

Kingdom wins UNEA top post
Manama

The Kingdom has won the Deputy Executive Director post at the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) representing the Asia-Pacific Group, said Personal Representative of HM the King and President of the Supreme Council for Environment, HH Shaikh Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa, yesterday.



As Bahrain would represent the Asian-Pacific region, it would have the opportunity to serve Arab countries' environmental interests.

HH SHAIKH ABDULLA

He said that the achievement is an important milestone that reflects the Kingdom's interest in environment issues at the local and international levels.

HH Shaikh Abdulla said this was another achievement that adds to Bahrain's international successes made in various fields.

"As Bahrain would represent the Asian-Pacific region, it would have the opportunity to serve Arab countries' environmental interests," he pointed out.

He added that Bahrain would participate in the UNEA regular meetings to discuss international environmental projects and other environment-related issues.



03 Ex-minister jailed in dud cheque case

04 'I Love Mom' campaign set

05 Police attackers lose appeals



His Majesty holds talk with Ajman ruler

● Ajman ruler hosted a dinner banquet in honour of HM the King. He also presented HM the King with a golden sword marking his visit to the Emirate of Ajman.

Ajman

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa lauded deep-rooted historic and fraternal relations binding the Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates, stressing mutual

keenness on further strengthening joint ties and bolstering shared interests.

HM the King made the statement as he met UAE Supreme Ruling Council member and Ajman Ruler His Highness Shaikh Humaid bin Rashid Al Nuaimi, in the presence of Ajman Crown Prince Shaikh Ammar bin Humaid Al Nuaimi.

HM the King lauded the advanced level attained by joint co-operation between the two brotherly countries, hailing steadily-growing ties.

Ajman ruler welcomed the visit of HM the King, accompanied by HH Shaikh Nasser



His Majesty in conversation with HH Shaikh Humaid.

Bahrain Royal Equestrian and Endurance Federation.

They exchanged cordial talks that reflect strong fraternal relations binding the two brotherly countries and peoples and mutual keenness on bolstering joint ties to serve shared interests and meet future aspirations.

Poet Said Khalfan Al Kaabi recited a poem welcoming HM the King and the accompanying delegation.

Ajman ruler hosted a dinner banquet in honour of HM the King. He also presented HM the King with a golden sword marking his visit to the Emirate of Ajman.

bin Hamad Al Khalifa, HM the King's Representative for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS) President and Honorary Chairman of the

The biggest loser

US says Iran has lost \$10bn in oil revenue due to sanctions

● US envoy on Iran, Brian Hook, said Washington the United States is accelerating its plan of bringing Iranian crude exports to zero.

● Washington wants to ensure a stable and well-supplied oil market.

Houston

Iran has lost \$10 billion in revenue since US sanctions in November have removed about 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd) of Iranian crude from global markets, a US State Department official said yesterday.

Brian Hook, the State Department's special representative on Iran, said in remarks at the CERAWEEK energy con-

ference that due to a global oil surplus — in part due to record US production — the United States is accelerating its plan of bringing Iranian crude exports to zero.

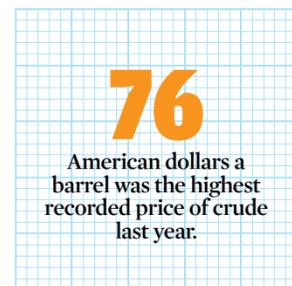
US sanctions on Iran and Venezuela, two of the largest oil producers in the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, and production cuts by OPEC and Russia have boosted global oil prices to near four-month highs.

Iran reached an agreement with world powers in 2015 over its nuclear program which led to the lifting of sanctions in 2016 but US President Donald Trump pulled out of the deal in May last year and reimposed restrictions in November.

Trump "has made it very clear that we need to have a campaign of maximum economic pressure" on Iran, Hook said, "but he also doesn't want to shock oil markets, he wants to ensure



”Trump has made it very clear that we need to have a campaign of maximum economic pressure on Iran.
HOOK



a stable and well-supplied oil market. That policy has not

changed.”

The global oil market is looking for signs that Washington may extend sanctions waivers for Iran's key customers in early May. The United States surprised the market in November last year by allowing eight countries to keep importing Iranian oil — in part causing Brent crude futures, the international benchmark, to fall to near \$50 a barrel in late December after surpassing \$86 a barrel in October.

The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) has projected that world supply will exceed demand in 2019 by 440,000 bpd, Hook said.

"When you have a better supplied oil market it enables us to accelerate our path to zero. But we also know that there are a lot of variables that go into a well-supplied and stable oil market," said Hook, a senior policy adviser to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Washington sanctioned Venezuelan oil exports in January in an effort to oust President Nicolas Maduro and a massive power outage since last week halted crude exports from its primary port, essentially crippling the South American country's principal industry.

"We are aware that our diplomatic and economic pressure, the timing and the pace of that affects Venezuela's oil industry," Hook said.

GREAT ESCAPE

Yachtsman inflates trousers to survive 3 hours in sea

Wellington

Knocked overboard in rough seas off New Zealand, a German yachtsman credited his jeans with saving his life after fashioning



A screenshot of German yachtsman Arne Murke being rescued by Lowe Corporation Rescue Helicopter Service.

them into a make-shift life jacket that kept him afloat for over three hours before his rescue by coast guards.

Arne Murke, 30, was sailing with his brother in Tolaga Bay, on the east coast of New Zealand's north island, on March 6, when the yacht's boom swung unexpectedly, whacking him into the water.

Unable to reach the life jacket thrown by his brother, Murke was soon carried far off by the swell. "Luckily, I knew the trick with the jeans," Murke told the New Zealand Herald newspaper. "Without the jeans I wouldn't be here today. They were really the thing that saved me."

He made knots at the end of the legs and pulled them over water to get air inside and then forced them under to trap the air and create an improvised life vest.

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WORLD BRANDING AWARDS BRAND OF THE YEAR

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Crackdown on businesses encroaching roads underway

● Previously five shops selling furniture were warned, and nine cafes were notified of the violation.

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Zafran

The Southern Governorate is carrying out an intense campaign to crack down on violations related to road-side businesses.

It is learnt that the Inspection and Licensing Inspection Department has begun carrying out many inspection visits.

According to reports, the violating businesses have been using the space in front of their shops to either sell their products or to use it as a work-space after encroaching the road.

"The campaign aims to ensure the municipality's efforts to enforce the law and to limit practices that are contradictory to the law. Several complaints were received from citizens and



A municipality official pastes a violation notice on the shutter of a washing machine repair shop.



Many furniture shops as well committed the violation.

residents who expressed their displeasure at the actions of the owners of the shops.

"Several violations were noted and action has been taken against them," a representative from the municipality said.

Recently, 17 violations were uncovered on Al Hajiyat Street in Riffa. "It is found that many businesses offering maintenance of washing machines, air-condi-

tioners, sale of iron and aluminium products and tyre retreading had encroached the road in the governorate. The items were confiscated and action was taken against them."

The municipality has informed the owners of these shops the need to respect the law and conduct commercial activity in accordance with the procedures in force in the Kingdom.

“Several complaints were received from citizens and residents who expressed their displeasure at the actions of the owners of the shops.”

MUNICIPALITY OFFICIAL

The businesses that do not comply with the warning will face further action, the representative added.

The municipality, as part of the campaign, has also been conducting awareness campaigns. Following complaints received from residents, authorities have recently conducted campaigns in Nuwaidrat area as well.

Previously five shops selling furniture were warned, and nine cafes were notified of the violation.

"The owners of the shops are asked to abide by the municipal laws and regulations and avoid encroaching the road with furniture, tables, chairs and any other kind items because this impedes the movement of traffic in these streets," the municipality stated.

Ex-minister jailed in dud cheque case

Defendant allegedly borrowed BD50,000 from plaintiff and never returned

● The plaintiff said he was informed by the bank that the cheque couldn't be cashed because there was no fund in the account.

● After he failed to reach out to the accused, the plaintiff lodged the complaint to the authorities and the case was referred to the First Low Criminal Court.

TDT | Manama

An ex-Bahraini minister was sentenced to three years in prison for issuing dud cheques.

He was prosecuted after a Bahraini citizen lodged a complaint against the former minister for handing over dud cheques for BD50,000 in guarantee after allegedly taking money from

“I repeatedly attempted to reach out to the ex-minister to inform him about the incident, but in vain.”

PLAINTIFF

him.

The plaintiff, who is a businessman, filed a complaint with the Financial Intelligence Directorate within the Interior Ministry, claiming he had lent the ex-minister BD50,000 and the cheque was received in guarantee.

The plaintiff said he was informed by the bank that the cheque couldn't be cashed because there was no fund in the account.

He told the prosecutors that he repeatedly attempted to reach out to the ex-minister to inform him about the incident, but the latter would avoid him.

After he failed to reach out

to the accused, the plaintiff lodged the complaint to the authorities and the case was referred to the First Low Criminal Court.

On the flip side, the accused denied the plaintiff's claims, stating that the bounced cheque was not issued by him and that he is not aware of it.

The plaintiff also told the prosecutors that his relations with the accused were good and that they had no disagreements before this incident took place.

The former minister's defence attorney claimed that his client didn't issue the cheque, but the fraud and counterfeiting expert at the General Directorate of Physical Evidence confirmed that the signature on the cheque belonged to the accused.

The Public Prosecution accused the defendant on May 1, 2018, of intentionally providing a dud cheque to the victim knowing that there are no funds in the account.

Political figure sentenced for insulting Sudan Prez

● The defendant was one of 21 men convicted in 2011 in connection with a plot to overthrow the government with help from abroad.

TDT | Manama

A political figure, who was the former Secretary-General of the

dissolved opposition party, Wa'ad, was sentenced to six months behind bars for defaming Sudan President Omar Al Bashir.

The defendant is said to have published insulting tweets against Al Bashir in the wake of the protests which broke out in the country.

The defendant was earlier sentenced to one year behind bars after he was tried in connection with a speech he gave in July 2015 during an event,

where he encouraged the public to overthrow the government.

He was only released from jail in June, 2015, after serving four years of a five-year prison sentence.

The defendant was one of 21 men convicted in 2011 in connection with a plot to overthrow the government with help from abroad.

Some were jailed for life, but the defendant was only jailed for five years.

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Deputy King, His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, yesterday held his weekly majlis at Riffa Palace. Members of the royal family, senior government officials, members of the Shura Council and Council of Representatives, members of municipal councils, religious and community leaders, journalists, and diplomats attended the majlis. His Royal Highness welcomed a broad range of visitors at the weekly majlis, which demonstrates Bahrain's commitment to rooted traditions and values, that are underpinned by His Majesty's aspirations to maintain a strong bond amongst Bahrain's society.



The Deputy King, His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, yesterday met Lieutenant General Sir John Lorimer, the United Kingdom's Defence Senior Advisor to the Middle East, at Riffa Palace. During the meeting, the Deputy King and the UK's Defence Senior Advisor to the Middle East discussed a range of security issues and strategic areas of collaboration aimed at promoting stability in the region. The Deputy King emphasised His Majesty King Hamad's role in advancing bilateral collaboration between the two countries, and highlighted the steady growth of Bahrain-UK ties at all levels. The meeting was also attended by the Bahrain Defence Force Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Theyab bin Saqar Al Nuaimi.



