



New board for Bapco announced
 Manama

Oil Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa issued edict nine of 2019 reforming the new Bapco board yesterday.

Dr Dawood Nasif has been appointed the chairman of Bapco board, which includes as members Mohammed Abulla Al Jamea, Nasser Sultan Al Suweidi, Abdulmajid Ali Al Awadhi, Abdulmajid Bashir Al Qassab, Youssef Abdulla Humood and Dr Ashok Krishna.

Their three-year-tenure shall start from the day of the issuance of this edict. The minister congratulated newly-appointed Bapco chairman and members, wishing them every success to support the march the company in serving the community.

He paid tribute to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier.

The newly-appointed Bapco chairman extended deepest thanks to HM the King, HRH the Premier and HRH the Crown Prince, hailing their constant support to bolster the company and promote Bahrain's sustainable development.

He also expressed thanks to Oil Minister, hailing his dedicated and constructive efforts to promote the company and support mega development plans.

US 'suspects' Iran seized UAE-based oil tanker

A US defence official said that Riah is in Iranian territorial waters near Qeshm Island.

London

The US said it suspects Iran has seized an oil tanker that drifted into Iranian waters as it traveled through the Strait of Hormuz.

Ship tracking data shows the Panamanian-flagged oil tanker Riah, which is based in the UAE, stopped transmitting its location on Saturday.

The incident is the latest involving shipping in the region where tensions between Iran and the US have escalated in recent



The Japanese oil tanker Kokuka Courageous was attacked in the Gulf of Oman last month.

months. Iran has been accused of planting mines on several tankers as Washington ramps up economic and military pressure

But the longer there is a period of no contact ... it's going to be a concern.

US DEFENCE OFFICIAL

on the regime over its nuclear program and aggressive foreign policy in the region.

Iran also threatened to retaliate against shipping after British forces this month helped seize an Iranian tanker near Gibraltar as it attempted to deliver oil to Syria.

A US defence official told AP that Riah is in Iranian territorial waters near Qeshm Island, which has a Revolutionary Guard base on it. He said the US "has suspi-

cions" Iran seized the vessel. "Could it have broken down or been towed for assistance? That's a possibility," the official said. "But the longer there is a period of no contact ... it's going to be a concern."

The Riah, a 58-meter oil tanker, travelled from a port near Dubai through the Strait of Hormuz towards Fujairah on the UAE's east coast. After 11 p.m. Saturday something happened to the vessel, according to tracking data.

Capt Ranjith Raja of the data firm Refinitiv told AP that the tanker had not switched off its tracking in three months of trips around the UAE.

"That is a red flag," Raja said. An Emirati official told Al Arabiya that the oil tanker is not owned or operated by the UAE and has not sent a distress call.

Out and out loyalty

Al Buflasa, Al Balushi and Al Jalahma families reiterate allegiance to leadership

Families vow to stand by HM the King's leadership to defend the homeland.

Documentary filled with "clear and blatant lies and fallacies".

Manama

Bahraini families yesterday disowned 'members' who appeared in a documentary broadcast by Qatar's Al Jazeera channel under the title 'The hidden is more immense'.

The families - Al Buflasa, Al Balushi and Al Jalahma, condemned the statements given to the channel by their 'members'.

"The allegations by Moham-

med Al Buflasa are mere lies aimed at offending the reputation of the Kingdom. He is not related to Al Buflasa family and he has no right to discredit the family's name and reputation," Al Buflasa family said in a statement issued.

The family reiterated allegiance to HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and loyalty to the homeland, vowing to stand by HM the King's leadership to defend the homeland.

Echoing a similar view, Al Bal-

ushi family said it would disown anyone who betrays his homeland or family, reiterating its allegiance to HM King, loyalty to the homeland and adherence to the national values and principles.

The Balushi family is an integral component of the peaceful and good Bahraini community that is loyal to the homeland and lives in peace and harmony, the family said in a statement.

"Based on such premises, the Balushi family does not accept,

in any case, that any member offends the family or tarnishes its glorious history on this land or in any part of the Arabian Gulf region.

"We stress that the attempts by Al Jazeera through broadcasting a video of a dead person in which he harms our beloved homeland, will not succeed and will not impact our national unity, which constitutes our essential protection. We are deeply patriotic, and we do stress our great pride in our genuine Bah-

rainsi values." Pledging allegiance to the Kingdom's leadership, Al Jalahma family also said it disowns Yasser Athbi Al Jalahma.

Al Jalahma family reiterated absolute loyalty to HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, HRH Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister.

Foreign Affairs Minister, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, yesterday stressed that the documentary filled with "clear and blatant lies and fallacies".

"It is the latest episode in a series of conspiracies staged by a rogue state against the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the security and stability of the entire region," the minister had said.

ROLE CHANGE

IMF chief Christine Lagarde resigns following ECB nomination

New York

Christine Lagarde submitted her resignation as managing director of the International Monetary Fund yesterday following her nomination to serve as the next European Central Bank chief.

Ms Lagarde, who was nominated earlier this month to succeed Mario Draghi starting in the fall, had subsequently suspended her role running the IMF.

Her resignation will take effect on September 12 and begins the process of finding her replacement at the Washington-based group.



Ms Lagarde



Quotas are the IMF's main source of financing. Each member of the IMF is assigned a quota, based broadly on its relative position in the world economy.

"With greater clarity now on the process for my nomination as ECB President and the time it will take, I have made this decision in the best interest of the Fund, as it will expedite the selection process for my successor," Ms Lagarde said in a statement.

The IMF executive board said it will "initiate promptly the process of selecting the next Managing Director and will communicate in a timely fashion".

David Lipton will remain acting managing director. "We would like to express our greatest appreciation for all that Managing Director Lagarde has done for the institution," the board said.



03 BDF raps Jazeera report

04 Summer lessons for empowering youths

06 Pakistan reopens airspace, ending months of restrictions

210 fils (includes VAT)





Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, yesterday received the outgoing Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bahrain, Shaikh Azzam bin Mubarak Al Sabah. The Commander-in-Chief expressed thanks and appreciation to the envoy for the tremendous efforts he has exerted throughout his tenure in the Kingdom, and contributed to strengthening the long-standing solid relations between the two brotherly countries.



The BDF Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa received Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Bahrain Simon Martin who introduced Commodore Dean Basset the newly-appointed Commander of the British Naval Component, in presence of Defence Affairs Minister General Abdullah Al Nuaimi. The Commander-in-Chief hailed the historic friendship and co-operation in various fields, praising the ambassador's efforts in bolstering them throughout his stint and wishing him success in the duties of his next assignment.



The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Kingdom, Shaikh Fawaz bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, met the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Theresa May, on the sidelines of the Conservative Middle East Council Annual Reception and Gala Lunch in London. The Ambassador conveyed the greetings 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 Prime Minister, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, to the UK Prime Minister. He expressed appreciation for her efforts in enhancing relations between the two Kingdoms during her terms, wishing her success in her future career.



Prominent members of Bahrain business community attended a dinner hosted by Pakistan Ambassador Afzal Mahmood at Gulf Hotel.



Jalal Mohammed Jalal, Chairman of the Bahrain Airport Services Company (BAS), honoured two employees from passenger services department Fatima Al Ajmi and Akash Sharma for their efforts in detecting the forging of passports and visas. The ceremony was attended by a number of board members: Nabeel Khalid Kanoo, Mohammed Khalil Ahmed and Farouq Mahmood Al Mahmoud, CEO Salman Saleh Al Mahmeed, Senior Manager of Passenger Services Mohammad Janahi and Manager of Passenger Services Hisham Al Sanad.



Shura member Nancy Khedouri visited Bahrain For All (BHR4All) Inclusive Summer Camp, which has been organised in co-operation with the Bahrain Institute of Hospitality and Retail for a group of 20 youth from various backgrounds over a period of five weeks. Ms Khedouri praised Nivedita Dhadphale for spearheading the BHR4All initiative. She interacted with participants attending the camp and was also briefed on various activities held for the participants.

BDF raps Jazeera report

Terms it the latest episode in series of conspiracies against Bahrain

● **Al Jalahma was sentenced to death in absentia and his rank was demoted to soldier.**

● **Al Jazeera approach proves that Qatari regime is embracing terrorists.**

Manama

The official spokesperson for Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) said the documentary titled "What is hidden is more immense" aired on Sunday by Qatar's Al Jazeera channel is the latest episode of its series of conspiracies against

the Kingdom within its attempt to undermine the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and stir up strife among its members.

The spokesperson said that the claims made by Yasser Athbi Al Jalahma in the programme were utterly false and a twist of the facts on the ground.

In fact, the security brigade in which he was assigned in 2011 was an auxiliary force at the Interior Ministry tasked with ensuring the security of the Salmaniya Medical Complex.

His brigade was never given any task in the operation to clear the roundabout, and therefore all the allegations by Al Jalahma, including the number of the members in the brigade and the posing of weapons and the taking of pictures by the Ministry of Interior, are pure lies and



concocted phoney fabrications.

The BDF spokesperson added that in 2018, the security agencies in the BDF spotted Al Jalahma recruiting cluster cells in order to spy on behalf of Qatar.

"He conspired with other suspects engaged in intelligence activities to disclose Bahrain's defence secrets and to hand over

classified information to Qatar intelligence agencies in order to damage Bahrain's military and defence posture.

"He and the other suspects disclosed sensitive classified information and military secrets to unauthorised individuals."

The Military Prosecution, upon achieving its thorough investigations, referred the case to the Military Judiciary, the spokesperson pointed out.

"On April 30, 2019, the Military Court issued its sentences that varied between temporary and life prison terms."

Al Jalahma was sentenced to death in absentia and his rank was demoted to soldier.

