

**Saudi, Palestine draw in landmark West Bank game**

Saudi Arabia's football team played Palestine in the occupied West Bank for the first time on Tuesday. The two met in a qualifier for the 2022 World Cup at the Palestinian national stadium in Al-Ram, playing out a 0-0 draw. **P16**

OP-ED **8**

Trump has handed his enemies their biggest strategic win

THE DAILY **tribune**

Angelina Jolie learned how to be "goofy" from Elle Fanning **14** CELEBS

WORLD **6** Prince William, Kate meet Imran Khan, friend of Diana



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# Beacon of tolerance

'Kingdom's heritage epitomises human values of justice, equality'

**Bahrain attends Brexit meeting**  
 Berlin

Ambassador of the Kingdom to the Federal Republic of Germany, Abdulla Abdullatif Abdulla, participated in the round table of Ambassadors Brexit Impact on the Financial Centre, at the invitation of the Federal Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany in co-operation with Frankfurt Main Finance.

**ARABAL 2019 set**  
 Manama

Aluminium Bahrain, host of the 23rd Arab International Aluminium Conference (ARABAL 2019), that will be held from 19 to 21 November 2019, under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa the Prime Minister, held a Press Conference yesterday to announce the details.



**02** 'Creative Corner' at expo opened

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● **HM the King hailed Bahrain's Tier 1 ranking, for the second consecutive year, as per the US Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TiP) report.**

● **His Majesty lauded Bahrain's respect for all people in their country without any discrimination.**

Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday received, at Al Sakhir Palace, heads of delegations participating in the Government Forum to Combat Trafficking in Persons in the Middle East, organised by the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA), in co-operation with the International Organisation for Migration and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) in the GCC. HM the King welcomed the guests of Bahrain and wished



His Majesty receives heads of delegations, which attended the forum against human trafficking.

them success, taking pride in hosting this importance forum, in a first in the region, describing the event as first-hand opportunity to exchange expertise and practices in the field of combating trafficking in Persons.

HM the King hailed Bahrain's Tier 1 ranking, for the second consecutive year, as per the US Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TiP) report, as the first country in the Middle East and North Africa.

His Majesty lauded the outstanding ranking, which, he said, reflects Bahrain's commit-



**Bahrain will remain a beacon of moderation, committed to building bridges with all countries in the world, regardless of cultures, religions or faiths.**

HIS MAJESTY

ment to international standards, participation in the international community's drive to combat trafficking in persons and foster

the culture of human rights.

The King praised the landmark achievement as the fruit of dedicated work and joint co-ordination between the Foreign Ministry, the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA).

His Majesty recognised all relevant institutions and competent authorities which adopted key initiatives and viable programmes aimed at turning the Kingdom as a global role model for combating trafficking in persons.

HM the King paid tribute to the people of Bahrain, who have been living, all along the Kingdom's history, as closely-knit family, welcoming all visitors in the homeland as their friends, thus reflecting their genuine mettle and deep-rooted and long-standing traditions.

His Majesty lauded Bahrain's respect for all people in their country without any discrimination, stressing their keenness on reaching out to all those living on Bahrain's soil respectfully.

"Protecting dignity and security is an inalienable human right which is inherent in all religions and international laws," His Majesty said, affirming that the Kingdom will always commit to its longstanding heritage that epitomises human values of justice and equality.

"Bahrain will remain a beacon of moderation, committed to building bridges with all countries in the world, regardless of cultures, religions or faiths," HM the King said.

The audience expressed deep thanks and appreciation to HM the King for the warm welcomed and the success of the forum, hailing Bahrain's Tier 1 ranking in the US Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TiP) Report, as the first country in the Middle East and North Africa.

**BIG VICTORY**

## Iran loses to Bahrain in World Cup qualifier

TDT | Manama

Iran suffered a 1-0 loss against Bahrain at match day four of Asia's Round 2 qualifying for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar in Group C yesterday.

Uzbekistani referee Valentin Kovalenko awarded a penalty stroke to Bahrain in the 65th minute, which Mohamed Al Hardan coolly slotted home at Riffa's Bahrain National Stadium.

Iran has already defeated Hong Kong and Cambodia in the competition.

The result means Bahrain now share the summit of the group with Iraq with seven points each, although a superior scoring record sees Iraq



Bahrain won the game (1-0).

claiming the top spot.

Iran dropped to third with six points from three matches and face a challenging trip to Iraq in November, while Bahrain head east to play Hong Kong next.

The eight group winners and four best runners-up will advance to the AFC Asian Cup

China 2023 and the final round of qualifying for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The next best 24 teams from the second round of the joint qualifiers will compete in a separate competition for the remaining 12 slots in the 24-team AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

## Syrian, Russian troops sweep into Manbij

Damascus

Turkey ignored US sanctions and pressed on with its assault on northern Syria yesterday, while the Russia-backed Syrian army roared into one of the most hotly contested cities abandoned by US forces in Donald Trump's retreat.

Reuters journalists accompanied Syrian government forces who entered the centre of the city of Manbij, a flashpoint where US troops had previously conducted joint patrols with Turkey.

Russian and Syrian flags were flying from a building on the city outskirts, and from a convoy of military vehicles. US forces announced they had pulled out of the city.

A week after reversing US policy and moving troops out of

**1,000**

US troops are being withdrawn by Trump administration from Northern Syria.

the way to allow Turkey to attack Washington's Syrian allies, Trump announced a package of sanctions to punish Ankara.

Trump's unexpected decision to withhold protection from Syria's Kurds after a phone call with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan a week ago swiftly upended five years of US policy in the Middle East.

**His Majesty receives envoys' credentials**



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday received the credentials of five new ambassadors during a ceremony held at Al Sakhir Palace. The new envoys are Jerome Cauchard of France, Shaikh Thamer Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah of Kuwait, Tshering Gyaltshen Penjor of Bhutan (Kuwait-resident), Henrik Landerholm of Sweden (Kuwait-resident), and Juraj Koudelka of the Czech Republic (Riyadh-resident). HM King Hamad exchanged welcome statements with the new ambassadors, and hailed the strong bilateral relations and steadily-growing ties binding the Kingdom of Bahrain and their respective brotherly and friendly countries, wishing them every success in performing their diplomatic duties to consolidate relations of co-operation and friendship with Bahrain.

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**‘Creative Corner’ at expo opened**

Manama

Oil Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa yesterday inaugurated the ‘Creativity Corner’ of emerging industrial enterprises.

This came on the sidelines of the Fifth Middle East Process Engineering Conference and Exhibition (MEPEC 2019).

The institutions displayed the latest projects, innovations and new technologies in this vital field.

The minister praised the efforts exerted by the organisers in showcasing distinct industrial initiatives, which was foremost the corner of creativity.

He visited the creative initiatives of companies from different countries of the world, as they gave a full explanation of their creative projects, which were characterised by innovation and exchange of parties for dialogue and discussion in



Shaikh Mohammed tours the ‘Creative Corner’ at the expo.

the various projects aimed at developing their products and emphasising the values added to them.

Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa expressed his admiration for the displayed creativities, stressing the importance of supporting and encouraging such energies, ideas, innovations.

He added that supporting emerging industries will contribute to enhance investment in Bahrain, and will develop the oil sector in general.

The global event is being attended by a group of speakers, dignitaries, CEOs, decision makers, technicians, engineers, academics, local, regional and international universities with the aim of exchanging knowledge, experiences, best practices and modern technologies in order to maintain its competitiveness in the global markets and attracting qualified human resources with experiences able to innovate and develop the future of operations engineering.



Under the patronage of Tamkeen’s CEO Dr Ebrahim Janahi, Bahrain International Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW) has launched its second leading project “Art and Career” at Al Frieih Dar Al Foonon Gallery, in the presence of Shaikh Hisham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, Governor of Capital Governorate, Shaikha Hind bint Salman Al Khalifa, BPW President, BPW board members, Tamkeen officials, diplomats, BPW friends and partners, civil society institutions and representatives. The new “Art and Career” project in Manama incubates 20 talented Bahrainis in the field of perfumes and jewellery accessories, gemstones designing, copper casting design, traditional games, fashion design, image and video documentation, renewing and recycling, beauty art and training centre, interior design, Arabic calligraphy, and bags design.

# Proposal submitted to allocate more nurses 'at public schools'

Public schools facing huge shortage of healthcare staff

● Mr Al Dossary said that the implementation of his proposal would contribute to the protection of students and curbing the spread of diseases among students.

● The shortage worsened following the voluntary retirement of many nurses under the Early Retirement Programme.



Public schools in the Kingdom face shortage of nurses, according to MP.

TDT | Manama

A Bahraini lawmaker has submitted a proposal demanding the Government to allocate more nurses at public schools around the Kingdom, considering the "large numbers of nurses who opted a golden handshake under the Early Retirement Programme". This was submitted by MP Bader Al Dossary, who is the Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Nation-

al Security Committee in the Council of Representatives.

Mr Al Dossary demanded the government, represented by Health Ministry, to urgently provide more male and female nurses at all public schools in the Kingdom.

The lawmaker stated that "there is a shortage of health staff at schools, especially nursing staff, due to the retirement of many of them within the early retirement scheme that was

“ This would also reduce pressure on health centres and hospitals, as well as reduce the frequent absences of students due to transmission of diseases and infections.

MR AL DOSSARY

of Health, which is concerned with providing a nurse in all public schools with the provision of the necessary equipment of first aid and others, would enhance school health and protect students safety," the MP commented.

Mr Al Dossary added, "This would also reduce pressure on health centres and hospitals, as well as reduce the frequent absences of students due to transmission of diseases and infection and eliminate them before spreading in schools, which will contribute to increase the healthcare provided to citizens, which is guaranteed by the Kingdom's Constitution and the government's action plan."

As per Article 86 of the Constitution, which stipulates that

"in all cases which a bill is approved, the President of the Consultative Council shall refer the approved bill to the Prime Minister so that he submits it to His Majesty the King", the proposal will be voted upon by the 40-member council, before it could be referred to the second branch of the Legislative Authority (Shura Council) before being referred to the government.

He also claimed that public schools are witnessing a shortage in the numbers of nurses. Mr Al Dossary said that the implementation of his proposal would contribute to the protection of students and curbing the spread of diseases among students.

"This proposal, in case the government responds to it and is implemented by the Ministry

recently launched by the government".

Parents are demanding that University of Bahrain should immediately give admissions to the affected students in this semester.

"Education is a fundamental right of every citizen as decreed in the Bahrain National law under the auspicious leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa,"

a parent of a student who graduated from Pakistan Urdu School said.

A student told Tribune: "The university kept on giving us hope regarding the admissions. They kept assuring us and because of that we did not apply for admission in any other institute.

"Now, one year of our life will be wasted just because of delays in the procedural delays from the part of the Ministry of Education and the university."

## Students' future in limbo over procedural delays

TDT | Manama

Around 150 students from various Asian schools in the Kingdom are in a limbo as they desperately wait for the outcome of their applications for admissions to the University of Bahrain (UoB).

The students, who graduated from the school this year, experienced delays in getting their certificates accredited by the Education

Ministry and ended up missing the deadlines set by UoB.

This has caused panic among the students and their parents who fear that their children's academic year would be wasted.

Tribune has learnt that a group of parents have been frequently visiting UoB and the Pakistan Embassy, and they have blamed the delayed endorsement/ accreditation procedures, for the troubles.

The parents have expressed se-

“ One year of our life will be wasted just because of delays in the procedural delays from the part of the Ministry of Education and the university.

STUDENT

vere frustration and tension that their children are unable to get admission at the university in the current academic year.

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## Bahraini swindles BD155,000 out of Saudi national

● The Bahraini man was arrested, tried and found guilty for fraud charges.

TDT | Manama

The Lower Criminal Court yesterday sentenced a Bahraini man to two years behind bars and fined him BD5,000 for swindling BD155,000 out of a GCC national businessman after fooling him by claiming that he could get him a bank guarantee worth euro 50 million from a Swiss bank.

According to court files, the defendant did provide his Saudi victim with the bank guarantee, though it was fake.

It's said that the victim wanted to get a loan from a local bank in 2017 but the banks had a list of demands, including providing a bank guarantee.

As a result, the defendant, in his capacity as the operations manager of an international financial institution, offered the victim his help to get him the required bank guarantee, but demanded BD155,000 in return.

"He told me that he would link me with one of the renowned people in Bahrain to get the bank guarantee. I gave him the requested amount and I received the bank guarantee, which was fake."

The victim informed the accused, who said he would get another bank guarantee. "However, he never contacted me back and stopped attending my calls," he added.

Therefore, the Bahraini man was arrested, tried and found guilty for fraud charges.

## Forum focuses on comprehensive emergency system

TDT | Manama

A key conference has recommended the establishment of a comprehensive emergency system in the Kingdom.

The demand came at the Bahrain Emergency Medicine Conference held under the patronage of Prime Minister His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa.

Organised by Bahrain Medical Society and Bahrain Association of Emergency Medicine, the conference was attended by more than 500 participants including 52 experts in emergency medicine from across the world.

The standardisation of emergency practices between various hospitals in the Kingdom of Bahrain will reflect positively on patient's lives and outcomes. This must include prehospital services and within hospitals, the experts observed.

It is also vitally important to unify the triage system between all health organisations in the



Dr Al Qassem and Dr Al Ghanim at the conference.

kingdom to be able to communicate better and more effectively, they said.

"It also recommended to offer higher incentives to all people working in emergency departments being paramedics, physicians, nurses and technicians to encourage everyone to enrol in this new promising specialty."

