Leeds, including researcher, Dr Rob Eagle. The performances follow workshops with community and professional actors, which were held last year.

Theatre in the Mill is classed as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England, one of around 800 across the country. Its status means it is recognised as making a significant contribution to the local and national arts scene.

'Teaspoon of Shampoo' will be performed at Theatre in the Mill from Wednesday 5 March to Saturday 8 March, from 19:30 with a matinee performance from 14:30 on the final day.

Matilda The Musical

New talent joins
the magical
world of Roald
Dahl's epic story
at London's
Cambridge
Theatre

Continued from page 41

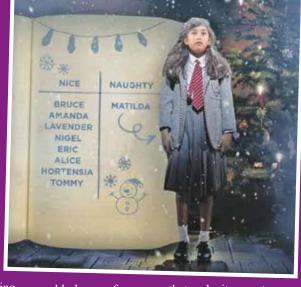
Joining these new Matildas is an exciting wave of talent with Janai Bartlett, Alexander Beaumont, Kobe Champion-Norville, William Gurney, Arietta Hall, Chase King, Reuben Laming, Lexi Lancaster, and many more young stars taking on key roles such as Bruce, Lavender, Nigel, and the pupils of Crunchem Hall.

Together, they'll bring a fresh burst of energy to the stage, joining the already exceptional cast of Joseph Burrows, Joey Grady, and others.

Of course, the star power doesn't stop there - Tiffany Graves returns as the notorious Mrs. Wormwood, Kieran Hill brings the fierce Miss Trunchbull to life, Neil McDermott plays the loveable but clueless Mr. Wormwood, and Eve Norris shines as the kind-hearted Miss Honey.

This magical musical, based on Roald Dahl's beloved book, boasts a fantastic score by Tim Minchin, a brilliant script by Dennis Kelly, and visionary direction by Matthew Warchus.

The production is packed with eye-popping effects, jaw-dropping choreography, and



world-class performances that make it a must-see for theatre fans of all ages.

The show's growing list of accolades includes sweeping the Olivier Awards in 2012 with seven wins, and it has continued to take the world by storm with its global tours from Broadway to Australia, New Zealand, and beyond.

Don't miss your chance to be part of the magic! Matilda The Musical is now booking through May 2026 at the Cambridge Theatre, and tickets are flying off the shelves. To catch this show and witness the dazzling new talent bring Matilda and her friends to life, head to the official website to book your tickets now!

#MatildaTheMusical #MatildaTheMusicalLondon #NewMatildas #WestEndMagic #MatildaTheMusical2025

For more information and tickets: www. matildathemusical.com

About Matilda The Musical

From the Royal Shakespeare Company, Matilda The Musical premiered in 2010 and has since become one of the most iconic musicals in the world, sweeping major awards and captivating audiences from London to New York, and everywhere in between. With a stellar creative team, including composer Tim Minchin and director Matthew Warchus, this is one theatrical experience you won't want to miss!



WHATSON

in cinemas this month



Marching Powder

Starring: Danny Dyer, Geoff Bell, Stephanie Leonidas, Callum MacNab, Arty Dyer, Bailey Patrick, Lex

Shrapnel, Janet Kumah
Director: Julius Onahs

Cert: 18

Genre: Action/Comedy/Crime

Release Date: 7/3/2025

Marching Powder sees the longanticipated reunion of acclaimed director Nick Love (The Business, The Sweeney, The Football Factory, The Firm, TV's Bulletproof) and long-term collaborator and national treasure Danny Dyer (TV's EastEnders, The Football Factory, The Business, Human Traffic).

This isn't your average 'rom-com'...
Set in the irreverent and profane world of cult classic The Football Factory,
Marching Powder is a hilarious, poignant and action-packed big screen drama that follows the story of Jack (Danny Dyer), an aging, drug-taking football hooligan who feels increasingly irrelevant in today's

society as he struggles to keep his family together.

Hooked on drugs and adrenaline; and struggling to resist the pull of his gang of fellow football fans, Jack is arrested after some violent matchday exploits and given six weeks to turn his life around, or else face a long spell in prison. Juggling his marriage, his mates, his hard-nut bully of a father-in-law and his wayward 25-year-old stepbrother, Jack tries to get his life back on-track but slowly his world starts to spiral out of control.