He was also discharged from the BDF without insignia and his name was written off the BDF reserves list. He is still a wanted fugitive.

”
Al Jalahma and other suspects disclosed sensitive classified information and military secrets to unauthorised individuals.

BDF SPOKESPERSON

In 2013, Al Jalahma was also sentenced to ten years in jail for failing to respond to the call of the Reserve Force after he fled to Qatar and acquired its nationality without the approval of the relevant department in the BDF.

A judicial warrant of arrest was issued against him through Interpol.

The BDF spokesperson stressed that Al Jazeera approach incites hatred and proves to the world that Qatar embraces terrorists and finances them to distort the Kingdom of Bahrain's image in an attempt to destabilise Bahrain's civil peace and sow sedition amongst the GCC states.

Qatar's destructive tool will continue to target Bahrain, but the Kingdom will remain a strong, serene and secure Arab country ruled by the noble Al Khalifa family and in which the people have full allegiance to their leadership.

The BDF will remain the mighty, invincible shield of the beloved Kingdom under the wise leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa the Supreme Commander, the spokesperson added.

Bahraini jailed for forging employee's signature

TDT | Manama

The First High Criminal Court has ordered to jail a Bahraini employer for receiving a connection from the Electricity and Water Authority (EWA) under his Pakistani employee's name and faking his signature without the latter's consent.

The court sentenced the man to five years of imprisonment for the crime.

Tribune reported earlier that the employee lodged a complaint to the police as he found out that he's obliged to pay BD900 in late EWA bills.

The victim discovered this when he approached the authori-

”
The victim discovered this when he approached the authority to connect his home to the power grid.

PROSECUTORS

ty to connect his home to the power grid, according to prosecutors.

He was informed that he owed the amount since the year 2015.

Court documents showed that the incident occurred in the Northern Governorate, where the employer, with the assistance of another unknown individual, forged the victim's signature

to obtain the EWA service for a commercial shop he had opened back then.

The employer also used the identity card of the victim to complete the crime.

The Public Prosecution accused the employer of forging the victim's signature and willingly using it in official documents.

The victim told the interrogators that he had worked with the defendant from 2011 to 2013, adding that he had left the job because he wasn't receiving his pay regularly.

He said he discovered the matter when he rented an apartment and approached the authority to subscribe for the service.

NAO, Shura ties discussed

Manama

Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, Auditor-General of the National Audit Office (NAO) received at his office Khalid Hussain Al Maskati, Chairman of the Financial and

Economic Affairs Committee of the Shura Council yesterday.

They stressed the importance of continuing joint cooperation and coordination between the Office and the Shura Committee, in addition to supporting

the role of the NAO in order to achieve the desired objectives in serving the goals of the comprehensive National Development and broadening the horizons and fields of co-operation between them.

Asian gets nose broken after row over taxi fare

TDT | Manama

Two Asian men attacked another Asian man after the latter disagreed to give the demanded transport fare, according to court files.

As per the records, the pair agreed to transport their victim from his home to his workplace and vice versa in return for BD4.

However, they demanded him to double the amount without pre-agreement and when he re-

”
They attacked me after I told them that I am not going to pay extra money.

VICTIM

jected, they attacked him and broke his nose.

An ear and nose specialist revealed in the medical report after examining the victim that he

suffered deviated septum and inflation in the nostrils, stating that his disability is permanent and is estimated at five per cent.

"They attacked me once I told them I am not going to pay them any extra money. They punched me in the face and then ran away," the victim told prosecutors.

The pair have been arrested and are standing trial before the High Criminal Court, which will announce its verdict in the case on September 30, 2019.

Alumni reunion set

TDT | Manama

Former students of Sacred Heart School (SHS), one of Bahrain's oldest and most prominent schools, are organising a reunion this year.

The event has been scheduled for Thursday, November 7th, 2019 at Awal Ballroom, The Gulf Hotel, Bahrain.

Led by a Committee of enthusiastic former students, the

reunion aims to reach out to all SHS students around the world, under the theme, "ReUnite, ReLive and ReVisit."

The initial response has been overwhelming with an anticipated 300 students waiting to attend from all over the globe and their visit is expected to also contribute to the country's tourism industry.

With a presence of nearly seventy years in the Kingdom,

Sacred Heart School has produced the finest professionals, all nurtured in a multi-cultural environment and who share the same values of respect, co-existence and appreciation for different cultures, faiths, beliefs and nationalities.

Tickets to the Grand Reunion may be purchased online. For any queries, kindly e-mail the Committee, shsalumni.bh@gmail.com.

Government 'hoping to reach a visa liberalisation agreement with Schengen countries'

TDT | Manama

The Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been putting efforts in securing a visa liberalisation agreement with the countries of the Schengen area, Schengen Visa Info reported.

The website quoted local media reports, which said the country is attempting to secure Schengen visas-on-arrival for its

citizens or completely exempt the nationals of Bahrain from the visa requirement.

According to Lawmaker Mohammed Al Buainain, a group of MPs have recently held a meeting with officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss visa liberalisation with the Schengen countries.

He also added that the Foreign Ministry and Interior Ministry will now go on discussions to replace

the current Bahraini passports with biometric passports, in order to meet the Schengen rule of granting visa-free entry only to travellers with biometric passports.

Previously, the speaker of the Bahraini House of Representative, Fawzia Zainal, had called on the Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa to push the European Union for the facilitation of visa requirements for Bahraini. Currently, there are 62 world



countries under the Schengen visa-free regime, the citizens of

which can enter the 26 Schengen countries without obtaining a visa beforehand.

The process of reaching a visa liberalisation agreement with the block can be long and difficult, in particular for countries where human rights violation and corruption are an issue, the website pointed out.

"At the beginning of the process, the EU hands a so-called 'visa liberalisation roadmap' to

the country wishing to gain visa-free access.

"The map contains a number of criteria, sometimes up to a hundred, that the country must meet."

Turkey and Kosovo are two countries still in the process of reaching a visa liberalisation agreement with the EU, despite that the latter received the confirmation of having met all the benchmarks over a year ago.

● **Youth and Sports Affairs Minister Aymen Almoayyed, senior government officials visited the camp.**

● **HH Shaikh Nasser underscored the importance of the Youth City in promoting the opportunities for Bahraini youngsters to enrol at the job market.**

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Zafran

Manama Youth City 2030, a summer programme to empower the youth, has come back bigger this year.

Organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the tenth edition of Bahrain's biggest summer camp is in full swing at Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre.

The event aims to improve the future of the youth of Bahrain by providing classes through which they learn and gain valuable skills.

It focuses on key growth areas for Bahraini youth, aiming to promote creative thinking among them and encourage talent in areas such as leadership, media, information technology, arts, languages, science and sport.

Youth and Sports Affairs Minister Aymen Almoayyed, senior government officials visited the camp yesterday and interacted with the youth attending the event.

"Hundreds of students are expected to take part in this programme, which is Bahrain's largest summer camp. Experienced teachers will teach various arts and sciences.

"The camp is categorised into many sections such as Art, Science, Leadership and Media. Classes for painting, leadership, public relations, cooking, fashion designing, technology, writing, video production, photography and other subjects are on," one of the organisers said.

"The students who take part



A training session on rock climbing in progress at the event.

in this summer camp will attain immense value as there are so many rich and valuable classes being provided. Youth City 2030 is unique because of the many different subjects that are covered under one roof," he added.

In a statement marking the launch of the 10th edition of the Youth City 2030 last month Representative of His Majesty the

King for Charity Work and Youth Affairs and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS) His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa said that the camp is a suitable place to focus on the initiatives of the national plan to promote belonging to the nation and boost values of citizenship.

He underlined the efforts made

Summer lessons for empowering youths

Event aims to promote creative thinking among the youth



Mr Almoayyed with University of Bahrain President Prof Riyadh Hamza, Tamkeen Chief Executive Dr Ebrahim Janahi and other dignitaries and senior officials at the event.



A Boeing 737 flight simulator at the camp.

”
Youth City 2030 is unique because of the many different subjects that are covered under one roof.

ORGANISERS

to groom Bahraini youngsters and empower them to meet the requirements of the upcoming phase of national work that necessitates exceptional multiplied efforts by all to achieve the Kingdom's vision 2030.

HH Shaikh Nasser underscored the importance of the Youth City in promoting the opportunities for Bahraini youngsters to enrol at the

job market thanks to the practical and scientific programmes which will be provided by the city to meet the labour market needs in the Kingdom.

He also pointed out the role of the Youth City 2030 in tapping on the creativity potential of Bahraini youngsters and enhance their participation in the Kingdom's development march.

'War of ideas' needed to confront extremism

London

Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies, Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, has stressed that investing in strategic thoughts contributes effectively to bringing about the desired positive change by producing new inspirational visions and dynamics that would support peace, freedom and development, and at the same time, confront extremism and terrorism in all their forms.

Addressing the Gulf Research Meeting 2019, organised by the UK Cambridge University, Dr

Shaikh Abdulla said that the Gulf region is in dire, more than any other part of the world, for investing in strategic thought, and for waging a "war of ideas" to confront the theocratic and extremist ideologies, after the prevalence of differences at the expense of coexistence, and chaos at the expense of stability, as well as the increase in the number of failed states or those on the verge of collapse.

He noted that many theories have attempted to explain the current situation in the region, such as "Filling the Void" or "Creative Chaos", but the "Power" theory has dominated, and become the most dangerous as it

derives its "fuel", in most cases, from sectarian feelings, extremist ideas and hatred of the other.

In this regard, he pointed out that Iran is the most prominent example, as it has proved, four decades after its revolution, that it is not a natural state, with its expansion-based and crisis-mongering approach aimed at stirring up conflicts, as well as sponsoring and harbouring terrorism, citing its interference in the internal affairs of the region's countries, including Bahrain, where Iran-backed terrorist cells have been discovered.