Dr Ghada Al Qassem, President of Bahrain Medical Society, confirmed that the society in collaboration with the Bahrain Association of Emergency Medicine, will convey and discuss these recommendations with various concerned parties, saying that these recommendations "represents a combination and the outcomes of high level experts in the conference, and we have benefited considerably from their advice and expertise in emergency medicine".

Dr Al Qassem also expressed her satisfaction with the great success of the conference in terms of the number of participants, which reached more than 500 participants, in addition to

the number of speakers from all over the world.

Dr Saleh Al Ghanim, President of the Bahrain Emergency Medicine Association, commented the co-operation between all parties to implement the recommendations of the conference will improve the quality of services provided to patients, especially that emergency physicians are the front lines of any hospital.

He added: "Our slogan for the conference was 'When Seconds Matter, Emergency Physicians Make the Difference' because we believe and value the important rule of emergency physicians in saving lives and we want to raise the standards of emergency physicians to match international levels."

Dr Al Qassem and Dr Al Ghanim at the end of this conference announced that there will be another conference next year, 2020, to continue what they have started and aiming to reach the top of services in emergency medicine practise in the Kingdom.

# 'Artificial Intelligence a major priority of eGovt Programme'

Comprehensive AI national strategy under way to improve government productivity

● Mr AlQaed said that the Kingdom's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector has experienced major advances under His Majesty's reign.

● A workshop by international experts is planned for November in co-operation with Economic Development Board (EDB) and the World Economic Forum.

Manama

Information and eGovernment Authority (iGA) Chief Executive Mohammed Ali AlQaed said that the speech of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa at the opening of the second session of the fifth Legislative Term of the Shura and Representatives councils, was a reaffirmation of the institutionalisation of democratic life under the reform pro-

cess lead by HM the King and with the support of the government of HRH Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa the Prime Minister, and the supervision of HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr AlQaed said that the Kingdom's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector has experienced major advances under His Majesty's reign, built upon a solid IT infrastructure and a supportive legislative environment that is in line with current developments.

All of these factors enhance the effectiveness and performance



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**The application of AI technologies is among the priorities of the eGovernment programme in the upcoming phase and the development process is continuing.**

MR ALQAEED

of the government sector, empowering national cadres to offer advanced government eServices to the community and placing the

Kingdom firmly among advanced countries in the ICT field, the official observed.

He noted that His Majesty's

speech was a roadmap for iGA going forward, stressing the Kingdom's technical readiness that qualifies to directly focus on improving its digital economy and Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities.

“The application of AI technologies is among the priorities of the eGovernment programme in the upcoming phase and the development process is continuing,” he added.

Mr AlQaed said that a comprehensive AI national strategy is being formulated to improve government productivity and create a work environment that encourages innovation.

A workshop by international

experts is planned for November in co-operation with Economic Development Board (EDB) and the World Economic Forum to consider the possibility of applying a number of successful international AI initiatives in the government sector.

He said that iGA continues to develop infrastructure in accordance with best international practice to support cloud computing migration across the Kingdom.

The focus of iGA's next phase is to speed up the transition towards a digital economy in partnership with all relevant sectors, and in implementation of His Majesty's vision.

## Deadline alert for all real estate evaluators

Manama

Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the CEO of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA), has urged real estate evaluators to apply for a RERA licence as the November 2, 2019 deadline is fast approaching.

Shaikh Mohammed said evaluators play a very important role in the overall real estate ecosystem and therefore licensing, professionalising and regulating

this category is essential.

When RERA was launched on 1 March 2018, the initial focus was on the licensing of developers, off-plan sales developments, real estate brokers and sales agents.

In the quarter four of 2018 licensing requirements and regulations were extended to property managers and owners association managers.

All providers of real estate evaluation services are required to hold a RERA licence by November 2, 2019 as it is a legal

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**More stringent regulation and professionalisation of the real estate evaluation sector is critical and will benefit the wider Bahrain economy.**

SHAIKH MOHAMMED

requirement.

The RERA CEO added the more stringent regulation and professionalisation of the real estate evaluation sector is critical and will benefit the wider Bahrain economy and the financial services sector in particular as valuations will have to be conducted by suitably qualified and expert licensed valuers in accordance with international valuation standards.

All licensed evaluators are required to attend the Valua-

tion Standards and Regulations course which take place on November 20 and 21 in English and on November 24 and 25 in Arabic. To register, licensed evaluators should send mail at realestate@bibf.com.

Providers of valuation services are encouraged to visit the RERA website [www.rera.gov.bh](http://www.rera.gov.bh) for full information on the licence application process, continuous professional development obligations and other useful information.

## ICRF Autumn Fest set

TDI | Manama

After the grand success of “ICRF Workers' Day 2019 – Summer Fest” in which more than 800 workers participated and enjoyed, the Indian Community Relief Fund (ICRF) is holding another event for the workers called “ICRF Workers' Day 2019 – Autumn Fest”.

The event will be held on Friday, October 25, 2019, starting from 2pm to 8pm followed by a dinner, at the Indian School premises, Isa Town.

“We intend to create an atmosphere of celebrations and enjoyment for the low-income workers, in turn improving their morale and create awareness on support systems available by the community for them,” ICRF said in a statement issued.

The workers will enjoy indoor and outdoor games and other fun-filled activities, including tug of war, running race, sack race, karaoke singing, spot quiz, cinematic dance and many more attractions, the statement added.

“In addition to the above entertainments, we shall have gift hampers for each attendees and special gifts for the winners as well.”

ICRF has established a big team comprising Pankaj Malik and M K Siraj as general conveners and Sudher Thirunilath, Subair Kannur, Nasser Manjeri, Pavithran Neeleswaram, Jawad Pasha, Muralikrishnan, K T Salim, D Siva Kumar, Anish Sreedhar as joint conveners for this purpose.

ICRF is a non-government, non-profit organisation established in 1999, working under the patronage of Indian Ambassador to the Kingdom for the general welfare of the Indian workers in Bahrain.

“Our mission is to give a helping hand to the economically weaker section of the Indian community in Bahrain. This includes legal aid, emergency help, community welfare services, medical assistance and counselling,” the fund said.

## Updating accounting practices



Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, Auditor General of the National Audit Office (NAO) yesterday received Abbas Radhi, Chairman of the Bahrain Accountants Association and his accompanying delegation. They discussed the latest developments and initiatives in updating accounting practices to keep abreast of the digital revolution in this sector. They reviewed the association's role in developing the accounting profession to cope with international as well as local requirements through the organisation of seminars, lectures and sponsorship of scientific research in various fields of accounting and auditing. They examined ways of enhancing co-operation in the field of capacity building for the benefit of the financial community in Bahrain and to keep pace with the changing requirements in this field.

## Bahrain's commitment to all UNSC resolutions stressed

Manama

The National Committee for Follow-Up on the Kingdom of Bahrain's Commitment to All Security Council Resolutions convened its fourth meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday presided by the Ministry's Undersecretary for International Affairs Dr Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, with the participation of members of the committee representing the relevant ministries and government bodies.

At the outset of the meeting, Dr Shaikh Abdullah thanked the members of the committee and their respective bodies on their active and distinguished participation in the “workshop to safeguard non-profit sector from terrorist abuse” which was held in



Dr Shaikh Abdullah chairs the meeting.

the Kingdom between the 3rd-4th of September, in partnership with experts from the United Nations Office on Counter-Terrorism and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force

(MENAFATF), as well as representatives of 19 bodies with a total of 83 participants, including representatives of civil society organisations, banks and financial institutions.

The meeting reviewed the outcomes of the working groups emanating from the National Committee, and the efforts exerted in establishing integrated system related to the implementation of the

UN Security Council resolutions in accordance with the expected standards and requirements.

During the meeting, they also exchanged view on the mechanisms of completing the committee's work plan for this year in line with the aspirations and programs of the relevant ministries and government agencies.

The undersecretary pointed out that the National Committee continues to exert efforts to follow-up the UN Security Council resolutions, namely combating terrorism. He added that the Committee works on enhancing coordination with the relevant bodies in the Kingdom, as well as taking all the necessary measures in this regard and in line with the partnership with the United Nations.

WORLD  
world

## Russia bids farewell to first man who walked in space

Mytishchi | Russia

Hundreds of people including Russian and US astronauts and top officials bid farewell yesterday to Alexei Leonov, a legendary Soviet cosmonaut who was the first man to perform a spacewalk.

Thomas Stafford, an 89-year-old retired NASA astronaut, Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman to travel into space, and Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu were among those gathered for a funeral with military honours just outside Moscow.

Fellow astronauts took turns praising the Soviet space icon next to a flag-draped casket that bore Leonov's body at the military memorial cemetery in Mytishchi.

Soviet cosmonaut Tereshkova called Leonov, who died in Moscow on Friday aged 85 after a long illness, a true friend.

"It's hard to come to terms with the fact that we have to say goodbye to you today," said the 82-year-old Tereshkova.

In his speech Stafford, who shared a historic handshake with Leonov in space

-- at the height of the Cold War in 1975 -- said he would never forget the Russian.

The two men took part in the groundbreaking Apollo-Soyuz mission that opened a new era of space cooperation between the Soviet Union and US. Leonov was commander of the Soyuz 19 spacecraft and Stafford commanded the Apollo. Leonov also helped Stafford adopt two Russian boys.

"A great patriot has left us," Russian cosmonaut Sergei Krikalev said at the memorial service. On March 18, 1965, at the age of 30, Leonov made history when he left a spacecraft during the Voskhod 2 mission for a spacewalk that lasted 12 minutes and nine seconds.

That spacewalk nearly killed him as his spacesuit became inflated due to the lack of atmospheric pressure. He had to bleed off some of the oxygen in his suit, risking oxygen starvation.

His return to Earth also nearly ended in tragedy when Leonov and pilot Pavel Belyayev were forced to crash-land deep in the Russian woods.

## 85 civilians killed, 373 wounded during Afghan election campaign

● On polling day alone, 28 civilians were killed

● Children accounted for more than one-third of the victims

● Preliminary results are due Saturday

AFP | Kabul

Hundreds of people were killed or wounded in violence related to Afghanistan's recent presidential election season as the Taliban sought to undermine the democratic process, a UN agency said yesterday.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reported that 85 people were killed and another 373 wounded in election violence during the period from June 8 to September 30.

On polling day alone, 28 civilians were killed and 249 injured. Children accounted for more than one-third of the victims.

Despite the high toll, Afghan security forces said election day was a success because the Taliban failed to pull off any large-scale attacks that stole the headlines.

The majority of Taliban attacks involved the use of rock-



Twenty-eight civilians were killed and 249 injured on polling day alone in Afghanistan's presidential election

ets, grenades and mortars, as well as homemade bombs planted near polling centres, including schools, the report found.

On July 28, the same day as the election campaign started, militants targeted the office of Ghani's running mate Amrullah Saleh in Kabul, killing 21 people and wounding another 50.

"These attacks, along with public statements made by the Taliban, revealed a deliberate campaign intended to undermine the electoral process and deprive Afghan citizens of their right to participate in

this important political process, freely and without fear," Tadamichi Yamamoto, the UN secretary-general's special representative for Afghanistan, said in a statement.

The casualty figures are actually a substantial improvement on the run-up to parliamentary elections held a year ago, when UNAMA tallied 226 deaths and 781 injuries.

Final election turnout figures have yet to be released but it appears participation in this year's first round presidential vote is at record low levels.

Voters stayed away, wary of repeated Taliban threats to attack polling stations and also despondent about the chances of their ballots being fairly counted in a country that has seen systemic and large-scale electoral fraud.

The Independent Election Commission however insists multiple safeguards including biometric verification will make this year's vote the cleanest yet.

Preliminary results are due Saturday, though officials have suggested this date will be pushed back a few days.

The race is seen as a two-horse steeplechase between President Ashraf Ghani and his top rival Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah.

If no one wins a majority of more than 50 percent, the elections will go to a second round.

“These attacks, along with public statements made by the Taliban, revealed a deliberate campaign intended to undermine the electoral process and deprive Afghan citizens of their right

TADAMICHI YAMAMOTO  
THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR AFGHANISTAN



Former NASA astronaut Tom Stafford, assisted by Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova, paid tribute to friend and colleague Leonov

## High on ease, low on nutrition: instant-noodle diet harms Asian kids

● Indonesia was the world's second-biggest consumer of instant noodles, behind China, with 12.5 billion servings in 2018, according to the World Instant Noodles Association

● Sugar-rich biscuits, beverages and fast food also pose problems in these countries

Manila

A diet heavy on cheap, modern food like instant noodles that fills bellies but lacks key nutrients has left millions of children unhealthily thin or overweight in southeast Asia, experts say.

The Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia have booming economies and rising standards of living, yet many working parents do not have the time, money or awareness to steer clear of food hurting their kids.

In those three nations, an average of 40 percent of children aged five and below are malnourished, higher than the



Instant noodles are low on essential nutrients and micronutrients like iron and are also protein-deficient while having high fat and salt content, experts say

global average of one-in-three, according to a report out Tuesday from UNICEF, the UN children's agency.

"Parents believe that filling their children's stomach is the most important thing. They don't really think about an adequate intake of protein, calcium or fibre," Hasbullah Thabrany, a public health expert in Indonesia, said.

UNICEF said the harm done to children is both a symptom of past deprivation and a predictor of future poverty, while iron deficiency impairs a child's ability to learn and raises a woman's risk of death during or shortly

after childbirth.

To give some sense of scale to the problem, Indonesia had 24.4 million children under five last year, while the Philippines had 11 million and Malaysia 2.6 million, UNICEF data show.

