

**Bieber mom raves over son's new wife**

Pop star Justin Bieber's mother raved over her son's new wife Hailey Baldwin in an adorable selfie. On Tuesday, Bieber's mother Pattie Mallette shared a sweet selfie of herself with Baldwin, 21.

THE DAILY **tribune**



**Alicia Keys' kids are not impressed that she's hosting the Grammys**

14 CELEBS

**WORLD 6 US will ensure ISIS defeat, says Pence**



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**May wins vote of confidence**  
 London

UK Prime Minister Theresa May has seen off a bid to remove her government from power, winning a no confidence vote by 325 to 306. Rebel Tory MPs and the DUP - who 24 hours earlier rejected the PM's Brexit plan by a huge margin - voted to keep her in Downing Street.



Theresa May

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn argued that Mrs May's "zombie" administration had lost the right to govern.

Mrs May will be making a statement from Downing Street at around 2200 GMT.

The PM won the vote by margin of 19, including 10 votes from the DUP. Had the party voted against her, she would have lost by one.

Giving her reaction to the result, Mrs May told MPs she would "continue to work to deliver on the solemn promise to the people of this country to deliver on the result of the referendum and leave the European Union".

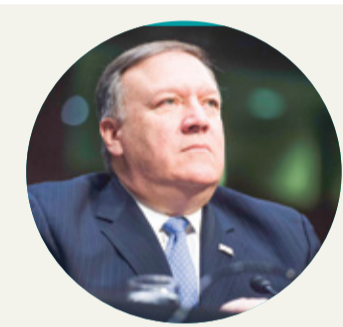
See pages 10 & 11

**Iran launches satellite, fails**

Tehran

Iran launched a satellite that failed to reach orbit, after the US warned against the launch earlier this month.

The satellite "did not reach enough speed in the third stage and was not put into orbit," Mohammad Jahromi, the country's Minister of Communications and Information Technology, told the official IRNA news agency after a ceremony was held for the launch at Imam Khomeini



Spaceport.

The minister said Iran would



**We have been clear that we will not stand for Iran's flagrant disregard for international norms.**

POMPEO

launch another satellite soon. US Secretary of State Mike

Pompeo warned Iran earlier this month to scrap its planned satellite launch, threatening to increase sanctions on the country.

He issued a statement Tuesday condemning the launch but did not say whether the US plans to levy new sanctions against Iran in response.

"We have been clear that we will not stand for Iran's flagrant disregard for international norms. The United States is working with our allies and partners to counter the entire range

of the Islamic Republic's threats, including its missile program, which threatens Europe and the Middle East," the statement said.

Pompeo has argued that such space launches violate a UN Security Council resolution passed in support of the 2015 nuclear deal, saying in a statement that Iran's launch vehicles "incorporate technology that is virtually identical to that used in ballistic missiles, including in intercontinental ballistic-missiles (ICBMs)."

**Far from defeat**

Daesh Syria attack kills at least 16, including US soldiers

● **Attack comes after Trump vowed to pull out US troops after defeating Daesh.**

● **Targeted a restaurant where US personnel were meeting members of the local militia supported by Washington.**

Beirut

A bomb attack claimed by Daesh killed US troops in northern Syria yesterday, weeks after President Donald Trump said the group was defeated there and he would pull out all American forces.

A US official who declined to be named said four US troops had been killed and three wounded in the blast, which a Daesh-affiliated site said was the work of a suicide bomber. Others said only two had been killed.



The aftermath of a suicide attack in the northern Syrian town of Manbij.

The US-led coalition fighting Daesh said that "US service members were killed during an explosion while conducting a routine patrol", and that it was still gathering details.

Unusually, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan gave his own death toll for the attack, saying it had killed 20 people, including five US troops.

Erdogan said he did not believe the attack would impact Trump's decision to withdraw from Syria.

The attack, which took place in the town of Manbij, controlled by rebels opposed to Syrian President Bashar Al Assad, appears to be the deadliest on US forces in Syria since they deployed there in 2015.

**2,000**  
 US troops will be withdrawn from Syria in the coming days as per Trump plan.

A Pentagon spokeswoman said only two US troops had previously been killed in action in Syria. There were two additional non-combat fatalities.

Last month, Trump made a surprise announcement that he would withdraw all 2,000 US troops from Syria after concluding that Daesh had been defeated there.

Trump's announcement helped trigger the resignation of his defence secretary, Jim Mattis, stunned allies and raised fears of a long-threatened Turkish military offensive against US-backed Kurdish forces in northern Syria.

APOLITICAL

**Facebook brings stricter advertising rules to India ahead of polls**

San Francisco

Facebook Inc told Reuters that it would extend some of its political advertising rules and tools for curbing election interference to India, Nigeria, Ukraine and the European Un-

ion before significant votes in the next few months.

As the largest social media service in nearly every big country, Facebook since 2016 has become a means for politicians and their adversaries to distribute fake news and other propaganda. Buying



Facebook ads can widen the audience for such material, but some of those influence efforts may violate election rules and the company's policies. Under pressure from authorities around the world, Facebook last year introduced several initiatives to increase oversight of political ads.



Diplomatic forum stresses Bahrain's foreign policy

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Bahraini gets jail for anti-electoral tweets

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# Diplomatic forum stresses



Shaikh Khalid with Foreign Ministry officials and diplomats at the forum.

**Manama**

Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa said that the foreign policy of the

Kingdom of Bahrain is based on strong and solid foundations, thanks to the wise leadership and directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness the Prime

Minister, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al

Khalifa.

This came during a speech delivered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Diplomatic Forum of the Ambassadors of the Kingdom of Bahrain, which was held yesterday, in the presence of a number of accredited Ambassadors of the

Kingdom of Bahrain to celebrate 50 years of Bahraini diplomacy.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that the Kingdom of Bahrain has been an independent Arab Muslim country since 1783, and in the early nineteenth century signed an agreement with Great Britain

on cooperation in military and foreign affairs, which is considered one of the oldest diplomatic agreements between the two countries.

He also added that after Bahrain had joined the United Nations in 1971 as a full member, Britain considered this agree-

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## Focus on Bahraini women's strides

**Manama**

King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence Board of Trustees' Chairman Dr Shaikh Khalid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa received a delegation from Johns Hopkins University, currently on visit to Bahrain in coordination with the Supreme Council for Women (SCW).

Dr Shaikh Khalid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa briefed the delegation about the center's goals, mission and achievements which reflect HM the King's thought and philosophy about efforts to promote co-existence and tolerance in the world.

He highlighted particularly the establishment of the King Hamad Chair for Interfaith Dialogue and Peaceful Coexistence which was launched at the prestigious Rome-based Sapienza University.

He underlined Bahraini women's strides and landmark participation in the political, diplomatic, economic and educational fields since dawning of the modern state in the 1920s.

He said that women's achievements gained further momentum in the prosperous era of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, who provided women with historic opportunities to thrive and reveal their potential.

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# Bahrain's foreign policy



Shaikh Khalid addresses the forum.



Many discussions on the Kingdom's foreign policy were held as part of the forum.

ment unnecessary. He noted that the Kingdom of Bahrain and the friendly United Kingdom celebrated two years ago the 200th anniversary of Bahrain-UK relations, which was established at that time to achieve common interests.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs described the Kingdom of Bahrain's foreign policy and priorities as flexible and constantly subject to evaluation, review and realignment of priorities, while also being committed to major principles since joining the United Nations until now, namely: asserting the sovereignty and

territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Bahrain, protecting its security, defending its interests, and strengthening its status and its external reputation as well as consolidating its civilizational image.

He also highlighted the Kingdom's principles in strengthening its relations with brotherly and friendly countries, developing cooperation with regional and international organizations, adopting collective action in defence of Arab and Islamic issues.

He affirmed the consolidation of values and principles of humanity in our society such as

peace, coexistence and dialogue between different cultures and peoples, and the importance of addressing the threats facing the international community as a whole, regarding violence, extremism and terrorism in all its forms as well as the policies of some countries seeking to destabilize security and stability in the region.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs affirmed that the celebration of 50 years of Bahraini diplomacy will pave the way for further Bahraini achievements in various fields, noting the great role of the Ambassadors of the

Kingdom of Bahrain in achieving these goals and implementing His Majesty's directives through maintaining constant communication with the officials of the countries accredited to them and conducting meetings with them on various occasions.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs also expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation to the Ambassadors participating in the meetings of the Forum and their efforts in introducing innovative ideas that will contribute to developing diplomatic work and reaching its objectives.

The first session of the forum

dealt with "the role of diplomatic missions abroad in promoting and attracting foreign investment", with the attendance of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Shaikha Rana bint Isa bin Daij Al Khalifa, and the Assistant Undersecretary for Consular Affairs Resources & Information System, Ambassador Khalil Yaqoub Al-Khayat.

The second session discussed "strengthening bilateral and international relations" with the attendance of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for International Affairs,

Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, and the Assistant Undersecretary for Western Countries & Afro-Asian Affairs, Ambassador Tawfeeq Ahmed Al Mansoor, while the third session revolved around "the challenges and visions of the future of the Middle East", with the attendance of the Assistant Foreign Minister, Abdulla bin Faisal bin Jabur Al Doseri, the Undersecretary of Regional & GCC Affairs, Ambassador Waheed Mubarak Sayyar, and the Assistant Undersecretary for GCC and Arab Countries Affairs, Ambassador Yusuf Mohamed Abdulla Jameel.

## Executive-legislature co-operation stressed

Manama

Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Fawzia Zainal, has lauded the positive Executive-Legislature co-operation which enjoys the great interest of the government, led by His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa.

The co-operation between the two branches is based on mutual trust and respect, as well as national responsibility of the two sides to consolidate

the democratic process in order to attain more achievements for Bahrain and its people, she observed.

This came as she met yesterday the Deputy Premier and Chairman of the government's delegation to the committee in charge of studying the Government Action Plan 2019-2022, Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, along with Parliament Affairs Minister, Ghanim bin Fadhul Al Buainain.

The speaker affirmed her confidence in the govern-

ment's positive response to all the issues raised by MPs regarding topics related to the citizens' needs and aimed at serving the kingdom's development march.

She stressed that cooperation between the two branches always aims to serve the interests of the nation and the citizens, in line with the vision and democratic approach stipulated in the Reform Project spearheaded by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

## Bahraini fined BD50 for attacking wife's mother

TDT | Manama

The Lower Criminal Court has fined a Bahraini man BD50 for attacking wife's mother and relative.

The man pleaded not guilty in court stating that the mother-in-law and relative were targeting him and attempting to destroy his marital life.

According to court details, the man became upset after his wife went to meet her relative without seeking his permission.

"He followed her to the rel-

“She gave me a kiss in the morning before I left home. How can she file for a divorce in the afternoon?”

ACCUSED

ative's house, manhandled and stripped her in front of the rel-

atives. Subsequently, the wife filed a divorce as well as a police complaint against her husband."

Upon interrogation, the man told prosecutors that he loved his wife and they had no differences. "She gave me a kiss in the morning before I left home. How can she file for a divorce in the afternoon?"

He alleged that it was his mother-in-law who was fuelling his wife to get separated.

His innocence plea was rejected by the court, which fined him BD50.

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## GAP Study Committee holds second meeting

Manama

A committee tasked to study the Government Action Programme (GAP-2019-2022) yesterday held its second meeting, chaired by Council of Representatives Speaker Fawziya Zainal.

Deputy Premier and Head of the Government's delegation Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa attended the session, along Second Deputy Speaker Ali Ahmed Zayed and other ministers and lawmakers.

The Speaker said that the second session laid a joint platform between the legislative and executive branches of governments, stressing the importance of ensuring citizens' rights and gains.

She commended the cooperation of the Government's delegation, led by Deputy Premier Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, as well as readiness to provide all queries regarding the



Deputy Premier Shaikh Khalid with other ministers at the meeting.