He asserted that the Mullahs Regime in Iran and the Takfiri (accusing others of being



”
Middle East region is currently going through a new crisis after the recent escalation in the Arabian Gulf caused by attacks on civilian oil tankers.

DR SHAIKH ABDULLA

unbelievers in Islam) terrorism complete each other, despite their different names, as their doctrine and goals are the same-changing the world as per divine orders, which means, for both, that every terrorist act is legitimate and justified.

DERASAT chairman went on to say that the Middle East region is currently going through a new crisis as a result of the recent escalation in the Arabian Gulf region caused by attacks on civilian oil tankers, and there is evidence of Iran's responsibility over them.

The lecturer stressed that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remains a permanent source of

tension, noting that Bahrain, out of its desire to be an influential part in the solution to the problem, has hosted the "Prosperity for Peace" workshop as an initiative aimed at enhancing development, education and the quality of life for peoples of the region, especially the Palestinians, as well as creating a suitable environment for peace.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla said that the region has, over the past decade, witnessed a wave of violent changes that led to nothing but the collapse of national institutions, the increase of savage sectarian and ethnic conflicts and the obstruction of development plans, thus making reforms more difficult.

world

Pakistan hopes to 'refresh' US ties with PM Khan's visit



Donald Trump (file)



Imran Khan (file)

Islamabad, Pakistan

Pakistan expressed hopes yesterday that Prime Minister Imran Khan's maiden trip to the White House later this month would help repair its acrimonious relationship with Washington as the US seeks its help in ending the war in Afghanistan.

Observers believe that the nearly 18-year conflict will be the major focus of talks between Khan and President Donald Trump when they meet on July 22, as Washington presses for Pakistani assistance in securing a peace deal. "Pakistan has been facilitating the US-Taliban talks in good faith, underscoring that

it remains a shared responsibility," Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said during a seminar in Islamabad.

"It will therefore be appropriate to work for broader engagement from Afghanistan to bilateral issues, economic and trade cooperation, to peace and stability in South Asia," he added.

On Tuesday, Qureshi said that Trump's invitation to Khan reflected the "importance of the relationship for both sides".

Last year, Trump suspended \$300 million in military aid to Islamabad, saying Pakistan has given Washington "nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools".

Indonesia seizes notorious vessel wanted by Interpol



Representative picture

Jakarta, Indonesia

A notorious Panama-flagged vessel wanted by Interpol for illegal fishing has been seized by Indonesia, authorities said yesterday.

The MV NIKA -- a vessel with an extensive maritime rap sheet -- was intercepted by the navy Friday in the Strait of Malacca, the fisheries ministry said on Twitter.

The 750-tonne vessel had 18 Russians and 10 Indonesians aboard, the Jakarta Post reported. The crew have been detained and are now being questioned.

The ship is suspected of falsifying registration documents

and claiming it was a bulk carrier instead of a fishing boat in order to avoid detection, said fisheries minister Susi Pudjiastuti said.

"This ship has been wanted by Interpol in many countries for a long time," she told broadcaster TVOne.

"The ship kept changing flag. The last one it used was Panama's... which is typical of ships used in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing."

Boats involved in illegal fishing often obscure their origins by using foreign flags, a system that complicates monitoring and oversight by allowing ships to register outside of the vessel owner's country.

Malaysian MPs back lowering voting age to 18

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Malaysia's parliament yesterday backed lowering the voting age from 21 to 18, a change that would add millions of people to the electoral roll and was pushed by the country's reformist government.

The Southeast Asian nation is one of a handful of countries around the world that

limits voting to those aged over 21, and the change still has to be debated and passed in the country's senate before it can become law.

The overhaul was championed by the government of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad -- who at 94 is the world's oldest leader -- about a year after it came to power by defeating a long-ruling, corruption-plagued coalition.

Fuel leak halted blastoff for Indian rocket: reports

India | Sriharikota

A fuel leak in the rocket engine forced India to abort the launch of its landmark Moon mission less than one hour before liftoff, media reports said yesterday.

A committee of experts was looking into the causes of the problem that put back the bid to become just the fourth nation -- after Russia, the United States and China -- to land a spacecraft on the Moon.

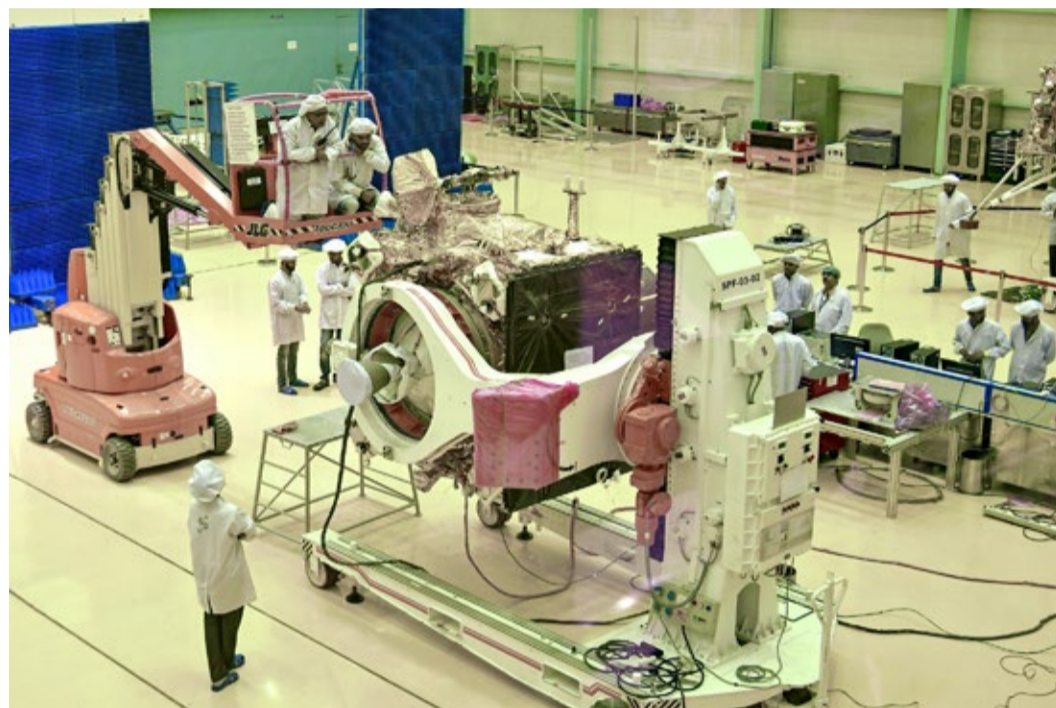
Having halted the countdown 56 minutes and 24 seconds before the scheduled launch of Chandrayaan-2 -- or Moon Chariot 2 -- the Indian Space Research Organisation gave no explanation for what it called a "technical snag" in the rocket nor a date for a new attempt.

"As a measure of abundant precaution Chandrayaan-2 launch has been called off," ISRO said.

However, the *Times of India* quoted a senior mission scientist as saying there had been a leak in the GSLV-MkIII rocket's helium fuel component.

"After filling helium, we found the pressure was dropping, indicating there was a leak," the unnamed scientist said adding that it was possible there were "multiple leaks".

"We were lucky that the mission did not enter the automatic launch sequence else all would have been lost," the *Hindustan Times* quoted a senior ISRO official as saying.



Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientists work on the orbiter vehicle of 'Chandrayaan-2', India's first moon lander and rover mission planned and developed by the ISRO, in Bangalore

The report added that scientists were "racing to plug the leak" in time for a new launch window at the end of July.

Experts said Indian mission chiefs would be cautious about trying a new liftoff.

"If the launch does not happen in the next 48 hours, it could be postponed for a few months until we get an opportune launch window," said Ravi Gupta, a scientist formerly with the state-run Defence Research and Development Organisation.

Low-cost missions

India has spent about \$140 million on Chandrayaan-2, with most of it home-made. It is one of the cheapest in the crowded space race.

The launch would have been the third to the moon this year.

China put its Chang'e 4 mission on the lunar surface in January, while Israel's \$100 million Beresheet crash-landed when it sought to become the first privately funded mission in April.

A soft landing on the Moon

would be a huge leap forward in India's space programme.

National pride is at stake as Prime Minister Narendra Modi has vowed to launch a crewed space mission by 2022.

It follows another high-profile but low-cost Indian mission -- Mangalyaan -- which put a spacecraft in orbit around Mars in 2014 at a fraction of the cost of comparable projects by established space powers like the United States, which often cost billions of dollars.

\$800,000 spent in one day on Malaysia ex-Prime Minister's cards, court hears

Kuala Lumpur

Credit cards belonging to Malaysia's disgraced ex-leader Najib Razak were used to spend over \$800,000 in one day at a luxury jeweller in Italy, a court has heard.

The 2014 spending spree is the latest evidence of what critics say is the lavish lifestyle enjoyed by Najib after he and his cronies allegedly plundered state coffers.

The former prime minister, his family members and inner circle are accused of stealing billions of dollars from Malaysian sovereign wealth fund IMDB in a fraud that stretched around the world.

The claims played a major part in Najib's government losing power at elections last year. He was arrested after being ejected from office, and went on trial over the scandal in April.

At a hearing in the case Monday, a bank official said two credit cards belonging to the ex-leader were used to spend 3.3 million ringgit (\$803,000)



The current trial is the first of several that Malaysia's disgraced ex-leader Najib Razak is expected to face over sovereign wealth fund IMDB

at a branch of Swiss jeweller De Grisogono in Italy, state news agency Bernama reported.

The money was spent on August 8, 2014, said Yeoh Eng

Leong, a senior official from Malaysian lender AmBank, although he did not disclose what was bought, Bernama reported.