Muenei Mutunga, UNICEF Asia nutrition specialist, traced the trend back to families ditching traditional diets for affordable, accessible and easy-to-prepare "modern" meals.

"Noodles are easy. Noodles are cheap. Noodles are quick and an easy substitute for what should have been a balanced diet," she said.



Instant noodles are big business in many parts of Asia

'Poverty is key'

The noodles, which cost as little as 23 US cents a packet in Manila, are low on essential nutrients and micronutrients like iron and are also protein-deficient while having high fat and salt content, Mutunga added.

Indonesia was the world's second-biggest consumer of instant noodles, behind China, with 12.5 billion servings in 2018, according to the World Instant Noodles Association.

The figure is more than the total consumed by India and Japan put together. Nutrient-rich

fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy, fish and meat are disappearing from diets as the rural population moves to the cities in search of jobs, the UNICEF report said.

Though the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia are all considered middle-income countries by World Bank measures, tens of millions of their people struggle to make enough money to live.

"Poverty is the key issue," said T. Jayabalan, a public health expert in Malaysia, adding that households where both parents work need quickly made meals. Low-income households in Malaysia depend largely on ready-made noodles, sweet pota-

toes and soya-based products as their major meals, he said.

Sugar-rich biscuits, beverages and fast food also pose problems in these countries, according to experts.

Rolling back the influence instant noodles have on the daily lives, and health, of people in southeast Asia will likely require government intervention, they said.

"Promotion and advertising is extremely aggressive," said Thabrany, the Indonesian public health expert.

"There is massive distribution. They (instant noodles) are available everywhere, even in the most remote places."

# Public buses return to Tripoli after 30 yrs

● Imported from China, the brand new vehicles will make their first trips in the coming days

● Equipped with wifi and air conditioning, the blue and white buses will run 20 routes

## Tripoli

**P**arked in a hangar in downtown Tripoli, some 35 buses awaited this week's launch of a new urban public transport scheme -- the first in the Libyan capital in three decades.

Imported from China, the brand new vehicles will make their first trips in the coming days, across a city that for six months has lived with the deadly rhythm of combat in its outer suburbs.

Since April, eastern strongman Khalifa Haftar has been battling forces loyal to the UN-recognised Government of National Accord for control of Tripoli.

Equipped with wifi and air conditioning, the blue and white buses will run 20 routes, from Janzour 15 kilometres (nine miles) west of Tripoli to Tajoura, 12 kilometres east of the city. Another route will travel 25 kilometres south to the airport (though the facility is not operational).

Transport company Al-Sahem -- whose name means arrow -- wants residents to re-embrace public transport as a way to reduce congestion in this Mediterranean city where urbanisation sprawls along the coast.

With commutes lengthening,



Public buses are returning to the streets of the Libyan capital for the first time in three decades

increasingly dilapidated private transport options aren't meeting people's needs, said al-Sahem head Aboubakr Qormane.

"We urgently need to re-establish public transport services in Tripoli, a city that has suffered in its absence," he said.

The system will "prioritise workers who need public transport the most... reducing congestion during rush hour," he said.

## Traffic jams

Every day, Mohamed al-Bouzedi commutes via minibuses or ancient taxi from his home in Janzour to his clothing shop in town.

"There hasn't been public transport in Tripoli for decades... this project will be really helpful to residents," said al-Bouzedi, whose journey is often punctuated by breakdowns and traffic jams.

"Modern buses should help me get to my shop in less time. I'm eager to try it," he said.

Until now, those without a car have had the choice between taking a taxi or relying on rundown private minibuses -- known locally as Ivecos after their manufacturer -- which ply the main roads.

Qormane said al-Sahem had contracted Chinese manufacturer King Long to provide 145 vehicles over two years at a cost of \$13 million (11.8 million euros).

Selecting the capital for al-Sahem's pilot project was a logical choice, Qormane said: "A third of Libya's population lives in Tripoli and its roads present no great challenges, beyond a general disregard for the road code."

After launching its Tripoli project, Al-Sahem hopes to introduce intercity lines, in particular connecting isolated southern cities dotted across a vast desert landscape in a country of more than 1.7 million km<sup>2</sup>.

## Insecurity

With fighting still imperilling

certain districts around Tripoli, shopkeeper al-Bouzedi worries for the future of a public bus project.

"The situation on the outskirts of Tripoli, particularly in the southern suburbs, is bad. Rocket fire is indiscriminate and



Tripoli's streets are notoriously clogged with three million vehicles in a city of two million people, where petrol costs 10 cents a litre

unpredictable. It would be tragic if a rocket hit a bus filled with 40 passengers," he said.

Another obstacle to the transport network is more mundane: severe traffic clogs Tripoli's roads daily.

In an oil-rich country, where subsidised petrol costs about 10 cents a litre (less than bottled water), the average household owns two to three cars.

In Tripoli alone, the number of privately-owned vehicles has more than tripled in less than a decade, jumping from 600,000 in 2010 to two million this year.

Together with municipal vehicles, taxis and minibuses, the number rises to three million -- in a city of two million inhabitants.

But if buses will be a boon for most citizens, some taxi drivers worry for their future earnings.

Abdel Mohayem fears he could be forced to sell his cab if his passengers prefer the bus, the driver said.

"Many will be affected by this project... even if it does reduce traffic jams and travel time," he said.

## Hong Kong leader rules out concessions in face of escalating violence



Carrie Lam

Reuters | Hong Kong

**E**mbattled Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam yesterday ruled out making any concessions to pro-democracy protesters in the face of escalating violence, which police said was now "life threatening" citing the detonation of a small bomb.

"I have said on many occasions that violence will not give us the solution. Violence would only breed more violence," Lam told a news conference.

"For concessions to be made simply because of escalating violence will only make the situation worse. On the other hand, we should consider every means to end the violence."

Protesters have five main demands, which include universal suffrage and an independent inquiry into what they say has been excessive force by police in dealing with the demonstrations.

Hong Kong has been rocked by four months of unrest.

# Prince William, Kate meet Imran Khan, friend of Diana



Prince William, Catherine, Imran Khan pose after a meeting in Islamabad



William and Catherine attend a meeting with President of Pakistan, Arif Alvi, at the Presidential Palace in Islamabad



William and Catherine arrive at Margalla Hills in Islamabad

Reuters | Islamabad

**B**ritain's Prince William and his wife Kate yesterday met Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan, a former international cricket star who the prince played cricket with in London as a child.

The royal couple, on a five-day visit, also toured a school and a national park in the capital Islamabad where they chatted with children and admired their drawings.

The trip, which focuses on climate change and access to education, has been described by palace officials as the most complex the couple have undertaken due to security issues.

Yesterday afternoon, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge met Khan at his official residence. William's mother Princess Diana, a hugely popular figure in Pakistan, visited Pakistan several times in the 1990s and helped Khan raise money for a cancer hospital.

Earlier William and Kate met students at an Islamabad Model College for Girls, discussing education with a group of older students and visiting the classrooms of younger students.

As they left, a group of girls sang one of Pakistan's national songs and the couple greeted preschoolers who had lined up to chant 'bye bye'.

They then visited the Mar-

gallah Hills National Park on the edge of Islamabad, which is under threat from poaching, wildfires, invasive species and littering.

For the morning events, Kate wore a periwinkle blue silk shalwar kameez, the national outfit of Pakistan consisting of a loose tunic worn over trousers. Many on social media and in the fashion industry had been hoping she would don the outfit, which Princess Diana had worn during visits.

The designer, Maheen Khan said on Twitter: "It is an honor to have been asked to create this outfit for the Duchess."

The Duchess of Cambridge's fashion choices, including a

bright green tunic over white pants to meet with the Prime Minister, appeared to echo many of the colours and outfits worn by Diana.

Foreign policy experts and officials have said the trip, the first by a British royal family member in more than a decade and made at the request of the British foreign office, represented a soft power push, which may help both sides further their diplomatic aims.

It comes as Britain seeks to reinvigorate its foreign relationships as the deadline looms for its departure from the European Union, while Pakistan works to repair its global image to boost tourism and investment.

# Dutch family found in cellar 'waiting for end of time'

Local media said the family were found after one of the sons went to a nearby pub in a confused state, drank five beers and then asked for help, saying he had not been outside for nine years

AFP | The Hague

Dutch police found a father and six adult children hidden in the basement of a remote farmhouse where they had reportedly spent years "waiting for the end of time", officials said yesterday.

They discovered a man, be-



The family lived isolated in the farm for nine years

lieved to be the father of the family, and his children aged between 18 and 25 near the village of Ruinerwold in the northern province of Drenthe.

Local media said the family were found after one of the sons went to a nearby pub in a confused state, drank five beers and then asked for help, saying he had not been outside for nine years.

Police arrested a 58-year-old

man at the scene for failing to cooperate with the investigation, but he was not the father.

"I have never come across anything like this before," local mayor Roger de Groot told a press conference.

"Police investigated after receiving a tip-off from somebody who was concerned about the people's living conditions" and discovered the adults, de Groot said.

"They lived an isolated lifestyle," he said, adding that they had been living on the homestead for the past nine years and several of the children "had not been taken up in the birthing register" or officially registered.

Many questions were unanswered and police are investigating "all scenarios", the mayor added.

The family meanwhile had been taken to a nearby holiday

Upon investigation police discovered a hidden staircase behind a cupboard leading to a cellar where a man said to be the family's father and five others, believed to be his children, were hiding

park while the investigation continued, reports said.

## 'Living in a basement'

Local news station RTV Drenthe, which first reported the story, said the family "have been living in a basement for years, waiting for the 'end of times'."

Some of those freed "had no idea that other people existed," the station added.

Police were alerted after a man of around 25, believed to be the family's oldest son, walked into a village bar on Sunday evening.

The dishevelled man, unwashed and wearing old clothes said "he has not been 'outside' for the past nine years," bar owner Chris Westerbeek told RTV Drenthe.

"He said he'd never been to

school and seemed very confused. He spoke in a childish way," said Westerbeek.

The man told Westerbeek he ran away from home and urgently needed help, "so I phoned the police."

Upon investigation police discovered a hidden staircase behind a cupboard leading to a cellar where a man said to be the family's father and five others, believed to be his children, were hiding.

Aerial photos showed a remote farmhouse surrounded by fields.

The family had no contact with the outside world and were completely self-reliant with a vegetable garden and a goat, RTV Drenthe said.

"The father had a stroke a few years ago and was lying in bed. There was no sign of his wife," RTV Drenthe reported.

Neighbours told the station they did not know the family and they only knew that one man lived on the premises.

Police declined to give further details when contacted.

"All scenarios are being investigated. At this point we cannot give further information," local police said on Twitter.

# Swiss glaciers shrink 10 per cent in five years: study

Geneva

Switzerland's glaciers have lost a tenth of their volume in the past five years alone -- a melting rate unmatched during observations stretching back more than a century, a study showed yesterday.

Measurements on 20 Swiss glaciers have shown that melt rates this year have reached "record levels", according to the annual study on the state of the glaciers, published by the Cryospheric Commission at the Swiss Academy of Sciences.

The study, released amid growing global alarm over climate change, found that intense heatwaves over the summer in Switzerland had dashed hopes that an exceptionally snow-filled winter would limit the



The new study on Switzerland's melting glaciers comes less than a month after a "funeral march" was held on a steep mountainside to mark the disappearance of the Pizol glacier

glacier melt this year.

The commission said that in April and May, snow cover on the glaciers was between 20 and 40 percent higher than usual,

with depths of up to six metres measured in some places as late as June.

But during two weeks of intense heat at the end of June and



A recent study by glaciologists at the ETH technical university in Zurich indicated that more than 90 percent of the some 4,000 glaciers dotted throughout the Alps could disappear by the end of this century if greenhouse gas emissions are not reined in.

again in late July, "the volume of snow and ice melting on Swiss glaciers ... was equivalent to the country's total annual consumption of drinking water," it said in a statement.

The result, it said, was that the thick snow layer quickly disappeared and the strong melt continued until early September.

"This means that, over the past 12 months, around two percent of Switzerland's total glacier volume has been lost," the commission said, adding that the rate of loss over the past five years "exceeds 10 per cent."

That marks "a rate of decline never previously observed in the time series extending back for more than a century," it said.

## Queen attends service for Westminster Abbey's 750th anniversary

Reuters | London

Queen Elizabeth attended a service at London's Westminster Abbey on Tuesday to mark 750 years since King Edward the Confessor's original church on the site was rebuilt during the reign of Henry III and consecrated in 1269.

The Anglo-Saxon abbey was where Elizabeth was crowned in 1953, where her grandson Prince William and his wife Kate were married in 2011 and where 17 British monarchs are buried.

# Four-metre king cobra wrestled from sewer in Thailand

Bangkok

A feisty four-metre (13-foot) king cobra was pulled from a sewer in southern Thailand in an hour-long operation, a rescue foundation said yesterday, describing the reptile as one of the largest they had ever captured.

Footage of the daring capture showed a man chasing the cobra -- the world's longest venomous snake -- into a dark and cramped drainage pipe.

The cobra splashed around in water and tried to slither back into the pipe, but was pulled out by the tail after multiple attempts.

A security guard on the housing estate where it was found first alerted the rescue group on Sunday.

"Seven rescue workers, including me, went there," said Kritkamon Kanghae, 26, adding that the estate was built on a plot that was once jungle.

Kritkamon said the snake was more than four metres long,



Krabi Pitakpracha Foundation snake rescuers released the giant cobra into the wild after capturing it



A rescuer grabbed the king cobra by its tail as it attempted to flee into a drainage pipe



A Krabi Pitakpracha Foundation snake handler holds the four-metre (13 feet) king cobra he pulled from a sewer in southern Thailand

weighed 15 kilos (33 pounds), and was the third-largest they had found.