Government Action Programme (GAP-2019-2022).

Deputy Premier Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa said that process of discussing the pro-

gramme complies fully with the constitutional amendments which were endorsed in 2012, particularly clause 46 which stipulates the GAP procedures.

The Deputy Premier said that the GAP Study Committee had submitted 75 questions to the Government. The Government's delegation replied to most of the

queries.

The State budget for the two fiscal years 2019-2020 will include details about the planned projects.

The parliamentary committee will convene today, in the presence of the Government's delegation, to continue discussing the (GAP-2019-2022).

# A rare feat for Bahrain

The Kingdom becomes first nation to enact UNCITRAL model law on electronic transferable records

● **New wave of legislations includes Electronic Communications and Transactions Law**

● **Ground-breaking reforms to bridge trade and finance seamlessly, strengthen Bahrain's digital economy**

TDT | Manama

In a global first, Bahrain has enacted the Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR), developed by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). The move is part of a series of sweeping reforms aimed at bolstering the digital

readiness of the GCC region's US\$1.5 trillion economy.

In strategic cooperation with the UNCITRAL Secretariat, Bahrain also revised its existing Electronic Transactions Law with new provisions that align with the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts and renamed it the Electronic Communications and Transactions Law.

A 2018 report by KPMG titled



'The Cost of Doing Business in the GCC' in the ICT sector recognised Bahrain as having the most liberalised and competitive ICT sector in the region with the lowest costs for critical ICT metrics, such as cross-border internet connectivity. While building on this foundation, the new laws further enhance the country's competitiveness on a global scale.

The overall benefits of the legislations include Electronic Transferable Records Law and Electronic Communications and Transactions Law.

In a statement issued to media, Khalid Al Rumaihi, Chief Executive of the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB), said: "Bahrain continues to lead the way in digital reforms. The latest achievement of being the first country in the world to adopt the UNCI-

TRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records gives us an unrivalled advantage in the GCC region. The new laws are a key step forward in achieving the Bahrain Vision 2030 and The Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain."

MR AL RUMAIHI

TRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records gives us an unrivalled advantage in the GCC region. The new laws are a key step forward in achieving the Bahrain Vision 2030 and The Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain."

Electronic transferable records and transactions offer unprecedented flexibility, speed, security and scope, covering the entire gamut of electronic

commerce, including distributed ledgers such as blockchain. These capabilities support the goals set by public-private partnership-led initiatives such as Team Bahrain, which has succeeded in attracting investments from leading multinationals into the country.

"From a regional perspective, Bahrain has achieved many firsts in its 47-year history – from discovering oil to diversifying its economy, as well as driving innovation through the GCC region's first FinTech sandbox. We are confident that the new legislations will revolutionise the way we do business, develop talent and create a sustainable trading environment."

Luca Castellani, Secretary of Working Group IV (Electronic Commerce) of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), noted: "Bahrain is the first

country in the world enacting the Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records, which establishes a modern legislative framework for a digital-first economy by legally enabling, for example, the use of blockchain in fintech and logistics.

"The adoption of UNCITRAL texts, including the incorporation of additional provisions in the revised Electronic Transactions Law, helps creating confidence in overseas traders and investors that Bahrain is committed to upholding modern commercial law standards and places Bahrain at the forefront of innovation and business-friendliness."

The influx of foreign direct investments into the country in 2018 increased by 13 per cent per cent over the previous year to US\$830 million, making it one of the region's fastest-growing economies.

## Special Representative discusses US-Iran policy at Derasat

● **Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the Chairman of Derasat affirmed the longstanding relations between Bahrain and the United States, and Bahrain's commitment to the US's strategy to combat Iran's destabilising activities.**

Manama

In conjunction with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's visit to the region, US Special Representative for Iran and Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary of State Brian Hook returned to Bahrain and spoke about US-Iran policy at the Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat) in a specially arranged roundtable discussion.

In his opening remarks, Special Representative Hook said, "Bahrain is a key partner in our



Dr Shaikh Abdulla receives Mr Hook.

Iran strategy." He continued: "Iran's support of proxies here in Bahrain is part of a much larger strategy to destabilise the region. Iran must stop testing and proliferating missiles, stop launching and developing nuclear-capable missiles, and stop supporting its militias in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Bahrain, and Yemen."

Mr Hook also emphasised: "Together, our two nations work closely to promote stability and strengthen security. Iran, on the other hand, has tried to weaken national identity in Bahrain and create sectarian divisions. But Bahrain's leaders have responded by deepening their commitment to peaceful coexistence and religious freedom."

Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the Chairman of Derasat affirmed the longstanding relations between Bahrain and the United States, and Bahrain's commitment to the US's strategy to combat Iran's destabilising activities.

The Chairman also commented, "This meeting highlighted the importance of convening relevant stakeholders in Research Centres such as Derasat as a way of coordinating efforts and creating partnerships and we look forward to continue our efforts in this regard."

## 10 years jail for rioting duo

● After burning the vehicle, the accused went in hiding, but were arrested following a thorough investigation.

TDI | Manama

The Fourth High Criminal Court has handed down 10 years of imprisonment to two Bahrainis convicted of burning a police vehicle.

The court also fined them BD5,804 for the damages incurred in the attack.

According to court details, the duo planned to burn a police vehicle to hurt police officers and cause a law and order situation in Karazakan.

After burning the vehicle, the accused went in hiding, but were arrested following a thorough investigation.

# Bahraini gets jail for anti-electoral tweets

Accused had urged citizens to boycott polls on social media

● The court in its judgement observed that the accused violated the electoral laws by urging citizens of the Kingdom to boycott the electoral process.

TDI | Manama

The Third Lower Criminal Court has sentenced a Bahraini man for posting comments on social media

with an intention to disrupt the electoral process in the Kingdom.

He was handed down one month imprisonment along with a fine of BD500.

The court also ordered that the sentence can be replaced with social service.

The man was charged after the Electronic Crimes Department of the Interior Ministry notified his posts on Twitter to the Public Prosecution.

According to Public Prosecution, the accused had asked the citizens of



The accused was charged with attempt to disrupt the electoral process by exploiting social media networks.

PUBLIC PROSECUTION

the Kingdom to boycott the recently-held parliament and municipal elections by not coming out of their houses to vote.

"The accused was charged with attempt to disrupt the electoral process by exploiting social media networks along with acting against the constitutional privilege of the people to practise political rights."

The court in its judgement observed that the accused violated the electoral laws by urging citizens of the Kingdom to boycott the electoral process.

## Ayurvedic tourism attracting more Bahrainis to India

● According to travel agents and Ayurveda experts, the holistic approach of Ayurveda is what has been luring Bahrainis.

TDI | Manama  
Mohammed Zafran

Medical tourism to India for Ayurveda treatment has been on a rise with an increasing number of Bahrainis becoming convinced about the ancient healthcare tradition, according to experts.

More and more Bahrainis are traveling to India in hopes of treating their ailments.

Ayurveda, which is at-least 5,000 years old has been gaining popularity in the Gulf in recent years.

According to travel agents and Ayurveda experts, the holistic approach of Ayurveda is what has been luring Bahrainis.

Dr Mohammed Mubashir, Medical director at Focuz Ayur Center in India, who is on a visit to Bahrain, said that he has witnessed a great increase in Gulf patients traveling to India.

"There has been an increased

awareness about Ayurveda in the Gulf, people are becoming more aware about its benefits and its potential to treat diseases."

However, he warned that people travelling to India for treatment should ensure that they are getting treated by licensed, qualified professionals and as unlicensed practise is rampant.

"It is imperative that treatment is given by qualified Ayurveda practitioners. If treatment is done with the wrong practitioner the patient may worsen his symptoms and put himself in danger," he said.

Ayurveda has been able to help patients avoid surgery, he said, explaining some of the unique aspects of the practice.

"Patients often come to us stating that they want to avoid surgeries that their doctors prescribed for them. Ailments such as back pain for example can be successfully treated with Ayurveda even if the patient has avoided surgery. Avoiding surgery is a huge relief for the patients."

Speaking about the rise of Ayurveda, he said, "Ayurveda is now globally accepted, even in Western countries like Germany and Russia, it has become quite common, it is an emerging science. Ayurveda is something that has been tried and tested for

5,000 years and continue to be popular."

Zeeshan Mansoor, Business Director at Zoma Travel and Tours, said that medical tourism to India over Ayurveda has seen an uptick in the past few years.

"There is definitely an increase in interest in Ayurveda in this part of the world. People are traveling to India for treatment of various ailments using Ayurveda.

"They are getting attracted to it because of the holistic solution it provides. We are certain that the interest in Ayurveda will improve and we are bracing ourselves to meet the increase of demand for medical tourism from Bahrain to India."



There has been an increased awareness about Ayurveda in the Gulf, people are becoming more aware about its benefits and its potential to treat diseases.

DR MOHAMMED



There is definitely an increase in interest in Ayurveda in this part of the world. People are traveling to India for treatment of various ailments using Ayurveda.

MR ZEESHAN

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Ayurvedic medicine is one of the world's oldest holistic healing systems. It was developed more than 3,000 years ago in India.

WORLD  
world**US service members killed in Syria attack: coalition**  
Beirut, Lebanon

US service members were among those killed in a suicide attack yesterday in the flashpoint Syrian city of Manbij, the US-led coalition said without specifying how many.

"US service members were killed during an explosion while conducting a routine patrol in Syria today," a coalition spokesman said in a statement posted on social media.

"We are still gathering information and will share additional details at a later time."

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, at least two US members of the coalition were killed in the attack targeting their patrol.

The Britain-based monitoring group relies on a network of sources inside Syria for its information.

The attack, the first of its kind against the coalition in Manbij in 10 months, was claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group.

**US will ensure ISIS defeat, says Pence**

Washington, United States

Vice President Mike Pence said the United States would fight to ensure the defeat of the Islamic State movement but reiterated plans to pull troops out of Syria after an attack there killed US service members.

"We'll stay in the region and we'll stay in the fight to ensure that ISIS does not rear its ugly head again," Pence, using another name for IS, told a gathering in Washington of US ambassadors stationed around the world.

"We will protect the gains that our soldiers and our coalition partners have secured," he told the meeting at the State Department.

Despite the pledge of support, Pence double-downed on President Donald Trump's



US Vice President Mike Pence

controversial declaration in December that the United States would pull all of its 2,000 troops from Syria.

"Thanks to the leadership of this commander-in-chief and the courage and sacrifice of our coalition partners, we're now actually able to hand off the fight against ISIS in Syria to our coalition partners and we are bringing our troops home," he

said. "The caliphate has crumbled and ISIS has been defeated," he said, without referencing the attack earlier Wednesday.

The US-led coalition said US service members were among the dead in the suicide attack in the flashpoint city of Manbij, the first there against the international forces in 10 months.

**Indonesia vows to push Palestinian rights**

Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia will do everything possible to advance the rights of Palestinians when it assumes its position on the United Nations Security Council, the foreign ministry said yesterday.

Ministry official Febrian Ruddyard said the world's largest Muslim-majority country would make sure issues facing the Palestinians were

not buried, and it would offer unwavering support for their bid to become a full member of the UN. Palestinians have the status of non-member observer state at the world body. Full membership would amount to international recognition of Palestinian statehood.

"We have always reiterated that once we are elected we will push the Palestine issue in any form," Ruddyard said.

**Kremlin says 'stupid' to suggest Trump a Russian agent**

Moscow, Russia

A top Kremlin aide yesterday dismissed as ridiculous claims that US President Donald Trump has acted as an agent for Russia amid mounting controversy over his alleged ties to Moscow.

"Why comment on something stupid? How can the US president be an agent of another country?" President Vladimir Putin's foreign poli-

cy advisor Yuri Ushakov told a briefing after a journalist if Trump was a Russian agent.

Ushakov said Russia's relations with the US were "at rock bottom" and "nothing has happened in the context of developing them."

