

Hamilton back on top in Silverstone practice

Hamilton leads Mercedes 1-2 ahead of Ricciardo as Vettel suffers engine failure | P 08

THE DAILY tribune



Reese Witherspoon shares sad 2020 meme, goes viral on social media

BUSINESS 4 Trump preps bans on WeChat, TikTok

Oil ministers reaffirm commitment to OPEC+ deal

TDT | Manama

Oil ministers of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Oman and Iraq yesterday reaffirmed their full commitment to the OPEC+ agreement.

The minister, during a teleconference call, emphasised the importance of all OPEC+ countries in meeting their production targets to accelerate the rebalancing of the oil market.

The minister also called countries who overproduced in May, June and July to compensate those volumes.

The meeting thanked Ihsan Abdul Jabbar Ismail, Oil Minister of Iraq for his great efforts to achieve the balancing of the oil market.

The ministers reviewed the recent developments in oil markets, the continued recovery in the global economy and oil demand and the progress made in rebalancing the oil market.

Oil Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Prince Abdulaziz Bin Salman Al Saud, Energy Minister of Saudi Arabia, Suhail Mohammed Al Mazrouei, Energy Minister of the UAE, Khaled Ali Al Fadhel, Oil Minister of Kuwait, Mohammed bin Hamad Al Rumhy, Energy Minister of Oman and Oil Minister of Iraq took part.

"The ministers stressed, again, that full commitment to the OPEC+ agreement and the compensation mechanism will accelerate the recovery of the global oil market."

Dubai-Kozhikode Air India flight skids of runway, splits into two

Eighteen dead, including pilot; over 100 passengers injured

TDT | Kerala

A pilot and 17 passengers were killed, and over 100 passengers were injured when an AirIndia express flight carrying 191 passengers from Dubai skidded off the runway, plunging nose down into a gorge, splitting into two, while landing at Calicut International Airport, Kerala, amidst heavy rain.

There were 174 passengers, 10 infants, two pilots and five cabin crew members on board the Air India express IX 1344 operating as part of Indian government's Vande Bharat evacuation mission.

A critically injured co-pilot and other passengers, who were injured, were rushed to nearby hospitals. The Kerala state police chief said at least 17 people had been killed, with at least four passengers stuck in the wreckage.



Air India flight from Dubai skids off runway at India's Kozhikode airport in Kerala. (picture courtesy of ToI)

Early images from the site showed the aircraft's fuselage broken into two pieces with the entire area littered with debris.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said the accident occurred at around 7:40 pm. No fire reported at the

time of landing. The incident happened at Kozhikode international airport, also known as Karipur Airport, in the state of Kerala.

Initial reports said the plane skidded off the runway and fell down the valley at least 35 feet below. (continues on page 2)

191 passengers and crew were onboard the Boeing-737 plane flying from Dubai

18 passengers including a pilot died in the crash, initial reports said

Beirut blast, an attack?

Lebanon investigating the possibility of rocket, bomb or other act in Beirut blast

- Toll rises to 154
- Rescue efforts continue
- Teargas fired at crowd

Reuters | Beirut

Lebanon's president said yesterday an investigation into the biggest blast in Beirut's history would examine whether it was caused by a bomb or other external interference.

"The cause has not been determined yet. There is a possibility of external interference through a rocket or bomb or other act," President Michel Aoun said in comments carried by local media and confirmed by his office.

He said it would also consider whether the explosion was due to negligence or an accident.

The United States has previously said it has not ruled out an attack. Israel, which has fought several wars with Lebanon, has also previously denied it had any role. Latest reports say the massive blast took the lives of at least 150 people and injured nearly 5,000, heaping misery on the country already in crisis.



A view of the damaged grain silo following Tuesday's blast in Beirut's port area.



Bahrain delegates deliver the first batch of humanitarian aid to Lebanon in the presence of Health Ministry Undersecretary Dr Waleed Al Manea, and Bahrain's Charge d'Affaires in Syria, Ali Khaled Al Mahmoud

The death toll is expected to rise as search-and-rescue operations continue for missing people. Lebanese Red Cross Secretary General George Kettaneh told local radio VDL that three more bodies had been found in the search, while the health minister said on Friday the death toll had climbed to 154. Dozens are still unaccounted for. The blast wipe-out a large grain silo, destroyed neighbourhoods and left several city blocks littered with glass and rubble.

Lebanese community thanks HM King

Manama



HM the King

The Lebanese community in Bahrain thanked His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa for the humanitarian and relief aid to the Lebanese people in Beirut.

The medical aid sent to Lebanon amidst the exceptional circumstances "reflects the most sublime humanitarian essence and deep-rooted relations between the two brotherly countries," Lebanese community members wrote in a statement yesterday.

They wished HM the King a long life, describing him as a model of humanitarian support during crises.

On a mission: Bahrain begins Beirut relief efforts



Workers loading aircraft with emergency medical supplies for Beirut

TDT | Manama

A team of Bahraini experts went to Beirut yesterday with ample supplies of emergency medicines, first aid materials and respiratory ventilators, to expedite Kingdom's relief operations and support victims of the devastating blast.

Dr Mustafa Al-Sayyed, the Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF) Secretary-General, who is with the relief team, told BNA before departure yesterday morning that they are looking forward to delivering the aid to pain-stricken people as soon as possible.

Later yesterday, Dr Al-Sayyed said, the team of Bahraini youths visited the blast-hit areas, to assess their needs, and deliver the relief materials.

Lebanon's Health Minister Hamad Hassan thanked Bahrain for its noble stance and praised the directives of HM the King to provide aid to Lebanon to help it face the painful disaster.



The team of Bahraini experts visited the blast-hit areas, to assess their needs, and deliver the relief materials

DR MUSTAFA AL-SAYYED
ROYAL HUMANITARIAN FOUNDATION (RHF) SECRETARY-GENERAL

BAHRAIN COVID-19

TOTAL CASES
43,307

ACTIVE CASES
2,872

DEATHS
159

DISCHARGED
40,276

NEW CASES
418

CRITICAL
40



Captain Deepak Vasant Sathé, pilot of the Air India flight

Rescue operation in progress at the accident site (picture courtesy of CNN)

Plane fell off into the valley 35 feet below

● Most of the injured were front row passengers

● Crash impact broke the plane's fuselage into two

(Continued from page 1)

The accident reportedly occurred when the pilots attempted a take-off when the aircraft skidded through the runway, losing traction, amid the downpour.

Pilots, however, were unsuccessful in regaining control as the aircraft skidded further towards the tip of the runway and fell off the cliff into the valley, splitting it into two parts.

The impact of the accident was so bad that the front door of the aircraft and cockpit were completely destroyed.

Officials said it was a miracle that the aircraft didn't burst into flames.

The flight was ferrying stranded Indian from Dubai following the coronavirus-induced lockdown.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said police and fire force personnel are at the scene and is taking all measures for rescue and relief operations.



Rescue workers at the accident site (Courtesy of Mathrubhumi)



An injured passenger being transported to a hospital (Courtesy of Mathrubhumi)

Local news channels quoting rescue workers said the injuries to most of the passengers were not serious.

Tried landing twice?