It was later released into the wild.

Thailand is teeming with reptiles, and several species of cobra are native to the southeast Asian country.

References to the deadly snake fill folklore.

The main international airport was built on an area that used to be called "Cobra's Swamp".

Snakes have increasingly become a headache for residents in the Thai capital, where the fire department is sent out to respond to calls from alarmed residents.

Authorities are reluctant to get rid of the reptiles because they help to control a rat population that could otherwise threaten crops and food stocks.

King cobras, however, mainly feed on other snakes -- particularly the rat snake.

# Trump has handed his enemies their biggest strategic win

*The US president's indifference is massively emboldening Iran and extremist groups such as ISIS*

HUSSEIN IBISH

**W**e've seen this show before. It doesn't end well. In fact, it doesn't really end at all.

If US President Donald Trump hopes his decision to move US troops almost entirely out of Syria and allow Turkey to attack pro-US Kurdish forces will extricate the US from Syria, he is going to be disappointed.

In 2011, then president Barack Obama withdrew US troops from western Iraq, following the military surge that crushed Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia (AQM). By 2014, the terrorist group had morphed into ISIS and created the "caliphate" that forced the US intervention Mr Trump is now vowing to end.

The US president, a former reality TV producer and star, does not think in policy terms. He is fixated on reality as refracted through television news and seems to care only about how his supporters will react to the news cycle.

But when the dust settles, Washington is going to have to deal with the real world on a policy basis.

While decrying "endless wars", Mr Trump has repeatedly identified two imperative US interests in the region: combating Iran's expanding hegemony and defeating terrorist organisations like Al Qaeda and ISIS.

What he doesn't seem to grasp is that the US presence in Syria – amounting to about 1,000 troops – is crucial to both of those agendas.

Turkey kept threatening to attack Washington's Kurdish allies but would never have done so without Mr Trump's acquiescence. It was bluffing but Mr Trump again proved an easy mark. Betrayed by the US, the Kurds have reluctantly struck a deal with the Assad regime in return for protection. Yesterday,



A Turkish military vehicle on the outskirts of Tal Abyad on the border with Turkey.

day, Syrian troops were moving towards the Turkish border in what could become a bloodbath for civilians, especially those opposed to the regime.

Now that a massive Turkish attack against the Kurds is under way and the Syrian regime is on a collision course with Turkish-backed troops, the worst actors in the Middle East will directly and immediately benefit, starting with ISIS.

Tens of thousands of captured terrorists and their relatives are being guarded by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, who were the foot soldiers in the US-led campaign to crush ISIS's so-called caliphate.

These dangerous extremists are already escaping and conducting terrorist attacks, primarily against their Kurdish former captors. As Turkey's attack expands, the SDF cannot defend themselves and their vil-

lages while continuing to guard these prisoners.

On Saturday, a senior SDF commander said the coalition forces would be redeploying troops to defend against the Turkish attack and could no longer prioritise guarding ISIS sympathisers escaping a camp in north-east Syria. Many more of the tens of thousands of ISIS prisoners and their families currently being held are likely to escape, be released in desperation or be summarily executed.

Moreover, the sectarian, ethnic and communal violence being unleashed by Turkey in northern Syria will destabilise the area for many years to come. It has already led to a resurgence of violence by ISIS, which could not have asked for a better scenario to revive its fortunes.

As Mr Trump withdrew US

**The world is being shaped by Mr Trump's new reality show. Brace yourself for a rerun of a tragic and terrible episode. We have seen it several times before.**

forced to abandon efforts to pull all American troops out of Syria completely. For now, the position of the US administration is that all troops will be withdrawn, except for those in Al Tanf.

Mr Trump's indifference, or even hostility, to the US mission in Syria is massively emboldening Iran in its strategically crucial quest to create a secure military corridor linking Iran to Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea via the Iraqi-Syrian border.

While the world's attention has been understandably focused on the Turkish threats and subsequent invasion in Syria's north, Iran has been intensifying its grip on strategic areas to the south, near key border crossings that it already controls on the Iraqi side.

It is constructing two new major military facilities in Mayadin and Abukamal. The

goal is to control the existing road networks from Abukamal to the T2 oil pumping facility in Deir Ezzor near Mayadin, on to the T4 station and airbase in Tiyyas, east of Homs, and then south to the Lebanese border and the Hezbollah-dominated Bekaa Valley.

Iran's considerable and highly alarming progress in securing its control over these strategically vital routes was signalled by the re-opening, after more than five years, of the crossing between Al Qaim in Iraq and Abukamal in Syria. Pro-Iran Iraqi militias are now dominant on both sides.

The Al Tanf crossing and highway is even more important and only the US forces stationed there currently prevent Iran from doing the same there.

Mr Trump does not seem to grasp that removing the modest contingent of US forces from Syria would create ideal conditions for the resurgence of ISIS and for Iran to quietly consolidate its "land bridge" to Lebanon and the Mediterranean. Both scenarios are already happening.

By facilitating this attack on pro-US Kurdish-led forces, who lost up to 11,000 fighters in the battle against ISIS, and worse, by withdrawing US forces from Syria entirely, the American president is handing his two stated enemies the biggest strategic wins they have had in many years.

If the past is prologue, then the consequences of this fiasco are easily predictable.

The big winners will be ISIS and Iran. US forces might even have to return to the areas they are now leaving.

The world is being shaped by Mr Trump's new reality show. Brace yourself for a rerun of a tragic and terrible episode. We have seen it several times before.

## CIVILIAN'S TRIBUNE

### The proud son of India

**I**ndian-American Abhijit Banerjee, his wife Esther Duflo, and Michael Kremer have jointly won the Economics Nobel for the year 2019 for their "experimental approach to alleviating global poverty."

He is the eighth Indian-born person to win a Nobel.

Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee is the Ford Foundation International Professor of Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US.

Born in Kolkata, Dr Banerjee's parents were also economics professors. After his post-graduation from JNU, he obtained his PhD in economics from Harvard University. He specialised in developmental economics.



In 2003, he founded the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), along with Esther Duflo and Sendhil Mullainathan, and he remains one of the lab's directors. J-PAL has carried out 568 field experiments, or Randomised Control Trials (RCTs), in 10 years in several countries, including India. This includes pollution control audit in Gujarat, MNREGA experiments, and a series of partnerships with the government of Tamil Nadu.

He also served on the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Dr Banerjee is the co-author of the award-winning Poor Economics. The

book, which was co-authored by his wife and fellow Nobel Laureate Esther Duflo, delves deep into the lives of the world's poorest and argues that poverty eradication begins with understanding the daily decisions facing the poor.

Dr Banerjee was one of the economists consulted for formulating NYAY or Nyuntam Aay Yojana, a flagship scheme promised by Congress in its 2019 election manifesto that ambitiously aimed to provide basic income to the poorest 20 per cent of India's population.

Dr Banerjee also won the inaugural Infosys Prize in 2009 for economics.

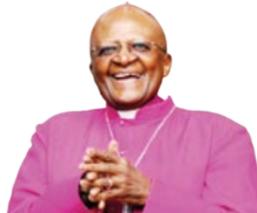
**K R Chandrasekharan**

1978

**Pope John Paul II** becomes the first non-Italian pontiff since 1523.

1984

**Desmond Tutu** is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.



1991

**George Hennard** runs amok in Killeen, Texas, killing 23 and wounding 20.

1995

The Million Man March takes place in Washington, D.C. About **837,000** attended.



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Democrats are allowing no transparency at the Witch Hunt hearings. If Republicans ever did this they would be excoriated by the Fake News. Let the facts come out from the charade of people, most of whom I do not know, they are interviewing for 9 hours each, not selective leaks.

@realDonaldTrump

02



When we are in the White House we will put a moratorium on deportations. Millions of immigrants like Edith living in constant fear is not what this country is about.

@BernieSanders

03



Congrats on being selected the @BCCI President, Dadi. I am sure you will continue to serve Indian Cricket like you always have! Best wishes to the new team that will take charge.

@sachin\_rt

04



Through the power of their vote, the people of Haryana will give a befitting reply to Congress for giving priority to petty politics over national interest.

@narendramodi

*Thousands have been driven out of their homes because their numbers pose a major demographic threat to the state*

# Bedouin mass eviction is part of Israel's dangerous plans



Farag Younis, a professional Bedouin shepherd who tends a flock in Rahat.

JONATHAN COOK

The decades-long struggle by tens of thousands of Israelis against being uprooted from their homes – some for the second or third time – should be proof enough that Israel is not the western-style liberal democracy it claims to be.

Last week 36,000 Bedouin – all of them Israeli citizens – discovered that their state is about to make them refugees in their own country, driving them into holding camps. These Israelis, it seems, are the wrong kind.

Their treatment has painful echoes of the past. In 1948, 750,000 Palestinians were expelled by the Israeli army outside the borders of the newly declared Jewish state established on their homeland – what the Palestinians call their Nakba, or catastrophe.

Israel is regularly criticised for its belligerent occupation, its relentless expansion of illegal settlements on Palestinian land and its repeated and savage military attacks, especially on Gaza.

On rare occasions, analysts also notice Israel's systematic discrimination against the 1.8 million Palestinians whose ancestors survived the Nakba and live inside Israel, ostensibly as citizens.

But each of these abuses is dealt with in isolation, as though unrelated, rather than as different facets of an overarching project. A pattern is discernible, one driven by an ideology that dehumanises Palestinians everywhere Israel encounters them.

That ideology has a name. Zionism provides the thread that connects the past – the Nakba – with

Israel's current ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from their homes in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, the destruction of Gaza, and the state's concerted efforts to drive Palestinian citizens of Israel out of what is left of their historic lands and into ghettos.

The logic of Zionism, even if its more naive supporters fail to grasp it, is to replace Palestinians with Jews – what Israel officially terms Judaisation.

The Palestinians' suffering is not some unfortunate side effect of conflict. It is the very aim of Zionism: to incentivise Palestinians still in place to leave "voluntarily", to escape further suffocation and misery.

The starkest example of this people replacement strategy is Israel's long-standing treatment of 250,000 Bedouin who formally have citizenship.

The Bedouin are the poorest group in Israel, living in isolated communities mainly in the vast, semi-arid area of the Negev, the country's south. Largely out of view, Israel has had a relatively free hand in its efforts to "replace" them.

That was why, for a decade after it had supposedly finished its 1948 ethnic cleansing operations and won recognition in western capitals, Israel continued secretly expelling thousands of Bedouin outside its borders, despite their claim on citizenship.

Meanwhile, other Bedouin in Israel were forced off their ancestral lands to be driven either into confined holding areas or state-planned townships that became the most deprived communities in Israel.

**These interminable expulsions look less like a necessary, considered policy and more like an ugly, ideological nervous tic.**

It is hard to cast the Bedouin, simple farmers and pastoralists, as a security threat, as was done with the Palestinians under occupation.

But Israel has a much broader definition of security than simple physical safety. Its security is premised on the maintenance of an absolute demographic dominance by Jews.

The Bedouin may be peaceable but their numbers pose a major demographic threat and their pastoral way of life obstructs the fate intended for them – penning them up tightly inside ghettos.

Most of the Bedouin have title deeds to their lands that long pre-date Israel's creation. But Israel has refused to honour these claims and many tens of thousands have been criminalised by the state, their villages denied legal recognition.

For decades they have been forced to live in tin shacks or tents because the authorities refuse to approve proper homes and they are denied public services like schools, water and electricity.

The Bedouin have one option if they wish to live within the law: they must abandon their ancestral lands and their way of life to relocate to one of the poor townships.

Many of the Bedouin have resisted, clinging on to their historic lands despite the dire conditions imposed on them.

One such unrecognised village, Al Araqib, has been used to set an example. Israeli forces have demolished the makeshift homes there more than 160 times in less than a decade. In August, an Israeli court approved the state bill of \$370,000 (Dh1.6 million) for the repeated evictions.

Al Araqib's 70-year-old leader, Sheikh Sayah Abu Madhim, recently spent months in jail after his conviction for trespassing, even though his tent is a stone's throw from the cemetery where his ancestors are buried.

Now the Israel authorities are losing patience with the Bedouin.

Last January, plans were unveiled for the urgent and forcible eviction of nearly 40,000 Bedouin from their homes in unrecognised villages under the guise of "economic development" projects. It will be the largest expulsion in decades.

"Development", like "security", has a different connotation in Israel. It really means Jewish development, or Judaisation – not development for Palestinians.

The projects include a new highway, a high-voltage power line, a weapons testing facility, a military live-fire zone and a phosphate mine.

It was revealed last week that the families would be forced

into displacement centres in the townships, living in temporary accommodation for years as their ultimate fate is decided. Already these sites are being compared to the refugee camps established for Palestinians in the wake of the Nakba.

The barely concealed aim is to impose on the Bedouin such awful conditions that they will eventually agree to be confined for good in the townships on Israel's terms.

Six leading United Nations human rights experts sent a letter to Israel in the summer protesting the grave violations of the Bedouin families' rights in international law and arguing that alternative approaches were possible.

Adalah, a legal group for Palestinians in Israel, notes that Israel has been forcibly evicting the Bedouin over seven decades, treating them not as human beings but as pawns in its never-ending battle to replace them with Jewish settlers.

The Bedouin's living space has endlessly shrunk and their way of life has been crushed.

This contrasts starkly with the rapid expansion of Jewish towns and single-family farming ranches on the land from which the Bedouin are being evicted.