The cards were also used

to pay over 460,000 ringgit at a Chanel boutique in Hawaii and over 120,000 ringgit at a Shangri-La Hotel in Bangkok, he told the Kuala Lumpur court.

Najib defended the Italian spending spree.

"This expenditure is for a gift to a senior member of the royalty of a government and their entourage that has good relations with our country," he said in a Facebook post.

"It is normal to give gifts to leaders of other governments".

The current trial is the first of several that Najib is expected to face over IMDB, and centres on claims 42 million ringgit was stolen from SRC International, a former unit of the fund.

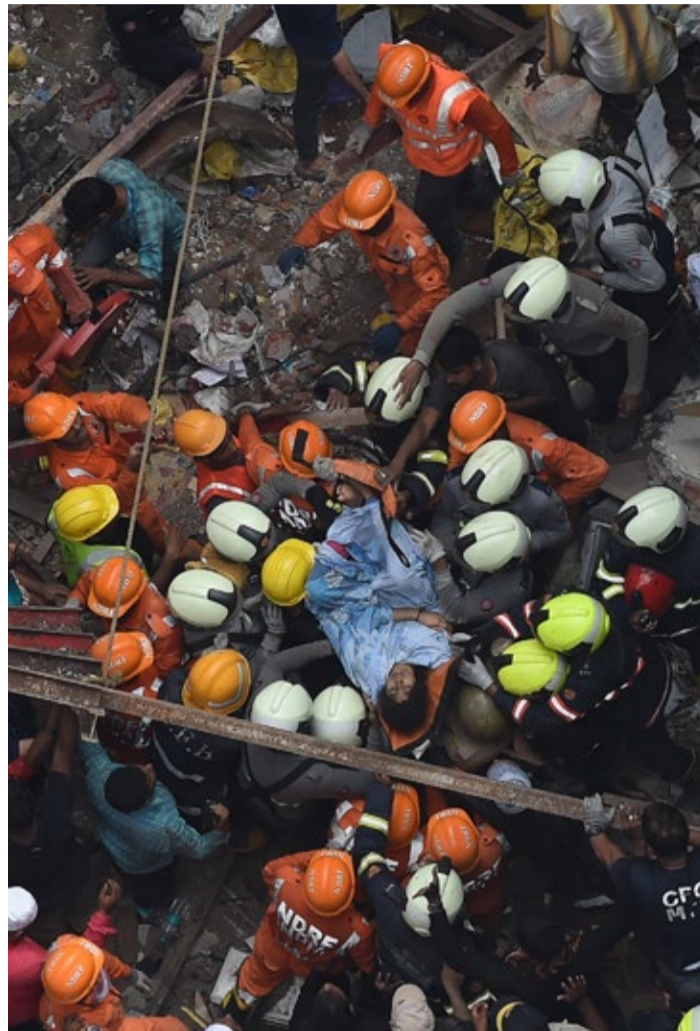
During his years in office, Najib and his luxury-loving wife Rosmah Mansor -- who has also been charged over the fraud -- came to symbolise the rot in Malaysia's elite.

Following the election, police discovered valuables, including cash, jewellery and luxury handbags, worth up to \$273 million in properties linked to the couple.

Four dead, 12 feared trapped after Mumbai building collapse



Indian fire brigade personnel and rescue workers look for survivors after a building collapsed in Mumbai



Indian fire brigade personnel and rescue workers look for survivors after a building collapsed in Mumbai

Mumbai, India

Four people were killed and at least others 12 feared trapped under rubble after a building collapsed as heavy monsoon rains lashed India's financial capital Mumbai yesterday, officials said, the second such tragedy in two weeks.

Torrential downpours have swept away homes, triggered landslides and claimed at least 180 lives across South Asia.

"Four people are dead and over 12 people are still stuck

under the rubble," disaster management spokesman Tanaji Kamble said of the building collapse in southern Mumbai's congested Dongri area.

"Eight injured have been sent to hospitals and rescue operations are ongoing."

Two teams from India's National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) as well as local volunteers, the fire department and police officials were scouring the rubble for survivors.

Volunteers could be seen recovering household items including furniture from the

debris.

"The building collapse sounded like an earthquake and we rushed to the spot to check the loud noise," a local resident told Indian news channel NDTV.

Another resident said the building was more than a century old and had 10 families living

inside despite its dilapidated condition.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted his condolences to the victims' families, describing the incident as "anguishing".

Earlier this month, a wall collapsed in the city, killing 29 people.

Pakistan reopens airspace, ending months of restrictions



The closure forced Pakistan International Airlines to suspend some of its flights

AFP | Karachi

Pakistan yesterday fully reopened its airspace for all civilian traffic, ending months of restrictions affecting major international routes including from India after clashes between the nuclear-armed rivals brought them to the brink of war.

"With immediate effect Pakistan airspace is open for all type of civil traffic," the state-run Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said.

A CAA spokesman confirmed that the eastern airspace along the border with India had been reopened.

Pakistan closed its airspace completely after aerial dogfights in February ratcheted up tensions between Islamabad and New Delhi. It removed some restrictions a month later but kept constraints in place along its eastern border with India.

The closure disrupted Indian flights headed west, forced Pakistan International Airlines to suspend some of its flights, and effectively closed off major international routes in and out of Islamabad and Lahore, such as the Thai Airways route

“
With immediate effect Pakistan airspace is open for all type of civil traffic

THE STATE-RUN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (CAA)

from Islamabad to Bangkok.

The crisis between the countries was first sparked by a suicide bombing in Kashmir in February that killed 40 security personnel and was later claimed by the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad.

Days later India responded with a cross-border air raid on Pakistan that kicked off a quick succession of attacks and dogfights between the arch-rivals, spurring fears of all-out war.

Pakistani and Indian soldiers have continued to fire over the Line of Control, the de facto border, killing several civilians on both sides.

AIDS deaths down a third since 2010: United Nations

Paris

HIV-related deaths last year fell to around 770,000 -- some 33 per cent lower than in 2010 -- the United Nations said yesterday, but warned that global efforts to eradicate the disease were stalling as funding dries up.

An estimated 37.9 million people now live with HIV -- a record 23.3 million of those have access to some antiretroviral therapy

(ART), UNAIDS said in its annual report.

Highlighting the enormous progress made since the height of the AIDS epidemic in the mid-1990s, the report showed that the number people dying from the disease fell from 800,000 in 2017 to 770,000 last year.

The figure was down by more than a third from 2010, when there were 1.2 million AIDS-related deaths.

But it also exposed weaknesses in the world's fight against AIDS.

While AIDS-related deaths in Africa, the continent most affected by the epidemic, have plummeted this decade, Eastern Europe has seen the death toll rise 5pc and the Middle East and North Africa 9pc.

Year-on-year, those same regions saw a 29pc and 10pc rise in new infections, respectively.



Decades of research have yet to yield a cure or vaccine for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), which has infected almost 80 million people and killed more than 35 million since the early 1980s.

The UN said that more than half of new HIV infections globally come from "key populations" -- intravenous drug users, gay men, transgender people, sex workers and prisoners.

Despite this, the report said that under 50 percent of these at-risk populations were reached by HIV prevention services in more than half of countries.

Another vulnerable group is children, with more than 160,000 new HIV infections last year. The report also warned that a lack of political will coupled with decreasing finance risked undermining the progress made so far.

Macron pressed Putin for release of French investor

Paris, France

French President Emmanuel Macron last month urged his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to help release arrested French businessman Philippe Delpal, an aide to Macron said yesterday.

Delpal, a senior executive at Baring Vostok private equity group, was arrested in February along with its American founder and CEO Michael Calvey in a case that has shaken the Western business community in Russia.

Macron raised the case during talks with Putin during the G20 summit in Japan at the end of June, an aide said on condition of anonymity.

"We are continuing to work to secure his release," he said,



French banker Philippe Delpal arrives to a court hearing on whether to extend his detention in Moscow's Basmanny Court

adding the arrest "was damaging for Russia's image in the business world."

Delpal, who has lived in

Russia with his wife and two children for the last 15 years, has been accused of defrauding Vostochny Bank of 2.5 billion

rubles (\$38.7 million).

A court last month ruled that Calvey should be moved to house arrest, but Delpal and four others remain in pre-trial detention.

Calvey has argued that the case against him has been fabricated by a rival businessman using the criminal justice system for corporate benefit.

In a statement Monday, Baring Vostok said the arrested executives are key witnesses in an arbitration case over fraud set to be considered in London in January 2020.

French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe also raised the case of Delpal with his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev during a meeting in northern France on June 24.

Duterte mulls cutting Iceland ties over UN probe

Manila

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte is "seriously considering" cutting his nation's diplomatic ties with Iceland after it spearheaded a UN resolution to probe his deadly drug war, the leader's spokesman said.

Duterte bristles at any Western condemnation of his signature campaign, which has killed thousands and critics say could amount to crimes against humanity.

The comments late Monday from presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo came in response to the UN Human Rights Council last week backing the Iceland-proposed resolution to review the killings.



Rodrigo Duterte

"(Duterte) is seriously considering cutting diplomatic relations with Iceland," Panelo said in a statement.

"The adopted Iceland resolution is grotesquely one-sided, outrageously narrow, and maliciously partisan," he added. Duterte launched the anti-drug crackdown in 2016, and since then police say they have killed over 5,300 drug suspects.



Indian children paddle a raft through floodwaters at Kalgachia in Barpeta district in India's northeastern state of Assam



The torrential rains have struck communities in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan-administered Kashmir



Pakistani Kashmiri walk along a damaged road following heavy monsoon rains in Neelum valley near the Line of Control in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir

Monsoon wreaks flood havoc across South Asia

New Delhi

Torrential monsoon rains swept away homes and triggered landslides across South Asia, affecting millions of people and claiming at least 180 lives, officials said Tuesday.