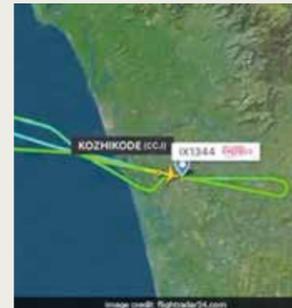
TDI | Kerala

The Air India express flight involved in the fatal accident in the South State of Kerala attempted to land twice on the Table-top runway in Calicut, says Global flight tracker website.

According to the Swedish company's landing map, the Boeing-737 aircraft attempted to land twice at the airport and came back in a 'figure 8' track.

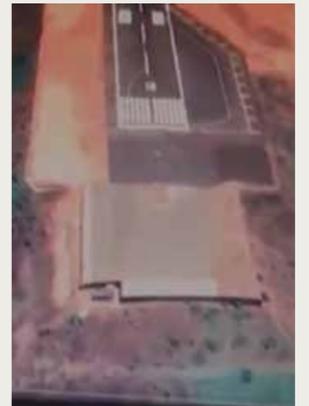
Initial reports indicate that the pilots aborted their first attempt after approaching the runway and returned for another.

Air India express guidelines say pilots are allowed to make



The map showing the flight path of Air India Express IX1344

one more attempt, in the event of failing to land the first time. However, it is left to the discretion of the captain, whether to try again or approach an alternate destination.



A three-dimensional image of the table-top runway in Calicut International Airport. The aircraft fell off this cliff to the valley 35 feet below, splitting it into two parts

When the flight was landing, the visibility on the runway was around 2,000 metres, which is alarmingly low for an inbound aircraft in such topography

In his response, Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar tweeted: "Deeply distressed to

hear about the Air India Express tragedy at Kozhikode. Prayers are with the bereaved families and those injured."

Calicut International Airport, the eleventh busiest airport in India in terms of overall passenger traffic, is also the only airport in the state with a table-top runway.

The accident also brought into memory the similar accident of Air India Express Flight 812

from Dubai to Mangalore, India. The accident, blamed on captain's unstabilized approach, resulted in the aircraft to overshoot the runway, falling down a hillside and bursting into flames. Of the 160 passengers and six crew members on board, 158 were killed (all crew members and 152 passengers) and only eight survived. This was the first fatal accident involving Air India Express.

Red Crescent launches "Bahrain assists Beirut"

● The Lebanese Red Cross has said that more than 5,000 people were being treated for injuries

(Continued from page 1)

Upon directives from His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Honorary President of the Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF) and under the patronage of HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Representative of HM the King for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, Dr Mustafa Al Sayed delivered the shipment of urgent humanitarian aid to Lebanon.

Shaikh Nasser praised HM the King's patronage of the RHF



Dr Al Sayed with Bahraini relief consignment

and his generous humanitarian gesture towards the people in Lebanon.

"We are honoured to extend to His Majesty King Hamad our sincere thanks, appreciation and gratitude for his continuous humanitarian initiatives in helping the needy and the afflicted," Dr Al Sayed said.

The Bahrain Red Crescent

Society earlier said it has donated \$50,000 to the Lebanese Red Cross through International Red Cross and Red crescent organisation.

The Society also announced yesterday the launch of its "Bahrain assists Beirut" campaign aimed at collecting donations and providing relief, medical, health and psychological sup-

port to the Lebanese people.

The society appealed to citizens, residents and institutions in the Kingdom to make donations to the Society to help the needy in Lebanon. The BRCS expressed optimism that the campaign will generate great interaction in Bahrain.

Gulf states were among the first to respond to the crisis with emergency relief materials to ease pressure on Lebanon's medical system, already strained by the coronavirus pandemic.

Lebanon's Prime Minister Hassan Diab has called on "friendly countries" to support a nation already reeling from its worst economic crisis in decades as well as the impact of the coronavirus. The Lebanese Red Cross has said that more than 5,000 people were being treated for injuries after the explosion.

Three more COVID-19 deaths

TDI | Manama

Bahrain's Health Ministry yesterday announced three more deaths from Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak raising the virus death toll in the Kingdom to 159.

An 84-year-old Bahraini woman, a 53-year-old expatriate man and an 82-year-old Bahraini man are the latest casualties. The ministry announced the deaths on its official twitter handle, separately. Officials tweeted condolences to the family members of the deceased. There are currently 79 coronavirus patients in the Kingdom, who are receiving treatment, of which 40 patients are admitted to critical care. The number of



active cases in the Kingdom now stands at 2,872, out of which 2,832 cases are health-wise stable.

The minister further said it conducted 9,395 COVID-19 tests yesterday, increasing the number of people tested in the Kingdom to 886,095.

Some 418 new cases were detected yesterday, which includes 190 expatriate workers, 225 contacts of active cases and three travel related cases. The minister also announced 331 new recoveries yesterday, raising the total number of people cured of their infection in the Kingdom to 40,276.

Turkish deal in 'trash can'

Egypt, Greece maritime deal opens up new horizons of cooperation: Bahrain

- Bahrain welcome demarcation of economic zone
- Deal calls for setting up an exclusive economic zone
- Rejects a similar agreement by Turkey and Libya
- European Union has said that the Turkish deal violates international law and threatens stability in the region



Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry (R) shakes hands with his Greek counterpart Nikos Dendias during their meeting in Cairo, Egypt, on Aug. 6, 2020. (Str/Xinhua)

TDI | Manama

Bahrain yesterday welcomed the maritime deal signed by Egypt and Greece as “an important and successful” decision opening up new horizons of economic cooperation.

Bahrain’s Foreign Affairs Ministry said the deal, which demarcates an exclusive economic zone for oil and gas drilling rights, is in line with the rules of International Law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The deal signed on Thursday by Egypt and Greece designates an exclusive economic zone in the eastern Mediterranean between the two countries, an area containing promising oil and gas reserves.

Bahrain’s Foreign Ministry statement said the deal would “en-

“The deal would enhance bilateral constructive cooperation, achieve joint benefits from the available resources in the EEZ of each of them” and meet the aspirations of their peoples for further progress and prosperity.

BAHRAIN FOREIGN MINISTRY

hance bilateral constructive cooperation, achieve joint benefits from the available resources in the EEZ of each of them” and meet the aspirations of their peoples for further progress and prosperity.

The deal is in response to a similar agreement signed by Turkey and Libya’s Tripoli-based government last year raising tensions in the East Mediterranean region.

The deal was widely dismissed by nations Cyprus and Greece as an infringement on their economic rights.

European Union has said that the Turkish deal violates international law and threatens stability in the region.

Turkish deal

In Greece, diplomats said the deal effectively nulli-

fied an accord between Turkey and the internationally recognised government of Libya.

Last year, those two parties agreed to maritime boundaries in a deal Egypt and Greece decried as illegal and a violation of international law. Greece maintains it infringed on its continental shelf and specifically that off the island of Crete.

Following the deal, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said, “This agreement allows both countries to move forward in maximizing the utilization of

the resources available in the exclusive economic zone, especially promising oil and gas reserves.”

His Greek counterpart Nikos Dendias said the agreement with Egypt is within the framework of international law.