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa patronised the 10th edition of the UNESCO-King Hamad Prize for innovative use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Education which was presented to the laureates at United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) headquarters. UNESCO's Director-General Audrey Azoulay, in presence of Education Minister Dr Majid Al Nuaimi deputised by His Majesty, awarded the Prize to the two laureates in a ceremony at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Two innovative projects to ensure quality education have been selected to receive the 2018 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize for the use of ICT in Education.



The Lions Club of Riffa celebrated Annual Lions Day with the United Nations in Bahrain at Bahrain Society of Engineers, Juffair. Lions Club International is the only society to have been granted recognition by the United Nations. At the event, Lions Club of Riffa and the United Nations Information Centre for the Gulf States (UNIC Manama) distributed the awards to the winners of its annual essay and painting competition that was held in Bahrain under the theme 'Peace'.

'I Love Mom' campaign



Al Hawaj Group has launched a special promotional campaign 'I Love My Mom' to mark Mother's Day. In its seventh edition, the campaign will run until March 21 at all Al Hawaj outlets. Customers can submit their entries in the form of a love message to their mom upon purchasing a gift item from any of the Al Hawaj outlets. Shoppers using CrediMax card will enjoy a five per cent discount. A jury panel consisting of renowned personalities will select 10 winners who will take home a beautiful perfume bouquet from Al Hawaj. Aside from that, the top three winners will be presented with cash prizes of \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500, sponsored by CrediMax, in addition to the perfume bouquets. The campaign details were announced at a press conference attended by Group Managing Director Jawad Yousuf Al Hawaj along with General Manager Abdul Wahab Al Hawaj and Mandana Banahi, Marketing Communication Officer for CrediMax.



Bahrain Red Crescent Society (BRCS) participated in the annual Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development (DIHAD) conference held at Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre. The conference was held under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai. The Secretary-General of the Bahrain Red Crescent Society, Dr Fawzi Abdullah Amin, met with the President of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Francesco Rocca, during his visit to the exhibition of the Society. Dr Amin stressed keenness of the society to contribute in this conference which showcases new trends in operational support and supply services related to the humanitarian industry. This contribution aims to showcase local, regional and global humanitarian acts carried out by BRCS.



Legislative-executive representatives hold joint meeting to discuss budget

Budget based on Government Action Plan and Fiscal Balance Programme, says Finance Minister

● A joint meeting between the financial committees of the Shura and Representatives Councils and representatives of the government is set to be held later this week.

Manama

The Financial and Economic Affairs Committees at the Shura and Representatives Councils held yesterday its first joint meeting with the government's representatives to discuss a draft law to endorse the state's general budget for the fiscal years 2019-2020.

The meeting was chaired by Representatives Council Speaker Fawzia Zainal, in the presence of Shura Council Chairman Ali Al Saleh and Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, the Head of the Ministerial Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs and Fiscal



The joint committee meeting stressed continuing co-operation between the executive and the legislature.

Balance.

The meeting was also attended by the Minister of Finance and National Economy, the Minister of the Shura and Representatives Councils Affairs, the Head of the Shura Council's Financial and Economic Affairs Committee and members of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committees at the Shura and Representatives Councils.

The Representatives Council Speaker stressed that the royal directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, included mainly in his address in

the opening of the first session of the fifth legislative term, will always serve as a roadmap in serving the nation and citizens.

She praised co-operation with the government led by HRH Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Deputy King.

She noted that positive co-operation between the legislative and executive branches, the spirit of consensus and complementarity, taking into consideration the supreme interest of the nation, catering to citizens'

“The government has given citizens' interests and sustainability of services utmost consideration throughout the preparation of the budget.”

SHAIKH SALMAN

needs, preserving achievements, ensuring continuity of the direct subsidisation programme for

financial balance.

He pointed out that the exceptional circumstances surrounding endorsement of the budget necessitate hard work to ensure its rapid implementation.

He added surmounting the circumstances is a joint responsibility and all have to work as one team.

He expressed hope the efforts made by all parties will lead to a budget that takes into consideration first and foremost the supreme national interest.

Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa conveyed the greetings of HRH the Premier and HRH the Deputy King, stressing that discussing the state's general budget project for the fiscal years 2019-2020 will bring to Bahrain more growth and prosperity under the leadership of HM the King.

He underlined the government's keenness on ensuring cooperation and consensus are the characteristic features of the meetings during which the budget will be discussed.

He pointed out that the budget project reflects keenness to pre-

eligible citizens while taking into account current challenges will contribute to achieving set up goals from the state's general budget draft law, the Government's Action Plan and plans to boost the economic situation.

The Shura Council Chairman stressed the need for continuous cooperation between the legislative and executive branches to carry out the state's general budget project for 2019-2020, reach a consensual result that meets the aspirations of HM the King's leadership and citizens and back the efforts to achieve

Iran regime played 'a major role in destabilising Syria'

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Zafran

Iran has played a dangerous role in supporting the Syrian regime and destabilising Syria, according to a prominent Bahraini human rights activist.

Iran has contributed to destabilising Syria by providing long-term support to bring militias from Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to mobilise them in Syria to fight the opposition factions, it was claimed.

According to Gulf European Centre for Human Rights Secretary General Faisal Fulad, this resulted in the killing, disappearance and the arrest of a large number of Syrian citizens and the destruction of property of citizens such as houses, agricultural land and livestock by Iranian militias.

"Since the first day of the Syrian crisis in March 2011, Iran has provided various military support to the Syrian regime.

"Iran since March 2011 be-



Mr Fulad, third from right, at the conference.

gan to send military advisers to Syria, but in 2012 without announcement, Iran directly intervened in Syria by sending Revolutionary Guards, Iraqi and Lebanese Shiite militia groups.

"However, the announcement of participation of Iranian forces and foreign militias was in 2013, which these forces began to commit crimes against humanity in Syria, which is a war crime and violation of international law," Mr Fulad pointed out.

"According to Syrian human rights reports, the Iranian militias have made Syrian citizens

suffer from starvation, as well as destroying Syrian property in several cities and villages.

"Arbitrary arrests and forced abductions have displaced tens of thousands of Syrian citizens because of the role of Iranian militias against innocent Syrians.

"These crimes violate international law and constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. Hence, it needs international intervention to stop Iran's crimes in Syria."

Gulf European Centre for Human Rights recently participated in a conference in Geneva

to discuss the ongoing crimes in Syria by the Syrian regime and Iran.

The conference was held at the Swiss Press Club in Geneva in conjunction with the 40th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Mr Fulad presented a paper on the Iranian regime's financing of terrorism, supporting armed groups and committing of crimes against humanity in Syria and the rest of the Middle East, such as Yemen, Bahrain and Lebanon through Hizbollah, Iraq through several militias.

Police attackers lose appeals

TDT | Manama

The High Appeals Court has upheld the sentences issued against two defendants involved in attempting to murder police officers and training on how to use weapons and explosives in Iraq.

The pair were among the five tried in connection with this case, all of whom received life in prison each.

However, only the appellants challenged the initial verdicts.

The defendants are said to have travelled to Iraq in 2017, where they were trained at the hand of militants on using weapons and explosives and how to make bombs.

The appellants were reportedly ordered by their co-defendants to carry out assaults

5
defendants were convicted in the case and all received life in prison.

against police officers in Manama via guns.

According to court files, the duo used Kalashnikov guns against in an effort to murder them.

Nevertheless, their attack was thwarted and they were arrested.

Their accomplices, however, are still at large and were tried in absentia.

DJ duo launches new disco record label

TDT | Manama
Harpreet Kaur

Bahraini duo Mazen and Vish released their debut Dar Disku extended play record, a blistering two-track release that brilliantly updates long-lost Middle East music for today's dance floors.

Merging Middle East music with club-ready disco and house, Bahraini DJ and producer duo Mazen Almaskati and Vish Mhatre have created their own cutting-edge, homegrown label Dar Disku, that has quickly become a cult name, securing a guest mix

and interview for BBC radio plus headline DJ slots in Dublin, London, Mumbai and Bahrain in just six months.

Dar Disku, which literally means 'home of the disco' in Arabic, has quickly proved its skill in their first official release which was out worldwide on January 21 where the duo are currently prepping for their tour, starting from April 16 in Kent, United Kingdom.

Speaking to Tribune, Mazen Almaskati, said: "This project aims to encapsulate a collective culture and various forms of artistry from the Middle East that was right before our eyes grow-



DJ duo Mazen Almaskati and Vish Mhatre

ing up in Bahrain. Many of us looked to the West for 'valuable art, things that were worth our time and attention and unfortu-

nately may have turned a blind eye to our homegrown talents and schools of thinking and creativity.

"Bahrain is rich in culture and art owing to it being a melting pot of not only all Middle Eastern cultures but cultures from all over the world. This has manifested in the music and art and physical forms around us and even the way we speak. All in all, Bahrain has a lot to offer. We hope to not only revive people's keen ear for middle eastern music but also to bring people together with the shared experience of growing up in a place like this whilst reclaiming the pride and awe that it deserves."

Echoing a similar view, Vish Mhatre said, "Bahrain has not only the talent but also the means to harness this creative potential and produce fantastic art and music. During our time making music in Bahrain we have met many incredible artists making fantastic art and music from home studios and bedrooms and so with the technical barriers of entry changing year by year.

"We foresee the future of Bahrain's creative output not being limited by the skill and talent of homegrown artists, but instead by the presence of an all-encompassing creative platform and collective."

WORLD
world

CIA behind N. Korea embassy attack?

● The mysterious incident took place on February 22

● At least two of the 10 assailants... have been identified to have ties with US secret services

● They reportedly escaped with documents, computers and telephones in two embassy cars

● Break-in was well organised and similar to a military commando operation

Madrid, Spain

At least two of the 10 people who broke into Madrid's North Korean embassy in Febru-



The North Korean embassy in Madrid

ary, roughing up employees and robbing computers, are linked to the CIA, the El Pais daily said yesterday.

The mysterious incident took place on February 22 just five days before the start of a nuclear summit between North Korea and the United States attended,

among others, by Pyongyang's former ambassador to Spain Kim Hyok Chol.

According to investigators quoted by El Pais, they were specifically looking for information linked to Kim.

"At least two of the 10 assailants... have been identified

and have ties with US secret services," the paper said, citing sources from the police and Spain's intelligence agency, the National Intelligence Centre (CNI).

It specifically identified the CIA.

Contacted by AFP, the CNI refused to comment.

According to El Pais, Spain asked for clarification from the CIA but the US spy agency denied any involvement.

Spanish authorities however said the response was "not very convincing".

The report said the CIA acted "in probable cooperation" with South Korean intelligence services.

The break-in has been surrounded by mystery.

The Spanish government and police have only confirmed that on February 22, emergency services attended to a North Korean woman with mild injuries on the street near the embassy.

According to El Pais, which has quoted investigators as saying this could be "political espionage", the 10 men entered with fake handguns, tying up and gagging the staff.

They reportedly escaped with documents, computers and telephones in two embassy cars with diplomatic number plates which they later abandoned.

Investigators have discarded the theory of a petty crime as the break-in was well organised and similar to a military commando operation that knew what it was looking for.