The monsoon is crucial for irrigation and groundwater supplies in the impoverished region -- home to a fifth of the world's population -- and brings relief after the unforgiving summer.

But the downpours -- which stretch from June to September -- can turn deadly and have wreaked havoc again this year across India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan-administered Kashmir, with

people, dwellings and boats in remote low-lying areas washed away.

In Mumbai, a building collapsed in a crammed neighbourhood, killing two people and trapping more than 40 following heavy rains in the city.

At least five children drowned in Bangladesh Monday, taking the toll in the country to 34, including 18 hit by lightning and seven who drowned after their boat capsized in choppy waters in the Bay of Bengal.

Hundreds of thousands have been marooned by floodwater in the country's north, with one of the major Himalayan rivers, the Brahmaputra, over a metre (40 inches) above the "danger level", officials said.

In Nepal,

at least 78 people have died and 16,000 families displaced, although flood waters have started receding. Images showed rescuers using inflatable dinghies to evacuate families trapped in flooded houses.

Health experts have warned of possible outbreaks of waterborne diseases and called for international help.

"The ground floor of our house was completely submerged," Rajaram Yadav, 45, told AFP from a district near the border with India.

"Our family and some neighbours survived by staying at the top floor for two days. Most one-floor mud houses in the areas

have been severely damaged."

Red alert

Nearly 50 people have been killed in India, with two eastern states -- Assam and Bihar, which borders Nepal -- bearing the brunt of the deluge.

Authorities in Assam declared a red alert Monday as the flood situation turned critical, with villages cut off by surging waters and a major highway submerged.

Photos showed residents crammed in boats carrying their belongings to safer areas in Morigaon, one of the worst-affected districts, and just the roofs of submerged homes above water.

So far 11 people have died in the state and some 83,000 people displaced by flooding.

Authorities also scrambled to reach animals marooned by the deluge at the state's World-Heritage listed Kaziranga National Park, which is home to two-thirds of the world's one-horned rhinos.

In Bihar, 25 deaths were reported, with 2.5 million residents affected.

Among the dead were three children who drowned as they went to check the rising water level in a canal.

Two others died while playing near a ditch filled with floodwater, the Press Trust of India reported.

Further northwest, in the Pakistan-administered part of the Kashmir region, flash floods killed 23 people and damaged 120 houses, with the water and power supplies crippled.

The United Nations said Monday it "stands ready to work with the authorities in the affected countries as they respond to the humanitarian needs resulting from this ongoing monsoon season".



Indian men catch a tree in the flooded Manas river, following heavy rainfall in Baksa district of Assam, in the North-Eastern states of India.

Italy seizes Qatari army missile from far-right sympathisers

Rome

Italian police seized an air-to-air missile, machine guns and rocket launchers during raids sparked by an investigation into far-right extremist groups on Monday, that authorities said was almost without precedent.

Police arrested three people, including Fabio Del Bergiolo, 50, a former candidate for the neo-fascist Forza Nuova party, whose home was found to contain a huge stash of arms as well as neo-Nazi propaganda and Hitler memorabilia.

"During the operation, an air-to-air missile in perfect working order and used by the Qatari army was seized," police said of the 245-kilogramme (540-pound) Matra missile.

They also found automatic assault rifles that they described as "latest generation" among the cache.

"This is a significant seizure, with few precedents in Italy," said Turin police commissioner Giuseppe De Matteis.

The missile, 3.54 metres (more than 11 feet) long was made in

France and Del Bergiolo had been hoping to sell it for 470,000 euros (\$529,000), according to Italian media reports.

The missile was "without explosive charge, but re-armorable by people specialised in the field," police said.

"For now, nothing leads us to suspect" an active plot to use the weapons, said counter-terrorism official Eugenio Spina.

The other arrests were a Swiss national, 42, and an Italian, 51, accused of holding and marketing the missile, which was found by police at a warehouse near the small Rivanazzano Terme airport in the Pavia province.

'Extremely dangerous'

The Mantra Super 530 F was a modernisation of the R530 missile that went into service in 1980, and has a range of 25 kilometres (15 miles), with an explosive charge of 30 kilos.

"It is extremely dangerous and risky to turn it into a missile to fire from the ground, unless you have good engineers and equipment," a missile expert who

asked not to be named said.

Similarly, because of its age, it is "extremely unlikely that it can be used, but its use can be changed," he added.

The raids were the result of a police probe into Italian extremists known to have fought against pro-Russian rebels in Ukraine.

Messages intercepted by the police led them to investigate Del Bergiolo, who had sent photographs of the missile for sale through the Whatsapp messaging service.

They put him under surveillance before raiding his home and finding a stash of weapons including a Scorpion machine gun, 306 firearm parts and 20 bayonets.

His collection included street signs from the Nazi era, including one reading "Adolf-Hitler Platz".

Trafficking war weapons

Police in Pavia also found the cockpit of a military plane.

The Digos law enforcement agency, which deals largely with



The missile was 'in perfect working order', police said



The raids were the result of a police probe into Italian extremists known to have fought pro-Russian rebels in Ukraine

terrorism and organised crime, led the operation from Turin with assistance from police in Forlì, Milan, Novara and Varese.

"We have some idea about what the seized equipment could be used for, but will not speculate," De Matteis told reporters.

The Forza Nuova party released a statement Monday distancing itself from Del Bergiolo.

Police have carried out several raids in recent weeks on far-right targets around Turin, with a man arrested earlier this month for advocating fascism and possessing illegal weapons.

While Italy's far-right interior minister Matteo Salvini was uncharacteristically quiet following the raid, the opposition centre-left Democratic Party (PD) urged the country's populist government to do more to tackle right-wing extremists.

"The far right in this country trafficks weapons of war, and even missiles. It's an incredible, very serious event," said Maurizio Martina, the PD's former party head.

A rising China can be of great benefit to world nations

There is every possibility, given sufficient good will in the West, that the nation will play a constructive and collaborative role on the world stage for many years to come

SHOLTO BYRNES

The ongoing protests in Hong Kong continue to make headlines around the world. But other events that deserved greater coverage have taken place in the territory. They include a two-day conference hosted by the China United States Exchange Foundation and the China Centre for International Economic Exchanges. If that sounds less than thrilling, think again.

We are so used to hearing of wariness about China, of people doubting its stated good intentions, condemning its attitude towards human rights, and predicting the inevitability of military conflict with the US that it is refreshing to be reminded that not all westerners share that apocalyptic view of what the rise of the Middle Kingdom entails. And at the conference President George HW Bush's son Neil delivered one of the most forthright defences of the benefits of China's growth and its relationship with America that I have ever heard.

His father often stated that this was, in fact, the most important bilateral relationship in the world. Mr Bush pointed to the freedoms gained by the Chinese over the past four decades – to choose where to live, whom to marry, to travel and enjoy better living standards, and how the connection between the two countries had led to Americans gaining access to lower-cost, high-quality goods.

He described the economic leap-forward as having built "what one might call the American dream with Chinese characteristics". He acknowledged cultural differences, observing that "our system of government, our form of democracy, would not work for China, just like China's system would not work for us", while also warning that "If the Chinese government gets carried



Beijing's central business district offers a clear illustration of the country's modern trajectory.

away denying basic rights, there will be a pushback from within."

He also characterised the "demonisation of China" as "hysterical". And, critically, stated clearly that "the zero-sum, winner-loser mentality is wrong and naive. The truth is that our trade deficit with China is natural – the richer country buys more stuff from the poorer country."

Mr Bush is founder-chairman of the George HW Bush Foundation for US-China Relations. Some might respond: "He would say that, wouldn't he?" But other prominent attendees at the conference, such as the former Japanese prime minister Yasuo

Fukuda and the former Canadian prime minister Jean Chretien cannot be dismissed as Chinese stooges (although Mr Chretien was known as a Sinophile while in office).

And while some criticisms of Beijing are definitely valid, there is most certainly a case for describing the attacks on China as "hysterical". It has long struck me as bizarre, not to say unfair, that the worst motives are assigned to the country's every move. At the same time, Western critics happily apply double standards, allowing that states such as the US and Australia might fairly consider themselves to have a rightful "sphere

When it comes to China, Mr Trump should read Mr Bush's speech and take the lessons handed down from the late Republican president: that a zero-sum approach will fail and that the only way to make America great again.

Reviving America's busing debate won't

JANINE DI GIOVANNI

In 1971, at the height of the busing debate in the US, I was a tiny kid wearing giant bell-bottoms and riding a Schwinn bike with training wheels. It was a heady and dangerous time: the height of the Vietnam war, the early years of feminism and the aftermath of the civil rights movement. Four years had passed since the long, hot summer of summer of 1967, when riots broke out in cities across America: Detroit, Newark, Cincinnati, Buffalo.

Busing was a national experiment, a means to integrate public schools in America, a way of achieving racial balance. It was not the best plan – under the Department of Education's mandate, black children from the inner cities were bused hours away from their homes to predominately white suburban schools. These schools were usually better equipped, had better teachers and offered a higher standard of education. That part, we can all agree with – these kids deserved the same education as their white counterparts.

However, the ones who were bused, and their parents, weren't given a choice – it was a federal

decision. Equally, white children who went to the better public high schools were sent to inner-city high schools, which were predominantly black. No one was happy with this initiative, least of all the students and their parents.

The notion of mixing the demographics was good. The way it was carried out was not. It inflamed rather than soothed racial tensions. In the end, studies showed that white parents just sent their children to private schools, or moved to the suburbs – a pattern that became known as "white flight".