He further said the Turkey, Tripoli memorandum of understanding is “illegal, void and legally unfounded” and that the “non-existent Turkish-Libyan memorandum has ended up where it belonged from the beginning: in the trash can.”

His state-

ment came hours after Greece said it is ready to start exploratory talks on the demarcation of maritime zones with Turkey as soon as this month.

Earlier this month, Egypt said that part of a seismic survey planned by Turkey in the eastern Mediterranean potentially encroached on waters where Cairo claims exclusive rights.



Egypt holds 77 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of proven gas reserves as of 2017, ranking 16th in the world and accounting for about 1 per cent of the world’s total natural gas reserves of 6,923 Tcf. Egypt has proven reserves equivalent to 37.9 times its annual consumption.

38 yrs

According to a 2015 calculation, Egypt has 38 years of gas left, based on then consumption levels and excluding unproven reserves

A natural gas production platform in the Mediterranean Sea (Courtesy of egyptianstreets). The Zohr gas field is an offshore natural gas field located in the Egyptian sector of the Mediterranean Sea. The field is located in the Shorouk concession, a concession with an area of 3,765 square kilometres which was won by Eni in 2013.



Northern Governor Ali bin Al-Sheikh Abdul Hussein Al-Asfoor yesterday conducted a field visit to the village of Diraz to ensure adherence of coronavirus (COVID-19) precautionary measures in expatriate accommodations there. Deputy Northern Governor Brigadier Khaled bin Rabia Sinan Al Dossary, MP Fatima Al-Qatari, Governorate’s Security Coordination Officer, Major Salman al-Zarqawi, Essam Al-Khayyat, Head of Investment Development in the Northern Governorate and fieldwork team accompanied Al Asfoor. The visit also falls in line with the directives of General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, on setting up a mechanism to reduce the density of foreign workers in residential complexes to curb the spread of the deadly pandemic. (pictures courtesy of AlAyam)



Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) yesterday received the patrol warship vessel “RBNS Al-Zubara” from the British BAE Systems Company. The handover ceremony was held at the HMNB Portsmouth Naval Base in the UK, in the presence of the Bahraini Ambassador to the UK, Shaikh Fawaz bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, the Military Attache at the Bahraini Embassy in London, Brigadier General Ahmed Mohammed Al-Ruwaie, the vessel’s crew and a representative of BAE Systems Company.

Trump preps bans on WeChat, TikTok

Reuters | Washington

US President Donald Trump has unveiled sweeping bans on US transactions with the Chinese owners of messaging app WeChat and video-sharing app TikTok, escalating a high-stakes confrontation with Beijing over the future of the global tech industry.

The executive orders announced Thursday and effective in 45 days come after the Trump administration this week flagged increased effort to purge “untrusted” Chinese apps from US digital networks, calling Tencent Holdings Ltd’s WeChat and ByteDance’s popular TikTok “significant threats.”

China said on Friday the companies comply with US laws and regulations and warned that the United States would have to “bear the consequences” of its action.

“The US is using national security as an excuse and using state power to oppress non-American businesses. That’s just a hegemonic practice,” foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing.

TikTok has come under fire from US lawmakers over national security concerns surrounding data collection as distrust between Washington and Beijing grows. Reuters on Sunday reported that Trump has given



Officials have urged the president to delist Chinese companies that trade on US exchanges and fail to meet US auditing requirements by January 2022



TikTok threatens legal action

Reuters

TikTok is threatening legal action against the US after Donald Trump ordered firms to stop doing business with the Chinese app within 45 days.

Microsoft Corp 45 days to complete the purchase of TikTok’s US operations.

“We are shocked by the recent Executive Order, which was issued without any due process,” TikTok said in a statement on Friday, adding that it would “pursue all remedies available to us in order to ensure that the rule of law is not discarded.”

The company said it was “shocked” by an executive order from the US President outlining the ban. TikTok said it would “pursue all remedies available” to “ensure the rule of law is not discarded.”

The ban on US transactions with Tencent, one of the world’s biggest internet companies, portends further fracturing of the global internet and severing of long-standing ties between the tech industries in the United States and China.

“This is the rupture in the digital world between the US and China,” said James Lewis,

a technology expert with Washington-based think-tank Center for Strategic and International Studies.

“Absolutely, China will retaliate.”

On Wednesday, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo expanded a programme dubbed “Clean Network” to prevent various Chinese apps and telecoms firms from accessing sensitive information on US citizens and businesses.

Trump’s new orders appeared coordinated with Pompeo’s announcement, Lewis said.

“We are reviewing the executive order to get a full understanding,” a Tencent spokesperson said. ByteDance declined to comment.

China opposes US orders

Reuters

China’s foreign ministry firmly opposes executive orders announced by US President Donald Trump banning US transactions with the Chinese owners of messaging app WeChat and video-sharing app TikTok, Beijing said on Friday.

Beijing will defend the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese businesses and the United States would have to bear the consequences of its actions, ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told reporters during a daily briefing, without giving details.

“The US is using national security as an excuse and using state power to oppress non-American businesses. That’s just a hegemonic practice,” foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing.

500m

TikTok has 500 million active monthly users. The average user spends 52 minutes per day on TikTok. The 50 most popular users on TikTok have almost 500 million followers.



TikTok/Douyin is a Chinese video-sharing social networking service owned by ByteDance, a Beijing-based Internet technology company founded in 2012 by Zhang Yiming.

Oil slips below \$45 per barrel



A TORC Oil & Gas pump jack is seen near Granum, Alberta, Canada

Reuters | New York

Oil prices fell more than 1 per cent yesterday, pulling back from a week of gains due to concerns that the global recovery could falter from a resurgence of coronavirus cases.

The rise in coronavirus infections remains the dominant issue for the demand outlook. Cases in the United States are still rising in a number of states, while India recently reported a record daily jump in infections. More than 700,000 people have died in the worldwide pandemic.

Brent crude lost 57 cents, or 1.3 per cent, to \$44.52 a barrel by 11:23 a.m. EDT (1523 GMT). US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell 60 cents, or 1.4pc, to \$41.35 a barrel.

Brent is set for a weekly gain of 2.8pc, while WTI is on track to rise 2.7pc.

Talks between US lawmakers over another round of stimulus have stalled, meanwhile. US President Donald Trump

has threatened to pull White House representatives out of talks and instead issue executive orders to address economic needs.

“The US Congress can’t seem to come up with a plan for the next round of stimulus and it’s creating doubt for US economic recovery,” said Gary Cunningham, director of market research at Tradition Energy.

OPEC member Iraq pledged to cut output further in August, which helped support prices. The nation has been a laggard in fully meeting its pledge as part of an April deal to reduce supply.

Crude has recovered from lows reached in April, when Brent slipped below \$16, a 21-year low.

“Keeping the price levels would be unrealistic,” Bjornar Tonhaugen of Rystad Energy said of this week’s rise. “Traders rushed to the task today to correct the gains, remembering the invisible enemy, COVID-19.”

Trump reimposes 10pc tariff on Canadian aluminum

Reuters | London

US President Donald Trump on Thursday announced he had ordered a 10 per cent tariff on Canadian aluminum to be reimposed, saying America’s key trading partner was flooding the US market with the metal.