After analysing CCTV footage and questioning witnesses, they identified two of the assailants as having links with the CIA, El Pais said.

Since 2017, when Kim Hyok Chol was expelled from Spain as "persona non grata" after nuclear tests and missile firings by Pyongyang, the secretive state has had diplomatic representation in Madrid but no ambassador.

Kim is one of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's most trusted officials.

He is now Pyongyang's special representative for the US and was involved in preparations for the summit in Hanoi between the North Korean leader and US President Donald Trump.

The talks failed to reach a nuclear accord.

Britain expands drone no-fly zones

London, United Kingdom

Britain yesterday expanded the no-fly zones around airports in response to a spate of drone sightings that temporarily shut down some of London's biggest hubs.

The new law extends the radius around which drone flights are not permitted to five kilometres (three miles) from one kilometre.

Existing rules ban all drone



Representative picture. (Courtesy of Daily Mail)

flights above 122 metres (400 feet) and within 50 metres of buildings and people.

Ethiopia cannot read black boxes, 'might' send them abroad: airline

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ethiopia does not have the equipment to analyse the black boxes from Sunday's deadly Ethiopian Airlines plane crash, and is considering sending them abroad, a spokesman for the airline said yesterday.

"It could be sent abroad because there is no equipment to read it here," said spokesman Biniyam Demssie.

The airline's chief executive

Tewolde GebreMariam earlier told CNN the black boxes would have to be examined outside the country, in a destination to be chosen by investigators -- possibly the United States or "a closer country in Europe in the interest of proximity and in the interest of speed."

Numerous countries have banned Boeing's 737 MAX 8 medium-haul workhorse jet from their airspace while



A photo shows debris of the crashed airplane of Ethiopia Airlines, near Bishoftu

airlines around the world have grounded the plane after the crash which killed 157 people.

The Nairobi-bound plane was the same type as the Indonesian Lion Air jet that crashed in October, killing 189 passengers and crew.

Tewolde said Ethiopian Airlines pilots had been retrained on the MAX 8 following the Lion Air crash.

Several charged in US over Chinese student visa scheme

Los Angeles, United States

Several California residents were arrested yesterday in connection with a scheme to help Chinese nationals obtain student visas by hiring people to take English proficiency exams for the foreign students.

Federal authorities allege that those involved in the plot used counterfeit Chinese passports to impersonate 19 different students who were required to take the so-called TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) exam in order to get a US student visa. Six people have been named in a 26-count indictment handed down in the case.

Professors at various universities have complained at being faced with an increasing number of such students unable to handle college-level work in English. According to the University of California, which has 10 campuses across the state, there were 24,387 students from China enrolled at its schools in 2018, as opposed to 2,632 in 2008.

Vienna tops world rankings

● Vienna has been named the city with the best quality of life

● In second place was Zurich, followed in joint third place by Munich, Vancouver and Auckland, New Zealand

Paris, France

Vienna has been named the city with the best quality of life for a 10th consecutive year in a survey published yesterday.

The Austrian capital was one of eight European cities in the top 10 in the survey by Mercer, a human-resources consultancy.

In second place was Zurich, followed in joint third place by Munich, Vancouver and Auckland, New Zealand.

Duesseldorf in Germany took sixth followed by Frankfurt, Copenhagen, Geneva and Basel.

London was ranked 41st and Paris was 39th, although the study, carried out between September and November 2018, did not take into account France's



Representative picture. (Courtesy of Tripsavvy)

'yellow vest' anti-government protests.

The survey, designed as a tool to help international organisations determine salary levels for expatriate employees, is based on 39 criteria.

These include housing, political stability, crime, leisure, air pollution, infrastructure, the health system, education and the economy.

Mercer said all US cities covered in the analysis fell in the rankings this year, with the exception of New York, which

rose one place to 44 as crime rates there continue to fall. San Francisco was the top-ranked US city at 34.

In Asia, Singapore has the highest quality of living at 25th place, followed by Tokyo and Kobe (joint 49th). Hong Kong was ranked 71st and Seoul 77th.

At the other end of the table, the lowest ranked city was Baghdad at 231. Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic, and Sanaa in Yemen were 230th and 229th respectively.

He got some moves!



Britain's Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge meets children while she visits the Henry Fawcett Children's Centre in London. The Duchess visited the Henry Fawcett Children's Centre to learn more about the work being done by local organisations in Lambeth and their partners to support young children and their families.

100 children feared trapped as school collapses in Lagos



Emergency and rescue personnel are seen at the site of a building which collapsed in Lagos

● **Police said they believed scores of people were trapped under the rubble**

● **Panicked parents, local residents and shocked onlookers rushed to the area**

● **A reporter at the scene saw at least eight people pulled from the wreckage**

● **School bags, toys and clothes could be seen among the piles of rubble**

Reuters, AFP | Lagos, Nigeria

As many as 100 children and many others were feared trapped yesterday after a building containing a primary school collapsed in Nigeria's commercial capital Lagos.

A reporter at the scene saw

a boy of 10 being pulled from the rubble covered in dust but with no visible injuries. A crowd erupted into cheers as another child was pulled from the wreckage. The two were among eight children residents said had been rescued so far.

Workers on top of the rubble shoveled debris away as thousands of people swarmed around the rescue site — dozens watching from rooftops and hundreds more packed into the surrounding streets.

"It is believed that many people including children are currently trapped in the building," said Ibrahim Farinloye, spokesman for the National Emergency Management Agency's southwest region, adding that casualty figures were not yet available.

Residents of the area said around 100 children attended the school, which was on the third floor of the building.

At the site, many people were shouting and screaming. A fight almost broke out as anger at the collapse boiled over.

In the crowd's midst stood ambulances, fire trucks and a fork lift. Workers from the Red Cross

and police were on hand.

The building was in the Ita-faji area of Lagos island, the original heart of the lagoon city before it expanded onto the mainland.

"We are still trying to find out how many are trapped inside," said police officer Seun Ariwyo, who added that the number was probably scores.

He said "at least 20 have been brought out" but did not say whether they were alive or dead.

One local resident who witnessed the moment of collapse said there was no warning.

"We were smoking outside when the building just collapsed," Olamide Nuzbah told in pidgin English.

Distraught parents

As rescuers worked furiously to reach those inside, distraught parents begged them to find their children.

"Please, save my child, save my child!" wept one traumatised mother whose seven-year-old daughter was trapped inside, as people tried in vain to console her.

School bags, toys and clothes could be seen among the piles

of rubble as a bulldozer tried to clear a path through some of the wreckage to help the rescue efforts. As the day wore on, a correspondent saw several children being brought out, at least one of whom appeared to be dead.

Elsewhere, hundreds of local residents tried to help, passing water and helmets through to dust-covered rescuers working tirelessly to sift through the rubble, some of whom appeared to be distressed.

Many locals said that the building, which was in an advanced state of disrepair, had been "earmarked" for demolition by the authorities.

Lagos, which has a population of 20 million people and serves as Nigeria's economic capital, is made up of a collection of islands. One of them is Lagos Island, a densely-populated area which is one of the city's oldest neighbourhoods.

It is characterised by its Afro-Brazilian architecture, a style brought over by thousands of freed slaves who headed back home after decades working the plantations in Brazil.



Men carry a boy who was rescued



Rescue workers help carry a child



A woman reacts at the site of the collapse building



People watch rescue workers at the site

19 migrants kidnapped from bus in Mexico

AFP | Mexico City, Mexico

Nineteen passengers who were kidnapped from a bus last week in northern Mexico were migrants, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said yesterday, as investigators worked through the murky details of the case.

The men were crossing the violent state of Tamaulipas, on the US-Mexican border, on Thursday when four vehicles blocked the road and forced their bus to



Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador

stop, according to authorities.

Armed men then boarded the coach and kidnapped 19 passengers whose names they had on a list.

"I can confirm that they were

migrants," Lopez Obrador said, referring to the abducted men, without specifying their nationalities. The bus was traveling from the port of Tampico to Reynosa, a border city across from McAllen, Texas.

Although the bus driver told authorities that 19 passengers were kidnapped, investigation sources have indicated the real number of victims could be as high as 25.

The president told a news conference that one line of

investigation is the possibility the men could have staged their own kidnapping as a way to drop off the radar and then enter the United States undetected.

Mexico's National Human Rights Commission, however, warned the men may have been genuinely kidnapped, and that their lives could be in danger.

"They are in a situation of vulnerability on multiple fronts that places them at extraordinary risk," it said in a statement.

Several dead in Brazil school shooting

Sao Paulo, Brazil

A shooting at a school near Sao Paulo yesterday left several people dead, police sources said, with initial reports putting the death toll as high as eight.

Sao Paulo's state military police department said that "several people were shot" when "an individual" entered the institution in Suzano and opened fire.

Brazilian television channel Globo and website UOI said eight people had died, including five children, a teacher and two teenagers believed to be the shooters.

UOI said 17 people were also injured in the shooting.

Television pictures showed worried family members congregating outside the Raul Brasil school in the greater Sao Paulo area, alongside firefighters and security services.

Will Britain press the Brexit self-destruct button?

The narrow referendum result is hailed as a sacred mandate for the hardest versions of Brexit



Anti-Brexit demonstrators protest outside the British parliament.



BARIA ALAMUDDIN

Two-and-a-half years ago, when a narrow majority of British voters chose to leave the EU, it would have been inconceivable that, just days before the designated leaving date, nobody would have any idea of how the UK would depart — or even whether it would quit the EU after all. Yet politicians remain deadlocked, while all options remain on the table.

Has any other country in history voted so manifestly against its own economic interests and position in the world? Bank of England scenarios predict a 3.75 per cent hit to gross domestic product by 2023, while a “no-deal” scenario could leave the economy 9.3pc smaller after 15 years, along with a plunge in the value of sterling and house prices, and a near-doubling of unemployment to 7.5pc. Brexit uncertainty has paralysed the UK economy, while US and EU markets have soared. Brexit harms Britain’s future prosperity by impacting research, technological innovation, higher education standards, and access

to overseas markets.

International observers express incredulity: How could rational citizens back this obviously insane idea? How could politicians implement such a calculated act of self-harm? Pro-Brexit slogans about “taking back control” amount to a struggle for the Titanic’s navigation systems as this fatally wounded ship sinks beneath the icy waters.

As a former colonialist power, Britain traditionally invested heavily in diplomacy. Major post-2010 funding cuts hamstringing its ability to be a driving force behind EU foreign policy, with Brexit delivering a fatal blow. The country is also retreating from active involvement in foreign challenges like Iraq, Iran and Syria. When Brazil and India demand the UK’s permanent UN Security Council seat, how can London today claim to be more deserving?

Brexit reflects a confused desire to withdraw from international commitments, and an act of violence against the foreign policy levers that allow Britain to project influence. In an increasingly anarchic and unstable world, isolationism is a pernicious trend among Western states with narrowing perceptions of their global roles, exemplified by Trumpism

and the European far right.

Remainers feel that they are being marched at gunpoint toward the EU exit door, while many young people are angry that an older generation skewed the outcome of a vote that sabotages their future prospects. On both sides, people are sick to death of never-ending Brexit negotiations and just want the issue resolved by any means.