It is hard not to conclude that what is taking place is an administrative version of the ethnic cleansing Israeli officials conduct more flagrantly in the occupied territories on so-called security grounds.

These interminable expulsions look less like a necessary, considered policy and more like an ugly, ideological nervous tic.

# business

## Putin in Abu Dhabi seeking \$1.3 billion in investments

Abu Dhabi

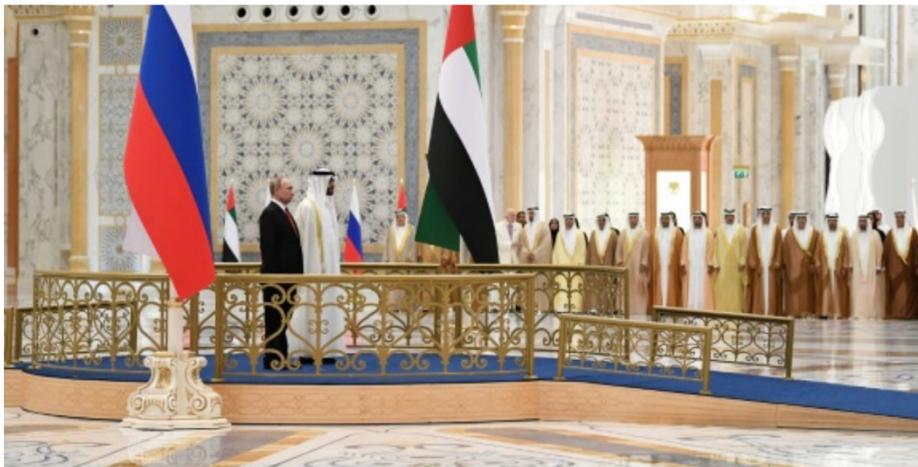
President Vladimir Putin visited Abu Dhabi yesterday, seeking to attract over \$1.3 billion worth of investments in Russia's economy.

Putin, who came to the United Arab Emirates a day after signing a key oil deal with Saudi Arabia in Riyadh, was greeted by Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

A dozen agreements worth more than \$1.3 billion, notably in the energy, advanced technology and sectors, are expected to be sealed during the visit, according to the Russian sovereign wealth fund.

As Putin made his way to the presidential palace, jets painted the sky white, blue and red -- the colours of the Russian flag -- and ceremonial cannon salutes were fired.

The streets of Abu Dhabi were lined with Emirati and Russian



Putin's visit to Abu Dhabi comes a day after a trip to UAE ally Riyadh

flags, while road signs typically displaying warnings for motorists greeted Putin in Arabic and Russian.

"The United Arab Emirates welcomes the visit of the Russian president," read the signs.

"Among the Gulf countries, the UAE is the leader in terms of trade with Russia," Kremlin adviser Yuri Ushakov told the press a few days ahead of the visit. In 2018, trade between the two countries had reached up to

\$1.7 billion.

"Relations with the Emirates are very advanced, and they are constantly improving," Russian Economy Minister Maxim Ore-shkin told reporters in Riyadh on Monday.

## Arabal 2019 puts spotlight on the Future of Aluminium



Arabal 2019 will be held under the patronage of Prime Minister HRH Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa from 19 to 21 November 2019 at Gulf Hotel

TDT | Manama

Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), the host of the 23rd Arab International Aluminium Conference (Arabal 2019), yesterday announced that the conference will focus on the challenges and future opportunities that affect Aluminium business in the Arab region.

'Shaping the Future of Aluminium in the Arab Region' is the theme for Arabal 2019, which will have more than 35 speakers addressing topics including 'Impact of current economic challenges on the aluminium industry', 'Environment, sustainability and recycling' and 'Bahrain post Line 6'.

Arabal 2019, under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain, will be held at Gulf Hotel from 19 to 21 November 2019.

"Arabal has become one of the much-thought events in the global aluminium industry with a major focus on the challenges and future opportu-

nities that affect the business," said Alba's Chairman of the Board of Directors, Shaikh Daij bin Salman bin Daij Al Khalifa during a Press Conference held at Gulf Hotel, Bahrain.

Alba, Shaikh Daij said, is looking forward to welcoming everyone in Bahrain - industry peers, delegates and sponsors - to the conference.

Led by Chairman of the Arabal Organising Committee Mohammed Al-Naki, the Press Conference was attended by founding members: Mohammed Yahya, EGA (Arabal Vice-Chairman), Khalifa Al-Mazrouei, EGA, Jameel Shakeel, Sohar Aluminium, Mahmoud Fawzy Sharaf, Egyptalum, Ghannam Al Ghannam, Maa'aden and Abdulla Seyadee, Alba. Alba's Acting Chief Executive Officer Ali Al Baqali along with Alba's Executive Management team were present.

Arabal, Acting Chief Executive Officer Ali Al Baqali said, coincides with Alba's transformation into the world's largest smelter with Line 6 Expansion Project.

## BCCI chairman hails His Majesty's address

TDT | Manama

BCCI Chairman Sameer Nass yesterday announced the full backing of Bahrain's private sector to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's vision to ensure the prosperity of the people of Bahrain.

His Majesty's futuristic vision, Sameer Nass said, emphasises on accelerating the pace of development, embracing modernisation, and keeping abreast of technological advancement.

The Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman said this while express-



BCCI Chairman Sameer Nass

ing pride in the Royal address delivered by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa during the inauguration of the second session of the assembly in its fifth legislative term.

The Royal address reflects the "far-sighted vision and unwavering determination" of HM the King to keep Bahrain at the forefront of countries, boost economic gains, and ensure the prosperity and welfare of the people of Bahrain.

His Majesty's directives emphasise on developing a comprehensive national strategy for

the country's transformation to a knowledge-based economy and accelerate the integration of artificial intelligence in production and service sectors, Nass said.

Nass voiced his full support to the country's modernisation pursuit and the government spearheaded by His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier.

## Pound surges as Brexit deal speculation heats up

London

The pound rallied yesterday to levels last seen five months ago as speculation on an imminent Brexit deal gained traction, dealers said.

Sterling got an early boost from the European Union's top Brexit negotiator flagging the possibility of a divorce agreement this week, reviving hopes that Britain might yet avoid crashing out of the bloc without a deal.

With the exit deadline on October 31, Michel Barnier's comments rekindled hopes that a compromise might be taking shape.

The British currency then got another shot in the arm when reports suggested that negotiators in Brussels were getting close to a deal.

It hit \$1.28 in the late London afternoon, a level last seen in May. It also rose strongly against the euro.

Sterling jumped "as reports said UK and EU negotiators are

### Key figures around 1540 GMT

Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.2743 from \$1.2555 at 2040 GMT
Euro/pound:	▼ at 86.62 pence from 87.79 pence
Euro/dollar:	▲ at \$1.1036 from \$1.1024
Dollar/yen:	▲ at 108.79 yen from 108.39 yen
London - FTSE 100:	■ at 7,211.64 points (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ 1.0 pc at 5,702.05 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX 30:	▲ 1.2 pc at 12,629.79 (close)
EURO STOXX 50:	▲ 1.2 pc at 3,598.65
New York - Dow:	▲ 1.0 pc at 27,048.51
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▲ 1.9 pc at 22,207.21 (close)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng:	▼ 0.1 pc at 26,503.93 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.6 pc at 2,991.05 (close)
Brent North Sea crude:	▼ 0.2 pc at \$59.24 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▼ 0.4 pc at \$53.41

closing in on a draft Brexit deal," said Neil Wilson, Chief Market Strategist at Markets.com.

### 'Whirlwind of diplomacy'

Earlier Barnier told reporters: "This work has been intense all along the weekend and yesterday

because even if the agreement will be difficult -- more and more difficult to be frank -- it's still possible this week."

Even before he spoke, Britain's Daily Telegraph had said a divorce agreement was forming, with EU and British nego-

tiators hailing a positive day of talks on the Northern Ireland issue.

The paper quoted unnamed sources as saying there was "cautious optimism", while the BBC said the EU was considering holding an emergency summit to push through a possible deal. It said there was not enough time to get anything done before a summit set for this week.

The pound had come under pressure on Monday after European officials played down the chances of an agreement that had been aired by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his Irish counterpart Leo Varadkar last week.

David Kelly at JP Morgan Asset Management said the Johnson-Varadkar talks had sparked a "whirlwind of diplomacy between the British government and the Europeans to try to come up with an agreement this week".

Analysts were quick, however, to put reports into perspective

and warned investors against getting ahead of themselves.

### 'Headline risk'

"These kind of reports expose just how vulnerable sterling is to headline risk," cautioned Wilson. "At present these are unconfirmed reports and need to be verified."

David Cheetham at XTB called the Brexit news "encouraging" but also said that "this is another example of the markets honing in on the positive aspects while looking through the negative, a recurring theme of late that has been a key driver behind the recent gains in the currency".

In equity trading meanwhile Wall Street extended opening gains, with the Dow Jones index trading solidly higher by the end of the New York morning.

Eurozone stock markets also powered ahead, gaining more than one per cent by the close, while London ended steady as the strong pound weighed on stock prices.

Asian equity markets had earlier closed mixed as investor caution returned, replacing the optimism fanned by Donald Trump's partial China trade deal.

While Friday's mini-agreement between the world's economic superpowers put off fresh tariffs and saw them reach common ground on some issues, observers pointed out it was light on detail and left other major levies in place.

And despite Trump's insistence that the "phase one" agreement was "the greatest and biggest deal", Beijing said it wanted to hold more talks and called for a delay in other tariffs due in December before it would sign.

Meanwhile the IMF added to global worries about growth, saying Tuesday that the world economy is slowing to its weakest pace since the global financial crisis, amid continuing trade conflicts that have undercut business confidence and investment.

## India readies policy to attract investment in coal mining

Reuters | New Delhi

India expects to have formulated a policy within the next two weeks to attract foreign investment to its coal mining industry, the country's Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi said yesterday.

Sources told Reuters last month that the country planned to invite bids for coal mining blocks by the end of 2019. It is also creating a coal price index as part of plans to open the sector to outside investment.

"We are formulating various policies within the coal ministry to attract foreign investment. Hopefully within a fortnight or a month's time we will come out with a policy," Joshi said at the India Energy Forum by CERAWEEK.

Joshi said the government



Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi

was looking to make investing in coal mines more attractive to bidders.

"We have several small blocks which usually don't attract foreign investment. For that we need bigger blocks."

Joshi said he expects India's coal demand to rise more than 21 per cent from current levels to 1.2 billion tonnes in 2023, adding that coal would be necessary for the next three decades.

## CBB's Noora Hassan Abdulghani gets GFCs membership

TDT | Manama

Noora Hassan Abdulghani, a Superintendent in the Inspection Directorate at the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), has been named as a member of the Global Future Councils (GFCs).

GFCs is the world's largest expert-level and foremost interdisciplinary knowledge network dedicated to promoting innovative thinking to shape a sustainable and inclusive future for all.

It is an invitation-only community organised by the UAE Government in partnership with the World Economic Forum (WEF) where two co-chairs lead each of the 38 councils comprised of 20-25 leading experts from academia, government, international organizations, business, and civil society.

Abdulghani extended her gratitude and appreciation to



Noora Hassan Abdulghani,

Rasheed Mohammed Al Maraj, Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain, saying, "This membership will reflect positively on my performance in the CBB Inspection Directorate, which specializes in ensuring best practices in the banking and financial sector."

## Germany plans steeper-than-expected tax hike on short flights - official

Reuters | Berlin

Berlin plans to increase taxes on short-haul flights by more than 5 euros, an official at the Finance Ministry said yesterday, a larger tax hike under Germany's emissions cutting programme than many had expected.

The levy on domestic and intra-European flights would rise to 13.03 euros from 7.50 euros, the official said, while carbon charges on medium-haul flights could rise to 33.01 euros from 23.43 and for long-haul flights to 59.43 from 42.18 euros.

A draft law seen by Reuters showed that the government had planned smaller hikes as recently as earlier this month.

The German government, which consists of Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and the Social Democrats, agreed that short-haul flights, particularly heavy in CO2 emissions, should be taxed more heavily in proportion to underlying ticket prices than



Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and the Social Democrats, agreed that short-haul flights should be taxed more heavily

longer flights, the official said. The finance ministry official said that Germany could expect an additional tax take of around 740 million euros once the new taxes come into force in April. The proceeds will mainly be used to finance tax relief on train tickets.

# Trade war cuts global growth to lowest since financial crisis: IMF



IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath speaks in her office during the Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and IMF in Washington, U.S

● GDP growth projected at 3.0 per cent, down from 3.2pc in July

● US-China tariffs would reduce global economic output by 0.8pc

● For 2020, global growth was set to pick up to 3.4pc due to expectations of better performances in Brazil, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey

● Global vehicle purchases fell by 3pc in 2018

Reuters | Washington

The US-China trade war will cut 2019 global growth to its slowest pace since the 2008-2009 financial crisis, the International Monetary Fund warned yesterday, adding that the outlook could darken considerably if trade tensions remain unresolved.

The IMF said its latest World Economic Outlook projections show 2019 GDP growth at 3.0 per cent, down from 3.2pc in a July forecast, largely due to increasing fallout from global trade friction.

The forecasts set a gloomy backdrop for the IMF and World Bank annual meetings this week in Washington, where the Fund's new managing director, Kristalina Georgieva, is inheriting a range of problems, from stagnating trade to political backlash in some emerging market countries struggling with IMF-mandated austerity programs.

The World Economic Outlook report spells out in sharp detail the economic difficulties caused by the US-China tariffs, including direct costs, market turmoil, reduced investment and lower productivity due to supply chain disruptions.