Trump himself said on Monday that he "never worked for Russia" and told reporters: "It's a disgrace that you even ask that question."

**Russia and Japan 'far from partners': Lavrov**

Moscow, Russia

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said yesterday that Moscow and Tokyo are still "far from being partners" despite renewed efforts to resolve a decades-old conflict over disputed islands.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe are to meet in Moscow next week for talks on The four strategic islands seized by the Soviet army in the final days of World War II.

Lavrov, speaking during an annual conference, set a confrontational tone ahead of the talks. "We are still far not only from being partners in international relations but also in finding constructive ways to make our relations better," Lavrov said.

"Why is Japan the only country in the world that cannot accept the results of World War II in their entirety?"

He said recognising the results of the war was not an ultimatum, but "an unavoidable part of the modern international system".

Lavrov met this week with his Japanese counterpart Taro Kono and demanded that Tokyo recognise Moscow's sovereignty over the Kuril islands for talks on ending hostilities to continue.

On Wednesday he said that, as well as the islands dispute, Japan's pro-Western position was also harming relations between Moscow and Tokyo.

"Japan votes not with us but against us on all the resolutions that interest Russia in the



Lavrov attends a meeting with his Japanese counterpart in Moscow



**The two leaders agreed last year to increase efforts to finally sign a treaty ending World War II-era hostilities.**

UN," he said.

The disputed Kuril islands, one of which lies less than 10 kilometres (six miles) from Japan's Hokkaido, consist of Kunashir, Iturup, Shikotan and Habomai. Three are inhabited while Habomai is a group of islets with only the presence of a border patrol.

In 1956 Japan and the Soviet Union signed a document which stipulated that the USSR was willing to cede Shikotan and Habomai following a signed peace agreement, but Japan demanded all four islands.

**'Upskirting' becomes illegal across UK**

London, United Kingdom

British lawmakers have outlawed the practice of "upskirting" -- secretly taking pictures up women's skirts -- following an 18-month campaign by a victim.

Those found guilty face up to two years in jail, leading campaigner Gina Martin to praise the bill as "politics and society at its best".

Members of the upper House of Lords on Tuesday gave the bill the final seal of approval, and it now only requires the formality of Royal Assent.

Prime Minister Theresa May personally backed the legislation, saying the practice left victims "feeling degraded and distressed".

The bill was briefly held up last year when a single MP blocked it by shouting "Object!"



Gina Martin

during a parliamentary vote.

Christopher Chope, a member of May's Conservative Party, claimed he was objecting to the manner in which the bill

was introduced, but was met with cries of "shame" from MPs.

Martin tweeted that she was "over the moon" about the vote, adding "I AM EXHAUSTED AND SO HAPPY!".

From Liverpool in northwest England, Martin was attending a music festival in London's Hyde Park when a man rubbed against her while his friend lurked nearby.

"Five minutes later, I saw that his friend... was watching a picture taken very close to a woman's c\*\*\*\*," she said earlier. "I knew it was me immediately."

Martin grabbed the phone and showed the image to police officers, but "they said 'we can't really help you'."

She then decided to campaign to make it illegal, collecting more than 100,000 signatures of support in an online petition.

**Kenya says Nairobi attack over, all five gunmen killed**  
Nairobi, Kenya

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta said yesterday that gunmen who stormed a luxury hotel complex, killing 14 people, had been "eliminated" after an almost 20-hour operation in which hundreds of civilians were rescued. The attack was claimed by the Al-Qaeda-linked Somali group Al-Shabaab, which has targeted Kenya.

At least one suicide bomber blew himself up and others swapped gunfire with security forces as the assault on DusitD2, a complex which includes a 101-room hotel, spa, restaurant and offices. "There were five terrorists and all of them are no more," Kenyan police chief Joseph Boinnet said.

**The curious case of an American in Syria**

Washington, United States

An American teacher captured by Kurdish-led forces in Syria acknowledged in an interview aired Tuesday that he was drawn to the Islamic State movement but said he did not fight.

NBC News broadcast an interview with Warren Christopher Clark, one of five foreigners, including another American, whom the Syrian Democratic Forces last week said they had seized as they battled remnants of the Islamic State group in eastern Syria.

Clark, a 34-year-old Texan who converted to Islam and



Warren Christopher Clark (Courtesy of NBC News)

took the alias Abu Mohammed al-Ameriki, said of the extremists: "I wanted to learn more about their ideology."

"I wanted to go see exactly what the group was about, and what they were doing," he said.

Clark said he entered Syria in 2015 and had previously watched videos of beheadings by the Islamic State group, also known as ISIS.

"I'm from the United States, from Texas. They like to execute people, too. So I really don't see any difference. They might do it off camera, but it's the same," he said.

But Clark insisted that he never fought for the group, which he said detained him numerous times for not taking up arms.

Instead Clark, who had worked as a substitute teacher in Sugar Land, near Houston, said he offered his services as an English instructor in Islamic State-controlled territory.

US officials have yet to reveal what they will do with Clark and another US citizen purportedly arrested by Kurdish-led forces, Zaid Abed al-Hamid.

President Donald Trump has in the past vowed tough punishment against extremists detained overseas.

# Millions take plunge in giant Indian festival



Indian Hindu devotees taking a holy dip at Sangam -- the confluence of the Ganges, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati rivers

AFP | Allahabad, India

More than 20 million Hindu pilgrims ritually bathed in India's holy rivers on the opening day of the Kumbh Mela, a gigantic festival billed as the world's largest human gathering.

The spectacular seven-week festival began Tuesday in Allahabad, an ancient city that rises alongside the Ganges, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati rivers in northern Uttar Pradesh state.

The meeting point of these rivers is considered among the holiest places in Hinduism and devotees believe bathing there during the Kumbh helps cleanse sins and brings salvation.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, whose government is overseeing the enormous event, said 22.5 million Hindus plunged into the icy waters on the first day of the Kumbh.

"I thank all the visitors, religious leaders, common man and officials for the smooth conduct

of the mega event," he told the Press Trust of India news agency on Wednesday.

Adityanath, a firebrand Hindu priest who rose to lead India's most populous state in 2017, said the opening day figures were "a record" for the centuries-old festival.

The Kumbh attracts astonishing numbers of visitors, outstripping the Haj pilgrimage to Mecca or any other large-scale gathering.

Kumbh organisers say the last major gathering in Allahabad in 2013 drew 120 million people -- nearly the population of Japan.

Nearly 30,000 police have been deployed to oversee crowds for the huge undertaking, and prevent stampedes that have marred previous gatherings.

A gigantic tent city has emerged near the banks of the hallowed rivers with a 45-square kilometre encampment set aside specially for pilgrims.

Adityanath, who hails from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party,



Followers of the Kinnar Akhara monastic Hindu order made up of transgender members take a dip in the Sangam

has heavily promoted this year's festival which comes as India prepares for a general election due by May.

The historic city of Allahabad was even renamed Prayagraj in October by the state's conservative government, stripping its centuries-old name and replacing it with an ancient Hindu

title.

But it is still widely known as Allahabad, the name given by Islamic rulers that reigned over India hundreds of years ago.

The Kumbh, which runs until March 4, was recognised as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2017.

## Only Japanese-born sumo champ retires

Tokyo, Japan

The only Japanese-born grand champion or "yokozuna" in sumo has decided to retire following a disastrous run of form and injury, leaving two Mongolians on top of the ancient sport.

Kisenosato, the first Japanese-born wrestler to reach the heights of yokozuna since 1998, decided to throw in the towel after three straight losses in the New Year "basho" or tournament.

Top government spokesman Yoshihide Suga described the retirement as "very regrettable."

"It's sad," he told reporters at a regular briefing.

"I think he captivated many fans as the first Japanese-born yokozuna in 19 years," he added.

Kisenosato won promotion to yokozuna in March 2017, much to the delight of fans eager to see a home-grown champion.

He had a promising start, winning his first basho as a yokozuna, but suffered a chest injury that forced him to miss eight consecutive tournaments.

He managed to win the autumn tournament last year but was again forced to retire in the basho after that following four consecutive losses.

This prompted officials to voice disappointment with his performance, sparking speculation that he needed good results in the New Year tournament to retain his top-ranked status.

Local wrestlers have been unable to repel a flood of foreigners who have dominated in recent years.

The overseas invasion began in earnest with Hawaiian behemoth Konishiki, who was nicknamed "Dump Truck" and tipped the scales at a whopping 285 kilos (628 pounds), and other hulking Pacific islanders in the 1990s.

The subsequent rise of the Mongolians has tormented sumo traditionalists in the absence of a Japanese challenge.

Sumo has also been rocked by a series of scandals in recent years, including the 2017 resignation of yokozuna Harumafuji after a brutal assault on a rival wrestler while out drinking.

In 2018, the sport drew accusations of sexism over a long-standing prohibition on



With the expected retirement of the 32-year-old, there will only be two fighters left in the top ranks -- Hakuho and Kakuryu, both Mongolians.

women entering the "dohyo" or dirt rings where sumo is practised.

The rings are viewed as sacred in the Shinto faith and women -- considered to be ritually unclean -- are not allowed to enter them.

The tradition came under the spotlight after women who rushed to help a mayor who collapsed in a ring were asked to leave as they offered medical assistance.

And in September, a top sumo stablemaster whose charges included the wrestler involved in the fight with Harumafuji announced he was resigning over the assault row.

The decision meant his wrestlers and staff were transferred to another stable.



Sumo grand champion or "yokozuna" Kisenosato of Japan takes part in a traditional ring-entering ceremony at Meiji shrine in Tokyo

## 'Zebra' bodypaint cuts fly bites 10-fold

Paris, France

Traditional white-striped bodypainting practiced by indigenous communities mimics zebra stripes to reduce the number of potentially harmful horsefly bites a person receives by up to 10-fold, according to new research published yesterday.

Tribes in Africa, Australia and southeast Asia have practiced bodypainting in cultural ceremonies for generations.

But scientists now believe that the striking striped patterns also slash the amount of biting insects attracted to the naked flesh of people living in Nature.

It is known that zebras get bitten far less than animals with a single fur colour, so a team of researchers decided to see if the light stripes painted on humans

would have a similar deterrent effect.

They used three shop mannequins -- one with dark skin, one with lighter skin, and a dark-skinned model painted with white stripes -- and coated each with a thin layer of adhesive to capture creepy crawlies. They then stuck them in the middle of a meadow for eight weeks in summer, and counted the number of horseflies and other biting insects each one attracted.

The results were startling: the dark-skinned mannequin was 10 times more attractive to horseflies than the striped model and twice as attractive than the light-skinned dummy.

The team behind the study believe that the stripes disrupt the polarisation of light reflect-



Representative picture (Courtesy of France 24)

ed off human bodies, making them less delicious-looking to horseflies and other bugs.

"Traditional bodypaintings with their typical white-striped patterns on a brown body sur-

face have the advantage of deterring blood-sucking horseflies as these patterns are unattractive to these parasitic insects," the authors wrote in the journal Royal Society Open Science.

# American companies need Chinese consumers

Apple's declining sales reveal how important the health of China's consumer market is to the world's economy



A mobile phone shop in Sin Tat Plaza, in Hong Kong.



WEIJIAN SHAN

In a rare bit of bad news for its investors, Apple last week laid the blame for lower than expected revenue on its performance in China. The news sent Apple's stock price plunging, and investors also ditched other companies with significant exposure in China. The scale of the damage, both to Apple's bottom line and to the broader market, underscores how critically important China — and Chinese consumers — have become for American companies.

China accounts for about \$52 billion in sales for Apple, and is its third-largest market. Apple is not the only technology company that relies on sales in China. For Qualcomm, a chip maker whose technology is used in many Apple smartphones, the figure is \$15

billion, or about 65 per cent of its total sales, according to an estimate by FactSet. Others with big bets on China include Intel (24pc of sales), Micron Technology (51pc) and Texas Instruments (44pc).