From the outset, pro-Brexit elements were louder and better organised; partly due to illegal funding, Russian meddling, and dishonest campaign claims. Remain advocates tended to be center ground politicians who were reluctant to stand against their party leaders or challenge the 2016 referendum result. Yet Brexit tensions have broken Britain’s long-standing two-party system, with a small but significant number of center ground MPs last week breaking away from both parties to form an independent group; which, given the government’s narrow majority, could play a pivotal role in ongoing brinkmanship.

Months of fruitless efforts by Prime Minister Theresa May to win support for her Brexit plan culminated in a crushing parliamentary defeat in mid-January. She continues to hawk approximately

A no-deal Brexit could devastate the economy, while endangering supplies of food, medicines and essential services.

the same deal while playing a somewhat sharper game. This includes facing down Brexit extremists, who have waived an earlier demand for scrapping the so-called “backstop” (a provision for ensuring that the Irish border remains open) to avoid their precious Brexit aspirations being scuppered altogether. After decades of conflict, Northern Ireland remains politically precarious and even minor attempts to tweak the border status could provoke renewed tensions, with far-reaching consequences.

Brexit reflects a collective failure of leadership. May in 2016 backed Remain, and since then she has been faced with a deluge of evidence for Brexit’s

ruinous consequences. Her pursuit of Brexit is like a doctor determined to fulfil her patient’s wishes to needlessly amputate their limbs. Why doesn’t she have the guts to tell the public that this is a suicidally painful, unnecessary and destructive process that will leave Britain an impoverished, impotent and marginalised former power?

The departure of MPs from both parties has dictated changes in approach in order to stem this blood loss. The PM has now promised to hold another meaningful vote on her deal on March 12. If that fails to pass, MPs will be given a vote on leaving with no deal (something most would be unlikely to support), followed by a vote on delaying the departure date. The risk is that — given habitually irrational voting patterns — MPs could vote against both a no-deal withdrawal and a time extension. This could legally compel Britain to plunge out of the EU on March 29 without any measures in place — a disaster scenario that all sane minds should be laboring to prevent.

Meanwhile, hard-left Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has finally caved in to pressure from within his own party and agreed to commit to a second referendum, which could al-

low voters to reject Brexit. Indeed, Labour has indicated that it may not vote against May’s deal in exchange for such a public vote. A second referendum, however, would trigger a furious backlash from the right-wing press, which dogmatically denounces such moves as a betrayal of the 2016 vote. The narrow referendum result is hailed as a sacred mandate for the hardest versions of Brexit, yet apparently the British public can’t be trusted to vote responsibly a second time.

A no-deal Brexit could devastate the economy, while endangering supplies of food, medicines and essential services. Jingoistic Brexiteers speak glibly about the “Blitz spirit” and Britain having won the Second World War against the odds. Yet Britain only won that war by standing shoulder-to-shoulder with its continental and international allies. This hubristic desire to “go it alone” in today’s fundamentally interconnected and interdependent world is a self-deluded path that can only lead to national ruin.

(Baria Alamuddin is an award-winning journalist and broadcaster in the Middle East and the UK. She is editor of the Media Services Syndicate and has interviewed numerous heads of state.)

USAF Broken Arrow nuclear weapon mishap in B-52 crash near Yuba City, Ca.

A jury in Dallas finds Jack Ruby guilty of killing Lee Harvey Oswald, the assumed assassin of **John F. Kennedy**.

The body of U.S. President **John F. Kennedy** is moved to a permanent burial place at Arlington National Cemetery.



The **Israel Defense Forces** invade and occupies southern Lebanon in Operation Litani.

What's the US role in NATO?

President Donald Trump has many bad ideas. Reconsidering America's role in NATO isn't one of them



BARRY R POSEN

NATO, a military alliance, was formed specifically to prevent the Soviet Union from dominating Europe, whose principal powers — Germany, France, Italy and Britain — had been so devastated by World War II that they were vulnerable to Soviet coercion, subversion or conquest. NATO also became a vehicle for rehabilitating the Axis powers — Germany and Italy — under the victors' tutelage.

America had an enduring interest in ensuring that the Continent not fall under the domination of a single, capable, hostile power: That could pose a serious threat to America. The Truman administration was clear on this point: The main purpose of stationing US military forces in Europe in the early 1950s was to stay long enough to right the balance of power, not to stay forever.

By the 1960s, the balance was restored. Western Europe's economies were booming; Britain and France had become nuclear powers; German militarism had been tamed, even as a new, large modern army emerged in West Germany. During the Vietnam War, America was so free of worry about the Soviet threat that it essentially milked its conventional forces in Europe to support its war in Indochina. Its European allies contributed nothing to America's effort in Vietnam. By 1968, with the collapse of Czechoslovakia's government and army, the Soviet-controlled Warsaw Pact alliance also appeared less capable.

In the early 1970s, Sen Mike Mansfield, D-Mont, led an effort to cut the US troop presence in Europe. It lost momentum in part because the Soviet Union conducted an ill-fated military buildup, which contributed to its economic failures in the 1980s. Mansfield's campaign was also opposed by the Europeans, who preferred to keep their US security blanket, and by President Richard Nixon and his chief foreign affairs adviser, Henry Kissinger, who rejected what he considered congressional meddling in foreign policy. Oddly, troop reductions in Europe would have been consistent with the "Nixon Doctrine," which called explicitly



for allies to do much more in their own defence.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 removed the last vestiges of a major security threat to NATO, and with it, the rationale for the US military presence in Europe. Russia's annexation of Crimea and its violent machinations in Eastern Ukraine haven't improved its ability to threaten NATO. Instead they have placed Putin in the penalty box. The European Union, like America, reacted appropriately by imposing punishing sanctions on Russia.

The whole misadventure has diminished Russian power. Europeans are able to defend themselves. France and Germany together equal Russia's population, enormously outweigh the country economically and outspend it militarily.

The dysfunctional turn in European domestic politics seems to be enabled by elites who fear no foreign threats because the United States dutifully promises to take care of them.

But organisations don't like going out of business, and NATO was a "good brand," making it useful for other projects. So NATO took on a new goal: banishing security competition from all of Europe

and its periphery, and bringing liberal democracy to former subjects of the Soviet empire. Instead of being re-evaluated, NATO got bigger.

NATO's expansion now requires the United States to defend all the new member states from both conventional and nuclear threats — a tall order given their proximity to Russia and a strategically unnecessary project since they can contribute nothing to US national security.

From an organisation that could succeed simply by deterring a major military threat, NATO turned into an expansive project to make all of Western Eurasia safe, liberal and democratic — goals that are much more complicated.

NATO's wars in Bosnia, Kosovo and Libya all depended on sig-

nificant US military capability; none produced functioning liberal democracies. Among three of post-Cold War NATO's new members — Hungary, Poland and Bulgaria — democracy is now suffering erosion or is in actual retreat. NATO's 2008 Bucharest summit declaration that Ukraine and Georgia "will become members of NATO" proved alarming to Russia — and helped pave the way to wars. In other words, NATO's well-intended political project is an expensive failure.

Ironically, NATO also encourages fecklessness among its members in ways that can be likened to what financiers call the "moral hazard" phenomenon, in which excessive insurance, offered for an ostensibly good purpose, promotes risky behaviour by those insured.

America's wealthy European allies have underfunded their own militaries, secure in the credibility of America's commitment. Even the most martial European powers, France and Britain, don't spend enough today to pay for their much-reduced post-Cold War force structures. They barely reach the alliance's obligation to spend 2 per cent of GDP on defence. France and Germany spend roughly half, and Britain two-thirds, of what the United States does per soldier; unless they have achieved remarkable levels of efficiency, they must be cutting corners.

Germany today spends only about 1.25 per cent of GDP on defence, leaving the German armed forces a sad remnant of their very capable Cold War incarnation. Until 1990, that army could put a dozen heavily armed divisions into the field a few days after mobilisation. Today it would be lucky to get one fully equipped division into the field. Less than half of German military equipment is ready for combat.

While European and US politicians and pundits wring their hands about the Russian military threat, European governments and militaries practice business as usual.

The dysfunctional turn in European domestic politics seems to be enabled by elites who fear no foreign threats because the United States dutifully promises to take care of them.

(Barry R Posen, a professor of political science at MIT and director of its Security Studies Programme, is the author of "Restraint: A New Foundation for us Grand Strategy".)



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Directed Secy to hold an emergency meeting with all Airlines to prepare a contingency plan to avoid inconvenience to passengers. While passenger safety is a zero tolerance issue, efforts are already on to minimise the impact on passenger movement as their convenience is important

@sureshprabhu

02



Forbes magazine has ranked The Kingdom of Bahrain second on the list of best places for women to work. Bahrain's Supreme Council for Women protects & promotes women's rights & their full participation in society, making Bahrain a champion of women's rights in the region

@LatifaBntEbrahim

03



Iapplaud Governor Newsom for placing a moratorium on the death penalty in California. I have long opposed the death penalty because it is immoral, discriminatory, ineffective & a misuse of taxpayer dollars. This is an important day for justice.

@SenKamalaHarris

04



In an effort to avoid voting in favor of the House's resolution to terminate Trump's #FakeEmergency, GOP senators are proposing legislation to allow Trump to violate the Constitution *just this once.* The House will not take up this legislation to give President Trump a pass.

@SpeakerPelosi

CIVILIAN'S TRIBUNE

Second Brexit poll not against democracy

Freezing democracy by preventing a further vote is undemocratic. Intrinsic to democracy is regular consultation of the people.

You might argue that after an overwhelming majority vote it would be unnecessary to have any further votes

on a topic for some time; however, the reverse logic equally applies.

A small majority indicates that the electorate is seriously divided and, as events and people move on, that majority opinion could easily shift.

Given that the terms of the EU with-

drawal agreement were unknown at the time of voting, that the Leave vote was not overwhelming, that two countries in the UK voted to remain and that the UK faces some of the most important series of decisions in its recent history, exercising further democracy can only

be just.

It is quite ridiculous to suggest that calling for a vote is against democracy. Voting is what democracy is all about and it should not exclude the option to change direction completely.

P Young

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

business

UK rejects no-deal Brexit

The vote passed by 312 in favour and 308 against

● Britain is still on course to leave the EU in just over two weeks unless it can decide a new plan

● The government is expected to propose a "short, limited" postponement on Thursday

London, United Kingdom

British MPs signalled their opposition yesterday to leaving the EU with no deal on March 29, in another blow to Prime Minister Theresa May's authority which opens the door to Britain requesting a Brexit delay.

The decision by parliament's lower House of Commons is largely symbolic as Britain is still on course to leave the EU in just over two weeks unless it can decide a new plan in agreement with Brussels.

Business leaders have warned that Britain is "staring down the precipice" as it faces the possibility of severing 46 years of UK-EU ties overnight, with the risk of an economic shock on both sides of the Channel.

And the manner in which MPs voted demonstrated once again the chaos in parliament over Brexit, and the lack of control that May has over events.

She had offered MPs a vote on a "no deal" option after they rejected for a second time on Tuesday the divorce terms she negotiated with the EU over many months.