The global crisis lender said that by 2020, announced tariffs would reduce global economic output by 0.8pc. Georgieva said last week that this translates to a

## Bahrain growth projected at 3pc in 2024

Manama

The International Monetary Fund projects Bahrain's GDP (annual percentage change) to grow 2.0 per cent this year, up from 1.8pc a year ago.

The global lender's latest projection also shows Bahrain's 2020 GDP growth at 2.1 per cent, which further improves to 3.0pc by 2024.

In comparison, Saudi is projected to grow 0.2pc in 2019, 2.2pc in 2020 and 2.5pc in 2024.

IMF also sees UAE's GDP growth at 1.6pc in 2019, 2.5pc in 2020 and 2.5pc in 2024.

Middle and Central Asian nations as a whole is projected to grow 0.9pc this year, 2.9pc in 2020 and 3.3pc in 2024, IMF report says.

loss of \$700 billion, or the equivalent of making Switzerland's economy disappear.

"The weakness in growth is driven by a sharp deterioration in manufacturing activity and global trade, with higher tariffs and prolonged trade policy uncertainty damaging investment and demand for capital goods," IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath said in a statement.

Services were still strong across much of the world, but there were some signs of softening in services in the United States and Europe, Gopinath said.

For 2020, the Fund said global growth was set to pick up to 3.4pc due to expectations of better performances in Brazil, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. But this forecast was a tenth of a point lower than in July and was vulnerable to downside risks, including worse trade tensions, Brexit-related disruptions and an abrupt aversion to risk in financial markets.

### Investment, trade stall

The IMF said foreign direct investment abroad by advanced economies came to "a virtual standstill" in 2018 after increasing in earlier years to average

more than 3pc of global gross domestic product annually - or more than \$1.8 trillion.

The institution said the decline of some \$1.5 trillion between 2017 and 2018 reflected purely financial operations by large multinational corporations, including in response to changes in U.S. tax law. Global vehicle purchases fell by 3pc in 2018, reflecting a drop in demand in China after expiration of tax incentives and production adjustments after adoption of new emissions standards in Germany and other eurozone countries.

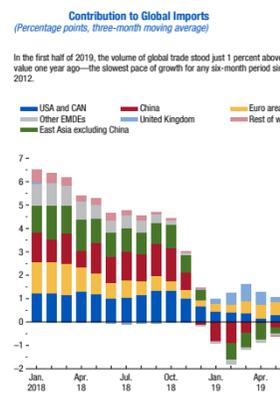
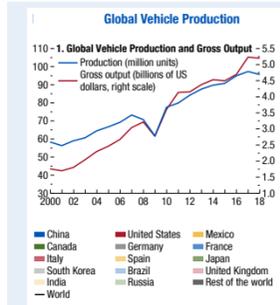
Global trade growth reached just 1pc in the first half of 2019, the weakest level since 2012, weighed down by higher tariffs and prolonged uncertainty about trade policies, as well as a slump in the automobile industry.

After expanding by 3.6pc in 2018, the IMF now projects global trade volume will increase just 1.1pc in 2019, 1.4 percentage points less than it forecast in July and 2.3 percentage points less than forecast in April.

Trade growth was expected to rebound to 3.2pc in 2020, however risks remained "skewed

**To rejuvenate growth policymakers must undo the trade barriers put in place with durable agreements, rein in geopolitical tensions and reduce domestic policy uncertainty**

GITA GOPINATH  
IMF CHIEF ECONOMIST



to the downside," the IMF said, with a significant drag on both the US and Chinese economies.

For a table showing IMF country and regional forecasts, see

### Tariff, Reshoring losses

New IMF projections show China's GDP output falling 2 percent in the near term under the current tariff scenario and 1 percent in the long term, while US output would decline 0.6 percent over both time spans.

"To rejuvenate growth policymakers must undo the trade barriers put in place with durable agreements, rein in geopolitical tensions and reduce domestic policy uncertainty," Gopinath said.

But she was cautious about President Donald Trump's announcement on Friday of a "Phase 1" US trade deal with China, saying that more details were needed about the "tentative" deal.

The IMF also modelled what would happen if multinational firms in the United States, euro area and Japan reshored enough production to reduce nominal imports by 10pc. The lender found that it would drive up consumer prices and reduce domestic demand, while throttling the spread of technology to emerging economies.

"At 3pc growth, there is no room for policy mistakes and an urgent need for policymakers to cooperatively deescalate trade and geopolitical tensions," it said.

"Further escalation of trade tensions and associated increases in policy uncertainty could weaken growth relative to the baseline projection."

# China wants centralised digital currency

● Chinese media are putting their money on a November 11 launch

● China was once a stronghold of bitcoin

● China's moves coincide with Facebook's plans to launch a cryptocurrency called Libra

AFP | Beijing

As Facebook readies to launch its answer to bitcoin, China is set to introduce its own digital currency -- one that could allow the government and the central bank to see what people spend their money on, according to analysts.

Far from the libertarian ideals of cryptocurrencies, whose anonymity allows users to buy and sell without leaving a digital trail, China's mooted e-cash system will be tightly regulated, experts say, and run by the People's Bank of China, the central bank.

Yi did not say what shape the currency would take. "We will not predetermine the technical path," he said. "We may consider blockchain technology or another technology that evolves from existing electronic payments."

It is likely to be more akin to electronic money, stored on a physical medium, than a cryptocurrency such as bitcoin which is based on a computer network. One thing is certain: "We will adhere to centralised management," Yi said, the polar opposite of the philosophy behind cryptocurrencies like bitcoin.

While he gave no timetable,



China's mooted e-cash system will be tightly regulated, experts say, and run by the People's Bank of China, the central bank.

Chinese media are putting their money on a November 11 launch to coincide with "Singles Day" -- a massive, annual online sales event.

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Its purpose is to 'replace cash'

China was once a stronghold of bitcoin.

Just two years ago, the three major Chinese bitcoin trading platforms -- BTC China, OKCoin and Huobi -- accounted for more than 98 per cent of world trade, according to the benchmark site bitcoinity.org.

But the sector was unregulated and transactions were invisible to the authorities -- anathema to Beijing, which shut down the trading platforms in 2017.

"You can be interested in the technology behind bitcoin and not like the way it is implemented, and want to create your own bitcoin with your desired characteristic," said Stanislas Pogorzelski, editor-in-chief of the

specialist site Cryptonaute.fr.

In a country where social credit systems and facial recognition cameras are becoming widespread, a new Chinese cryptocurrency could allow the government to "more closely monitor the actions of its population," he said.

Its purpose is to "replace cash," he explained, "the last bastion of privacy."

"The digital currency will allow the PBOC to collect new information that is impossible to collect when a transaction is through paper currency," said Song Houze, a research fellow at think tank MacroPolo, which specialises in the Chinese economy.

'Competition and threat'

China's moves coincide with Facebook's plans to launch a cryptocurrency called Libra.

The emergence of Libra was an "alert" for Beijing, according to a former senior central bank official quoted in the Chinese press.

Due to roll out next year, Libra should offer a new payment method outside traditional banking channels to buy goods or send money as easily as an instant message.

Like bitcoin, Facebook's virtual currency "represents a competition and threat" to the yuan when Beijing is anxious to stabilise its currency, said Song.

But it is not only authoritarian Beijing that is worried about the growth of cryptocurrencies.

Facebook's plan has faced heavy criticism from regulators and lawmakers in the United States and Europe, with chief executive Mark Zuckerberg expected to face questioning from Congress.

French Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire has warned that Libra poses a threat to the "monetary sovereignty" of governments and could not be authorised in Europe.

The French Senate has advocated the creation of a public cryptocurrency, under the aegis of the European Central Bank.

The controversy has seen huge financing firms like Visa, Mastercard and eBay pull out of the scheme.

Nonetheless, many analysts expect more and more transactions around the world to move online, in one form or another.

For China, a home-grown system of electronic cash controlled by the central bank offers the convenience that consumers want with the control that authorities crave.

The People's Bank of China, must "stay relevant in an age of declining usage of paper currency," said Song.



Yi Gang, President of the People's Bank of China, has said China's own digital currency would be associated with electronic payment systems, such as the popular WeChat and Alipay phone apps

## Google unveils Pixel 4 phones with radar, more affordable laptop

● The fourth-generation Pixel starts at \$799 for a 5.7-inch (14.5-cm) display and \$899 for a 6.3-inch display

Reuters | New York/San Francisco/Berlin

Alphabet Inc's Google unveiled new Pixel smartphones with higher quality cameras, a radar sensor to track hand gestures and faster virtual assistant yesterday, but the devices had no surprise features to set them apart from rivals and nix concerns about price.

The Pixel 4 phones, in two sizes, headlined a New York press event at which Google also announced its first moderately priced laptop, first wireless earbuds and upgrades to its well-reviewed Wifi router and burger-sized smart speaker.

The fourth-generation Pixel starts at \$799 for a 5.7-inch (14.5-cm) display and \$899 for a 6.3-inch display, and for the first time all four major US wireless carriers will offer the smartphones, beginning Oct. 24.

A new feature based on radar technology enables users to skip songs or issue other commands by waving their hands



above the screen.

Picture courtesy of the Verge

The phones include a telephoto lens and improved software to take photos of the night sky. Google Assistant has been deeply integrated into the device to reduce response times.

Sherry Lin, a Pixel product manager, said Google tested work very well if trees and buildings got in the way."

The new 13.3-inch touchscreen Pixelbook Go laptop, starting at \$649, features a textured bottom panel, meant to

Google also announced Pixel Buds, a set of wireless earbuds with hands-free access to Google Assistant launching next spring in the United States for \$179.

make it easier to grip with one

hand while working in transit.

It follows the Pixelbook, which debuted in 2017 with a starting price of \$999. It has barely made a dent on the market, to the point that some researchers do not track it.

Google slashed costs for Pixelbook Go by shifting to magnesium from aluminum for the laptop exterior and removing hinges and wiring that enabled the prior model to be used like a tablet, product leaders Ben Janofsky and Matt Vokoun said in an interview.

It also improved the design of components such as the trackpad to cut manufacturing mishaps and therefore costs. But the company still included a 15% larger battery and reduced the overall weight of the device to 2.3 lb (1.04 kg) from 2.4 lb.

## Fortnite launches 'Chapter 2' after Call of Duty challenge

● The new version of the game features 13 new locations, water gameplay where characters can swim, fish and ride motorboats

Reuters

Epic Games' launched a "Chapter 2" reboot of its battle royale smash hit "Fortnite" yesterday, drawing the eyeballs of millions of gamers globally as it bid to halt defections to rivals "Apex Legends" and "Call of Duty".

Fortnite, which as of earlier this year had 250 million registered players here has been down since Sunday, giving users no option other than staring at a black screen after a season-ending in-game event where its original island was sucked into a black hole.

The new version of the game features 13 new locations, water gameplay where characters can swim, fish and ride motorboats as well as new places to hide and a host of new avatars and guns.

The changes, hashtagged #FirstDrop, were received well by gamers, with 'Fortnite is back' trending on U.S. Twitter with 13 thousand tweets.

Nearly 80,000 tuned in to watch the new game being

played live by gamer Turner "Tfue" Tenney on video game live-streaming platform Twitch, less than two hours after its launch.

Fortnite and its early rival, Tencent-backed "PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds" (PUBG), popularized an arena-style battle royale survival concept where 100 gamers are dropped onto an island to fight each other to the death.

The games are free to download and play but users pay for upgrades, like the "skins" displayed on characters. Fortnite raked in \$2.4 billion in revenue in 2018, more than any other single title, according to Nielsen data.

The runaway successes of

the games prompted Electronic Arts to launch its similarly-themed Apex Legends earlier this year and competition continues to mount.

The mobile version of Activision's (ATVI.O) long-running "Call of Duty" franchise launched on Oct. 1, and has already racked up 125 million unique downloads and more than \$28 million in gross player spending, according to data website SensorTower.

Shares in Activision, EA and Grand Theft Auto-maker Take-Two Interactive Software all inched higher in trading on the New York Stock Exchange. Fortnite publisher Epic was worth \$15 billion when it last raised capital last year.



An attendee stops to text next to Epic Games Fortnite sign at E3, the annual video games expo revealing the latest in gaming software and hardware in Los Angeles, California

# CAMPUS

## AI Academy to support EDB's AI adoption efforts

● **Bahrain Polytechnic's 'AI Academy' in collaboration with Tamkeen, Microsoft and Fastlane will support EDB's AI adoption efforts in the Kingdom**

TD | Manama

Bahrain Polytechnic, in collaboration with Microsoft and Tamkeen yesterday reiterated its commitment to support Bahrain Economic Board's (EDB) new pilot that will design guidelines for the procurement of Artificial intelligence in the public sector.

The framework, produced by the World Economic Forum (WEF) Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution focuses on the acceleration and implementation of AI in the kingdom, as well as bridge the skills gap to successfully implement the technology.

The 'AI Academy', launched in April this year is aimed at schooling Bahraini students on the power of artificial intelligence to accelerate digital transformation and deliver the means to engage citizens and consumers, empower employees, optimise operations and reinvent governance and business models.

"The AI Academy has been



HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa with officials of Bahrain Polytechnic and other partners of the programme

carefully designed to hone our youth into the brightest AI minds in the region," said Dr. Jeff Zabudsky, CEO of Bahrain Polytechnic. "Relevant skills with real-world applicability are the end product of this programme, and we fully expect these new professionals to go on to contribute significantly to the delivery of Bahrain's Vision 2030. This initiative, in collaboration with trusted organizations like Tamkeen, Microsoft and Fastlane; will be a major catalyst in the digitisation of the nation."