There's romance, there's comedy, but this ain't no 'rom-com'...this is real life, on the line.

WHAT'S ON

in cinemas this month

Mickey 17

Starring: Robert Pattinson, Naomi Ackie, Steven Yeun,

Toni Colette, Mark Ruffalo

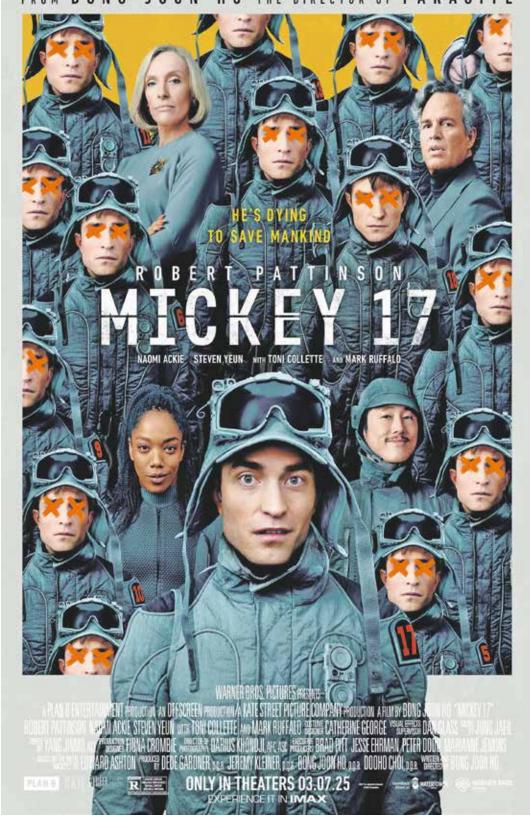
Director: Bong Joon-ho Cert: 18 Genre: Comedy/Fantasy/Sci-Fi

Release Date: 7/3/2025

From the Academy Award-winning writer/ director of "Parasite," Bong Joon Ho, comes his next groundbreaking cinematic experience, "Mickey 17." The unlikely hero, Mickey Barnes (Robert Pattinson)

has found himself in the extraordinary circumstance of working for an employer who demands the ultimate commitment to the job... to die, for a living.

FROM BONG JOON HO THE DIRECTOR OF PARASITE

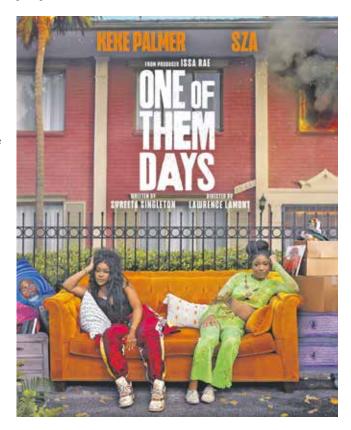


One of Them Days

Starring: Keke Palmer, SZA, Maude Apatow,

Janelle James, Katt Williams Director: Lawrence Lamont Cert: 15 Genre: Comedy Release Date: 7/3/2025

Best friends and roommates Dreux (Keke Palmer) and Alyssa (SZA) are about to have One of Them Days. When they discover Alyssa's boyfriend has blown their rent money, the duo finds themselves going to extremes in a comical race against the clock to avoid eviction and keep their friendship intact.



Last Breath

Starring: Woody Harrelson, Finn Cole, Cliff Curtis, Simu

Liu <mark>Director: A</mark>lex

Parkinson
Cert: TBC

Genre: Thriller Release Date:

14/3/2025

Starring, Woody Harrelson, Finn Cole, and Simu Liu, Last Breath is a tense and emotionally powerful action thriller that tells the remarkable true story of a commercial diver stranded at the bottom of the North Sea with only five minutes of oxygen and no chance of rescue. It's a story of one man's impossible fight for survival and a crew doing everything they can to bring him home alive.





Round up of all your local, national and international sporting news

Asian Express S P O R T

Geopolitics and "lack of buzz" blight Champions Trophy's return

Geopolitical reality, lack of buzz in host nation Pakistan and mediocre cricket in general meant Champions Trophy's much-anticipated return to the calendar did not go according to plan for the governing International Cricket Council (ICC).

The one-day international (ODI) tournament served as an ICC fundraiser but offered no assurance about the future of a format battling for relevance in a cricket landscape ruled by Twenty20 leagues either.