Busing happened nearly half a century ago, but it has come back as a major campaign issue since the first Democratic primary debate in Miami two weeks ago. That was when the ambitious California Senator Kamala Harris skewered her rival and former vice president Joe Biden by asking him why he did not support busing back in 1971, when he was a young prosecutor in Delaware.

Ms Harris grew up in Berkeley, California, and was one of those kids on the bus. She understands how painful it is to live with racism every day. But trying to take Mr Biden back 50 years, when

he was a young prosecutor who disagreed with the practice and implications of busing, is wrong. Mr Biden had earlier fought for civil rights and was committed to equality. When it came to busing, he did not agree with the methods. He felt that the Department of Education was wrong to order transports of students to school, within or outside their school district, in an attempt to reduce racial segregation.

I believe that Mr Biden is not the uncaring white man the Harris campaign is attempting to portray him as. Back in 1971, in his home state of Delaware, Mr Biden fought for racial equality, but opposed busing because he thought it "pushed civil rights back" and that it was a bankrupt policy. Looking back at old footage of busing in places such as Boston, Philadelphia and Maryland, all I can see is anger. It did not do much to soothe the already wounded spirit of America, broken by racial tensions.

Mr Biden, clearly, is no racist. He believed and fought for racial equality. And a speech he gave to Yale's graduating class this year explains why he chose to work alongside the conservative and



Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders and Kamala Harris at the first debate.

segregationist North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms to create an anti-busing amendment to that year's education spending bill.

Why would Mr Biden work with such a man? He had an answer: "Senator Helms and I continued to have profound political differences, but early on we both became the most powerful members of the Senate... something happened, the mutual defensiveness began to dissipate. And as a result, we began to be able to work together in the interests of the country."

This brings us back to the cen-

tral topic: how to heal America post-Trump. The Democrats need to come together, not attack one another. Ms Harris's attempts to distort Mr Biden's history and his words were a cheap shot to turbocharge her campaign. She recalled one of the most painful moments in American history, one that we should not forget, but one that we should also not use and manipulate. For anyone who grew up during the civil rights movement which I did, it seems almost sacrilegious to try to corrupt the facts of that time to gain votes.

Democrat presidential hopeful Kamala Harris has attacked rival Joe Biden's record on race

1938

Douglas Corrigan takes off from Brooklyn to fly the “wrong way” to Ireland and becomes known as “Wrong Way” Corrigan.



1944

Port Chicago disaster: Near the San Francisco Bay, two ships laden with ammunition for the war explode in Port Chicago, California, killing 320.

1944

World War II: At Sainte-Foy-de-Montgomery in Normandy Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was strafed by allied aircraft while returning to his headquarters.

1945

World War II: The main three leaders of the Allied nations, Winston Churchill, Harry S. Truman and Joseph Stalin, meet in the German city of Potsdam to decide the future of a defeated Germany.



structive and collaborative role on the world stage to the benefit of all. Indeed, on climate change, some, such as the former UN official Christiana Figueres, think it can and will play the leading role after the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement and President Trump’s continued scepticism about the very concept of global warming.

More broadly, elements of the zero-sum approach appear to have been contributing factors to the disastrous Brexit negotiations. British leavers talked in terms of winning back control of fishing rights, which would have meant a loss of income to the continental fishing industry. Top European Union leaders, meanwhile, gave every impression that the UK must suffer a cost for daring to depart. I can’t recall anyone, sadly, trying to work towards a British exit that would be positive for both sides.

Likewise, critics of Vladimir Putin regularly accuse him of seeing international relations as a zero sum game: that if Russia expands its influence, the US, in turn, loses it. But I am not alone in thinking that successive US administrations have acted in exactly the same way, and that opportunities to work with Russia to secure greater mutual stability have been missed, time and again.

For all that is disturbing about the Trump White House, the US president’s keenness to reset relations with countries such as Russia and North Korea is to be applauded. These are confrontations that conventional wisdom has failed to solve. When it comes to China, Mr Trump should read Mr Bush’s speech and take the lessons handed down from the late Republican president: that a zero-sum approach will fail and that the only way to make America great again will be to allow the Chinese the “win-win” scenario that, after the way they were treated by Western imperial powers in the past, they justly demand.

of influence”, while condemning China for having the temerity to suggest it should have the same.

Others present echoed Mr Bush’s criticism of the “zero-sum game” approach, which I believe to be wrong-headed not just in terms of trade, but also in geopolitics. Too often a snappy and smart-sounding phrase can be produced that supposedly sums up a great power rivalry scenario and it then becomes generally assumed to be a revealed truth.

In the case of China, the “Thucydides trap” refers back to the writings of a Greek historian who witnessed the Peloponnesian war between the rising Athens and

the already established Sparta. The term was coined by Harvard’s Graham Allison and elaborated upon in a book that concludes: “China and the US are currently on a collision course for war.” But there is no reason to suppose that China regaining its historic prominence necessitates war with the declining global hegemon, the US.

Just as the lifting out of poverty of nearly one billion Chinese since the early 1980s caused no harm to other countries – contrary to the presumption of “zero-sum” theory that one party’s gain must mean another’s loss – so there is every possibility, given sufficient good will, that China could play a con-

address political crisis

President Trump has managed to set back race relations by half a century with his hate-filled rants and his response to the deadly white supremacist rally in Charlottesville in 2017.



And to make it even worse, Ms Harris is unclear and muddy about where she actually stands in the busing debate (she says it was “in the toolbox” for desegregating American schools, but does not say how), even though she tried to seduce the audience with her emotional words “and that little girl on the bus was me ...”

I want to like Kamala Harris because I am a woman and a Democrat. But I don’t find her nearly as impressive as her colleague in the Senate, Elizabeth Warren, who is less a politician and more a stud-

ious problem solver, prepared to roll up her sleeves and tackle the biggest issues in America: bankruptcy.

Ms Harris has also faced criticism because of her relationship with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which according to the progressive activist group MoveOn, “has been known to peddle anti-Muslim and anti-Arab rhetoric”.

While Ms Harris did not go to the group’s annual policy meeting in March, she did meet its key figures and tweeted a pho-

tograph. “Great to meet today in my office with California AIPAC leaders to discuss the need for a strong US-Israel alliance, the right of Israel to defend itself,” read the caption. It is true that Ms Harris has not actually made her Middle East policies clear, but I worry about someone who is susceptible to such Washington lobbyists. This, and the busing incident, make her an unreliable candidate, in my view.

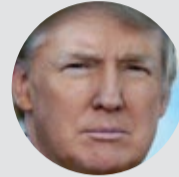
Whoever the next US president will be has to be someone as Corey Booker, the African-American New Jersey senator – who is also in the running – says, who can talk honestly and candidly about race. President Trump has managed to set back race relations by half a century with his hate-filled rants and his response to the deadly white supremacist rally in Charlottesville in 2017.

I have recently moved back to the US after nearly 30 years away. I try to remember those days of 1971, when things seemed so new: feminism, civil rights. We need to recall the wisdom of elders such as Martin Luther King and others who sacrificed so much to bring the country together – not tear it apart.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



The Dems were trying to distance themselves from the four “progressives,” but now they are forced to embrace them. That means they are endorsing Socialism, hate of Israel and the USA! Not good for the Democrats!

@realDonaldTrump

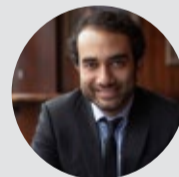
02



Donald Trump has decided he does not want to be President of the United States. He does not want to be a President to those who disagree. And he’d rather see most Americans leave than handle our nation’s enshrined tradition of dissent. But we don’t leave the things we love.

@AOC

03



I see Ilhan Omar being attacked in some conservative circles for not denouncing Al Qaeda. Her response was the correct one—she refused to dignify it with an answer. No American Muslim should have to spell out that they’re anti-Al Qaeda. It should be the starting presumption

@shadihamid

04



Joe Biden raised his hand in support of giving free health care to illegal immigrants. Today he AGAIN suggested illegal immigrants deserve to receive Social Security benefits. So UNFAIR to American taxpayers and our great seniors!

@TrumpWarRoom

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

Wide Angle

Moon Landing: Its fascination in fiction



JOEL INDRUPATI

“There are more than 185,000 songs with the word ‘moon’ in their title”. That’s according to Spotify, the audio streaming platform, with probably the largest database of songs.

On hearing this the staggering number of references to the ‘Moon’, I thought it might be worth dwelling on the topic of ‘moon’, as we commemorate now, the 50th anniversary of man’s historic moon landing.

Man’s fascination with the Moon – whether in song or in the story – has been going on for centuries; in fact, for millennia.

From poetic expressions in romance to serious inquiry through science, this lovely large white disc, which hovers overhead every night, in varied hues, in different phases on different days, has captivated mankind for ages.

So, how much did fiction help man dream a dream so big that he thought he could reach the Moon?

What were the small steps in fiction which led to this giant leap for mankind?

Investigating into these questions, I found a wealth of information that inspired man to journey to the Moon.

Many people regard an ancient Greek novel by Lucian of Samosata, a Syrian satirist, written around AD 120, as the first true piece of ‘science fiction’.

Titled ‘Vera Historia’ (A True Story), it actually begins by stating that the story is, in fact, an utter lie, and not true at all!

In the story, the ship of Lucian and his fellow travellers is blown off course, when caught up in a storm, and a whirlwind blows them up high – towards the Moon.

None of us can deny the truth that science-fiction has in many ways inspired the real Moon landing.

They get caught up in a full-scale interplanetary war. It is between the king of the Moon and the king of the Sun, over the colonisation of the Morning Star! Both armies with hybrid lifeforms could make us wonder if the second-century writer has

somehow got a sneak peek at the aliens shown in the ‘Star Wars’ movie series!