The Academy's first batch of 60 students is sponsored by Tamkeen, that is currently undergoing training through an integrated syllabus which covers artificial intelligence, data analysis, data science and ma-

chine basics. The programme is widely considered to be a vital strategic step in cementing the regional position of Bahrain in the field of AI. Courses will continue until April 2020, giving trainees exposure to real-world use cases and problems that they will solve using the toolbox of AI.

"One of the objectives of Bahrain's Vision 2030 emphasizes the need for robust economic growth through several means, such as diversifying the Bahraini workforce to tap into the global knowledge economy, and encouraging investment in non-oil sectors," said Sheikh Saif Hilal Al Hosni, Country Manager, Microsoft Bahrain and Oman. "Following the prevalence of AI in recent years, the Academy is designed to help establish a

workforce of skilled students with robust knowledge of the field. Such skillsets easily translate to efficiencies across the Kingdom of Bahrain, as these young people take their innovative talents out into the nation's public and private sectors."

The AI Academy is also a road map for students to participate in the Khalid bin Hamad Competition for Innovation in Artificial Intelligence, an initiative launched by HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, First Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS), President of Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC). Students that are enrolled in the academy will develop a capstone project as part of their course, and become eligible to enter the competition.

## Dr. Daghustani represents AGU in seminar on ethics for social practitioners

TD | Manama

Assistant Professor in the Learning Difficulties Programme in the College of Graduate Studies at the Arabian Gulf University (AGU) Dr. Wid Daghustani recently participated in a seminar titled "Towards a Unified Gulf Code of Ethics for Social Practitioners".

The activity was organised by Bahrain Society for Sociologists, under the patronage of Labour and Social Development Minister Jameel bin Mohammed Humaidan, and in cooperation with the Gulf Society for Social Sociologists.

The seminar saw the participation of Social Affairs Ministers Council in the GCC, representatives of societies in the GCC, and a number of social researchers and specialists of public agencies and authorities working in the field of social work in the public and private sector, in addition to representatives of civil service bureaus in GCC States.

The participants discussed the draft of a unified Gulf code of ethics for social practitioners in the GCC. The code includes all those involved in research and social guidance and providers of various social services such as care, accommodation, rehabilitation and other services.

The seminar also addressed several other topics, such as introducing ethical codes in the GCC and other foreign coun-



Dr. Wid Daghustani

tries, general principles of the ethical code, the contents of the unified Gulf code of ethics for social practitioners, and ethical responsibility towards the profession and social policies.

At the event, the participants stressed on the necessity of conduct extensive studying on social issues in a more comprehensive and broader approach, as well as the commitment to the ethical code of social practitioners to cement the basic values and principles of ethical and professional conduct for the concerned individuals.

They also emphasised on the importance of Gulf cooperation to strengthen the concept of community partnership between the different sectors, in accordance with the controls, standards, legislations and systems that ensure the moral and legal commitment regulating the practice of social professions.



Students under the Ministry of Education's 'Takween' programme at Bahrain Islamic Bank's Headquarters as part of a training programme. It aims to prepare and familiarize secondary-level students with the requirements of the modern workforce by receiving hands-on training across a numbers of departments at BisB



New Millennium School-DPS team members pose with school officials after winning Girls' Football title in the CBSE Cluster (Bahrain Chapter) Inter-School competition. All CBSE schools in Bahrain participated in the annual event. In the final, NMS-DPS overwhelmed The Indian School Bahrain (2-1) emerging as winners.



Students of Quality Education School, Bahrain during the 16th investiture ceremony of the institution. The event was organised to honour and handover responsibilities to the new student council committee of the school. The Chairman, and Chief Guest of Honour, Bhagwandas Kewalram Bhatia, inaugurated the ceremony and honoured the council members in the presence of special guest Kunal Kewalram, Principal Dr. Ravi Warrior and Vice Principal Geetha Mukkatira. The event was followed by an oath taking ceremony where members of junior and senior student council swore to conduct their duties with diligence and discipline

# celebs



Angelina Jolie



Elle Fanning

## Ryan Reynolds' witty hint at possible MCU future

Los Angeles

Hollywood star Ryan Reynolds has hinted at his possible appearance in future installment of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU).



Ryan Reynolds

The actor teased his meeting with Marvel Studios' executives as he took to his Instagram page on Monday to share a photograph of his reported visit to the studio, reports aceshowbiz.com. In the picture, the "Deadpool" star posed with a giant logo of Marvel Studios in the background.

True to his humorous nature, he joked about his unfortunate audition during the meeting.

## Jennifer Aniston joins Insta, has over 200k followers in 1 hr

Los Angeles

Hollywood star Jennifer Aniston finally joined Instagram on Tuesday, and she had nearly 200k followers within the first hour of joining the social media app.



Jennifer Aniston

Aniston is known to be fiercely private about her life, so her decision to join Insta has pleasantly surprised many of her fans.

Quite in sync with what fans have most loved most about her, the first picture she posted on the social media app is a reunion photo-op that celebrates her career-defining show, "Friends".

## Shah Rukh Khan gets 39 million followers on Twitter

Mumbai

As Shah Rukh Khan surpasses 'Shahenshah' Amitabh Bachchan with 39 million followers on Twitter, the actor has thanked his fans for the love, asking them to "keep the positivity multiplying."

"Keep the positivity multiplying. Keep yourself Happy... always. Everything is as beautiful as you want to see it. Love you all," King Khan tweeted.



Shah Rukh Khan

## Angelina Jolie learned how to be "goofy" from Elle Fanning

Los Angeles

Hollywood star Angelina Jolie, who shares screen space with actress Elle Fanning in the upcoming film "Maleficent: Mistress of Evil", says her co-star has taught her how to be goofy.

On Monday's edition of "This Morning", Angelina spoke about her film and her equation with the other co-stars, reports dailymail.co.uk. She said: "I've learned a lot with Elle, with my children I'm silly and light but sometimes in my life I'm not. Being with her as a child brought out this lightness this softness out in me, and it continues to be our relationship where she smiles at my strength and toughness and it makes me goofy and fun."

They previously starred together in the first Maleficent film, which was released in 2014. Asked why it took five years for a sequel to be released, Angelina said Elle, 21, "had to grow up".

Elle added: "I was 14, Angelina and I we had the first movie and she's watched me grow up and now here we are again, I'm older I feel like we have this bond which I felt I was accepted as one of the women on set."

## Aishwarya's "Maleficent" style has a French connection

Mumbai



Aishwarya Rai Bachchan

Actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has lent her voice for Angelina Jolie's titular character in "Maleficent: Mistress Of Evil", in the film's dubbed Hindi version. For promotion of the film in India, Aishwarya got a spiffy French twist in style.

For a special promotional shoot for the film, Aishwarya's hair was done up by French hair expert Florian Hurel.

"The look is used for the promotion of the film. With the team, including make-up artist Mickey Contractor, we spoke about what were we going to do. I came up with two hairstyle references and she agreed to go with the one I thought will be the best for the promo shoot -- and inspiring from Angelina," said Hurel.

## Cara Delevingne says she's the "luckiest girl!"

Los Angeles

Model-turned-actress Cara Delevingne feels that she is the "luckiest girl in the world", thanks to her girlfriend Ashley Benson.



Cara Delevingne

Delevingne, who was honoured with the 2019 Girl Up #GirlHero Award in Beverly Hills on Sunday night, couldn't help but praise her girlfriend.

"It's so nice to have someone in my life that supports me so much and loves me," the 27-year-old told E! News. "I'm the luckiest girl in the world!"

Girl Up - an organisation that promotes leadership in women in developing countries - awarded Delevingne for her advocacy in the LGBTQ community.

"It's a really big deal to me," she shared. "Especially since I think Girl Up is such an amazing organisation."

When asked what advice she would give to those struggling with their identity, Delevingne said to stand proud.

"Just knowing that everyone has that same trouble," she said. "I mean, some people find it easier, but everyone's gone through that kind of second thinking, like "Am I really? Should I? How do I?"

Just knowing that everyone has that same trouble," she said. "I mean, some people find it easier, but everyone's gone through that kind of second thinking, like "Am I really? Should I? How do I?"

## Zoe Kravitz cast as Catwoman in "The Batman"

Los Angeles

"Big Little Lies" star Zoe Kravitz will play Catwoman in Matt Reeves' "The Batman", starring Robert Pattinson in the title role.

Catwoman is an anti-heroine in the world of Batman, and at times also seen as a love interest of the caped crusader.

In recent weeks, the role came down to Kravitz, Zazie Beetz of "Joker", "Baby Driver's" Eiza Gonzalez and Oscar winner Alicia Vikander. Kravitz won out, despite some worry about scheduling issues with "Fantas-

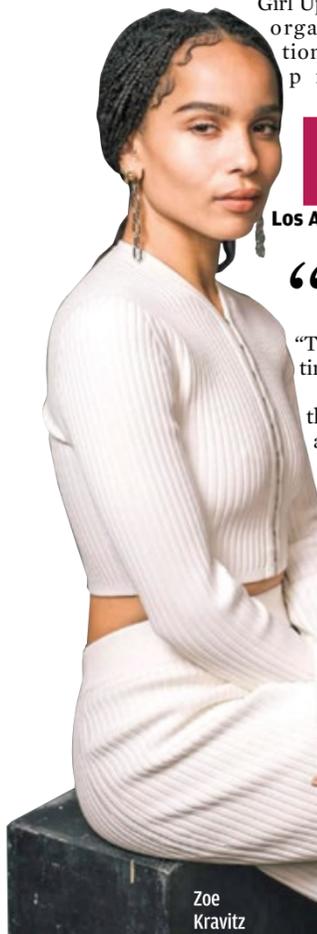
tic Beasts", reports variety.com.

The pre-production work on the Warner Bros.-DC Comics film is expected to start later this year.

No official start date has been set, although according to sources, filming could start in late 2019 or early 2020. "The Batman" is scheduled to release on June 25, 2021.

Reeves, the filmmaker behind the last two "Planet of the Apes" sequels, took over "Batman" directing duties from Ben Affleck in January 2017. Affleck departed his role as Batman following "Justice League", allowing Reeves to pick his own Bruce Wayne.

Pattinson has replaced Affleck to be the caped crusader. He will be seen as the superhero in Reeves' upcoming film. The casting decision made way for backlash on social media, in fact a petition was filed to reconsider the call.



Zoe Kravitz

## Katy Perry puts out for new single 'Harleys in Hawaii'

Los Angeles

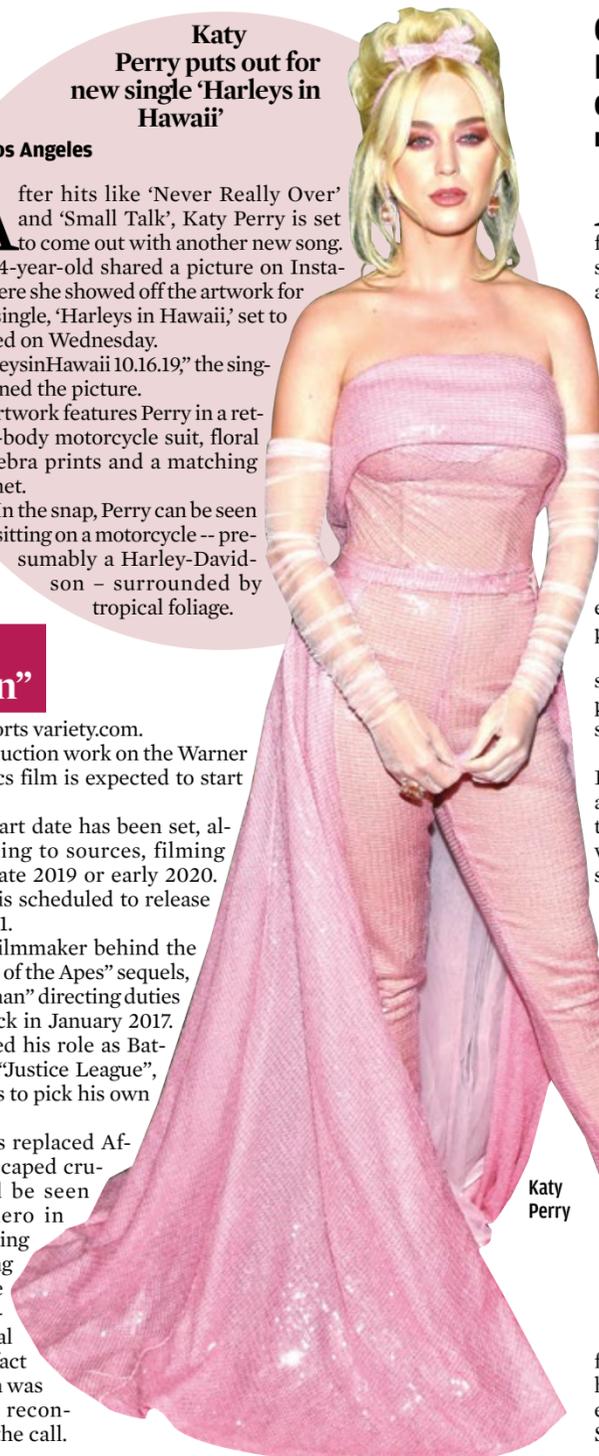
After hits like 'Never Really Over' and 'Small Talk', Katy Perry is set to come out with another new song.

The 34-year-old shared a picture on Instagram where she showed off the artwork for the next single, 'Harleys in Hawaii'; set to be released on Wednesday.