“Canada was taking advantage of us, as usual,” Trump

said in a speech at a Whirlpool washing machine factory in Clyde, Ohio.

“I signed a proclamation that defends American industry by reimposing aluminum tariffs on Canada,” he said.

Trump had exempted Canadian products from the tariffs as part of the USMCA free trade deal with Mexico and the United States, on condition that they

“not flood our country with exports and kill all of our aluminum jobs.”

“Canadian aluminum producers have broken that commitment,” he said.

In Ottawa, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland called the tariffs “unwarranted and unacceptable” and vowed to “swiftly impose dollar-for-dollar countermeasures.”

Gold eases off record as dollar regains momentum

Reuters

Gold’s record-breaking rally paused yesterday as the dollar got some respite from investors looking for a hedge against the US-China spat, but fears over a worsening pandemic kept bullion on track for its longest streak of weekly gains in about a decade.

Spot gold eased 0.2 per cent to \$2,058.55 per ounce by 0945 GMT, having scaled a record peak of \$2,072.50 in early trade. It has added 4pc so far this week in what would be its ninth straight weekly gain.

US gold futures were steady at \$2,070.20.

“We’ll see some pullback (in gold) from these levels with USD bottoming for a while and maybe even see some strength in the USD in the near term, which will reverse these gains but not entirely,” said Spencer Campbell, director at SE Asia Consulting Pte Ltd.

“People will be looking to re-enter the market on any pullbacks in precious metals as the medium to longer term views are significantly higher.”



Gold bars are stacked in the safe deposit boxes room of the Pro Aurum gold house in Munich, Germany



The dollar rebounded from a two-year low as President Donald Trump’s decision to ban US transactions with two popular Chinese apps weighed on risk

sentiment.

The US currency has in many instances been the preferred refuge during the flare-ups between Washington and Beijing.

“The dollar’s performance has a major say on how much runway gold bulls are accorded,” said FXTM market analyst Han Tan.

Gold has surged more than 35pc this year amid surging COVID-19 cases that have battered economies and prompted unprecedented global stimulus measures.

“There would have to be a paradigm shift in the outlooks for global monetary policy and the worldwide economy, before considering whether gold’s surge has run its course,” Tan added.

Investors now await the US non-farm payrolls data due at 1230 GMT.

Elsewhere, silver was down 2.2pc at \$28.30, having earlier hit a high since February 2013. It has gained about 16pc so far this week.

Elsewhere, platinum dropped 2.8pc to \$970.31 an ounce and palladium fell 1.7pc to \$2,183.70.

Mahindra seeks investors for electric vehicle business



A showroom attendant cleans a Mahindra Quanto car inside the company’s showroom in Mumbai

Reuters | New Delhi

Indian automaker Mahindra & Mahindra is looking for investment partners for its domestic electric vehicles business and is finalising investment plans for its Automobili Pininfarina unit, the group’s managing director said on Friday.

The automaker wants to be a key player in mass-market electric vehicles (EVs) through its unit Mahindra Electric and in the high-end segment through Europe-based Pininfarina, which is building an electric hyper car Battista, Pawan Goenka said.

Mahindra & Mahindra is seeking financial or strategic investors for Mahindra Electric, Goenka told a news conference after the group’s quarterly earnings. For Pininfarina, it is finalising how much investment it needs for future projects and will then decide how to raise funds, Goenka said, adding that this could include taking a strategic partner.

Mahindra has also decided not to proceed with the bid made by its North American unit to supply vehicles to the US Postal Service.

SOCIETY



Coast Guard Commander Major-General Alaa Siyadi received the Deputy Commander, US Naval Forces Central Command Admiral Curt Renshaw and the accompanied delegation. The Coast Guard Commander welcomed the guests and highlighted the importance to exchange visits to promote maritime security cooperation. They reviewed coordination and topics of common interest.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, held a virtual Minister meeting with the employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during which he expressed his congratulations on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, wishing them continued success. He affirmed the importance of the efforts the employees are making in order to enable the Ministry to achieve an effective and constructive foreign policy that enhances the position of the Kingdom of Bahrain in the international community.



The General Directorate of Traffic has honoured drivers who followed rules during Eid Al Adha holiday in cooperation with Al Salam Bank. The Traffic campaign aims to support community partnership with road users and appreciate ideal drivers. The honouring was part of the "Thank You" initiative.



The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) entered into a partnership agreement with Infosys Finacle, part of EdgeVerve Systems, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Infosys, to adopt the Finacle Cash Management Suite, which will allow the Bank to digitally transform its transaction banking business.



Air India Express flight IX1376 departed for Kozhikode from Bahrain airport with total 175 passengers including 4 infants on board as part of Vande Bharat Mission by Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Rajapaksa brothers win big in Sri Lanka's poll

PM and president's party 150 seats in the 225-member parliament

● The 'super majority' will allow them to carry out constitutional changes

Reuters | Colombo

Sri Lanka's parliamentary Selections handed President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother an overwhelming majority, results showed yesterday, giving the family power to enact sweeping changes to the constitution of the island nation.

Rajapaksa had sought, and achieved, a two-thirds majority for his Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna party and its allies to be able to restore full executive powers to the presidency.

The ruling group won 150 seats in the 225-member parliament, according to a tally published by the election commission from Wednesday's vote.

The two-thirds majority will see Rajapaksa's older brother and former president Mahinda Rajapaksa taking over as prime



Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa (R) and his Prime Minister brother Mahinda Rajapaksa, pose for a photograph (file photo)

minister as the tourism-dependent nation struggles to recover from last year's deadly Islamist militant attacks and, more recently, lockdowns to control the coronavirus pandemic.

Rajapaksa said the restoration of full executive powers was necessary to implement his agenda to make the country of 21 million economically and

militarily secure.

The brothers are best known for crushing the Tamil Tiger rebels fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils during the elder Rajapaksa's presidency in 2009, ending a 25-year civil war.

"We will ensure (Sri Lanka) will not stand disappointed during our tenure," Mahinda



Rajapaksa brothers needed to secure a super-majority to carry out their promised roll-back of constitutional changes

Rajapaksa said on Twitter.

Currently, significant power is bestowed on parliament and the prime minister after a previous government led by the opposition had amended the constitution and set up independent commissions to oversee the police and the judiciary among other arms of the government.

"We have seen in the past when governments have had a two-thirds majority it does not have to worry about checks and balances," said historian and political scientist Jayadeva Uyangoda.

News in brief

Malaysia's ex-finance minister charged with corruption

◆ Malaysia charged former finance minister and senior opposition leader Lim Guan Eng with corruption for seeking a bribe on a



\$1.5 billion infrastructure project. Lim said the charge was "politically motivated". The charge against Lim, who was minister in the Mahathir Mohamad-led coalition that collapsed in February, comes amid speculation that elections could be imminent due to Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's slim majority in parliament.