The prominent astronomer Johannes Kepler too had written some fiction. In his ‘Somnium’ (The Dream) published in 1634, four years after his death, he talks of a dream in which a demon describes the moon’s inhabitants to an Icelandic boy and his mother who is a witch.

After Kepler’s writings, many stories of moon voyages suddenly became popular; even by Cyrano de Bergerac and Daniel Defoe.

In 1638, an English historian and author Francis Godwin published a short novel called ‘The Man in the Moone’, describing the adventures of a Spaniard named Domingo Gonsales. Gonsales trains some migratory swans to wear harnesses and fly him around in an “engine” he had devised. He describes a 12-day journey watching the Earth recede from view as the swans take him to the lunar surface. And he tells us of a utopian lunar society there, where inhabitants are extraordinarily tall, with no illness, with no crime or with no need for any lawyers.

Around the same time another Englishman, the philosopher, and clergyman John Wilkins, composed ‘A Discourse Concerning a New World and Another Planet’, a full scientific discussion of the Moon and the possibility of voyaging there.

John Wilkins, in 1640, had apparently said, “I do seriously, and upon good grounds, affirm it possible to make a flying chariot, in which a man may sit, and give such a motion unto it, as shall convey him through the air.” (‘Many fictional moon voyages preceded the Apollo landing’ by Tom Seigfried, Sciencenews.org).

In 1865, Jules Verne’s book ‘From the Earth to the Moon’ talked of a huge cannon, which can shoot a group of men into space, to land on the moon.

Even in the world of comic books, Tintin’s adventures, in ‘Destination Moon’ and ‘Explorers on the Moon’, were written long before the actual Moon Landing.

None of us can deny the truth that science-fiction has in many ways inspired the real Moon landing.

business

IKEA closing only US furniture factory, cutting 300 jobs



Then-Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine (left) joins Ikea officials to saw a log in half as the Danville facility celebrated its opening on May 21, 2008. The center is set to close, leaving 300 to search for new jobs. (Courtesy of Roanoke Times)

Washington, United States

IKEA said it will close its only US factory at the end of the year, cutting 300 jobs, as it will be more cost effective to make the products in Europe and import them.

The global big-box furniture store, known for its Swedish meatballs and sometimes incomprehensible assembly instructions, said raw material costs were too high compared to plants in Europe meaning prices at the plant in the southern Virginia town of Danville were "significantly higher."

"We made every effort to improve and maintain the competitiveness of this plant, but unfortunately the right cost conditions are not in place to

continue production in Danville, VA for the long-term," Bert Eades, the company's site manager, said in a statement last week.

The factory, which opened in 2008 to produce wood shelves and storage units for the US and Canadian markets, will close in December.

"We will do everything we can in the coming months to support our co-workers through this change as they look for new jobs and training opportunities," Eades said.

IKEA, which has production units at 24 sites in nine countries, with about 20,000 workers, said it will work with labor representatives and US agencies to provide job search assistance.

NBB Q2 net profit rises 14.6pc

- Q2 net interest income was up 12.6pc

- Quarterly operating profit increased 17.2pc

- H1 net profits rose 8.7pc

- Provisions more than doubled to BD4.7m

TDT | Manama

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) yesterday reported a 14.6 per cent increase in its second-quarter 2019 net profit driven by higher operating profit and interest income notwithstanding a rise in provisions.

The bank's quarterly net profit increased to BD19.6 million (US\$52.1m) from BD17.1m (US\$45.5m) in the same quarter a year ago.

Net interest income was up 12.6pc to BD24.2m (US\$64.4m) when compared with BD21.5m (US\$57.2m) in the prior-year-period.

NBB's operating profit increased 17.2pc to BD21.1m (US\$56.1m) while operating income rose 10.7pc to BD32.0m (US\$85.1m) from the same quarter a year ago.

Operating costs remained unchanged at BD10.9m (US\$29.0m).

Total comprehensive income rose to BD18.8m (US\$50.0m) compared with BD4.3m



Farouk Yousuf Khalil Almoayyed, Chairman



Jean-Christophe Durand, Chief Executive Officer

(US\$11.4m) in the year-earlier quarter.

The Bahrain-based lender's net income in the first half of the year rose 8.7pc to BD40.0 million (US\$106.4m) while operating profit recorded a 17.3pc increase to BD44.7m (US\$118.9m) in the same period a year ago. Earnings per share increased by 8.3pc to 26 fils (US\$ 69 cents) compared with 24 fils (US\$ 64 cents) in the prior-year period.

This was achieved despite provisions of BD4.7 million, which were more than double the provision amount in the corresponding period in 2018.

Net interest income increased by 16.8pc y-o-y to BD 48.0m (US\$127.7m) compared with BD 41.1m (US\$109.3m) in the prior-year period. Improvements were driven by prudent asset liabilities management and the

acquisition of new customers from various sectors across the Bank's business lines during the first half of the year.

Operating costs were up to BD21.5m (US\$ 57.2m) compared to BD 20.9m (US\$ 55.6m), an increase of 2.9pc which the bank said is in line with the ongoing investments in human capital and technology to support the Bank's transformation strategy.

Total comprehensive income for the period was BD44.5m (US\$118.4m) compared with BD14.4m (US\$38.3m) in the prior-year period.

Average loans and advances increased by 6.9pc to BD 1,230.5m (US\$3,272.6m) while average customer deposits remained steady at BD 2,108.8m (US\$5,608.5m).

Commenting on the results, Farouk Yousuf Khalil

Almoayyed, Chairman of NBB, said the bank's success in the first half "reflect the ongoing success of our strategy and the achievements made in transforming the bank."

"Continued expansion and income generation from our core banking activities drove strong gains in operating profit with another significant increase of 17.3pc reported for the first half of the year."

Jean-Christophe Durand, Chief Executive Officer of NBB, said, "Gains in operating income and profits during the period were the result of further business expansion and growth as well as the prudent management of costs."

The bank, he said, is working to create tailored solutions for SMEs and is also stepping up its debt capital market and advisory activities with a focus on large corporates and economy.

"We are now focused on taking a more leading role alongside other sizeable regional banks in the provision of financing and syndications and have already developed a strong track record."

Durand said NBB is planning expansions in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. "Over the past six months, we have continued building our team based in the Kingdom's capital and have recently received approval from the Central Bank of UAE for "reactivation" of our branch licence in Dubai, from where we will focus on growth in corporate and commercial banking operations."

AUB launches Next Gen Mobile Banking

TDT | Manama

Abli United Bank announced the launch of its next-generation mobile banking application.

In a statement, AUB said its mobile app has been enhanced with multiple additional functionalities to ease navigation and boost user experience that empowers customers to manage their banking transactions

anytime and anywhere.

The AUB mobile app enables first time users to register themselves, avoiding the need for branch visits.

Passwords are not required as the app enables facial recognition or fingerprint to access. Other services include that for transferring money, paying bills, a currency converter, or set up and management of their beneficiaries. The app can be

downloaded from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

Suvrat Saigal, Deputy Group CEO-Retail Banking, AUB, said: "As a customer-centric Bank, AUB is committed to delivering solutions that simplify our customers' Banking experience by giving them easy access to services where and when they require and providing integrated end-to-end banking solutions to our clients."

Dubai to organise Global Aviation Summit 2020

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

The General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) of UAE has announced that the second edition of Global Investment in Aviation Summit (GIAS) 2020, themed 'Enabling Global Aviation Growth through Fund Raising and Key Partnerships' will be held in Dubai from January 27-29.

Over 200 investors and 1,200 delegates, besides selected



Saif Mohammed Al Suwaidi

government officials, aviation organisations, finance & insurance firms, aviation asset owners, aircraft operators &

logistic service providers and legal consultants are expected to turn up at the event.

While disclosing the details of the summit Saif Mohammed Al Suwaidi, Director General of the GCAA, said, "The national agenda for 2021 aims for UAE to be the world first in the quality of the air transport infrastructure.

Registration is open on <http://www.gias.ae/>.



Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) hosted a group of Bahraini students for a tour of its headquarters and the existing airport terminal. The tours were also part of the Rotary Club of Adliya's Career Tasters programme, which exposes students from public and private schools to different industries and professions in the Kingdom. Following a welcome presentation, team members from BAC's Human Resources (HR) Department led Rotary Club of Adliya representative, Amal Al Koheji and the students on a tour of different BAC departments, including HR, Health, Safety and Environment, Finance, ICT, Procurement, and Soft Services.

Huawei says it plans to invest \$3.1 billion in Italy

Milan, Italy

Chinese tech giant Huawei said Monday it plans to invest \$3.1 billion (2.75 billion euros) in Italy over three years, as the firm looks to strengthen its foothold in Europe after the US labelled it a major security risk.

Announcing the investment plan Huawei's managing director for Italy Thomas Miao said trade tensions between the US and China were not having an impact on Huawei's business in Italy for now.

"Over the next three years, we will invest \$1.9 billion in Italy for the acquisition of supplies and \$1.2 billion in operations and marketing, with \$52 million in research and development," Miao told a press conference in Milan.

He said the plan would create 1,000 jobs directly as well as 2,000 subcontracted positions.

Fed's Powell doubles down on rate cut signal

Paris, France

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell added more weight to expectations the central bank will cut interest rates later this month, stressing yesterday that the US inflation outlook is near historic lows.

Economists and investors see it as a certainty that the Fed will lower the key borrowing rate at the policy meeting July 30-31, and Powell in recent statements has moved to solidify those predictions.

Central bankers have "raised concerns about a more prolonged shortfall in inflation below our 2 percent target," Powell said at a Bank of France event.

Powell said inflation expectations "are near the bottom of their historical ranges." The Fed raised the policy rate four times last year and a rate cut would be the first in a decade.