These numbers make it very clear that the perception of China as the "factory of the world," flooding global markets with cheap goods, is badly out of date. Exports and capital investments such as buildings and roads are no longer the main engines of China's growth. Exports have dropped from 36pc of China's gross domestic product in 2006 to 20pc in 2018. Going after China's exports with tariffs, as the Trump administration is attempting, is, to a certain extent, fighting yesterday's war.

In recent years, China's economy has shifted to one that is much more dependent on domestic household consumption — ordinary Chinese people buying things for themselves and their families. In China over

the last decade, the growth in private consumption has outpaced overall economic growth rate. In 2018, gross domestic product in China grew by 6.5pc, and household consumption accounted for about four-fifths of that growth.

China is now the fastest-growing consumer market in the world, with private consumption amounting to about \$5 trillion, more than 10pc of the world's total. Competition for Chinese consumers' hard-earned yuan has become intense.

Consider the smartphone market. As recently as 2016, Apple was China's leading maker of handsets. But by the third quarter of 2018, China's dominant telecommunications company, Huawei, was on top, with 23pc of the market. The Chinese smartphone makers Oppo, Vivo and Xiaomi occupy the next three spots, while Apple ranked fifth, with 9pc. South Korea's Samsung, the global leader in smartphone sales, has all but disappeared

China is now the fastest-growing consumer market in the world, with private consumption amounting to about \$5 trillion, more than 10pc of the world's total.

from China, having failed to recover from the fiasco over its dangerously overheating Galaxy Note 7 batteries.

Even industries where American consumers once reigned supreme are now increasingly shifting toward China. General Motors, for example, sells more cars in China than in North America. For global filmmakers, box office sales in 2018 totaled

about \$9 billion in China, compared with almost \$12 billion for North America in 2018.

My company made a decision more than a decade ago not to invest in China's export sector. Costs for Chinese manufacturers are rising, and prices for their exports are flat or falling. Instead, I feel strongly that there is much greater potential for companies — inside and outside China — that cater to the Chinese consumer market.

Yes, China's economic growth has begun to slow, and there has been a decrease in investments as Beijing has moved to tighten credit. And the threat of a trade war with the United States is real. But my long-term outlook has not changed. The Chinese consumer market will continue to grow, albeit at a slower pace, and it will continue to be a market that any global company must pay serious attention to if it wants to remain competitive.

So where does this leave companies like Apple that find them-

selves caught in the middle of the trade war? They must hope, first of all, for a swift conclusion to the latest round of trade negotiations between China and the United States, which began in Beijing on Jan 7.

The best possible outcome is a deal that will encourage China to open its economy further, commit to shrinking its bloated state-owned sector and ease barriers to further foreign investment and trade.

Tariffs were supposed to hurt China by hitting its exports to the United States. That hasn't happened. Should it persist, the trade war will, of course, hurt Chinese companies, just as it has already hurt so many American companies.

But if the conflict eventually drags down Chinese consumer demand, businesses all over the world will be the losers.

(Weijian Shan is chairman and chief executive of PAG, a private equity firm based in Hong Kong)

## CIVILIAN'S TRIBUNE

### Please don't invite unrest

What the People's Vote faction does not realise is that if parliament decides on a second referendum, those of us who voted to leave the EU will take to the streets to fight for democracy. The revolt will make the opposition to the poll tax look

like a tea party.

We voted to return sovereignty to parliament and expect parliamentarians to respect our choice and behave accordingly, not to follow their own self-serving priorities.

The hallmark of British constitutional democracy is the

sovereignty of parliament. MPs take upon themselves a duty to protect and advance the interests of the electorate and the country as a whole. The 2016 referendum result does not legally bind parliament; nor would any further referendum.

S Thomas





The **Czech Republic** applies for membership of the European Union.

**Cape Canaveral Air Force Station:** A Delta II carrying the GPS IIR-Isatellite explodes 13 seconds after launch, dropping 250 tons of burning rocket remains around the launch pad.

**Lewinsky scandal:** Matt Drudge breaks the story of the Bill Clinton–Monica Lewinsky affair on his Drudge Report website.



**Mount Nyiragongo** erupts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, displacing an estimated 400,000 people.



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Explaining tax rates before Reagan to 5th graders: “Imagine if you did chores for your grandma and she gave you \$10. When you got home, your parents took \$7 from you.” The students said: “That’s not fair!” Even 5th graders get it.

@ScottWalker

02



I’m upset to hear Arun Jaitley Ji is not well. We fight him on a daily basis for his ideas. However, I and the Congress party send him our love and best wishes for a speedy recovery. We are with you and your family 100% during this difficult period Mr Jaitley.

@RahulGandhi

03



The National Assembly is the only legitimate, democratically elected government entity in Venezuela, and the U.S. supports its important decisions yesterday. We urge all Venezuelan leaders, including the military, to uphold the rule of law and constitutional order.

@AmbJohnBolton

04



House Democrats just rejected an invitation from President Trump to come to the White House for a bipartisan discussion on border security solutions. And they expect voters to believe they’re serious about negotiating to find a compromise? Americans aren’t buying it.

@RepMarkMeadows

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

# Australians are, undoubtedly, having more fun

*Australians are also, mercifully, not in the midst of a raging culture war*



BARI WEISS

Australia — When Mark Twain steamed into Sydney’s harbour in September 1895, journalists peppered him with questions before he had even stepped off the S S Warrimoo. “I am going to write a book on Australia,” he proclaimed.

“And I think I ought to start now. You always know so much more of a country when you have not seen it than when you have.”

I imagined an exotic menagerie: animals that begin with the letter K frolicking next to shirtless Hemsworths, mostly.

Instead, I found Australia — or rather the teeny, tiny corner of this vast continent that I got the chance to experience this past month — much closer to how David Sedaris once described it: “Canada in a thong.”

It is a place where things just work. The politics are moderate. The economy is roaring (at least for now). The strangers are helpful.

Everyone has health care. Mass shootings are almost unheard-of. And I’d feel comfortable following the five-second rule on a random subway platform.

So far, so Canada. But you don’t get on a flight across the world just to admire a \$19 minimum wage. You come for the thongs.

Australians have more fun. They just do. I guess I should not be surprised by this fact given that this is the place that birthed both Hugh Jackman and Kylie Minogue.

As someone who is naturally suspicious of people who don’t seem to be experiencing some level of existential anxiety during their waking hours, I have watched my temporary neighbours with deep interest.

As I prepare to board a flight back to my natural habitat — bitterly cold and overbenzoed Manhattan — here are some of the lessons I’ve learned from the sunny Aussies I count myself lucky to have met.

The first: Hang out. But really. In the States, time with friends can feel a bit like those PETA videos of chickens on factory farms: slotted and squeezed into tight compartments.

On New Year’s Day in Sydney I spent seven hours at the beach. Doing what, I can’t quite tell you. But seven hours spent in a shady spot by the sea with friends and food went by in the blink of an eye.

I haven’t had a hangout like that since college. Here, that



Sunset approaching at Manly Beach, near Sydney, Australia.

is typical on any given Sunday.

Part of the beauty of the way Australians hang out isn’t just how relaxed it is, but the inclusive, rolling nature of how they socialise. I showed up for a drink at a friend’s place one evening last month and within an hour four people had turned into eight and by the time I left more were en route.

Happy hour is simply not a thing because it lasts only an hour. I went to an office Christmas party that began at 3 pm in one venue, stumbled into dinner and then morphed onto karaoke.

When I hailed a cab at 11:30 pm I was the first to leave. In my experience, American office Christmas parties mean that everyone gets a thimbleful of lukewarm Champagne in a plastic cup. We have a lot to learn.

Which brings me to another thing Australians do better: vacation.

My local cafe here closed the day before Christmas. It reopens on Jan 15. And no one here thinks that’s strange. January here is like August in France. The only labor taking place in summer seems to be tunneling into coconuts to sip from by the pool.

Many public pools, by the way, are called “baths” in Australia. Parks tend to be “gardens.” This makes me feel like I am in a Jane Austen novel.

I haven’t had a hangout like that since college. Here, that is typical on any given Sunday.

Word play here is a national pastime. Christmas presents: Chrissy prezzies. A bar mitzvah: a barmy. McDonald’s: Macca’s. Breakfast is brekkie, Australia is Straya, avocado is avo, but you already knew those.

You can roll your eyes or you can appreciate the fact that everything here sounds a bit cuter. I opt for the latter.

More profound is how people relate to one another. I’ve talked with people for hours before they have asked me what I do for work. At home that question can come before “How are you?” I won’t ever make that mistake again.

Australians are also, mercifully, not in the midst of a raging culture war. At home, friends are largely delineated by political tribe; couples that date

across the divide are newsworthy.

Here, it is normal. The political is not personal, and that’s not just because so many of the big issues that tear Americans apart (health care, guns, the social safety net) are settled. It’s that Australians never seem to doubt that there is more to life than politics.

And yet, for all that this country gets right, Australia is a bit like the hottest girl in your freshman class. She looks fantastic in her crop top but suffers from crippling self-doubt.

Some of the insecurity is warranted. Given the tremendous capital and the brain power here, Australia should be a startup nation. Ask Australians why it isn’t like Tel Aviv or Silicon Valley and they will invariably chalk it up to “tall poppy syndrome.” (Another great Australianism, tall poppies are successful people whose ambitions perhaps deserve to be cut down to size.)

Another obstacle might be how generally pleasant life here is. When you’ve got a good thing going, it’s hard to justify taking a risk that will most likely result in failure. And people here tend to be deeply laid back, a quality that can shade into risk aversion and complacency — perhaps an inevitable result of living somewhere so physically beautiful.

“We congratulate ourselves that we punch above our weight, but in fact most Australians underestimate our country’s weight class,” Michael Fullilove, the director of the Lowy Institute, a foreign-policy think tank based here, told me. “Australia has the 13th-largest economy in the world. We are an old democracy. We have a continent to ourselves. Given all that, I don’t think we punch above our weight, but below it.”

A longtime republican in the Australian sense of the word, he partly blames the queen for this state of affairs. “Are we so hopeless that we don’t deserve our own head of state?” he said. “I don’t think we are. Becoming a republic would make us prouder and more purposeful.”

Jerry Seinfeld once called Australia’s flag “Britain at night.” The sentiment behind that joke, at least how I hear it, touches on something Australians seem to fear about themselves: that they are derivative. Of England, of America, of both.

The faster they can stop caring about what others think — not just other English-speaking countries, but also their fellow Australians — the more interesting and innovative this already great country will be.

(Bari Weiss is an Op-Ed staff editor and writer. She writes about culture and politics.)

business

# Mayday! moment



## British press says May 'crushed' by Brexit defeat



London, United Kingdom



Britain's main opposition Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn (C bottom) giving his response and informing the House that he has tabled a motion of no confidence in the Government in the House of Commons in London

- After Brexit humiliation May faces confidence vote
- EU warns UK faces a hugely disruptive "no deal"

- London asked to clarify its intentions
- Ireland intensifies preparation for a 'disorderly Brexit'

AFP | London, United Kingdom



British Prime Minister Theresa May was expected to win a confidence vote despite a crushing defeat over her Brexit deal with the EU that triggered warnings of a chaotic "no-deal" divorce.

MPs on Tuesday rejected May's deal on leaving the European Union, leaving the Brexit process in total disarray with just 73 days to go before the official departure date.

She suffered the biggest government defeat in modern British history when the House of Commons rejected by 432 votes to 202 her agreement in a devastating blow to her entire Brexit strategy.

The result left Europe reeling, with various countries saying they would intensify preparations in case Britain

crashes out of the EU on March 29 with no agreement.

At a heated session in parliament on Wednesday, May faced calls from MPs to give up the red lines she has imposed on Brexit negotiations and come up with a different plan.

She has said she will hold cross-party talks and announce the way forward on Monday.