Her proposal made clear that no deal was still the default option, but lawmakers decided instead to back an amendment rejecting "no deal" in all circum-



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May speaking during the weekly Prime Ministers Questions session in the House of Commons in London



We will have the opportunity to start to map out a way forward towards building a consensus across this House for a deal we can collectively support, to exit the EU in an orderly way

PHILIP HAMMOND
FINANCE MINISTER



You can only take no deal off the table by doing one of two things: either revoke Article 50 (the Brexit process), which means betraying the vote of the referendum, or agree a deal

THERESA MAY
PRIME MINISTER

stances.

Yesterday's moves open the way for MPs to vote on Thursday on whether to ask the EU for a delay to Brexit -- but Brussels has warned London must explain what it wants.

"Why would we prolong the negotiation? To do what?" EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier told the European Parliament in Strasbourg ahead of the vote in London.

May, her voice still hoarse, had warned MPs there were "hard choices" about what would come next.

"You can only take no deal off the table by doing one of two things: either revoke Article 50 (the Brexit process), which means betraying the vote of the referendum, or agree a deal," she said.

But her personal failure yesterday, when the rebel "no deal" amendment was passed by 312 votes

to 308, reveals how much her authority has suffered.

'Stop this circus'

The pound took a brief knock after MPs rejected May's divorce deal for a second time on Tuesday, but rallied on hopes that MPs would now vote for a delay.

Catherine McGuinness, policy chief for the City of London financial district, said British business was now "staring down the precipice".

Carolyn Fairbairn, director-general of Britain's biggest employers' organisation, the CBI, called for parliament to "stop this circus", saying: "A new approach is needed by all parties."

The government is expected to propose a "short, limited" postponement on Thursday, but is expecting a slew of amendments that could chart a path forward.

"One of the things I think is

important, is that we as quickly as we possibly can, find consensus," Environment Secretary Michael Gove, a leading Brexit supporter in May's cabinet, told parliament before the vote.

A group of Conservative MPs on Wednesday proposed asking the EU to delay Brexit until May 22 and strike a series of interim agreements with the bloc lasting until 2021.

May said this was not realistic, and it was defeated by 374 votes to 164.

Finance minister Philip Hammond, who favours a close economic relationship with the EU, earlier seemed to indicate a new plan might be afoot.

"We will have the opportunity to start to map out a way forward towards building a consensus across this House for a deal we can collectively support, to exit the EU in an orderly way," he said.

However, May's spokesman rejected any suggestion she might back a new customs union with the EU -- Labour's plan.

In Berlin, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said: "Achieving an orderly exit together, and I particularly want to repeat this today, remains in our mutual interest."

French President Emmanuel Macron also warned again that the deal on the table was "not negotiable". "We cannot renegotiate an accord that we negotiated over several months and which we have said is not renegotiable," he said.

As Brexit day looms large, Britain and the EU are stepping up preparations for the potential catastrophic disruption caused by a "no deal" divorce.

May's government announced plans to scrap tariffs on 87 percent of imports and stop applying customs checks on the border with Ireland in the event of "no deal".



AUB's Senior Relationship Manager -Private Banking, Bassam Al-Tattan, presents a cheque for US\$50,000 to Executive Manager of the Bahrain Athletics Association Yusuf Ahmed, in support of the upcoming Bahrain Half-Marathon Night Race, a first of its kind in Bahrain and which will take place in the Zallaq area tomorrow. "We are pleased to support this event which will see sizable international participation, and hopefully help encourage more people to exercise in general, and running in particular as a beautiful and much rewarding sport, physically and mentally," said Al-Tattan



Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) Sameer Nass and Chief Executive Officer Shaker Al Shater receiving at Bait Al Tijjar the outgoing ambassador of Kazakhstan based in Riyadh and accredited to Bahrain Bakyt Batyrshayev. Nass commended the ambassador's efforts in fostering relationships between Bahrain and Kazakhstan and wished him every success in his life and future diplomatic duties. Batyrshayev reinstated his country's keenness on fostering business with the Kingdom of Bahrain and proposed holding joint economic functions to stimulate liaison among members of both business communities

ASRY approves new ownership equity

● To work on Bahrainisation of Jobs

● Approves new appointments

TDI | Manama

The Arab Ship Building and Repair Yard (ASRY) board of directors yesterday said it approved a new ownership equity of the company within the framework of the new strategic plan for restructuring the Company and the Company's capital.

The recommendations will be tabled during an Extraordinary General Assembly in its next meeting to amend the Memorandum of Association considering the adjustments made on the company's capital and the shareholders' equity.

The meeting headed by



ASRY board members during its 155th meeting held at the company headquarters in Hidd

Sheikh Daij bin Salman bin Duaij Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Board of Directors, also tasked the Executive Management to present a clear plan of action and an executive programme to work on the Bahrainisation of jobs in the company in line with the directives of the Cabinet.

The plan and its executive

programme are to be presented at the next meeting of the Board of Directors for discussion, approval and implementation as soon as possible.

Among other decisions, the board approved the election of Fadel Sayed Abbas, a board member from the State of Kuwait, as the First Deputy Chairman, and the election of Abdul-

lah Ahmed Abdullah, a board member from the United Arab Emirates as the Second Deputy Chairman.

The meeting also formed Sub Board committees.

The board meeting at ASRY's headquarters in Hidd was held in the presence of the new board of directors, as well as members of the Executive Management

team and the secretary of the board of directors.

Following the meeting, Shaikh Duaij Bin Salman Bin Duaij Al Khalifa said: "The meeting was fruitful and constructive, during which the company's matters were reviewed including ways of supporting the development and progress of the company in order to provide its services

at the highest levels of quality, professionalism and efficiency to the local, regional and international clients."

The board meeting, Shaikh Duaij added, reviewed the progress of the company's business and financial activities in accordance with the implementation of the company's current strategic plan.



BFCC staff members and their families during a gathering organised by the company at the camping area in Sakhir. Several entertainment activities, spot prizes as well as raffle draws were held on the occasion during which employees were honoured with awards and mementos for their dedicated services. Redha Fathalla, Managing Director and Vice Chairman, stated: "This activity comes within BFCC's recognition of the importance of preserving strong bonds with its staff and their families."

Fiat Chrysler to recall 863,000 autos over emissions

Washington, United States

Fiat Chrysler will recall nearly 863,000 SUVs and sedans that failed to meet federal emissions standards.

The voluntary recall involves models of the Dodge Journey, Chrysler 200, Dodge Avenger and Dodge Caliber sedans as well as the Jeep Compass and Jeep Patriot SUVs produced for model years 2011 and 2016, a statement from the US Environmental Protection Agency said.

The recall will be carried out in phases this year, beginning with the oldest vehicles, and owners may continue to drive their vehicles in the meantime, the agency said in a statement.

FCA will replace the catalytic converters on the affected vehicles.

The recall comes two months after the auto giant agreed to pay US and local authorities \$515 million to resolve charges that it had installed "defeat devices" on different cars to cheat on emissions tests -- something the company claimed at the time was unintentional.

China offers to help Venezuela restore power after blackout



Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed acting president Juan Guaido (C, bottom) speaks during a protest in the fifth day of a crippling power blackout, in Caracas

Caracas, Venezuela

China yesterday offered to help Venezuela bring its collapsing power grid back online as President Nicolas Maduro sought to stave off rising public anger that is bolstering his US-backed rival Juan Guaido.

A vast blackout that struck Venezuela nearly a week ago -- the worst in its history -- has deepened the South American country's already grave economic crisis, especially by disrupting the supply of drinking water.

Although electricity has since been restored to most of the capital Caracas, water was having to be trucked in, and western swaths of the country remain without power.

"No water, no power, no medicine, no cash, no transport. This has been dreadful," one Caracas resident, Victoria Milano, 40, said.

Guaido, an opposition leader whose claim to be Venezuela's interim president is backed by the US and 50 other countries, told supporters on Tuesday he expected to have military chiefs on his side and take over the presidential palace "very soon."

"This desperation and darkness is caused by the dictatorship," Guaido said, alleging that around 20 people had died in hospital because of the power cut. Venezuela's pro-Maduro prosecutor's office has hit back with a criminal investigation against Guaido for "sabotage," alleging he had a hand in the blackout.

VW slashes thousands more jobs

Frankfurt am Main, Germany

German car giant Volkswagen said yesterday it would slash thousands of posts to cope with its transition to electric and autonomous driving the day after reporting rising profits, saying heavy costs for investments meant savings were needed elsewhere.

Chief executive Herbert Diess had on Tuesday trumpeted rising sales and profits across the sprawling 12-brand group in 2018, the third year after its "dieselgate" emissions cheating scandal broke.

But it was up to the VW brand's chief operating officer Ralf Brandstaetter to announce the flagship division would drop between 5,000 and 7,000 positions by 2023 as it chases cost savings.

All of the cuts will come from non-replacement of workers already set to retire over that period, Brandstaetter said.



An overview of a production line at German car maker Volkswagen's headquarters in Wolfsburg, northern Germany.

"Given that more and more routine tasks are being automated, we'll need fewer jobs in administration," he said.

At the same time, VW plans to create 2,000 new posts in software development and electronics.

Overall the plan would help

"finance our investments and satisfy our objectives for the electric era," chief financial officer Arno Antlitz said.

Across the whole group, Volkswagen employs almost 665,000 people worldwide, close to 50,000 of them in administrative roles.

Trump fights impeachment talk ahead of looming Mueller report

Washington, United States

No one even knows when it will come out, but Robert Mueller's top secret probe into possible collusion between Donald Trump and Russia has Washington on edge -- and the president mounting preemptive attacks against impeachment.

"How do you impeach a man who is considered by many to be the President with the most successful first two years in history, especially when he has done nothing wrong," Trump asked Wednesday in a stream of tweets laying out the case for his innocence.

Urgent predictions that Mueller's report is just about to

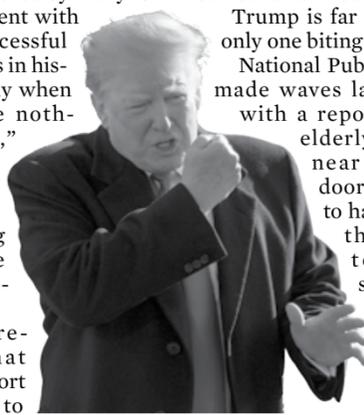
drop have come out all year, only to be proven wrong, leaving the country grasping for clues.

Every passing week with no news raises the tension. Will the special counsel's nearly two-year investigation exonerate Trump?

Or will it link him to a Kremlin influence operation in what would be one of the biggest political scandals in US history?

Trump is far from the only one biting his nails.

National Public Radio made waves last week with a report about elderly people near death's door fighting to hang on so that they too can see what Mueller uncovers.



China says air pollution dropped

Beijing, China

China's air quality improved substantially last year, the environment ministry said Monday, following a government crackdown on pollution and a weakening economy.

Thick smog clouds have plagued China's cities for years and represent the dark side of rapid development that has lifted hundreds of millions out of poverty.

The country's economic miracle has rested firmly on the output of goods like steel, coal and cement, the production of which are all heavily polluting.

But last year the average level of microscopic airborne PM2.5 particles -- which penetrate deep into the lungs -- in 338 cities stood at 39 micrograms per cubic metre last year, a 9.3 percent year-on-year fall, according to a ministry report.