Italian valley evacuated as cathedral-sized glacier slips

◆ A melting glacier as large as a cathedral is at risk of breaking apart due to a heatwave,

forcing the evacuation of part of an Italian alpine valley. The alarm was raised on Wednesday afternoon when experts in helicopters realised that the Planpincieux glacier, at an altitude of about 2,800 metres in the Ferret Valley in the Mont Blanc massif, was slipping dangerously. A heatwave has created a layer of water under the glacier, which is made up of about 500 cubic metres of ice - roughly the size of the Milan cathedral - making it more prone to a break.

Gunmen kill 21 villagers in northern Nigeria

◆ Gunmen have killed 21 villagers in northern Nigeria's Kaduna state, police said, in the latest deadly violence between ethnic Fulani herders and local farmers over grazing and water rights. Community leaders however

said a higher total of 33 people were killed in the assaults on the remote five villages which took place early on Thursday. Motorcycle-riding gunmen suspected to be Fulani herders stormed the villages in the predominantly Christian district of Zangon Katak, shooting residents as they fled their homes, state police spokesman Mohammed Jalinge said.

◆ Thousands of Afghan elders, community leaders and politicians gathered to debate government efforts to make peace with the Taliban, in particular the fate of 400 hardcore Taliban prisoners whose release could clear the way for talks. Some 3,200 people have been invited to the grand assembly, known as a Loya Jirga, in Kabul amid tight security to debate for at least three days and then advise the government on whether the prisoners should be freed.



◆ A Chinese court sentenced a Canadian national to death in a ruling that could further inflame tensions between China and Canada. The Guangzhou Intermediate Court said in a statement it had handed Xu Weihong a death sentence for manufacturing drugs, and said all his personal property would be confiscated. According to China's state-run Global Times, Xu had bought raw materials and tools for drug production in October 2016 and worked with an accomplice, Wen Guanxiang, to make ketamine.

◆ Thousands of South Korean trainee doctors went on strike, protesting outside parliament against a government plan to boost the number of medical students in the country, arguing it would be a poor use of additional funding for the sector. The government said its goal to increase the number of medical students by 4,000 over the next 10 years was necessary to better prepare for public health crises like the coronavirus pandemic

of medical students by 4,000 over the next 10 years was necessary to better prepare for public health crises like the coronavirus pandemic

India seizes 740 tonnes of chemical that caused Lebanon blast

Reuters | Chennai

Indian customs authorities have seized a container with 740 tonnes of ammonium nitrate, the chemical that caused this week's deadly blast in Lebanon's capital.

Nearly 150 people were killed

and more than 5,000 were injured when a large stock of the chemical exploded at Beirut's port on Tuesday. Dozens of people are missing and up to 250,000 are without habitable homes.

Customs authorities in the south Indian port city of Chennai

said a large consignment of the chemical had been stored at a site about 20 km from the city.

"The seized cargo is securely stored and safety of the cargo and public is ensured considering the hazardous nature of the cargo," they said in a statement

late on Thursday.

There was no residential area within 2 km of the freight station where the consignment has been stored, they said.

Ammonium nitrate is used to make fertilizers and explosives, mainly used by the quarrying industry in India.

Owner of cruise ship sunk by Lebanon blast sues

AFP | Beirut

The Lebanese owner of a cruise ship that was sunk by the huge explosion that destroyed the port of Beirut is filing a lawsuit, the National News Agency said.

Two crew members of the Orient Queen were killed and seven others wounded Tuesday when a huge shipment of ammonium nitrate caught fire and caused an explosion that levelled the port and gutted entire swathes of the city.

"Entrepreneur Merhi Abou Merhi, the owner of the Orient Queen cruise ship, has filed a lawsuit against all those responsible for this catastrophic blast," the agency said.

The state agency said the suit was the first of its kind and could pave the way for similar legal action in the coming days and weeks.

The large cruise ship, which can accommodate at least 300 guests and houses a casino, was docked in its home port when disaster struck.

Landslide kills 15 in Kerala, more than 50 feared trapped



Rescue workers look for survivors at the site of a landslide

Reuters | Kochi

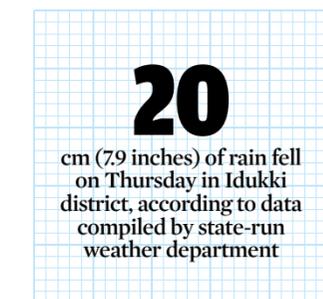
A landslide caused by torrential rains killed at least 15 tea garden workers in Kerala yesterday, and rescue workers were searching for more than 50 people thought to be trapped under soil and debris, officials said.

The landslide hit in the early hours as workers slept, in Idukki district, district collector H Dineshan told Reuters.

Fifteen bodies had been recovered so far and another 51 people were feared to be trapped, he said.

"One team of National Disaster Relief Force have reached the site. Helicopters cannot be deployed as the climate is very misty," he added.

Nearly 20 cm (7.9 inches) of rain fell on Thursday in Idukki district, according to data compiled by state-



run weather department. Idukki is about 240 km (150 miles) north of the state capital Thiruvananthapuram.

"The area has received heavy rains over the last two days and the landslides occurred after midnight. Those affected are mostly tea workers who were sleeping," said S Sureshkumar, the district's additional superintendent of police.



Palestinian woman killed in West Bank as Israelis, Palestinians clash



A man reacts as tear gas canisters are fired by Israeli troops

Reuters | Jenin, West Bank

A Palestinian woman was shot dead in the West Bank where Israeli soldiers clashed with Palestinians yesterday, Palestinian medical officials said.

Palestinian officials said Israeli troops had shot the 23-year-old.

An Israeli army spokesman said soldiers did not use live fire during the clash, and that Palestinians had opened fire and hurled explosives.

The woman's family said she was shot while trying to close the window to her house in the town of Jenin because of tear gas outside.

An Israeli army spokesman said a riot erupted while troops were operating in Jenin.

Local residents said Palestinians had not used guns. They said people were throwing stones at Israeli forces that raided the area.

Trump says Biden is 'against God'

Trailing in election polls, Donald Trump says rival Joe Biden opposes God and guns

● Biden called Trump's 'hurt God' attack 'shameful'

Reuters | Washington

U.S. Republican President Donald Trump asserted that his Democratic opponent in November's election, Joe Biden, is "against God," even though Biden frequently discusses how his Catholic faith has guided his actions as a public official.

With Trump trailing Biden in four recent polls in Ohio, the president is fighting to win voters in the traditional swing state as the coronavirus pandemic threatens his chances of a second term. After addressing a small crowd at a Cleveland airport, Trump went on to deliver a campaign-style speech at a Whirlpool plant in Clyde, Ohio.

"He's following the radical-left agenda: take away your guns, destroy your Second Amendment, no religion, no anything, hurt the Bible, hurt God," Trump said about Biden in his Cleveland speech. "He's against God."

The Second Amendment of the US Constitution gives Americans the right to keep and bear



Former vice president and Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden meets with clergy members and community activists during a visit to a church (file photo)

arms.

Trump did not explain what he meant. His accusation, though, could solidify support from his party's sizable conservative Christian bloc and also damage voters' view of Biden, the first Catholic Vice President in US history.

John Kennedy was the first and only Catholic elected President when he won in 1960.

In a statement, Biden said Trump's attack was "shameful" and that faith had been the bedrock foundation of his life.