But she insisted she was sticking to two key principles -- to limit migration from the EU and ensure Britain had its own trade policy. These would seem to rule out membership of a customs union or the EU's single market, which the main opposition Labour party wants.

May appeared to hint at the possibility of delaying Brexit, saying the EU would allow this "if it was clear that there was a plan towards moving towards an agreed deal".

EU officials have said this could be possible but only until the newly-elected European Parliament meets in June.

However, her Downing Street office insisted the government intends to leave the EU on March 29.

**'Fundamental change'**

Ahead of the 2016 Brexit referendum, most lawmakers, including May, were against leaving the EU after almost half a century of membership.

Nearly three years later, the country is deeply divided and politicians are still struggling to form consensus around any plan, with MPs criticising May's

deal both for keeping Britain too closely tied to the EU, and for not keeping it closer.

Former foreign minister and leading Brexit supporter Boris Johnson said Tuesday's vote gave May a "massive mandate" to renegotiate the deal.

**High-stakes**

The defeat blows the starting whistle on a no-holds-barred struggle to direct the course of Brexit.

Increasing numbers of pro-European MPs are calling for a second referendum with an option to cancel Brexit.

On Wednesday, 71 Labour MPs signed up to a letter calling for a public vote. Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said it was the "only credible option".

"We don't have any more time to waste," she said.

On Wednesday, the pound mostly held its ground as investors considered the next likely developments in the saga.

Bank of England chief Mark Carney said he believed sterling's relative strength reflected "some expectation that the process of resolution would be extended and that the prospect of no deal may have been diminished". British businesses urged politicians to unite.

"Financial stability must not be jeopardised in a game of high-stakes political poker," warned Catherine McGuinness, policy chair at the City of London Corporation, the body governing the British capital's massive financial district.

Prime Minister Theresa May was left "crushed" and "humiliated", Britain's newspapers said yesterday as they raked over the fallout from parliament's huge rejection of her EU divorce deal. Daily papers said May's deal was sunk after the huge vote against the agreement struck between May's government and Brussels, as she prepared to fight a no-confidence motion on Wednesday.

The *Daily Telegraph's* front page read: "A complete humiliation", following the 432 to 202 vote by MPs to reject the deal. Its editorial said May had misjudged parliament and the EU had failed to understand the "essential issues of sovereignty and freedom" behind the Brexit vote.

"The government must regain the confidence of the house, rethink the agreement and go to the Europeans with a united front. Whether or not Mrs May leads that effort is a decision upon which she will now have to think very hard."

The broadsheet's parliamentary sketch writer Michael Deacon said May's pre-vote plea to MPs "had all the brio of a mouldy gym sock".

"She sounded as winningly persuasive as a mother snapping at her children to eat up their cabbage or go to bed hungry."

"Brextinct" said *The Sun* tabloid's front page. "May's Brexit deal dead as a dodo", said Britain's biggest-selling paper, with a mock-up picture of the PM as the extinct flightless bird.

**'Zombie PM'**

The *Times* columnist Matthew Parris said it was time for senior MPs to take over the Brexit process.

"There exists no leadership in either the government or the opposition capable of taking us through this mess," he wrote following the vote.

"Theresa May isn't any good; she doesn't have a fiendish, secret strategy... she doesn't know what to do.

"Parliament must wrest control from a zombie prime minister, a zombie cabinet and a zombie opposition."

The *Daily Mirror's* front page said: "No deal, no hope, no clue, no confidence".

The tabloid called her "the humiliated PM". The *Daily Mail's* headline said: "Fighting for her life".

The tabloid said the defeat left May's power "hanging by a thread", calling it a "devastating result, which threatens to plunge the Brexit process into chaos".

The *Financial Times* newspaper ran a headline reading: "May's defeat spells trouble for the EU's Brexit approach."

**'Don't fail us!'**

The *Daily Express* headline said "Dismay". "Now it's time for MPs to do their duty and work with Theresa May for a deal that satisfies the 17.4m who voted for Brexit... Don't fail us!" it said on its front page.

The Scotsman's front page headline simply said: "Crushed".

"May suffers historic defeat as Tories turn against her," said *The Guardian's* front page.

"The PM leads a party that is divided and a country stockpiling food and medicines as if preparing for war. She needs to humbly reach out to her opponents and find a way to prevent Britain crashing out of the EU," its editorial said.

Pro-EU supporters celebrate outside the Houses of Parliament in London



# How Europe reacted to Brexit deal defeat

The EU and European governments have warned that the British parliament's rejection of a Brexit deal heightens the risk of a disorderly withdrawal from the bloc. Following are some of the key reactions to Tuesday night's huge defeat for British Prime Minister Theresa May.



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May leaves from the rear of 10 Downing Street with Number 10 Chief of Staff Gavin Barwell,

## European Union

” The risk of a disorderly withdrawal of the United Kingdom has increased with this evening's vote. While we do not want this to happen, the European Commission will continue its contingency work to help ensure the EU is fully prepared

**JEAN-CLAUDE JUNCKER**  
EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT



” If a deal is impossible, and no one wants no deal, then who will finally have the courage to say what the only positive solution is?

**DONALD TUSK**  
EU COUNCIL PRESIDENT WHO ADDED THE REMAINING EU27 "WILL REMAIN UNITED"

” It's now up to the British government to say what the next stage is. The EU will remain united and determined to find a deal.

**MICHEL BARNIER**  
THE EU'S CHIEF BREXIT NEGOTIATOR

” This is a bitter day for Europe. We are well prepared -- but a hard Brexit would be the least attractive choice, for the EU and GB (Great Britain)

**OLAF SCHOLZ**  
GERMAN FINANCE MINISTER AND VICE CHANCELLOR

” A hard Brexit will be the worst of all options

**ANNEGRET KRAMP-KARRENBauer**  
LEADER OF CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL'S CENTRE-RIGHT CDU PARTY AND HER LIKELY SUCCESSOR.

” Delaying Brexit beyond March 29 would make no sense. "It would only make sense if there is a path to the goal of a deal between the EU and Great Britain.

**HEIKO MAAS**  
FOREIGN MINISTER

## Germany

” Either way, we will have to negotiate a transition period with them because the British cannot afford to no longer have planes taking off or landing at home, and their supermarkets, as much as 70 percent, are supplied by continental Europe.

**EMMANUEL MACRON**  
PRESIDENT FRANCE

” An unordered exit would be negative for the EU and catastrophic for the UK

**SPANISH PRIME MINISTER PEDRO SANCHEZ**

” In any case, there will be no renegotiations on the withdrawal agreement

**AUSTRIAN CHANCELLOR SEBASTIAN KURZ**

## Ford forecasts Q4 loss

**Detroit, United States**

Ford said yesterday it expects to post a \$112 million loss in the fourth quarter of 2018 as it restructures in the United States and Europe.

The second biggest US automaker said it will still post a profit after charges stemming from the drive to cut \$11 billion in costs, financial documents showed.

The adjusted profit per share is set to be 30 cents during this period, less than the 32 cents anticipated by the markets.

Across all of 2018, Ford will post a net profit of \$3.7 billion, half the 2017 result.

Adjusted earnings per share are expected to be \$1.30 across the year, right at the lower end of its \$1.30-1.50 estimate in October.

The figures were released just a day after the automaker announced a global alliance with Germany's Volkswagen to build commercial vans and pickups starting in 2022, though the deal does not involve cross-ownership.

Ford is aiming to post better financial results this year than last, but warned that Brexit, tariffs, currency fluctuations, salary negotiations and the health of the Chinese and European economies will have an impact.



A bear display is seen in front of a Ford truck during day one of the 2019 North American International Auto Show



A high-level delegation from the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) spearheaded by chairman Sameer Nass during a visit to Asharqia Chamber in Saudi Arabia. The delegation held a meeting with the Chairman of Asharqia Chamber Abdulhakim Al Khaldi, who hailed the deep-rooted relation between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Nass expressed the Bahrain Chamber's keenness on bolstering cooperation and consolidating efforts with Asharqia Chamber in a bid to invigorate trade, investments, and partnerships.



The real-estate and constructions committee of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) headed by Dr Manaf Hamza during a meeting with the Survey and Land Registration Bureau represented by the General Director for Survey Naji Sabt Salem. The meeting stressed consolidating efforts between the chamber and the bureau in a bid to bolster the real estate sector and invigorate investments.

# Banks elevate Saudi

● **Riyad Bank continues to gain on merger talk**

● **Emirates NBD increases after strong Q4 earnings**

Reuters

Saudi Arabia's stock market rose yesterday, boosted by its bank shares, while Egypt's index was lifted by its blue-chip stocks, mirroring a gain in emerging markets.

Saudi Arabia's index rose 0.7 per cent with Banque Saudi Fransi rising 5.2pc.

Riyad Bank continued to rise, adding 4.5pc. The lender had picked Goldman Sachs to advise on its merger talks with National Commercial Bank (NCB). NCB shed 0.4pc.

The Saudi market, which will become part of the MSCI emerging market benchmark this year, has started the year on a positive note, rising 7.6pc so far this year.

Foreign selling, which accelerated in the second half of 2018, is also showing signs of easing.

Saudi exchange data released on Sunday showed foreigners were net buyers of 1.03 billion riyals (\$274.60 million) of stocks last week, up from the 134.3 million riyals of stocks foreigners bought the week before.

Most cement stocks also gained with Tabuk Cement increasing 4.8pc after saying that it had exported 6,950 tonnes of cement to Yemen under a memorandum of understanding with International Tataloat Co.



Saudi stock market (Courtesy of Emerging Market views).jpg

The Egyptian blue-chip index added 0.5pc, with its biggest lender Commercial International Bank rising 3.4pc. The Financial Regulatory Authority said it was considering the bank's request to increase its authorised capital to 50 billion Egyptian pounds (\$2.80 billion) from 20 billion pounds.

In Dubai, the index gained 0.4pc, after three straight sessions of losses, partly lifted by gains in Emirates NBD, its largest bank. Emirates gained 1.1pc after reporting a 10pc rise in its fourth-quarter net profit as loan growth and improved margins offset lower income from investment securities and higher expenses.

GFH Financial Group, whose primary listing is on the Bahrain stock exchange, added 2.4pc after saying it had acquired Westside Office Business Park in the UK. It said it and its clients would invest up to 39.2 million pounds (\$50.4 million).

However, Developer DAMAC Properties dropped 2.3pc, having plunged nearly 10pc in the last session after BofA Merrill Lynch downgraded the stock to 'underperform' from 'neutral'.

## Closing Bell

SAUDI	▲ 0.7pc to 8,406 pts
DUBAI	▲ 0.4pc to 2,501 pts
EGYPT	▲ 0.5pc to 13,510 pts
QATAR	■ at 10,762 pts
ABU DHABI	■ at 4,983 pts
KUWAIT	▼ 0.1pc to 5,468 pts
BAHRAIN	■ at 1,340 pts
OMAN	▼ 0.5pc at 4,258 pts

The Abu Dhabi index was flat with First Abu Dhabi Bank, United Arab Emirates' largest lender, slipping 0.4pc in low volume.

Energy firm Dana Gas added 5pc but trading was suspended after an hour ahead of a board meeting called to discuss its operations in Egypt, United Arab Emirates and Iraqi Kurdistan. The firm did not announce the results of the meeting, and trading was suspended until market close.

Qatar's index also traded flat, with Middle East's biggest lender, Qatar National Bank, shedding 0.5pc despite reporting a increase in full-year net profit and total customer deposits.



A delegation from the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) spearheaded by chairman of the board of directors Sameer Nass meeting yesterday the Emir of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia Prince Saud bin Nayef bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. Nass hailed the historic and deep-rooted relation between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, and mulled stepping-up economic cooperation and integration.

## iGA gets ISO for Quality Management



Mohamed Ali AlQaed, Chief Executive of the Information & eGovernment Authority, receives ISO (granted by Bureau Veritas) from Salman AlSalman Head of Quality Assurance department at the Authority.