Rising oil price boosts Saudi

● Ten of 12 Saudi banks gain

● Arriyadh Development climbs on capital increase

● SABIC gains after announcing merger of two units

● Dubai's Aramex surges in heaviest volume in over 9 years

Reuters

Saudi Arabia's stock market rose yesterday as banks and petrochemical shares gained amid rising oil prices, while Abu Dhabi was pulled down by Emirates Telecommunications.

Saudi Arabia's index was up 1 per cent, with Al Rajhi Bank gaining 0.9pc.

The Middle East's largest petrochemical maker Saudi Basic Industries (SABIC) also rose 1pc in active trade after it said it will merge its units Saudi Petrochemical Co and Arabian Petrochemical Co.

The deal, which will be completed during the second half



Traders on the floor of Saudi Stock exchange

of the year, is part of the firm's plan to increase efficiency in its global operations.

The Saudi index is up 8.9pc this year, outperforming major Gulf markets and led by foreign investors who have been net buyers of Saudi stocks every week this year. Foreign investors have already poured 6.94 billion riyals (\$1.9 billion) into the Saudi market in the first two months of 2019.

Foreign net buying in the Saudi market picked up in the first week of March, coming in at 985 million riyals, the highest since the week ending Jan. 17, Arqaam Capital said.

Developer Arriyadh Development added 1.5pc after the Capital Market Authority approved an increase in capital to 1.78 billion riyals, from 1.33 billion riyals, through a bonus share issue.

The Abu Dhabi index was down 0.9pc, with Emirates Telecommunications Group shedding 4.1pc.

United Arab Bank plunged 9.6pc in light trade while Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank lost 2.4pc.

Banks in the UAE are expected to experience a rise in loan losses over the next 12 to 18 months as a decline in real estate prices and rising interest rates reduce borrowers' cashflows, according

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▲ 1pc	» 8,527 pts
ABU DHABI	▼ 0.9pc	» 4,820 pts
DUBAI	■	» 2,600 pts
QATAR	■	» 9,762 pts
EGYPT	▼ 0.1pc	» 15,126 pts
KUWAIT	■	» 5,600 pts
OMAN	▼ 0.2pc	» 4,074 pts
BAHRAIN	▲ 0.4pc	» 1,411 pts

to Moody's.

In Dubai, the index was flat, but courier firm Aramex surged 9.1pc in its heaviest trading volume since December 2009 with 42.4 million shares changing hands, after the company said that Australia Post Transaction Services had sold its stake.

Australia Post Transaction Services sold its 10pc stake in the firm for 602.6 million dirhams (\$164 million).

Aramex caps foreign ownership of its shares at 49pc and the stake sale has freed up a 10pc stake for foreigners to potentially buy.

Arqaam Capital said this was "an excellent time" to buy the stock.

Egypt's blue chip index edged down 0.1pc with El Sewedy Electric shedding 1.8pc.

Qatar's index was flat with Mesaieed Petrochemical Holding losing 3.2pc.

Paris airport operator fined over fatal 2004 terminal collapse

Bobigny, France

A French court yesterday found the Paris airports operator guilty of involuntary manslaughter over the 2004 terminal collapse at Charles de Gaulle airport less than a year after it opened, killing four people.

Aéroports de Paris (ADP) was ordered to pay the maximum fine of 225,000 euros (\$254,000) by the court in Bobigny, just north of the capital.

Three subcontractors -- the construction company which built the vaulted glass-and-concrete roof at Terminal 2E, and engineering and inspection firms -- were ordered to pay fines of 100,000 to 150,000 euros.

The accident occurred early on May 23, 2004, 11 months after the building, designed by award-winning French architect Paul Andreu, was inaugurated to widespread acclaim.

Six concrete arches and walkways stretching over 30 metres (100 feet) crashed down as passengers waited to board flights at the ultra-modern, 650-million-euro terminal that ADP boasted was a "showcase for France."

\$20 m settlement in Uber driver lawsuit

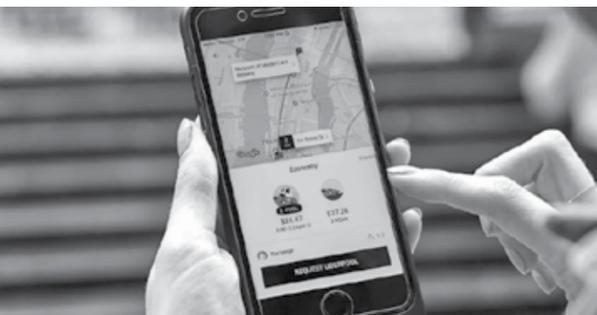
San Francisco, United States

Uber has agreed to pay \$20 million to settle a lawsuit accusing the ride-share service of classifying drivers as contractors to avoid paying them minimum wage and providing benefits.

The settlement filed late Monday noted that parties involved in the six-year-old suit still have a "bona fide" dispute regarding whether any specific amount of wages are due to drivers.

The proposed deal requires the approval of a federal judge presiding over the case.

The case filed in August 2013 covers Uber drivers in California and Massachusetts who provided rides for passengers any time from then to February 28 of this year who were not bound by an arbitration clause.



Representative picture

An estimated 13,600 drivers were affected. Uber faces a slew of arbitration claims by drivers not represented by the class-action suit.

"Uber has changed a lot since 2013," the San Francisco-based company said in a statement, noting it has added a driver rewards program as well as an option to let riders tip drivers. "We're pleased to reach a

settlement on this matter and we'll continue working hard to improve the quality, security and dignity of independent work."

The settlement also called for Uber to make changes including no longer deactivating drivers' accounts for accepting fewer rides and creating a formal appeals process for drivers dropped from the service.

Trump ex-campaign chief Manafort indicted for mortgage fraud

New York, United States

President Donald Trump's former campaign chief Paul Manafort was indicted Tuesday for mortgage fraud and other felonies in New York, less than an hour after a Washington judge extended his federal prison sentence to more than seven years.

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance unveiled 16 state felony charges against Manafort, which could not be pardoned by Trump in the event of convictions as they are state-level rather than federal indictments.



Paul Manafort

"Following an investigation commenced by our office in March 2017, a Manhattan grand

jury has charged Mr. Manafort with state criminal violations which strike at the heart of New York's sovereign interests."

The announcement came almost immediately after Washington District Court Judge Amy Berman Jackson sentenced Manafort in the second of two federal cases brought against him by Special Counsel Robert Mueller in the investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election.

Berman dismissed most of Manafort's claims of contrition to boost his previous sentence, in a Virginia court last week, by 43 months to 90 months.

Pound rallies on Brexit delay hopes before vote

London, United Kingdom

Key figures around 1640 GMT

Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.3220 from \$1.3062 on Tuesday
Euro/pound:	▼ at 85.49 pence from 86.46 pence
Euro/dollar:	▲ at \$1.1305 from \$1.1292
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 111.22 yen from 111.29 yen
London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.1pc at 7,159.19 points (close)
Frankfurt - DAX 30:	▲ 0.4pc at 11,572.41 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ 0.7pc at 5,306.38 (close)
New York - DOW:	▲ 0.6 percent at 25,703.54
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 1.0pc at 21,290.24 (close)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng:	▼ 0.4pc at 28,807.45 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 1.1pc at 3,026.95 (close)
Oil - Brent Crude:	▲ 44 cents at \$67.11
Oil - West Texas Inter:	▲ 94 cents at \$57.81

The British pound recovered strongly yesterday as traders were willing to bet that the UK's EU exit will be pushed beyond its March 29 deadline.

Sterling's rebound came hours ahead of a vote in Britain's parliament which is expected to soundly reject a "no deal" Brexit.

If so, a further vote will determine whether London should ask the EU for more time beyond March 29 to sort out its departure from the bloc.

"The potential delay of Brexit is what is helping to hold up the pound, but by the same token, the uncertainty is limiting its upside potential," said Fawad Razaqzada at Forex.com.

"If it feels like the UK government is going around in circles, it is because it is," he added.

'Sniffing opportunity'

Sterling, and also London's stock market, had taken a brief knock after MPs on Tuesday rejected for a second time a Brexit withdrawal deal negotiated by Prime Minister Theresa May, despite her obtaining last-minute added reassurances from EU officials.

But both recovered as the European trading day wore on, with the pound up more than onepc against the dollar on the day, and its progression against the euro only marginally less vigorous at 0.9pc.

"The pound has been the main area of volatility when reflecting Brexit developments, with the FTSE 100 remaining somewhat stable despite the

constant shifts," said Joshua Mahony, senior market analyst at IG trading group.

Sparking the pound's rally, meanwhile, was "markets either sniffing an opportunity for a second referendum or a deal passing," said Viraj Patel, a foreign currency and macroeconomics strategist at Arker, in a tweet.

Not a care

Both the pound and the FTSE held up even as Britain's finance minister Philip Hammond slashed the forecast for economic growth this year due to Brexit uncertainty.

The UK economy is forecast to grow by 1.2pc this year, down on the government's prediction of 1.6pc in October, Hammond said as he gave a budget update.

Elsewhere, Asian indices closed lower.

Eurozone stock markets ended the day higher across the

board, and Wall Street also showed solid gains in the early New York afternoon, prompting Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare to note that the US stock market was acting like it did not have a care in the world.

"It could care less that the UK's Brexit effort is a mess. It could care less that Boeing is dealing with a PR nightmare as multiple countries have grounded the 737 MAX," he said, adding investors also appeared unfazed by declining earnings estimates and global growth slowing down.

O'Hare said investors appeared to be happy that Fed interest rates probably will not rise any time soon, a supportive factor for stocks.

Oil was also well-bid, with the US benchmark WTI contract reaching a multi-month high driven by falling American stocks and global supply uncertainty.