"President Trump's comments reveal more about him than they do about anyone else. They show us a man willing to stoop to any low for political gain, and someone whose actions are completely at odds with the values and teachings

that he professes to believe in," Biden said.

More than three-fourths of Americans practice Christianity or another religion, according to the Pew Research Center. Trump has been hurt politically by his response to the coronavirus pandemic that has recently killed on average more than 1,000 Americans each day.

While he speaks very little



President Trump's comments reveal more about him than they do about anyone else. They show us a man willing to stoop to any low for political gain, and someone whose actions are completely at odds with the values and teachings that he professes to believe in

JOE BIDEN

about his own Presbyterian faith and rarely attends church, Trump works closely with evangelical Christians and puts their causes of restricting abortion and preserving gun ownership at the top of his policy agenda.

After a school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, killed 20 children in 2012, Biden pushed for some restrictions on gun ownership, but he has not called for confiscating firearms.

He has said he would seek to ban assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines, let people who own assault weapons sell them back voluntarily, and expand background checks.

North Korea's Kim inspects flood relief; worry grows about crops



A submerged Han River park by flooded Han River is seen in Seoul

AFP | Miami

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has ordered officials to provide food and shelter for hundreds of families who lost their homes in floods, the KCNA state news agency reported yesterday.

Heavy rain across the Korean peninsula has brought flooding to both North and South Korea in recent days, and concern is growing about damage to North Korean crops.

"It is of priority importance to quickly supply sleeping materials, daily commodities, medicines and other necessities to the flood-affected people to stabilize their living," Kim said in comments carried by KCNA.

Kim made the remarks while inspecting a flood-hit part of North Hwanghae Province, on the border of South Korea, as he "clarified tasks" for recovery work with officials there.

Torrential rain for several days has inundated more than 730 single-story houses, destroying 179 of them, and flooded rice-growing land, KCNA said.

179 houses have been destroyed among over 700 inundated for several days due to the torrential rain

There were no reports of casualties.

Kim would also mobilise the army for rehabilitation, in particular work on homes and roads, and he called on architects to build 800 model houses in a badly hit farming village in Unpha County, KCNA said.

The rain during the harvest season in the rice-growing area is raising concern about North Korea's food security.

North Korea's ruling party newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, cited a study that said rice and corn would suffer if the crops were under water for just two or three days.

"The fate of this year's farming depends on how to protect farmland and crops from the flood," the newspaper said.

Not "Thigh-land": Thais amused at Trump's slip

● Trump speaking at an election campaign event in Ohio when the gaffe happened, much to the amusement of netizens

Reuters | Bangkok

Citizens of Thailand were surprised and bemused yesterday to discover their country's name had become a social media meme after U.S. President Donald Trump mispronounced it.

Though Trump quickly switched to the correct pronunciation, people quickly seized on the slip to mock the U.S. leader online as #Thighland became one of the top-trending Twitter hashtags in Thailand with 32,000 tweets and in the top 25 in the United States with over 156,000, according to the tracking site Twitscoop.

The English-language online newspaper Thai Enquirer changed its Twitter name to "Thigh Enquirer" yesterday morning and ran an article on the mistake. TNN Online also



US President Donald Trump in the grand foyer of the White House (file photo)

reported the news, as did Thailand's Voice TV, and Matichon newspaper.

One online joker wrote that Thighland was located on a cartographic leg between "Kneepal" and "Ankola".

The American president made the gaffe during a speech in Ohio while explaining how his trade war with China had forced factories to move pro-

duction to Southeast Asian countries, Vietnam and, as he pronounced it, "Thi-land".

In the next breath, Trump got it right, saying: "Thailand and Vietnam - two places that I like their leaders very much."

The meme escalated when conservative American pundit and filmmaker Dinesh D'Souza, who was pardoned by Trump



Donald Trump's flub on "Thailand" came days after he incorrectly pronounced the name of Yosemite National Park, located in California

after a conviction of violating campaign finance law, argued in a series of tweets that "Thighland" is in fact the correct pronunciation.

Rikker Dockum, a professor of linguistics at Swarthmore College, told Reuters that Trump's second pronunciation - with an aspirated hard "t" instead of a soft "th" sound - is the widely used one in both Thai and English.

"Among English speakers around the world, this is not a disputed pronunciation," he added.

Ukraine Justice Ministry kicks off 'big sale' of old prisons

AFP | Kiev

Ukrainian justice ministry began a drive to sell off its prisons, an ambitious project meant to help finance new jails for the country's ageing penitentiary system.

Over the next 10 years the justice ministry plans to sell about a hundred prisons.



A dog guards Lukyanivska prison in Kiev

"We are starting a big sale of prisons," Ukraine's Justice Minister Denys Maluska told journalists in the yard of Irpin Penal Center located in Kiev region.

The jail was the first lot in the auction that will start in the coming weeks.

Ukraine's penal system discontinued use of the Irpin Penal Center a year ago and more

than 120 of its residents were relocated to other jails, Leonid Parkhomchuk, the center's acting head, told AFP.

"Such places are of great interest for investors," Maluska said.

Old jails mostly have large areas with already installed general utilities, so they are "ready to use", the minister explained.

CELEBS

celebs

Reese Witherspoon shares sad 2020 meme, goes viral on social media

Fox | Los Angeles

Reese Witherspoon, like many, began the year with the utmost glam and positivity only to have some of those hopes and dreams of a prosperous 2020 dashed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The actress and Hollywood executive, 44, captured that dashed hope in a collage of production still that shows the deterioration of her appearance throughout the year. The collage, which has prompted many of her fellow peers to follow suit, quickly became a viral meme.

In her medley of photos, the "Sweet

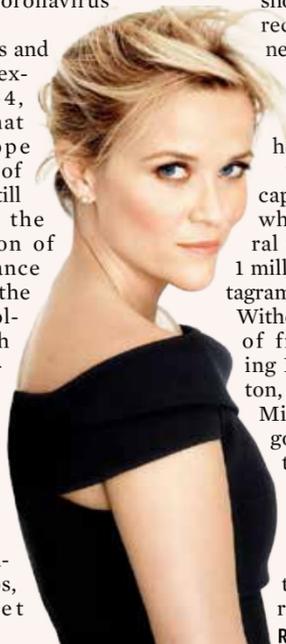
Home Alabama" star is seen as the upbeat and optimistic Elle Woods from her role in "Legally Blonde." The other images are pulled from her projects "Wild" and "Little Fires Everywhere."

Meanwhile, as March shows Witherspoon receiving unsavory news, June through September sees the Golden Globe-winner at her wits' end.

"Yup. 2020," she captioned the post, which has gone viral with more than 1 million likes on Instagram.

Witherspoon's cohort of friends including Kerry Washington, Viola Davis and Mindy Kaling also got in on the action.

"SAME," wrote Washington, sharing stills from her role on the legendary series "Scandal" as



Reese Witherspoon



Witherspoon's cohort of friends including Kerry Washington, Viola Davis and Mindy Kaling also got in on the action and posted similar collages

well as "Little Fires" where she stars and produces alongside Witherspoon.

Billy Ray Cyrus even joined in, tweeting his own meme collage.