"#HarleysinHawaii 10.16.19," the singer captioned the picture.

The artwork features Perry in a retro, full-body motorcycle suit, floral and zebra prints and a matching helmet.

In the snap, Perry can be seen sitting on a motorcycle -- presumably a Harley-Davidson -- surrounded by tropical foliage.



Katy Perry

## Gwyneth Paltrow: I'm just the lame old white lady

Los Angeles

Actress Gwyneth Paltrow has come up with a different way to describe herself, and that is - "I'm drunk and a lame old white lady".

She called herself "lame old white lady" because she claimed she was "too drunk" to prepare a speech on Sunday night when she was honoured at ELLE's Women In Hollywood event, reports "dailymail.co.uk".

Paltrow, 47, admitted that she is a "lame old white lady" as she continued to explain why she wasn't prepared.

She wished she had prepared a speech.

"Cause I'm drunk and I'm just the lame old white lady," she joked.

The star, who looked elegant in a black dress which had a low-cut back and a one-shoulder detail, then said creating her lifestyle website Goop, "where we can help women eliminate shame, it's been the most rewarding thing of my life, really".

At the event, Paltrow, who rose to fame with her roles in 90s films like "Seven" and "Emma", was recognised for their roles in film. Other women who were honoured at the event included Natalie Portman, 38, and Scarlett Johansson, 34.



Gwyneth Paltrow

## SPORTS

# Ukraine qualify for Euro 2020

● Ukraine defeated Portugal

● Racist abuse twice halts England's 6-0 victory in Bulgaria

AFP | Paris

Ukraine booked their place in Euro 2020 after squeezing past Portugal as Cristiano Ronaldo scored his 700th career goal on a night stained by Bulgaria fans racially abusing England players while their side were hit for six in Sofia.

Andriy Shevchenko's unbeaten team are through to next summer's finals with a match to spare as Group B winners thanks to first-half goals from Roman Yaremchuk and Andriy Yarmolenko, which meant that Ronaldo's 72nd-minute penalty wasn't enough for Portugal.

Ukraine join Poland, Russia, Italy and Belgium in the multi-host tournament which kicks off in Rome on June 12, with Shevchenko -- who scored 48 times for Ukraine in 111 matches -- proving a similar success on the bench as he was on the pitch.

Second-placed Portugal's fate is still in the balance, with Serbia just a point behind them with two matches remaining after they beat Lithuania 2-1.

Portugal dominated the second half and pulled one back



Portugal's defender Raphael Guerreiro and Ukraine's forward Andriy Yarmolenko vie for the ball

when Ronaldo blasted home the spot-kick to make it 700 goals for club and country, but they couldn't find an equaliser despite some good chances.

"There are days like these, when the ball just doesn't want to go in," said Portuguese midfielder Danilo. "No need to do the maths now: we just need to win the next two games to reach Euro 2020."

Group A leaders England still have to wait for their place at the Euros despite hammering hapless Bulgaria 6-0, but the focus of attention was again on the stands as the home fans caused mayhem with racist chanting that twice caused the match to

be halted.

It was another England match blighted by racism from opposition fans after England's black players were targeted with monkey chants during their 5-1 win at Montenegro in March.

## Racism mars England win

The level of abuse from a section of the Bulgarian support led the English Football Association to demand an investigation from UEFA, asking European football's governing body to open a probe "as a matter of urgency".

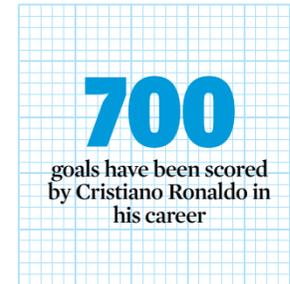
Tyrone Mings was one of those targeted on his England debut, and he said that stopping the game did have the desired

effect of reducing racist abuse in the second half.

"We made the decision at half-time to come out and play the game which we thought was the right decision," said Mings. "If anything else happened, we would have taken appropriate action."

England led 2-0 through early goals from Marcus Rashford and Ross Barkley when play was first stopped and an announcement made to supporters that the game could be suspended the abuse continued.

Once restarted, England quickly made it 3-0 through Barkley before a second stoppage, with Croatian referee Ivan



Bebek holding discussions with players and coaching staff from both sides.

Raheem Sterling then netted twice either side of half-time before Harry Kane rounded off the scoring to take England to the brink of qualification.

## Ayhan denies France

France also missed a spot in the Euros when Kaan Ayhan's leveller snatched a point for Turkey in a match played against a backdrop of diplomatic tensions after Paris condemned Ankara for its military offensive against Kurdish forces in Syria.

Substitute Olivier Giroud headed France in front on 76 minutes at the Stade de France. Ayhan nodded home six minutes later -- and celebrated with a military salute in front of the Turkish supporters -- to leave Didier Deschamps side waiting.

"We did what we needed to win the match based on the play and number of chances. They didn't have many but put away a set-piece," said Deschamps, whose team lost 2-0 to Turkey in June.

## Hamza Kooheji to represent Bahrain in home soil

TDT | Manama

Bantamweight contender Hamza Kooheji will get a chance to be closer to a title shot on November 15th, when he takes on Nahuel Gandolfi at BRAVE 29, which takes place at Khalifa Sports City Arena, in Isa Town.

The historical show will be the main attraction of the BRAVE International Combat Week, Asia's largest combat sports festival.

Bahrain's own Kooheji has been preparing for his BRAVE CF comeback in the United States alongside former BRAVE CF Lightweight world champion Abdul-Kareem Al-Selwady, at the world-famous Fortis MMA gym, in Texas.

With a professional record of eight wins against two losses, "The Pride of Bahrain" is on a two-fight win streak, beating Crisanto Pitpitunge at BRAVE CF 16, and following it up with an impressive victory over Yay-ong Wang at BRAVE CF 21. He hasn't fought yet in 2019, and Bahraini fans can expect a much-improved fighter when he takes to the BRAVE CF Arena on November 15th.

Nahuel Gandolfi is from Argentina, but trains in Brazil, at Astra Fight Team, and will drop down from Featherweight to take on Kooheji in his debut. A dangerous ground fighter, Gandolfi has eight of his 11 career victories by submission.

## Bahrain's Mattar to compete in karting finals



Mohammed Mattar (R) in Le Mans with coach Abbas Sarhan

TDT | Manama

Champion Bahraini karter Mohammed Mattar is set to fly the kingdom's flag in international competition over the next couple of weeks in Europe.

Mattar will be battling in the IAME International Final 2019 in Le Mans, France, over the next few days and then also race in the Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals 2019 in Sarno, Italy from October 19 to 26.

Mattar is already in Le Mans and over the past few days has been taking part in free practice and qualifying sessions, where he is racing in the X30 Super Shifter category.

Today, he will take part in the Heats, which continue tomorrow and Friday. The Pre-Finals

and Finals will then be held on Friday and Saturday.

There are several other competition categories in the IAME meeting, including the X30 Senior, X30 Junior, X30 Master, X30 Pro and X30 Mini, and the MINIME FFSA/Cadet MUK.

The IAME International Final is in its eighth edition. The event is bringing together over 500 of the top karters from around the world.

Meanwhile, Mattar will be competing in the Senior Max category in the Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals in Sarno. He is one of more than 70 entries in the class, which is also set to feature drivers coming from all across the globe.

The event also features racing in the DD2, DD2 Masters, Junior, Micro, Mini and E-Kart THUNDER classes.

## BTC to host world's top young players

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain once again welcomes some of the world's future tennis stars as Bahrain Tennis Club (BTC) hosts the 11th Bahrain ITF Juniors Tennis Championship 2019 from October 21 to 26 at the BTC hard courts in Juffair.

The prestigious tournament is being held under the patronage of Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa. It is a part of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) World Tennis Tour Juniors, and it continues the tradition of BTC's hosting of world-class tennis competitions each year.

The tournament coordinator Hamdi Abduljawad said the

highly ranked youngsters from around the world will be vying for glory in four categories, including the boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles.

Hamdi added also a main draw of 32 boys and 32 girls aged 18 and below will be competing for their respective singles titles. For the doubles championships, there will be a maximum of 16 pairings each for boys and girls.

Among the top players pencilled in to compete for the boys this year are Daniel Webb and Alexander Knox Jones of Great Britain, Garv Bahl and Vansh Bhagatani of India, Boris Stastny of the Czech Republic, Mark Owen Endler of Germany and the French pair of Pablo Trochu

and Victor Paganetti.

For the girls, last year's singles winner Nina Danisova of Slovakia is returning to defend her title. Some of the other top players she could be facing are Charlotte Russell and Jessica Dhome-Casanova of Great Britain, Sarah Dev and Hrudaya Shah of India, Rosaleen Aioussef of Russia, Stefania Bojica of Romania and Hagar Ramadan and Carolin Fawzy from Egypt.

A number of Bahrain's leading young players are also expected to be in the field.

Prior to the official start of the tournament, there will be a qualifying draw for both singles events.

BTC has had the privilege of organising the ITF champion-

ship since its inaugural event held in October of 2009. It was a strategic move by the club's officials, who aspired to take tennis in Bahrain to a higher international level.

Since then, the championship in Bahrain has become a staple on the ITF juniors calendar, and it is one of the top tournaments to look forward to each year. It attracts many players from all over the globe, and has achieved monumental success.

BTC has received tremendous feedback for hosting the tournament over the years, including the utmost appreciation of the ITF's higher-ranked officials, who have expressed their gratitude and support towards BTC for organising many more tournaments in the future.



Players of KCA Blue Sea after winning their match against Riffa Stars on Sunday in the KCA - Zayani Motors International Volleyball Tournament 2019. KCA Blue Sea won all 3 sets with score 25-13, 25-10 and 27-25. On Monday, Al Reef Panasia-B won their match against Lulu by winning all 3 sets

## Vorm returns to Tottenham to cover Lloris absence



Tottenham's Dutch goalkeeper Michel Vorm grabs the ball

AFP | London

Tottenham have re-signed goalkeeper Michel Vorm on a deal until the end of the season to cover for the injured Hugo Lloris.

The 35-year-old was released by Spurs in the summer but has been unable to find a new club.

Lloris suffered a dislocated elbow in a humbling 3-0 defeat at Brighton last week and has been ruled out for the rest of the year.

Vorm has returned to the club to strengthen the goal-

keeping ranks, where Paulo Gazzaniga is the only fit senior professional.

A club statement read: "As a free agent, Michel has been able to re-sign outside of the two designated annual transfer windows and will provide additional goalkeeping cover following the elbow injury sustained by Hugo in the match at Brighton earlier this month."

Vorm initially joined Spurs in 2014 from Swansea and made 47 appearances in five years as an understudy to Lloris.

## Tendulkar, Lara to play T20 tournament in India

Reuters | Mumbai

Batting greats Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara are among former cricketers who will return to the field for the Road Safety World Series in India next year.

The World Series will be an annual Twenty20 tournament played between retired cricketers from five countries - Australia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies and India.

Indian Tendulkar and West Indian Lara will be joined by former players including India's Virender Sehwag, Australian Brett Lee, Sri Lankan Tillakaratne Dilshan and South Africa's Jonty Rhodes for the tournament from Feb. 2-16 across India.

Tendulkar, 46, is the world's leading scorer in tests and one-day internationals, amassing more than 34,000 runs and 100 centuries in a 24-year career that ended in 2013.

# Saudi, Palestine draw in landmark West Bank game

Saudi Arabia held to goalless draw by Palestine in landmark West Bank World Cup qualifier

AFP | Ramallah

Saudi Arabia's football team played Palestine in the occupied West Bank for the first time yesterday. The two met in a qualifier for the 2022 World Cup at the Palestinian national stadium in Al-Ram, playing out a 0-0 draw.

Cheered on by a packed and vociferous home stadium, Palestine frustrated their more prestigious guests and came close multiple times, but neither side were ultimately able to make the breakthrough.

With significant excitement over the match, all tickets at the 8,000 stadium were given away free on the day, with thousands in often disorderly queues to get in.

Hundreds of others watched from windows or roofs of buildings overlooking the stadium, which is only a few meters from the Israeli barrier that cuts off the West Bank from occupied Jerusalem.

Arab clubs and national teams have historically refused to play in the Palestinian territory as it requires obtaining entry permits from Israel.

The Palestinian football association described the Saudi team's arrival in the Palestinian territories as a "win-win" situation.

At the stadium, large Palestinian and Saudi flags had been



Saudi defender Ziyad Al-Sahafi vies for the ball with Palestine's defender Abdelatif Bahdari

erected on the building behind it.

"God, Palestine and Jerusalem is Arab," the fans chanted, with the stadium only a few miles from the holy city.

There were no Saudi fans at the stadium but pictures of Saudi King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman were erected alongside Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and his predecessor Yasser Arafat.

Palestinians in the West Bank have to go through Israeli checkpoints to leave and many

have little experience of the wider Middle East.

Wajd Waji, 20, was among a group of four young men wearing Palestinian football shirts

"It will be the first time I have seen a Saudi person in real life," he told AFP.

Only one of the players in the first 11 was from Gaza, the other part of the Palestinian territories under a blockade by Israel.

The winners of the two cups in the West Bank and Gaza are meant to play each other an-

nually but this year it has been delayed for months after Israel refused permits to most of the Gazan team's players.

The Palestinians had the first real chance, with striker Saleh Chihadeh hitting the keeper in the 10th minute.

The Saudis could have scored as well in the first half but Yahya Al-Shehri's strike was well saved.

In a second half short of chances, Palestinian substitute Khaled Salem flicked a shot over the bar in the final minutes.

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