SHOW

OASIS JUFFAIR

1- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

⊕ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIFER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL

DAILY AT (3D): 12.00 + 4.30 + 9.00 PM

DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 11.15 AM + 1.15 + 3.15 + 5.15 + 7.15 + 9.15 + 11.15 PM

2- GRETA (15+) (THRILLER/CRIME) NEW

⊕ CHLOE GRACE MORETZ, ISABELLE HUPPERT, MAIKA MONROE

DAILY AT: 2.30 + 7.00 + 11.30 PM

3- MERE PYARE PRIME MINISTER (15+) (HINDI/DRAMA) NEW

⊕ RASIKA AGASHE, SONIA ALBIZURI, SYNA ANAND

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 7.00 + 11.30 PM

4- PHOTOGRAPH (PG-13) (HINDI/DRAMA/ROMANTIC) NEW

⊕ NAWAZUDDIN SIDDIQUI, SANYA MALHOTRA, AKASH SINHA

FROM THURSDAY 14TH AT 7.00 PM ONWARDS

DAILY AT: 4.45 + 9.15 PM

5- AN INTERNATIONAL LOCAL STORY (PG) (MALAY-ALAM) NEW

⊕ MANOJ K. JAYAN, TINI TOM, JOHN KAIPPALLIL

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 6.00 + 11.30 PM

6- ISPADE RAJAVUM IDHAYA RANIYUM (PG-13) (TAMIL) NEW

⊕ HARISH KALYAN, SHILPA MANJUNATH, MA KA PA ANAND

FROM THURSDAY 14TH AT 4.30 PM ONWARDS

DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.30 PM

7- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT (ATMOS): 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM

DAILY AT (3D): 2.00 + 6.30 + 11.00 PM

DAILY AT (VIP): 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM

8- BADLA (PG-15) (HINDI/THRILLER/CRIME)

⊕ AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM

9- ESCAPE ROOM (PG-15) (THRILLER)

⊕ TAYLOR RUSSELL, LOGAN MILLER, DEBORAH ANN WOLL

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.15 + 6.30 + 11.45 PM

10- TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)

⊕ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 4.30 + 9.00 PM

11- KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM)

⊕ FAHADH FAASIL, SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 5.00 + 11.00 PM

12- GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)

⊕ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI

DAILY AT: 3.30 + 8.45 PM

13- KODATHI SMAKSHAM BALAN VAKEEL (PG-13) (MALAYALAM)

⊕ DILEEP, MAMTA MOHANDAS, PRIYA ANAND

DAILY AT: 2.00 + 8.00 PM

CITYCENTRE

1- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

⊕ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIFER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.30 + 3.30 + 5.30 + 7.30 + 9.30 + 11.30 PM

DAILY AT (ARABIC DUBBED): 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM

DAILY AT (3D): 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 + 8.30 + 10.30 PM

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 2.00 + 4.45 + 7.30 + 10.15 PM + (12.30 MN +)



1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

2- GRETA (15+) (THRILLER/CRIME) NEW

⊕ CHLOE GRACE MORETZ, ISABELLE HUPPERT, MAIKA MONROE

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 PM + 12.00 MN + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

DAILY AT (VIP 10): 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM

3- THE HOLE IN THE GROUND (15+) (HORROR) NEW

⊕ SEANA KERSLAKE, JAMES COSMO, SIMONE KIRBY

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.15 + 3.15 + 5.15 + 7.15 + 9.15 + 11.15 PM

4- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM

DAILY AT (ATMOS): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 2.00 + 4.45 + 7.30 + 10.15 PM + (12.30 MN + 1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

DAILY AT (VIP 10): 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM

5- BADLA (PG-15) (HINDI/THRILLER/CRIME)

⊕ AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE

DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM

6- ESCAPE ROOM (PG-15) (THRILLER)

⊕ TAYLOR RUSSELL, LOGAN MILLER, DEBORAH ANN WOLL

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 PM + 12.00 MN + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

7- COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)

⊕ LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN

8- FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY)

⊕ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM

9- HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER

DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.45 + 4.45 + 6.45 + 8.45 + 10.45 PM

10- THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)

⊕ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM

11- ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)

⊕ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY

DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 4.00 + 9.15 PM

12- GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER)

⊕ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM

13- THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

⊕ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT

DAILY AT: 2.00 + 6.30 + 11.00 PM

14- NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY)

⊕ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM

15- JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (PG) (COMEDY/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ ROWAN ATKINSON, OLGA KURYLENKO, EMMA THOMPSON

DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 5.15 + 9.45 PM

16- AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.30 + 11.45 PM

17- RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

⊕ JOHN C. REILLY, SARAH SILVERMAN, GAL GADOT

DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 4.15 + 8.45 PM

SEEF (I)

1- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

⊕ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIFER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM

DAILY AT (ARABIC DUBBED): 11.30 AM + 1.30 + 3.30 + 5.30 + 7.30 + 9.30 + 11.30 PM

2- GRETA (15+) (THRILLER/CRIME) NEW

⊕ CHLOE GRACE MORETZ, ISABELLE HUPPERT, MAIKA MONROE

DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 1.45 + 3.45 + 5.45 + 7.45 + 9.45 + 11.45 PM

3- THE HOLE IN THE GROUND (15+) (HORROR) NEW

⊕ SEANA KERSLAKE, JAMES COSMO, SIMONE KIRBY

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 PM + 12.00 MN

4- CAPHARNAUM (18+) (ARABIC/DRAMA) NEW

⊕ KAWTHAR AL HADDAD, NADINE LABAKY, FADI YOUSEF

DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM

5- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT: (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

6- ESCAPE ROOM (PG-15) (THRILLER)

⊕ TAYLOR RUSSELL, LOGAN MILLER, DEBORAH ANN WOLL

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM

7- COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)

* LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN

DAILY AT: 1.45 + 6.30 + 11.15 PM

8- FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY)

⊕ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN

DAILY AT: 12.45 + 5.15 + 9.45 PM

9- THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)

⊕ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 1.45 + 6.45 + 11.45 PM

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⊕ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY

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⊕ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 4.15 + 9.00 PM

12- NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY)

⊕ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.00 + 7.30 PM + 12.00 MN

13- TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)

⊕ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 6.30 PM + 12.00 MN

14- KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM)

* FAHADH FAASIL, SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR

DAILY AT: 3.30 + 9.00 PM

SEEF (II)

1- GRETA (15+) (THRILLER/CRIME) NEW

⊕ CHLOE GRACE MORETZ, ISABELLE HUPPERT, MAIKA MONROE

DAILY AT: (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

2- MERE PYARE PRIME MINISTER (15+) (HINDI/DRAMA) NEW

⊕ RASIKA AGASHE, SONIA ALBIZURI, SYNA ANAND

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM

3- PHOTOGRAPH (PG-13) (HINDI/DRAMA/ROMANTIC) NEW

⊕ NAWAZUDDIN SIDDIQUI, SANYA MALHOTRA, AKASH SINHA

FROM THURSDAY 14TH AT 7.00 PM ONWARDS



DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM

4- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.30 + 3.30 + 5.15 + 6.15 + 8.00 + 9.00 + 10.45 + 11.45 PM

5- BADLA (PG-15) (HINDI/THRILLER/CRIME)

⊕ AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM

6- HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM

SAAR

1- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

⊕ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIFER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.30 + 3.30 + 5.30 + 7.30 + 9.30 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)

DAILY AT (ARABIC DUBBED): 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 PM

2- GRETA (15+) (THRILLER/CRIME) NEW

* CHLOE GRACE MORETZ, ISABELLE HUPPERT, MAIKA MONROE

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.15 + 3.15 + 5.15 + 7.15 + 9.15 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)

3- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

⊕ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.00 + 5.30 + 6.30 + 8.00 + 9.00 + (10.30 PM + 11.30 PM THURS/FRI)

AL HAMRA

1- AN INTERNATIONAL LOCAL STORY (PG) (MALAY-ALAM) NEW

⊕ MANOJ K. JAYAN, TINI TOM, JOHN KAIPPALLIL

DAILY AT: 3.00 + 9.00 + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)

2- ISPADE RAJAVUM IDHAYA RANIYUM (PG-15) (TAMIL) NEW

⊕ HARISH KALYAN, SHILPA MANJUNATH, MA KA PA ANAND

FROM THURSDAY 14TH AT 4.30 PM ONWARDS

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 6.00 PM

WADI AL SAIL

1- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

Gwyneth Paltrow



Los Angeles

Gwyneth Paltrow says she has not bid adieu to acting. The actor, who was last seen in "Avengers: Infinity War" in a cameo, said she is currently focused on her lifestyle brand, Goop. "I've never said that I am quitting acting. What I say is Goop is my full-time passion, and being the founder and CEO of Goop is what I do all day every day, and occa-

Gwyneth Paltrow hasn't quit acting

sionally when something is the right thing and it works out around my children and my Goop life, I'm able to participate. "I think I'm just not focused on full-time acting right now," Paltrow said in an appearance on "Today" show. The actor's comments come months after her admission that she does not miss acting.

celebs

Lady Gaga shuts down pregnancy rumours with album news

Los Angeles

Lady Gaga has rubished rumours that she is pregnant by announcing she is working on her next album.

The Oscar winning singer, who broke up with Christian Carino last month, four months after they announced their engagement, took to Twitter to shut down the grapevine.

Gaga revealed she is "pregnant" with her sixth record, a follow-up to her 2016's 'Joanne'.

"Rumors I'm pregnant? Yeah, I'm pregnant with #LG6 (sic)" Gaga tweeted.

The "Shallow" hitmaker also recently quashed reports claiming that she and her "A Star Is Born" co-actor-director were dating.

Her break-up and chemistry with her co-star after their "Shallow" performance at the Oscars 2019 may have added fuel to the fire though Cooper is in a relationship with supermodel Irina Shayk, with whom he has a daughter, Lea.



Lady Gaga

Demi Moore puts relationships over work

Los Angeles

Actress Demi Moore says she has changed her life and shifted her priorities over the last seven years.

The 56-year-old actress opened up about it while speaking to Gwyneth Paltrow and Arianna Huffington at the 2019 In Goop Health summit, reports people.com.

Moore said she has shifted her priorities to refocus on her health and the people around her in the "last seven years".

"My relationships are more important, and what I do comes second," she said.

She no longer looks outwards for validation. "What does it matter what anyone thinks?" she said. "Nothing is that bad."

This new outlook came after "my health took me down", Moore said, referencing her 2012 collapse at her home. The mother of three was hospitalised after the incident and entered a rehab treatment for addiction and an eating disorder.



Demi Moore

'Sesame Street' to release on January 15, 2021

Los Angeles

Anne Hathaway-starrer "Sesame Street" is set to hit the screens on January 15, 2021.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, Warner Bros also announced Tuesday that Tim Story's "Tom and Jerry" movie will release on April 16, 2021.

Studio insiders say "Sesame Street" will begin shooting in June. "Portlandia" co-creator Jonathan Krisel is attached to direct, with 21 Laps' Shawn Levy producing alongside Michael Aguilar and Entertainment 360.

The movie, which is said to be a musical, is expected to include appearances from "Sesame Street" residents Big Bird, Oscar the Grouch and Cookie Monster.

Anne Hathaway



Evan Rachel Wood self harmed during abusive relationship

Los Angeles

Evan Rachel Wood has revealed that she used to self harm when she was involved in an "abusive relationship".

The "Westworld" star opened up about the abuse on Twitter Monday, using the #IAmNotOk hashtag in an attempt to raise awareness about domestic violence. "Two years into my abusive

relationship. I resorted to self-harm. When my abuser would threaten or attack me, I cut my wrist as a way to disarm him.

"It only made the abuse stop temporarily. At that point I was desperate to stop the abuse and I was too terrified to leave," Rachel Wood tweeted, alongside a picture of herself with scars on her arm.

Evan Rachel Wood



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Aussies clinch historic series

● **Khawaja, bowlers humble India as Australia complete turnaround to seal series win**

● **From 0-2 down, Khawaja, Zampa, Cummins and Handscomb stun India**

● **Australia won the five-match series 3-2**

AFP | New Delhi

Afluent century by Usman Khawaja and incisive bowling helped Australia ease to a 35-run series clinching win in the fifth one-day international yesterday.

Adam Zampa took three wickets to help dismiss India for 237 on the last ball of their innings after Khawaja's 100 guided the tourists to 272 for nine at Delhi's Feroz Shah Kotla ground.

Pat Cummins, Jhye Richardson and Marcus Stoinis claimed two wickets each to set up Australia's first win in a five-match ODI series after being 0-2 down.

But the left-handed Khawaja stood out for the tourists with his 100 off 106 deliveries that guided Australia to what turned out to be a match-winning score.