"Thanks for the inspiration!" he wrote.

Meanwhile, Kaling captioned her post, "Pretty much" and tagged Witherspoon.

Gwyneth Paltrow stunned by derision over her 'conscious uncoupling'

Reuters | Los Angeles



Gwyneth Paltrow

Gwyneth Paltrow says deciding to split with her first husband Chris Martin was painful enough, but nothing could have prepared her for the public mockery that greeted the announcement of their "conscious uncoupling."

That was the phrase used by the "Shakespeare in Love" actress and the Coldplay

frontman when they announced in 2014 that they were separating after 10 years of marriage, but hoped to remain close friends.

In an essay in the September issue of British Vogue magazine, Paltrow said she knew the celebrity split would get attention.

"But I never could have anticipated what came next. The public's surprise gave way quickly to ire and derision. A strange combination of mockery and anger that I had never seen," Paltrow wrote. "The intensity of the response saw me bury my head in the sand deeper than I ever had in my very public life."

Paltrow, who is also the founder of lifestyle company Goop, said the phrase was introduced by the couple's

therapist as they were working out how to avoid acrimony and stay close despite their split.

"Frankly, the term sounded a bit full of itself, painfully progressive and hard to swallow. ... I was intrigued, less by the phrase, but by the sentiment," she said.

Paltrow, who had two children with Martin, married for a second time in 2018 to television producer Brad Falchuk. Martin attended the wedding and joined the newlyweds on their honeymoon.

She said times have changed in the way people treat their breakups.

"Instead of people approaching me with, 'Why did you say that?', they now approach me with, 'How do you do that?,' she said.

Justin Bieber, Hailey Baldwin get baptised together

Fox | Los Angeles

Justin Bieber and Hailey Baldwin are now baptised.

The married couple recently underwent the religious ceremony surrounded by loved ones, according to an Instagram post from Bieber shared on Wednesday.

In the photos, the 26-year-old singer and 23-year-old model could be seen in a body of water, holding hands with a man who was seemingly standing on a dock.

In the final photo, Baldwin could be seen dunking her head

beneath the surface of the water.

"The moment @haileybieber my wife and I got baptised together!" Bieber wrote in the caption. "This was one of most special moments of my life. Confessing our love and trust in Jesus publicly with our friends and family."

The two received

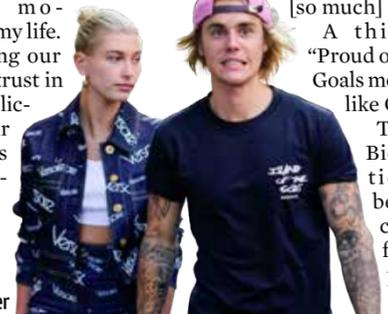
plenty of praise in the comments.

"So good, love you brother," said a follower.

"Loveee Love this," wrote another. "I admire u both [so much] for this."

A third added: "Proud of you Couple Goals more and more like Christ."

The pair, Bieber in particular, has been very vocal about his faith in the past.



Hailey Baldwin and Justin Bieber

Katy Perry reveals the unusual way she and Orlando Bloom prepared to be parents

Hello | Los Angeles

Katy Perry has revealed the surprising way she prepared herself for motherhood, after admitting she was previously "terrified" about having a baby. The Roar singer, who is set to welcome a baby girl with Orlando Bloom in August, went on a seven-day retreat with her fiancée, which she credits with changing both of their lives.

"I was really terrified of the idea two or three years ago. It was just like, I don't know how I'm ever gonna do that. That's crazy. I can barely take care of myself!" the singer told People magazine of her previous attitude towards motherhood.

However, after undergoing the Hoffman Process, which helps participants reveal negative behaviours conditioned

"I was really terrified of the idea two or three years ago. It was just like, I don't know how I'm ever gonna do that. That's crazy. I can barely take care of myself!"

KATY PERRY

from childhood, Katy said she experienced a huge shift.

"It changed my life, and it's changed Orlando's life and many of my friends' lives," she said. "It helped me re-wire how I think about myself and the habits and patterns of why I do something. It's just given me a lot more freedom."

Now, Katy says she's no longer "scared" to have a child, and is already excitedly thinking ahead to what her daughter might be like.

"She has two very ambitious, loud, independent, free-thinking parents, so it's gonna rub off," she told the magazine.

"Or maybe she's gonna completely revolt and be in the corner, very shy bookworm. We're just here to support her, and I'm sure she's just here to teach us a lesson!"



Katy Perry and Orlando Bloom

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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

- Stories; 6- Blind as ...; 10- Yonder yacht; 13- Covered with water; 14- Prefix with conference; 15- Analogous; 16- Beethoven's "Solemnis"; 17- New Mexico art colony; 18- Frees; 19- More; 20- Bone marrow; 22- Capital of United Kingdom; 24- Roman goddess of the dawn; 28- Ember; 31- Humped ruminant; 32- Lieu; 34- Cut (off); 36- Blab; 37- Kung _ chicken; 38- Purchasing option; 41- U.S. soldiers; 42- Hurry; 44- Craving; 45- Son of Abraham; 47- Take place; 49- Idolizes; 51- Navy builder; 53- Individual; 56- Makeshift solution; 59- Switch back?; 61- Ballerina's skirt; 64- Make _ for it; 65- Shady recess; 66- Thrust with a knife; 67- Attention; 68- Tour of duty; 69- Always; 70- " _ the night before Christmas ..."; 71- Adlai's running mate;

Down

- Easy to manage; 2- Where there's _; 3- Dogie catcher; 4- Spirit; 5- Doo-wop syllable; 6- Go to; 7- Glass ornament; 8- Baseball family name; 9- Unit of magnetic induction; 10- Hit the slopes; 11- Secreted; 12- Nav. officer; 15- Turkey's highest peak; 20- Second day of the week; 21- Director Jean _ Godard; 23- Clock face; 25- Last Greek letter; 26- Museum piece; 27- _ well...; 29- Gnu cousin; 30- Quartet; 32- Gravy, for one; 33- Puccini classic; 35- Twinned; 37- Career golfers; 39- Pro vote; 40- North Sea feeder; 43- Up roar; 46- States; 48- Mens _ (criminal intent); 50- Shares viewpoints; 52- Make into a statute; 54- Regular course; 55- Peter of Herman's Hermits; 57- No-win situation; 58- Pervasive quality; 60- Scraps; 61- Literary monogram; 62- Shoshone language member; 63- Pitch; 65- Enzyme ending;

Yesterday's solution

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Hidd, Muharraq draw as Nasser bin Hamad league returns



Muharraq's Fernandes celebrates after scoring the equalising goal

TDT | Manama

Title contenders Hidd and Muharraq played to a 1-1 stalemate last night as the 2019/2020 Nasser bin Hamad Bahrain Premier Football League got back into action, following a months-long ban due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

Senegalese professional Mamadou Drame and naturalised striker Thiago Augusto Fernandes were the scorers for their respective teams.

Drame put Hidd in front with a goal on the stroke of half-time, while Fernandes equalised on the hour-mark to give Muharraq a share of the points.

Drame scored from a brilliant low cross by Mohammed Fares on the right wing, tapping the ball into the net after poor Muharraq defending.