Financial engine India's participation, a key factor behind the commercial success of any cricket tournament, was in doubt after Pakistan bagged the hosting rights for the first ICC event in the country since 1996.

The Indian board (BCCI) stuck to their policy of not touring Pakistan because of the strained political ties between the bitter neighbours, who play each other only in ICC events.

Like for the 2023 Asia Cup in Pakistan, a 'hybrid model' was agreed on under which India were allowed to play their matches in Dubai to salvage a tournament, which had been discontinued after the 2017 edition.

Under the agreement running until 2027, Pakistan will play in a neutral venue for any ICC event, like next year's Twenty20 World Cup, scheduled in India.

Reigning T20 world champions India beat New Zealand in Sunday's final to prove their credentials as a white-ball behemoth.

India have lost just one match the final of the ODI World Cup in 2023 - in their last three ICC events and probably did not require what many called an "unfair advantage" of playing all their matches in Dubai.

"I feel sorry for India's cricketers," award-winning cricket writer Nicholas

Brookes told Reuters.

"They are an outstanding team – in my mind, streets ahead of their competition regardless of conditions, and one of the greatest white-ball sides the game has seen.

"This tournament should have been their victory lap, but their brilliance has been somewhat overshadowed by constant questions about unfair advantages."

Allowing India to play all their matches in Dubai robbed Pakistan of the honour of hosting the final and disrupted the schedule of the knockout matches.

South Africa were made to take a farcical 18-hour trip to Dubai in anticipation of a semi-final against India before flying back to Pakistan to face New Zealand.

"BENDING OVER BACKWARDS"

The whole affair made the ICC, currently headed by former BCCI

secretary Jay Shah, look weak in front of the world's richest cricket board.

The scheduling also favoured India, who had a week's rest between their last two group matches, while Afghanistan played twice in three

"That looks like the ICC putting finances ahead of fairness," said Brookes, whose "An Island's Eleven" charts the history of Sri Lankan cricket and won the Wisden Book Of The Year award in 2023.

"Some people will naturally think that the governing body is bending over backwards to accommodate India."

Defending champions Pakistan looked under-prepared for the tournament, both on and off the field.

Eleventh-hour facelift to stadiums in Karachi and Lahore, sparse crowd and three washouts dampened the spirit among the locals.

Adding to their woes, Mohammed Rizwan and his men finished bottom of Group A after a winless campaign that included a defeat by arch-rivals India.

An injury-ravaged Australia fielded a second string pace attack with Steve Smith, who quit ODIs after their semifinal exit, leading them in the absence of regular skipper Pat Cummins.

New Zealand all-rounder Rachin Ravindra bagged the player-of-the-tournament prize, while fellow Black Cap Glenn Phillips redefined fielding with gravity-defying catches and India's Virat Kohli proved he is not a spent force yet but the cricket was largely mediocre.

Afghanistan could not make the last four but impressed on their Champions Trophy debut while former champions England are searching for a new captain after their winless campaign prompted Jos Buttler to step down.



Asian Express ______

Round up of all your local, national and international sporting news









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University all set to host Kabaddi World Cup fixtures

With the start of Kabaddi World Cup less than two weeks away, the University of Wolverhampton is all set to host fixtures as part of the tournament.

The West Midlands will be hosting the sport's leading global tournament, between 17 March – 23 March, with fixtures to take place at the University's Walsall Campus on 21 March.

The Campus will host women's group games, including England vs Hong Kong and India vs Egypt, as well as the men's quarter-finals.

The University of Wolverhampton is also the exclusive Higher Education partner for the Kabaddi World Cup.

This month's World Cup is the first time the competition will be hosted outside of Asia. The region will welcome the world's best Kabaddi players from men's and women's teams from across the five member continents of World Kabaddi, including Africa, Asia, Oceania, Pan America and Europe

The contact sport sees teams broken down into raiders and blockers, with the aim of scoring points by entering opposition territory, tagging an opponent and making it back into their own half without being tackled to the ground.

Looking ahead to the tournament, Professor Prashant Pillai, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange at the University, said: "We're very much looking forward to welcoming colleagues from across the borough, country and from around the world to our Walsall Campus for the Kabaddi World Cup.

Continued on page 55

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