His scores of 50, 38, 104 and 91 in the previous matches made him stand tall in the batting chart between the two teams.

The left-right batting pair of Khawaja and Handscomb stayed firm during a 99-run stand to lay the foundation of their team's total after skipper Aaron Finch was out on 27.

Khawaja got the second hundred of his ODI career with a single off Kuldeep Yadav as he waved the bat to an applauding Australian dressing room.

He lost his wicket in the next over to paceman Bhuvneshwar Kumar with a drive to cover that was safely caught by skipper Virat Kohli.

Ravindra Jadeja returned to get the dangerous Glenn Maxwell for one and Handscomb was caught behind off Shami as Australia slipped to 182-4.

The Aussies kept losing wickets but Richardson played a useful cameo of 29 off 21 deliveries before being run out on the final ball of the 50th over.

India were reduced to 132 for six in their reply but Kedar Jadhav, who made 44, and Ku-



Australia's Usman Khawaja plays a shot

mar threatened to pull off the chase during their 91-run stand for the seventh wicket.

Cummins got Kumar caught and bowled for 46 and Richard-

son sent back Jadhav to silence the home crowd.

Earlier Cummins drew first blood after getting Shikhar Dhanwan caught behind for 12 on a



Khawaja got the second hundred of his ODI career with a single off Kuldeep Yadav as he waved the bat to an applauding Australian dressing room

pace away-going delivery.

But it was Stoinis who got Kohli's prized scalp after the star batsman edged a cross-seam delivery to wicketkeeper Alex Carey. He was on 20.

Spinner Nathan Lyon and Zampa then combined to get a wicket each and the hosts slipped to 120 for four midway into the innings.

Rohit Sharma, who survived a dropped chance on 53, could not capitalise on the spill by Glenn Maxwell off Zampa as he got out to the same bowler three runs later.

It was India's final ODI before the World Cup in England and Wales starting May 30.

Ebrahim K Kanoo continue as gold sponsor of Bahrain ITF tournament

TDI | Manama

The Board of Directors of Bahrain Tennis Club (BTC) welcomed today the joint cooperation between BTC and Ebrahim K Kanoo.

This comes following Ebrahim K Kanoo's agreement to continue as gold sponsors of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) tournaments hosted by BTC.

This year, Bahrain ITF World Tennis Tour takes place from March 18 to 23 at BTC hardcourts in Juffair. It is being held under patronage of HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports and President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee.

Batelco sponsors horseracing festival

TDI | Manama

Batelco as part of its CSR programme has announced its sponsorship of the King Hamad Horseracing Festival 2019.

The sponsorship is in line with the Company's continuous efforts to promote and support major sporting events within the Kingdom. The prestigious and highly anticipated event will take place on Friday at the Rashid Equestrian & Horse Racing Club in Sakhir.

In a statement Batelco said that they are always keen to support the efforts of different entities in the Kingdom to promote the growth of a diverse range of sporting activities, strengthening the Kingdom's position within the sporting sector as a result.

Vettel says Ferrari feeling good as new season launches

AFP | Melbourne

Sebastian Vettel said that Ferrari have "tried to turn the page" after being dominated by Mercedes in 2018 and their new car "feels good" ahead of season-opening Australian Grand Prix.

The German four-time world champion was speaking as new Formula One season officially launched with all 20 drivers taking part in a first-of-its-kind public meet-and-greet with fans in the heart of Melbourne.

"For the whole team we have tried to turn the page," Vettel told the thousands of fans who turned up for a glimpse of their heroes in the city's Federation Square.

Ronaldo lifts Juventus into last-eight



Juventus' Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (R) collides with Atletico Madrid's Colombian defender Santiago Arias (L)

AFP | Turin, Italy

Cristiano Ronaldo scored a spectacular hat-trick to fire Juventus into the Champions League quarter-finals with a 3-0 win over Atletico Madrid on Tuesday that saw his side claim a thrilling tie 3-2 on aggregate.

The Portuguese superstar scored two headers either side of half-time and a late penalty to clinch a place in Friday's last-eight draw with a dominant display by the Italian champions in Turin.

"It was always going to be a special night and it was, not only for the goals, but for the team," said Ronaldo.

"This is the mentality of champions. This is why Juve brought me in, to help on magical nights like this."

Diego Simeone's Atletico were a shadow of the team

who had run riot in the first leg in Madrid, and crashed out of the tournament they had been hoping to win in their own Wanda Metropolitan Stadium on June 1.

"The lads have shown great maturity," said Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri.

"They interpreted the game at their best, I have to congratulate them. This is what we wanted in the first leg.

"Tonight we were lucid, there was the risk of having a hysterical match, as if everything had to be done in 10 minutes."

It is the eighth time that Ronaldo has scored a hat-trick in the competition and mirrors his improbable treble which lifted former club Real Madrid past Wolfsburg in April 2016 with the Spaniards 2-0 down after the first leg.

Porsche GT3 Cup set for thrilling season finale supporting F1 Bahrain GP 2019

TDI | Manama

The sixth and final round of the 2018/2019 Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East is set to add to the "Limitless" thrills this coming Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2019, taking place March 28 to 31 at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

The Porsche GT3 Cup is one of two supporting championships to the Formula 1 spectacle that will soon be taking the region by storm. The other is the FIA Formula 2 Championship.

The Porsche GT3 Cup is the biggest and most popular one-make motor racing championship in the entire region. It has been the number one choice of the Arab world's most promising circuit racing drivers to broaden their racing experience in a professionally run series. Drivers race in identical Porsche GT3 Cup Car 911s, supplied by the founders from



Cars in action during a Porsche GT3 Cup race at BIC

Lechner Racing.

Clear rules ensure an equal footing - single-seated, near-standard race vehicles of the same make adhering to strict safety guidelines. The regulations consistently ensure fair competition and the highest standard of safety for participants.

The series has just come off its season's fifth and penultimate meeting held at BIC, setting the stage for an electrifying championship finale with the title battle going down to the wire.

Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Simmenauer clinched a fantastic double in the previous round, with Turkish ace Berkay Besler winning the other race.

Both drivers will be back at the Bahrain Grand Prix, as will top title contenders Al Faisal Al Zubair and Khalid Al Wahabi of Oman. They are all competing in the Pro class, along with Cypriot Tio Ellinas, Luxembourger Dylan Pereira, and Frenchman Julien Andlauer. Al Zubair is the defending champion and is a favourite to repeat.

Rampant City crush Schalke with magnificent seven

AFP | Manchester

Pep Guardiola says Manchester City don't fear any team in the Champions League after they powered into the quarter-finals with a 7-0 rout of hapless Schalke on Tuesday.

City had snatched two late goals to win the first leg 3-2 and they made the most of that fightback with a ruthless demon-

stration job at the Etihad Stadium to clinch a 10-2 last-16 aggregate victory.

Sergio Aguero's penalty opened the scoring in the 35th minute and the Argentine forward netted again soon afterwards before Leroy Sane, who also contributed three assists, struck against his former club.

Raheem Sterling, Bernardo Silva, Phil Foden and Gabriel

Jesus all scored after the interval to complete City's biggest home win in the Champions League.

Guardiola's side, who lifted the League Cup in February, remain on course for an unprecedented quadruple, sitting one point ahead of Liverpool at the top of the Premier League before this weekend's FA Cup quarter-final at Swansea.

Kohlschreiber stuns Djokovic

● Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer advance into the fourth round of the ATP Indian Wells Masters

● Nadal races into the fourth round with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Argentina's Diego Schwartzman

● Federer reached the last 16 after a 6-3, 6-4 victory over fellow Swiss Stan Wawrinka

AFP | Indian Wells



Novak Djokovic waves to the crowd after losing to Philipp Kohlschreiber of Germany

Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber stunned Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic 6-4, 6-4 on Tuesday, claiming his first career win over a world No. 1 player to reach the fourth round of the ATP Indian Wells Masters.

Serbian superstar Djokovic was playing his first tournament since lifting a record seventh title in Melbourne, taking his tally of Grand Slam victories to 15.

He had won eight of nine prior meetings with Kohlschreiber, but could find no answer to the 39th-ranked veteran, who had come up empty in 11 prior attempts to beat a top-ranked

rival. "It's a very special moment," Kohlschreiber said. "Of course, playing the top guys is always a big pleasure, but most of the time they beat you."

In match that resumed after rain stopped play just one game in on Monday night, Kohlschreiber said the warmer daytime conditions suited him better, and Djokovic agreed.

"I liked my chances more at night against Kohlschreiber," Djokovic said. "Completely different conditions today: Ball bounces much higher.

Nadal speeds through

World number two Nadal stayed on track to improve that number as he swept past Argentine Diego Schwartzman 6-3, 6-1 to reach the last 16.

Nadal took his record against the world No. 26 to 7-0 in emphatic style, never facing a break point in a match lasting an hour and 16 minutes.

"I think I played a very solid match. I did a lot of things well," Nadal said.

Nadal, a three-time winner of the Indian Wells title, next faces Serbian qualifier Filip Kra-

jinovic, who ousted 14th-seeded Russian Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 6-2.

Fourth-seeded Roger Federer eased through with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over friend and fellow Swiss Stan Wawrinka.

Federer took his record to 22-3 over Wawrinka, a former world number three who is climbing back up the rankings in the wake of double knee surgery.

"I felt good from the beginning," said Federer, who is coming off his 100th career title at Dubai last month. "For me, the plan worked. I was able to mix

Top-ranked Osaka, Halep crash out of Indian Wells

AFP | Indian Wells

World number one Naomi Osaka crashed out of Indian Wells on Tuesday, routed by Belinda Bencic on a day that saw second-ranked Simona Halep sent packing, too.

Bencic, ranked 23rd in the world, defeated Osaka 6-3, 6-1 to reach the quarter-finals of the prestigious WTA premier mandatory event, where Osaka won her first tour title last year.

That marked the start of a remarkable rise that included Osaka's first Grand Slam title at the US Open. She followed that with an Australian Open crown that sent her to number one.

But she never found her feet against Bencic, whose crisp groundstrokes and precise

service game propelled her to victory in 66 minutes.

The women's field lost its top two seeds as Romania's Halep, the 2015 Indian Wells winner, fell to Czech teenager Marketa Vondrousova 6-2, 3-6, 6-2.

Halep, who received treatment for blisters on her foot during the match, hit just six winners and piled up 36 unforced errors.

Former world number ones Venus Williams and Garbine Muguruza made it into the quarter-finals.

Spain's Muguruza, a two-time Grand Slam champion now ranked 20th in the world, outlasted seventh-ranked Kiki Bertens 5-7, 6-1, 6-4 while Williams, a seven-time Grand Slam winner, beat Germany's Mona Barthel 6-4, 6-4.

up my game, cover my serve, be dangerous on the return -- maybe take some rhythm away from Stan.

"You can't always make it work. Tonight it worked well so I think it was a good match for me," said Federer, who like Djokovic is a five-time winner at Indian Wells.

Federer next faces Britain's Kyle Edmund, who beat Macedonian qualifier Radu Albot 6-3, 6-3.

Poland's 67th-ranked Hubert Hurkacz upset sixth-seeded Kei Nishikori of Japan 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 to reach the last 16 of a Masters 1000 event for the first time.



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