TDT | Manama

The Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA) announced receiving the ISO Certificate 9001:2015 for Quality Management by Bureau Veritas.

Certification follows the implementation of all rules

and required standards in addition to surpassing independent evaluation stages, auditing processes and tests conducted.

Commenting, iGA Chief Executive Mohamed Ali AlQaed stated that re-attainment of the ISO Certificate reflects Authority's vision and keeness to raise

its services by improving its quality.

ISO9001:2015 in Quality Management comprise a set of standards by the International Organization for Standardization which recognizes the conformity of quality management systems in entities granted the international standards.

## Inovent names Al Jar CEO

Manama

Inovent's board of directors yesterday announced naming Yasser Al Jar as its Chief Executive Officer.

Al Jar most recently was the Group's acting CEO. Prior to that role, he was the Chief Financial Officer of Invest from August 2011.

Dr Omar Al Mutawa, Chairman of Inovent said: "Since his appointment as Acting CEO early last year, Yasser has been central to the successful execution and delivery of the Board's initiatives for 2018."



CEO Yasser AlJar

Al Jar's career spans 20 years of experience in the fields of Islamic Investment Banking, Assurance Services, Commercial and Investment Banking, and Real Estate.

## 1,300 vendors registered for VAT

Manama

The National Bureau for Taxation (NBT) yesterday announced that over 1,300 local and international vendors have registered for the Value Added Tax (VAT). NBT call center, as part of VAT awareness, also responded to over 7,000 VAT related queries, the statement said. To check taxpayers' registration status enter: <https://www.nbt.gov.bh/vat/tp/ms> prior to paying the 5 per cent VAT charge.



Royal Bahrain Hospital celebrates their 8th Anniversary. The cake cutting ceremony was attended by Ahmed Jawahery - President, Dr Sheriff Sahadulla - Chief Executive Officer, Jacob Thomas - Executive Director (Projects & Operations - GCC) and Rohit Srivastava - Chief Operating Officer along with Doctors and Staff at Royal Bahrain Hospital.



Gulf Air officials during an emergency response exercise at the airline's headquarters last week held to ensure the preparedness level to handle emergency in a timely, effective and responsible manner. The exercise, a refresher training to Gulf Air's Emergency Response Team assessed the adequacy of plans and procedures in the event of an emergency aimed at improving emergency preparedness level. The event was coordinated by the airline's Emergency Response Planning unit within the Security department in Gulf Air's Emergency Management Centre.



The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority's (TRA) Board of Directors during their last meeting of 2018 at TRA's headquarters in the Seef District. Board members discussed key issues related to the telecommunications sector praising TRA's outstanding efforts in the development and growth of the telecommunications sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

## show

## OASIS JUFFAIR

- 1-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM  
 DAILY AT (VIP): 2.30 + 7.45 PM
- 2-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW**  
 Ⓣ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM  
 DAILY AT (VIP): 12.00 + 5.15 + 10.30 PM
- 3-MIKHAEL () (MALAYALAM) NEW**  
 Ⓣ NIVIN PAULY, UNNI MUKAUDAN, MANJIMA MOHAN  
 FROM FRIDAY 18TH: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM
- 4-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE) NEW**  
 Ⓣ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER  
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 11.30 AM + 4.00 + 8.30 PM
- 5-SIMMBA (PG-15) (HINDI/ACTION/COMEDY/DRAMA/ROMANTIC)**  
 Ⓣ RANVEER SINGH, AJAY DEVGN, SARA ALI KHAN  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 2.15 + 5.15 + 8.15 + 11.15 PM
- 6-SPIDER MAN INTO THE SPIDER VERSE (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ HAILEE STEINFELD, NICOLAS CAGE, MAHERSHALA ALI  
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 1.45 + 6.15 + 10.45 PM
- 7-URI: THE SURGICAL STRIKE (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA)**  
 Ⓣ VICKY KAUSHAL, KIRTI KULHARI, PARESH RAWAL  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.30 + 8.30 PM
- 8-THE ACCIDENTAL PRIME MINISTER (PG) (HINDI/DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY)**  
 Ⓣ ANUPAM KHER, AAHANA KUMRA, ABDUL QUADIR AMIN  
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.15 + 11.15 PM
- 9-PETTA (PG-15) (TAMIL/ACTION/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ RAJINIKANTH, VIJAY SETHUPATHI, SIMRAN, TRISHA  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.45 + 7.00 + 10.15 PM
- 10-VISWASAM (PG-15) (TAMIL)**  
 Ⓣ AJITH KUMAR, NAYANTHARA  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 2.15 + 5.15 + 8.15 + 11.15 PM
- 11-VINAYA VIDHEYA RAMA (PG-15) (TELGU)**  
 Ⓣ KIARA ADVANI, RAM CHARAN AND VIVEK OBEROI  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 + 5.15 + 11.00 PM
- 12-JOSEPH (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)**  
 Ⓣ JOJU GEORGE, MALAVIKA MENON, JAMES ELIYA  
 DAILY AT: 2.30 + 8.15 PM

## CITYCENTRE

- 1-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)  
 DAILY AT (IMAX 2D): 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM  
 DAILY AT (VIP II): 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM
- 2-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW**  
 Ⓣ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)  
 DAILY AT (VIP I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM
- 3-ALL THE DEVIL'S MEN (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ WILLIAM FICHTNER, SYLVIA HOEKS, ELLIOT COWAN  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM
- 4-SA'AT REDA (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) NEW**  
 Ⓣ HALA FAKHER, AHMED FATHY, DINA FOUAD  
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 1.45 + 3.45 + 5.45 + 7.45 + 9.45 + 11.45 PM
- 5-MAHARAJA (PG-13) (ARABIC/COMEDY) NEW**



- Ⓣ ZIAD BOURJI, DALIDA KHALIL, JULIA KASSAR  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 4.00 + 9.15 PM
- 6-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT (ATMOS): 12.00 + 3.00 + 6.00 + 9.00 PM + 12.00 MN
- 7-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER  
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM  
 DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 PM
- 8-THE MULE (PG-15) (CRIME/DRAMA/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ CLINT EASTWOOD, BRADLEY COOPER, TAISSA FARMIGA  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
- 9-BACKTRACE (PG-15) (CRIME/ACTION/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ SYLVESTER STALLONE, RYAN GUZMAN, MATTHEW MODINE  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.30 + 3.30 + 5.30 + 7.30 + 9.30 + 11.30 PM
- 10-JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (PG) (COMEDY/ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ ROWAN ATKINSON, OLGA KURYLENKO, EMMA THOMPSON  
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 PM + 12.00 MN
- 11-MARY POPPINS RETURNS (G) (ADVENTURE/MUSICAL/FAMILY)**  
 Ⓣ EMILY BLUNT, LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA, BEN WHISHAW  
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.30 + 11.45 PM
- 12-RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)**  
 Ⓣ JOHN C. REILLY, SARAH SILVERMAN, GAL GADOT  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM
- 13-SPIDER MAN INTO THE SPIDER VERSE (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ HAILEE STEINFELD, NICOLAS CAGE, MAHERSHALA ALI  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM
- 14-BUMBLEBEE (PG-13) (ACTION /ADVENTURE/SCI-FICTION)**  
 Ⓣ HAILEE STEINFELD, JOHN CENA, JORGE LENDEBERG JR.  
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
- 15- EL BADLAH (PG-13) (ARABIC/COMEDY)**  
 Ⓣ TAMER HOSNY, AKRAM HOSNI, MAJED EL MASRY, AMINA KHALIL  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM
- 16-HUNTER KILLER (PG-15) (ACTION/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ GERARD BUTLER, GARY OLDMAN, COMMON  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
- 17-CREED II (PG-13) (DRAMA/ACTION/SPORT)**  
 Ⓣ TESSA THOMPSON, MICHAEL B. JORDAN, SYLVESTER STALLONE  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
- 18-ROBIN HOOD (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ Taron Egerton, Eve Hewson, Jamie Foxx

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

## SEEF (II)

- 1-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
- 2-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW**  
 Ⓣ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
- 3-ALL THE DEVIL'S MEN (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ WILLIAM FICHTNER, SYLVIA HOEKS, ELLIOT COWAN  
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
- 4-SA'AT REDA (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) NEW**  
 Ⓣ HALA FAKHER, AHMED FATHY, DINA FOUAD  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
- 5-THE AMITYVILLE MURDER'S (15+) (HORROR) NEW**  
 Ⓣ JOHN ROBINSON (IX), CHELSEA RICKETTS, DIANE FRANKLIN  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.45 + 4.45 + 6.45 + 8.45 + 10.45 PM
- 6-RIDE (PG-15) (THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ BELLA THORNE, JESSIE T. USHER, WILL BRILL  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 3.15 + 7.15 + 11.15 PM
- 7-WOMAN WALKS AHEAD (15+) (DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY) NEW**  
 Ⓣ JESSICA CHASTAIN, MICHAEL GREYDEYS, CHASKE SPENCER  
 DAILY AT: 1.45 + 6.30 + 11.15 PM
- 8-PRAANA (PG-15) (MALAYALAM) NEW**  
 Ⓣ NITHYA MENON  
 FROM FRIDAY 18TH: 10.45 AM + 4.00 + 9.15 PM
- 9-F2: FUN & FRSTRATION (PG-15) (TELGU) NEW**  
 Ⓣ TAMANNA BHATIA, PRAKASH RAJ, VENKATESH DAGGUBATI, VARUN TEJ  
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 6.15 + 11.30 PM
- 10-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM
- 11-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM
- 12-THE MULE (PG-15) (CRIME/DRAMA/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ CLINT EASTWOOD, BRADLEY COOPER, TAISSA FARMIGA  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 4.00 + 8.45 PM
- 13-BACKTRACE (PG-15) (CRIME/ACTION/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ SYLVESTER STALLONE, RYAN GUZMAN, MATTHEW MODINE  
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 5.15 + 9.15 PM
- 14-VISWASAM (PG-15) (TAMIL)**  
 Ⓣ AJITH KUMAR, NAYANTHARA  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM

## SEEF (I)

- 1-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW**  
 Ⓣ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
- 2-CHEAT INDIA (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/CRIME) NEW**  
 Ⓣ EMRAAN HASHMI, AMMAR TAALWALA, SHREYA DHAWANTHARY  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
- 3-FRAUD SAIYAAN (15+) (HINDI/COMEDY) NEW**  
 Ⓣ ARSHAD WARS, FLORA SAINI, MIHIKA VERMA  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
- 4-MARY, MARRY ME (PG-15) (FILIPINO/COMEDY/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW**  
 Ⓣ TONI GONZAGA, ALEX GONAZAGA, SAM MILBY

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

- 5-MIKHAEL () (MALAYALAM) NEW**  
 Ⓣ NIVIN PAULY, UNNI MUKAUDAN, MANJIMA MOHAN  
 FROM FRIDAY 18TH: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
- 6-PETTA (PG-15) (TAMIL/ACTION/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ RAJINIKANTH, VIJAY SETHUPATHI, SIMRAN, TRISHA  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 2.00 + 5.15 + 8.30 + 11.45 PM

## SAAR

- 1-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)
- 2-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW**  
 Ⓣ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)
- 3-ALL THE DEVIL'S MEN (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ WILLIAM FICHTNER, SYLVIA HOEKS, ELLIOT COWAN  
 DAILY AT: 9.15 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)
- 4-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.15 PM
- 5-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER  
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 PM
- 6-THE MULE (PG-15) (CRIME/DRAMA/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ CLINT EASTWOOD, BRADLEY COOPER, TAISSA FARMIGA  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 5.45 + (11.00 PM THURS/FRI)

## AL HAMRA

- 1-MIKHAEL () (MALAYALAM) NEW**  
 Ⓣ NIVIN PAULY, UNNI MUKAUDAN, MANJIMA MOHAN  
 FROM FRIDAY 18TH: 11.30 AM + 5.45 + (12.00 MN FRI)
- 2-PETTA (PG-15) (TAMIL/ACTION/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ RAJINIKANTH, VIJAY SETHUPATHI, SIMRAN, TRISHA  
 DAILY AT: 2.30 + 8.45 PM

## WADI AL SAIL

- 1-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER) NEW**  
 Ⓣ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM
- 2-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW**  
 Ⓣ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN
- 3-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
- 4-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 Ⓣ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER  
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM
- 5-THE MULE (PG-15) (CRIME/DRAMA/THRILLER)**  
 Ⓣ CLINT EASTWOOD, BRADLEY COOPER, TAISSA FARMIGA  
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.30 + 11.45 PM
- 6-SIMMBA (PG-15) (HINDI/ACTION/COMEDY/DRAMA/ROMANTIC)**  
 Ⓣ RANVEER SINGH, AJAY DEVGN, SARA ALI KHAN  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM
- 7-MARY POPPINS RETURNS (G) (ADVENTURE/MUSICAL/FAMILY)**  
 Ⓣ EMILY BLUNT, LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA, BEN WHISHAW  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.45 + 9.00 PM

## Movie Review

## The Mule: Clint Eastwood's best movie in more than 25 years

The Mule is a 2018 American crime film produced and directed by Clint Eastwood, who also plays the lead role. The screenplay, by Nick Schenk, is based on The New York Times article “The Sinaloa Cartel’s 90-Year-Old Drug Mule” by Sam Dolnick, which recounts the true story of Leo Sharp, a World War II veteran in his 80s who became a drug courier for the Sinaloa Cartel.