Muharraq later levelled the proceedings with a Fernandes header, off a high cross from the right flank.

Muharraq's Nigerian professional Prince Obus Aggreh found the net in the 82nd minute after a slotting home a rebound off an Ismael Abdulatif shot, but it was waived off as Aggreh was offside.

With the result, the two



teams remained two points apart atop the league standings. Hidd improved to 29 points in first place while Muharraq went to 27, with six games each remaining.

In other matches yesterday, Riffa defeated Manama 3-1 and Al Ahli beat Al Hala 3-0.

Riffa claimed their seventh win and improved to 22 points in third place, while Ahli won their fourth match and rose to 14 points while ranked seventh on the table. Manama suffered their third loss and stayed sixth with 15 points, while Hala were dealt their ninth defeat and remained bottom of the table with five points.

League action continues to-night with another two matches. Al Shabab play Al Najma at Khalifa Sports City and Busaitleen take on East Riffa at the Muharraq Club stadium, both scheduled for 7pm starts.

Hamilton back on top in Silverstone practice

Hamilton leads Mercedes 1-2 ahead of Ricciardo as Vettel suffers engine failure

● Bottas was the fastest in the day's first session

AFP | Silverstone

Lewis Hamilton led team mate Valtteri Bottas in a Mercedes one-two in practice for Formula One's 70th Anniversary Grand Prix yesterday as he set his sights on a second home win over successive weekends.

The six-times world champion, chasing a fourth win in a row on Sunday to stretch his 30-point lead over the Finn, lapped with a fastest time of one minute 25.606 seconds using medium tyres on a hot but cloudy afternoon.

Bottas, who had been fastest in the day's first session at Silverstone as drivers got to grips with Pirelli's softer tyres, was 0.176 slower.

Hamilton won last Sunday's British Grand Prix at the same circuit from pole position and despite a last lap puncture.

"I think it's been generally a good day. We had understanding, good findings from last week and I think made some small adjustments which have cut off a millisecond here and there," said Hamilton.

"So it's been positive in general. The tyres have been very soft but they're fine."

With 87 career wins, the Brit-



Lewis Hamilton steers his car during practice

on is closing in fast on Ferrari great Michael Schumacher's all-time record of 91 set between 1992 and 2006.

He could also become the first driver to take back-to-back wins at his home race, with Silverstone hosting two in a single season for the first time.

"I see it as an opportunity but Valtteri's going to be strong this weekend," said Hamilton. "You saw it in the last week that anything can happen, particularly in the last lap."

"But of course that would be an incredible accomplishment for us as a team."

Red Bull's Max Verstappen was best of the rest in the morning, 0.727 off the pace, and Renault's Australian Dan-

"I think it's been generally a good day. We had understanding, good findings from last week and I think made some small adjustments which have cut off a millisecond here and there

LEWIS HAMILTON

iel Ricciardo filled that slot in the afternoon with the Dutch youngster fourth.

"The gap to Mercedes last weekend was big, so of course I

think it's quite normal that we can't magically change things within a few days, but we are doing what we can," said Verstappen. Racing Point, fined and with 15 points deducted after stewards upheld a Renault protest, looked quick with Lance Stroll ending the day fifth and experienced German stand-in Nico Hulkenberg sixth.

Hulkenberg, replacing Sergio Perez after the Mexican contracted COVID-19 and then tested positive for a second time, was fourth in the opening session. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was fifth and seventh fastest respectively but team mate Sebastian Vettel suffered an engine failure in the afternoon and ended up 14th.

Fighters almost start brawl during BRAVE CF 38 weigh-ins, all athletes make weight

TDT | Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation's second Sweden show in as many weeks takes place this Saturday, as fighters from 10 nations will compete with eyes on moving forward in their divisions. However, two Bantamweights almost started the event one day early as Bernardo Sopai and Tariq Ismail almost traded blows during their staredown after the official weigh-ins.

Both men stepped under the limit at Bantamweight, but when they squared off, their foreheads touched and they almost started a brawl, being stopped by BRAVE CF officials. The young Sopai promised he would "smash" his opponent and Ismail also had some choice word for the BRAVE CF debutant.

In the main event of the evening, Welterweights Carl Booth and Abdoul Abdouraguimov were respectful to each other in their weigh-ins, and Abdoul even joked by grabbing the Jamaican flag that Carl carried with him alongside the British flag and they both posed for photos in an upbeat mood.

Aside from the clash in the Bantamweight bout, the ceremonial weigh-in went on without major incidents. All athletes made weight, with most fighters reserving their energy for tomorrow night when BRAVE CF 38 puts on the most stacked card of the European Invasion, that has seen the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world take over the continent of Europe.



Carl Booth and Abdoul Abdouraguimov during weigh-in

BRAVE CF 38 Weigh-in results

Welterweight: Abdoul Abdouraguimov (77,5 kg) vs Carl Booth (76,8 kg)
 Super Lightweight: Benoit St. Denis (74,5 kg) vs Mario Saeed (75,1 kg)
 Bantamweight: Bernardo Sopai (61,5 kg) vs Tariq Ismail (61,6 kg)
 Super Lightweight: Issa Isakov (75,1 kg) vs Djamil Chan (74,8 kg)
 Catchweight (56 kg): Malin Hermansson (55,8 kg) vs Elin Oberg (55,8 kg)
 Catchweight (74 kg): Dilmurod Movlonov (73 kg) vs David Jacobsson (74 kg)
 Catchweight (72 kg): Joakim Jankovic (71,8 kg) vs Robert Nystrom (71,6 kg)
 Bantamweight: Jonny Touma (61 kg) vs Moher Azizi (61,5 kg)
 Catchweight (68 kg): PK Zadeh (68 kg) vs Wasiu Idowu (68 kg)

BRAVE CF's Welterweight division is stacked and full of hungry contenders

TDT | Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation is known around the globe for its world-class scouting program, and for discovering talent like no other promotion in the business. After launching a number of athletes to stardom, all eyes are now on the organization's Welterweight division. Led by world champion Jarrah Al-Selawe, arguably the best Arab fighter in the world, the weight class is packed and set to produce some of the most exciting fights in the next months.

Apart from Al-Selawe, two of his former foes are set to meet soon. France's submission specialist Abdoul Abdouraguimov and England's striking powerhouse Carl "The Bomber" Booth will headline BRAVE CF's second iteration in Sweden, in a fight that is likely to set the next title contender, although no official word yet from the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world has cemented that fight as a number one contender's bout.

Joining them at the high ranks of the Welterweight division is Switzerland knock-



With a handful of key fights coming up and many names in contention for a shot against the kingpin Al-Selawe, BRAVE CF's Welterweight division is definitely one to keep an eye on moving forward

out artist Kevin Ruart, who is currently on a seven-win streak and won his most-recent bout via first-round-knockout against Ion Surdu, at BRAVE CF 36, in Romania. Ruart has dynamite in his hands and has become known as KO machine during his time with BRAVE CF, as both of his victories have gone viral for the way he dismantles his opponents. Aside from Surdu, Ruart also knocked out Ibrahim Mane late last year at BRAVE CF 31.