The Mule was released in the United States on December 14, 2018, by Warner Bros. Pictures. It has grossed over \$94

million and received mixed reviews from critics, who called it “poignant and charming” and praised Eastwood’s performance, but also noted the lack of true dramatic heft.

On review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes, the film holds an approval rating of 66% based on 101 reviews, with an average rating of 6/10. The website’s critical consensus reads, “A flawed yet enjoyable late-period Eastwood entry, The Mule stubbornly retains its footing despite a few missteps on its occasionally unpredictable path.” On Metacritic,



the film has a weighted average score of 58 out of 100, based on

33 critics, indicating “mixed or average reviews”. Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of “A–” on an A+ to F scale, while those at PostTrak gave it four out of five stars.

David Ehrlich of IndieWire gave the film a “B+” and called it Eastwood’s best in over 25 years, writing that “this soulful and deeply satisfying film — a fitting swansong, if ever there was one — makes a compelling argument that change is always possible, and that the path we’re on is never as narrow as the highway makes it look.” In a middling review, Peter Debruge

of Variety wrote, “It’s a great true story, colorfully told by Sam Dolnick in The New York Times and somewhat watered down for the screen by Nick Schenk, the still-green screenwriter who got incredibly lucky when Eastwood agreed to direct and star in his early spec, Gran Torino. And there’s obviously no one better to embody someone like Leo Sharp — the real-life criminal whose name has been changed to Earl Stone for the movie — than Eastwood, who can play stubborn, battle-scarred, casually racist characters in his sleep.”

# celebs

## Bieber mom raves over son's new wife

Los Angeles

Pop star Justin Bieber's mother raved over her son's new wife Hailey Baldwin in an adorable selfie. On Tuesday, Bieber's mother Pattie Mallette shared a sweet selfie of herself with Baldwin, 21. "What a gift!" Mallette, 43, wrote adding a heart-eyed emoji. In the shot, Baldwin can be seen planting a kiss on Mallette's cheek "Love you," Baldwin, who secretly married Bieber, 24, at a New York City courthouse in September, commented on the post. Earlier on Tuesday, the newlyweds were spotted in Los Angeles wearing matching pink ensembles. Bieber sported a pink hoodie paired with black sweatpants and Vans. Meanwhile, Baldwin rocked a pink tracksuit, white sneakers and pulled her newly dyed pink tresses into a sleek bun.



Bieber and Baldwin



Pattie

## Alicia Keys' kids are not impressed that she's hosting the Grammys

Los Angeles

Alicia Keys thought she had some big news on Tuesday when she gathered her two young sons together to share her announcement. It turns out that Genesis, 4, and Egypt, 8, apparently don't think hosting the Grammys is worth getting all worked up about. The singer-songwriter posted an adorable video on Instagram of her boys being less than impressed with the news on Tuesday that she will be hosting the 61st annual Grammy Awards on Feb. 10 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. "I've got some good news guys," she says. "Guess what? I am going to host the Grammys!" The boys have no reaction until Genesis lets out a squeal. Egypt continues to stare at her waiting for something bigger like, "Yeah ... and?" "What's the Grammys?" he says. While her two sons with husband Swizz Beatz may not have been overjoyed, it was big news for Keys. She formally announced it on Tuesday in a nine-minute video on her YouTube channel.



Alicia



## Drake signs \$25 mn Las Vegas residency deal

Los Angeles

Rapper Drake has signed a residency deal here worth \$25 million. He has signed a contract to do 12 shows over the next two years at Wynn Las Vegas' XS Nightclub, reports aceshowbiz.com. The "In My Feelings" hitmaker teased about the residency when he took the stage at the venue last week. "Vegas! When I came back, I thought it'd be back at T-Mobile Arena or some (stuff). But I will be back here at XS all year. You will have a lot of chances to see me," Drake said, sending more than 1,600 concert goers into an uproar. Drake continued to tease his possible residency when he took to Instagram to share a photograph from his performance at the venue which reportedly earned him \$2 million. "New home," he wrote beside the image.



Paris

Paris Jackson, model and daughter of late pop legend Michael Jackson, is seeking treatment to improve her "emotional health." "After a busy year of work engagements that took her all over the globe, Paris decided that she needed to take some time off to reboot, realign and prioritise her physical and emotional health," people.com quoted a source as saying. "She checked herself into a treatment facility to

## Paris Jackson checks into treatment facility

aid in her wellness plan and is looking forward to coming out of this revitalized and ready to tackle the exciting new projects that await her," added the source. Through the years, Paris has been open about her battle with depression and anxiety. In 2013, Paris was hospitalized after attempting suicide. Paris later admitted she attempted suicide a number of times during an interview with Rolling Stone in 2017.

## Bruce Willis is most chilled dude: James

Los Angeles

Actor James McAvoy has praised his "Glass" co-star Bruce Willis, saying he is the "most chilled dude". For "Glass", M. Night Shyamalan has converged the world of "Split" (a story about a man, essayed by McAvoy, with over 20 different personalities who kidnaps three teenage girls) and "Unbreakable" (about David Dunn, essayed by Willis, who gets superhero abilities after surviving a train crash). "Bruce is the most chilled dude. He is so relaxed, but he is bringing such a heaviness to the part," McAvoy said in a statement.

## Rihanna sues her father

Los Angeles

Singer Rihanna has sued her own father Ronald Fenty for using her brand name Fenty to launch a business for himself. In a new lawsuit obtained by TMZ.com, Rihanna claims her father Ronald started a talent development company in 2017 called Fenty Entertainment. The "S&M" hitmaker has already trademarked "Fenty" to use in a number of business ventures, including her well-known Fenty Beauty line. She claims he is profiting off the reputation she has created with the brand. In the documents, the 30-year-old singer says her father and a business partner falsely advertised themselves as her reps to solicit millions of dollars, including trying to book her for 15 shows in Latin America in December 2017 for \$15 million -- all without her authorization. Rihanna claims later her

dad even unsuccessfully tried to file a trademark for "Fenty" to use with resort boutique hotels. She says she has sent multiple cease and desist letters to her father, ordering him to stop capitalising off her Fenty trademarks, but says he has ignored them and continued to make money off Fenty Entertainment.

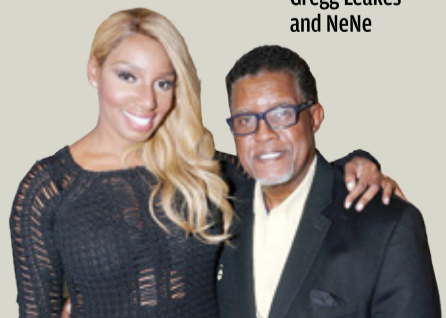


Rihanna

## Gregg Leakes apologises to wife amid cancer battle

Los Angeles

TV personality Gregg Leakes penned a heartfelt apology to his spouse NeNe after the "Real Housewives of Atlanta" star said she had been mistreated while caring for him during his cancer battle on an epi-



Gregg Leakes and NeNe

sode of the "Bravo" series. "We always hurt the ones we love... because they allow us to hurt them rather than snap back," Gregg wrote on Instagram alongside a photo of NeNe, 51, reports people.com. "I'm tired of hurting my wife who is only trying to take good care of me and

wants only the best for me too. She deserves much more for her hard efforts and tireless hours spent on me. I pray to God to get it together... She has done no wrong... this is all on me," Gregg continued. NeNe previously spoke on Gregg's attitude towards her in November 2018, calling her husband "mean" and "grouchy".

# Son sparks Koreans to Asian Cup victory

Vitali Lux's hat-trick puts Kyrgyzstan in good position to qualify for last 16

● Tottenham forward plays a part in both goals in the 2-0 win in Abu Dhabi to ensure his side progress as Group C winners

AFP | Abu Dhabi

An effervescent Son Heung-min inspired title-chasing South Korea to a comfortable 2-0 victory over China yesterday to finish top of their Asian Cup group.

Hwang Ui-jo and Kim Min-jae were on target as the Koreans, boosted by the arrival of their talisman, ran China ragged in Abu Dhabi.

Talisman Son won the penalty converted by Hwang and fizzed in the assist for Kim to spark South Korea, who finished top of Group C with a perfect nine points as they look to end 59 years of Asian Cup hurt.

Marcello Lippi's Chinese side finished as group runners-up having likewise already sealed their place in the last 16 by winning their first two matches.

Korean captain Son surprisingly started -- and completed 87 minutes -- despite a punishing run of 13 games for Tottenham since the start of December.



China's defender Linpeng Zhang (L) fights for the ball with South Korea's forward Heung-min Son

The mercurial Spurs forward, who played in the London club's 1-0 defeat by Manchester United three days ago, showed quick feet to tempt China defender Shi Ke into a rash challenge 12 minutes.

Hwang calmly tucked away the spot-kick to send thousands of Korean "Red Devils" fans wild at the compact Al Nahyan Stadium.

South Korea, who beat Asian Cup first-timers Philippines and Kyrgyzstan 1-0 in their opening two games, went for the jugular.

A Hwang Hee-chan rocket forced China goalkeeper Yan Junling into a fingertip save before Hwang Ui-jo curled an effort against the post.

Elsewhere in Group C, a Vitali Lux hat-trick sent Sven-Goran Eriksson's Philippines crashing out and gave Kyrgyzstan hope

of progressing as one of the best third-placed teams in a 3-1 victory.

German-based Lux struck once in the first half and twice in the second in Dubai before the Philippines grabbed a consolation goal through Stephan Schrock with 10 minutes to go.

## Asian Cup

S Korea	2	-	0	China
Kyrgyzstan	3	-	1	Philippines
Iran	0	-	0	Iraq
Vietnam	1	-	0	Yemen

## KHK Heroes to participate in Spartan Stadion 2019



KHK Heroes during a Spartan Race  
Manama

Spartan Arabia will host the first-ever Stadion of the region on January 18, 2019, under the patronage of HH Shaikh Nasser Bin Hamad Al Khalifa. The Bahrain National Stadium will see Spartans take on obstacles at this unique location, for a one of a kind experience.

KHK Heroes Team Captain

tism, intellectual disability, ADHD, Down syndrome or a combination.

HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamed Al Khalifa said that KHK Heroes team will compete in a historic race exhibiting the ideals of inclusivity in Bahrain and highlight the significance of sports and wellness for all

"KHK Heroes in collaboration with BHR4All is driving change in society with a vision of inclusivity while acknowledging the diverse communities that live in Bahrain. Regardless of background or abilities, our aim is to support youth to achieve their full potential in life. Initiatives like these are our duty, they lead the principles of promoting values that enable all people to participate based on equality of rights and dignity" said HH Shaikh Khalid.

Spartan Arabia will make history in Bahrain with the KHK Heroes team participating at the first ever "Stadion Race". Spartan supports all active communities when the opportunity presents itself.

for this race is 25 years old Ali Mohammed Moussa who is a motivational speaker of BHR4All. The team includes youth with cerebral palsy, au-

”  
KHK Heroes in collaboration with BHR4All is driving change in society with a vision of inclusivity while acknowledging the diverse communities that live in Bahrain

HH SHAIKH KHALID BIN HAMED AL KHALIFA

## MOIC, BIC support Sports Day

TDI | Manama

Assistant Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, Secretary General of the Bahrain Olympic Committee and Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Bahrain Sports Day Abdulrahman Sadeq Askar admired the supporting initiatives of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism (MOIC), and the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), for the 2019 edition of the Bahrain Sports Day, scheduled for February 12.

The Ministry decided to provide discounted rates on sports supplies for all participants during this year's event, while the BIC has stepped forward to offer its hosting women's sports activities on the day.

This was announced during the third meeting of the Organizing Committee of the



The Ministry decided to provide discounted rates on sports supplies for all participants during this year's event

Third Bahrain Sports Day, attended by Askar, during which many topics were discussed on the agenda, such as an e-system to calculate the steps of the participants in the walking race. Askar was briefed on the mechanism required to provide the application of this first of its kind idea.

## BTC to conduct training workshop

TDI | Manama

A training workshop will be organized by Bahrain Tennis Club for the parents of the Tennis players at 6 pm on Saturday, February 2, Lectures by ITF Tennis Consultant Luis de Sousa with coordinate with the Bahrain Tennis Federation.

The workshop will include the definition of the right nutrition for the tennis player and the correct behaviors to be followed a champion in tennis as well as continuous communication between the family and the technical and administrative of Bahrain Tennis Club.

## BKS-Jeep badminton tournament begins

TDI | Manama

BKS-Jeep Junior & Senior Open has begun in Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam's Diamond Jubilee Hall on Monday.

BKS President PV Radhakrishna Pillai and MP Raghu jointly inaugurated the tournament.

Most of the events on the first day were for juniors; however, the second day witnessed the senior events. The tournament will conclude on 19-Jan-2019 with Finals of all events being played.

The tournament has Boys & Girls - Singles & Doubles in the age category of U11, U13, U15, U17, U19 and for seniors 4 events - Men's Doubles, Women's



Event organisers in action during inauguration

Doubles, Mixed Doubles, and Veteran's Doubles. Trophies, Certificate (for Juniors) Will be awarded to the Winners and Runner-up.

312 players from various places to participate in BKS-JEEP Junior & senior Open Badminton tournament 2019.

Shanil Abdul Rahim, BKS Indoor Games Secretary said, "in the history of BKS Badminton Tournaments, this is the first time a huge number of players are flown into BKS to take part in the event."

"This tournament will be one of the major sporting events for the talents and will attract a crowd of more than 2000 spectators."

## India hails Mahendra Singh Dhoni the finisher

AFP | New Delhi

India's Mahendra Singh Dhoni won plaudits yesterday for a match-winning knock against Australia that raised expectations the veteran will play his fourth 50-over World Cup this summer.

The 37-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman kept his usual cool during an unbeaten 54-ball 55 as India chased down Australia's 298 in the second one-day international in Adelaide on Tuesday. Seen by some as losing his

ability to finish matches, Dhoni rolled back the years and secured the win with four balls to spare as the tourists levelled the three-match series.

The Indian Express headlined its report "Dhoni finishes, the Mahi way", using his nickname, and the Mail Today said the former captain's innings was "Just Like Old Times".

Some observers have suggested India have better options behind the stumps and with the bat for upcoming ODI World Cup in England, but former skipper



India's Mahendra Singh Dhoni plays a shot (file photo)

Sunil Gavaskar thinks otherwise. "Only those who are not really cognisant with the value of Mahendra Singh Dhoni will be asking this question," Gavaskar told TV channel India Today.

"In the Indian dressing room, in the think tank that is the selection committee there is no doubt that Dhoni will be part of the Indian team for World Cup."

Following his debut in 2004, Dhoni quickly became one of India's key players, captaining the side to a World Cup win in 2011.

# Federer, Nadal stay on track

Dominant Sharapova win sets up Wozniacki clash in Australian Open third round

● Consistent Angelique Kerber wins battle of lefties

● Sixth seed Cilic grinds into Open third round

AFP | Melbourne

Roger Federer ground out a tough three-set win to make the Australian Open third round for an incredible 20th straight year yesterday, with long-time rival Rafael Nadal also safely through in his drive towards an 18th Grand Slam title.

Women's defending champion Caroline Wozniacki also progressed to set up a mouth-watering clash next with in-form former world number one Maria Sharapova.

But it was curtains for South African Kevin Anderson, who slumped out to young American Frances Tiafoe and became the highest seed, at five, to be sent packing so far.

On an overcast day at Melbourne Park, second seed Angelique Kerber, the 2016 winner, and former US Open champion Sloane Stephens joined the big guns in round three, but the women's side also saw a top 10 player crash.

Ninth seed Kiki Bertens, who raced through the rankings last



Spain's Rafael Nadal hits a return against Australia's Matthew Ebden

year after winning three titles, was whipped in three sets by Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.

Federer might be 37 but he's not showing his age, with British qualifier Dan Evans the latest to fall under his spell as he works towards a third successive Australian crown and 21st major victory.

He defeated Evans at Wimbledon last year with the loss of just eight games, but it was a much harder assignment this time, winning 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/3), 6-3 on Rod Laver Arena.

"I think if I could have pulled away earlier in the match it might have been easier," said the third seed. "I think he played very well, it was hard to pull

away to his credit."

The Swiss star's Australian achievements so far put him on a par with other six-time winners Novak Djokovic and Roy Emerson -- although the Australian great's victories all came before the Open era.

He next plays American Taylor Fritz.

If he goes on to win the tournament, he will become the first man ever to claim seven or more titles at two Grand Slams, having already won eight Wimbledons.

Nadal had an easier route to round three, outclassing local hope Matthew Ebden 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

The Spaniard is bidding for his own slice of history by becoming the first man in the Open

era, and only the third in history along with Emerson and Rod Laver, to win each Grand Slam on two or more occasions.

"I played a solid match, I was happy with the way I served. I did a few things very well," said Nadal, who next plays Australian Alex de Minaur. "It is an honour to play here. Was a great atmosphere."

Anderson, beaten by Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final last year, was sent home by Tiafoe 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 7-5.

The fifth seed struggled with an elbow injury early in the clash and couldn't cope with the 20-year-old's power and finesse.

**Collision course**

Sixth seed Marin Cilic, who lost



Switzerland's Roger Federer hits a return against Britain's Daniel Evans



Rafael Nadal is bidding for his own slice of history by becoming the first man in the Open era, and only the third in history, to win each Grand Slam on two or more occasions

in the final to Federer last year, had no such dramas, grinding past American Mackenzie McDonald in four sets and next plays Spanish 26th seed Fernando Verdasco.

Dane Wozniacki, who is battling rheumatoid arthritis, steamrolled Sweden's Johanna Larsson 6-1, 6-3 as she bids to become the first woman to defend the title since Victoria Azarenka in 2013.

It set up a tough clash with five-time Grand Slam champion Sharapova, who blitzed past Sweden's Rebecca Peterson 6-2, 6-1. The Russian is in scintillating form and has dropped just three games in her opening two matches.

"I'm really happy with the way

I performed," said Sharapova, adding that she was looking forward to the Wozniacki showdown.

"It's a tough third round but I have set up the challenge and I'm ready to go out there and take it."

Meanwhile, three-time Grand Slam champion Kerber dominated Brazilian qualifier Beatriz Haddad Maia 6-2, 6-3 to stay on a collision course with Stephens in the quarter-finals.

Stephens, who endured a horror run at Melbourne Park since reaching the semi-final in 2013, exiting in the first round in 2015, 2016 and 2018, swatted aside former doubles partner Tímea Babos 6-3, 6-1.

## Bernardo Silva welcomes return of Man City big guns

AFP | London

Bernardo Silva says Manchester City's squad is approaching full strength at the right time as they mount a four-pronged trophy assault

Kevin De Bruyne and Benjamin Mendy have missed large chunks of the campaign through injury, while David Silva, Fernandinho, Sergio Aguero and Ilkay Gundogan have had spells out recently.

But the Premier League champions are now getting close to full strength, with Mendy the only key player sidelined with a serious injury, and there are hopes he could be back in action before the end of the month.

City illustrated the depth of their squad as they named De Bruyne, Aguero and Riyad Mahrez on the bench for Monday's clash with Wolves and still eased to a 3-0 win.

"It feels like we have all the squad, which is important because we need all of them," said playmaker Silva. "It is good finally to be back together."

"Of course until this moment of the season we have had so many injured players, we never played with the whole squad. To have almost the whole squad available is fantastic for us and it is very good to try and go for all the competitions."

Silva, 24, has no issue with the fact that means increased competition for his own place.

"That is what happens when you play in one of the best teams in the world," he said. "You have fantastic players in your position, you have to work hard to try and play as many minutes as you can."

"That is a good thing. It means you have a good squad. Everyone pushes the other teammates so you have to work harder to get in the team."



Bernardo Silva

## New Zealand's Bevin wins second Tour Down Under stage to lead

The stage win gave New Zealand's Patrick Bevin a 10-second time bonus, lifting him into the overall lead of the race

AFP | Adelaide, Australia

New Zealand time-trial champion Patrick Bevin swooped to take his first cycling World Tour stage and claim the overall lead in Australia's Tour Down Under yesterday.

Bevin, 27, riding for the CCC Team, capitalised on confusion in the peloton sparked by a mass crash inside the final kilometre of the 122-kilometre (70-mile) second stage to power home in the finish.

The Kiwi unleashed a sprint on the uphill 700m finishing straight to reel in Spain's Luis Leon Sanchez before holding off Australian star sprinter Caleb Ewan and Slovakia's former triple world champion Peter Sagan at the line.

The stage win gave Bevin a 10-second time bonus, lifting him into the overall lead of the race, five seconds ahead of Italy's Elia Viviani, who won Tuesday's stage one but could only manage seventh the next day.

Bevin holds a five-second lead over Viviani in the race general classification with Ewan in third place ahead of Germany's Max Walscheid (Team Sunweb).

Walscheid finished 23rd in yesterday's stage through South Australia's famous Barossa Valley wine country in scorching temperatures of 40 degrees Cel-



Race winner and new leader Patrick Bevin (L) from New Zealand of CCC Team crosses the finish in Angaston in the Barossa Valley

sus (104 Fahrenheit).

"I got to pick a pretty good line in the hard, draggy finish. Once Sanchez was off the front in the final it gave me the perfect springboard and I just went long," Bevin said.

"It was definitely a gamble, you could take five seconds today and lose two minutes in three days' time but that's bike racing, we're here to try to win it."

Bevin, whose previous race best in the UCI season-opening tour was 10th in 2016 and 11th last year, avoided a pile-up in the peloton which blocked the road to the Angaston finish line.

The crash left around 25 riders to contest the finale with Bevin surging from deep before dipping in behind Sanchez's slipstream and crossing the line with enough time to clench and

raise his hands in celebration.

His victory is CCC Team's maiden World Tour victory and his first triumph outside of a national championship since winning stage four of Australia's Herald Sun Tour in February 2015.

The peloton once again had to endure brutal temperatures on the stage, which was cut pre-race by 26.9km because of the extreme weather conditions.