GFH buys \$100m tech offices portfolio in US



The portfolio was purchased in partnership with Global Mutual Hisham Alrayes, CEO of GFH Financial Group

TDT | Dubai

GFH Capital Limited, a subsidiary of GFH Financial Group, yesterday announced acquiring a Tech Offices Portfolio in the US in a deal valued over US\$ 100 million.

With this deal, the total US and UK Real Estate transactions volume executed by GFH over the last few years has crossed the US\$ 1 billion mark.

The portfolio was purchased in partnership with Global Mutual, one of the fastest-growing real estate investment management company in the US, UK and Europe operating over £1.5 billion of assets under management.

The Tech Offices Portfolio is situated on nearly 60 acres

within the prime located Research Triangle Park, which is the largest dedicated scientific research park in the US, featuring more than 250 companies and 50,000 professionals within 22.5 million square feet of built-out space. The property is adjacent to Interstate 40, a main highway leading to two of North Carolina's major urban centres with Downtown Durham eight miles away and Downtown Raleigh, approximately 15 miles to the west.

The Tech Offices Portfolio is leased to 16 tenants for an overall occupancy of 96 per cent and features an 18-acre land parcel capable of accommodating up to 270,000 square feet of additional development.

GFH Financial Group, along

with its investors, acquired 95pc of the Portfolio with the remaining 5pc to be held by Global Mutual (and its affiliates).

Arcadia Management Group (Arcadia), an affiliate of Global Mutual, will act as the property manager for the portfolio.

Hisham Alrayes, CEO of GFH Financial Group said: "This venture will increase our footprint in the growing Tech office space in the US market. Expanding our partnership with leading international asset managers and property operators, we expect to build on the strong performance of these properties and, importantly, on the strong competitive advantage they enjoy."

LPOD's 'Antar' challenge continues

TDT | Manama

The Lost Paradise of Dilmun water park announced it has created a unique challenge for thrill and adrenaline rush lovers called Antar.

Antar challenge consists of four obstacles that participants run in a race to win valuable prizes. More than 5000 accepted the challenge but none yet has beaten it. The park is still in search of the bravest and fastest challenger and it's looking to add Gold for the winners this summer.

The water park has updated its website and is also offering



The lost Paradise of Dilmun

discounts for reservations online. A new slogan has also been introduced. Nonstop weekend live entertainment is available with extended timings both for

full day time users from 10 am to 11 pm and ladies' night from 6 pm to 1 am.

Summer camps booking is currently open.

Bahrain Clear requests shareholders to update KYC

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Clear yesterday requested shareholders of all listed companies to update their Know Your Customer (KYC) information in compliance with the Resolution No. (5) of the year 2015.

As of now, 79.57 per cent of shareholders, representing 28,208,869,078 shares of the listed companies on Bahrain Bourse, have been transferred to the Electronic Registry and deposited in Bahrain Clear's Central Depository System.

The total number of shareholders carrying physical certificates lacking updated Know Your Customer (KYC) information even after implementing the Electronic Registry reached 90,000 shares owned

by 82,889 shareholders owning around 7.24 billion shares with a market cap of BD 1.52 billion in comparison to the total market capitalization, which is BD 9.22 billion.

Updating personal KYC information, Bahrain Clear said, will facilitate distribution of past unclaimed dividends withheld by the listed companies.

Shareholders can update their information by communicating with Bahrain Clear and submitting shares certificates to Bahrain Clear reception desk at Bahrain Bourse - Trading Floor during working hours from Sunday to Thursday from 8:00 am to 1:30 pm or via email: csd@bahrain-clear.com or via the hotline: 17108833.

Twitter revamps website in bid to mimic mobile app



Twitter is revamping its website as part of an effort to boost its user base

San Francisco

Twitter on Monday began rolling out an overhauled version of its website, making it more similar to the mobile version of the one-to-many messaging platform.

The revamp to the Twitter page accessible on computer web browsers comes as the San Francisco-based company seeks to ramp up engagement while managing abusive content.

"We are starting to roll out a new Twitter.com -- a refreshed and updated website that is faster, easier to navigate and more personalized," the Twitter team said in an online post.

"The site has an updated look and feel that is more consistent with the Twitter you see on other devices."

An "explore" feature was added to the website, which the company expected to serve up more live video and local

"moments" based on where users are at any given time.

Twitter added "dark mode" themes and color options to allow people to personalize pages.

"Today is a big step as we continue building Twitter to best serve the people who use it every day," the company said.

"This update also gives us a much stronger foundation to build on so we can continue to bring you updated features faster than before."

While popular among political figures and celebrities, Twitter had failed to keep pace with social networks such as Facebook and Facebook-owned Instagram, which have much larger user bases.

Twitter said it would stop using its count of "monthly active users," which most recently was 330 million, and shift to "monetizable" daily active users -- 134 million in the most recent quarter.

Facebook needs 'very high standard' for Libra: Mnuchin

Washington

Facebook must meet "a very high standard" before it moves ahead with its planned digital currency Libra, US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Monday.

Mnuchin said US regulators have already expressed concerns to Facebook about the plan for a global cryptocurrency, noting that these kinds of virtual coins have in the past been associated with money laundering and illicit activities.

"Whether they're banks or non-banks, they're under the same regulatory environment," Mnuchin told reporters at the White House, adding that Facebook "will have to have a very high standard before they have access to the financial system."



Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin

Facebook last month unveiled its plans for Libra, widely regarded as a challenger to dominant global player bitcoin. Expected to launch in the first half of 2020, Libra is designed to be backed by a basket of currency assets to avoid the wild swings of bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies. Mnuchin said the US Treasury welcomes "responsible innovations" that can improve the efficiency of the financial system.



Aluminium Bahrain (Alba)'s Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) Ali Al Baqali and other Alba officials with the Executive Council Chairman of Bahrain Free Labour Unions Federation Yacoub Yousef Mohammed and other representatives yesterday at Alba premises. Commenting on this occasion, Alba's DCEO Ali Al Baqali stated: "We are pleased to have reached a common understanding and more importantly set a mechanism in place to close-out pending matters for the benefit of both Alba and the Union for now and the future. We trust that together Alba and the Bahrain Free Labour Unions Federation achieve more co-operation to work towards the goals and aspirations of the Leadership of the Kingdom of Bahrain."

Mixed earnings at large US banks



JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon

New York, United States

JPMorgan Chase reported record quarterly profits yesterday behind strong consumer businesses, but shares were volatile amid worries over expected Federal Reserve interest rate cuts on a day of mixed results by large banks.

Wells Fargo also notched higher profits, while Goldman Sachs reported a dip in earnings but still topped analyst expectations. The trio of results moved markets into the heart of second-quarter earnings season, which comes against a backdrop of uncertainty over international trade and an anticipated loosening of monetary policy, with the Fed expected to cut interest rates later this month.

Bank profits have been boost-

ed the last few years from a series of interest rate hikes. But the Fed has pivoted away from that stance and is now expected to cut interest rates as soon as this month.

Lower interest rates are generally viewed as a drag for large banks because it reduces the net interest income of financial companies -- the difference between the interest rates it charges consumers for loans and the interest it must pay for deposits. At JPMorgan, key areas of strength included consumer banking, where it scored from higher net interest income. JPMorgan also generated increased revenues connected to the credit card business and higher auto loans and lease originations.

Net profit came in at \$9.7 billion, up 16.1 per cent and a com-



Wells Fargo Interim chief executive Allen Parker

Higher profits at Wells

Revenues were up 4.1pc to \$29.6 billion.

Chief executive Jamie Dimon said uncertainty about issues such as trade and monetary policy is "a constant" while geopolitical tensions "may be a little bit higher now than normal," but added that "the consumer in the United States is doing fine" and that economic conditions are solid in other key markets.

"So I wouldn't get too pessimistic yet," Dimon said.

But shares were choppy after the report, with analysts pointing to the bank's forecast for \$57.5 billion in 2019 net interest income, down from the prior \$58 billion forecast.

Bank executives said they anticipate up to three interest rate cuts this year.



Goldman Sachs chief executive David Solomon

Goldman trading hit

the bank a couple of years ago. Lingered skepticism of the bank prompted the resignation in March of chief executive Tim Sloan.

Interim chief executive Allen Parker said he had no information about the selection of a new CEO and that the board was overseeing the process. Asked if he was under contention, Parker said he had no reason to think the board had shifted from its stated aim to pick an outsider to lead the bank.

At Goldman Sachs, net income was \$2.2 billion, down 6.4pc from the year-ago period. Revenues dropped 1.8pc to \$9.5 billion.

Goldman trading hit

Goldman suffered from a decline in fixed income, currency

and commodity trading, a weakness at other large banks.

Financial advisory revenues also fell due to lower merger and acquisition activity compared with the year-ago period. Debt underwriting revenue also fell.

"We're encouraged by the results for the first half of the year as we continue to invest in new businesses and growth to serve a broader array of clients," chief executive David Solomon said in a statement.

"Given the strength of our client franchise, we are well positioned to benefit from a growing global economy."

Shares in JPMorgan rose 0.6pc to \$114.61 in midday trading. Wells Fargo dropped 2.4pc to \$45.58, while Goldman Sachs added 0.8pc, rising to \$213.25

European stock markets advance, pound slumps

London, United Kingdom

European stock markets pushed higher yesterday, while the pound hit the lowest level versus the dollar in more than two years on Brexit deadlock.

Wall Street stocks, which had set new records on Monday as an expected Fed interest rate cut continued to fuel optimism, mostly slipped as the earnings season entered full swing.

The pause in the Wall Street rally came despite top banks JPMorgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, and Wells Fargo beating earnings expectations, as did consumer and medical goods firm Johnson & Johnson for second quarter earnings.

Key figures around 1530 GMT

London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.6pc at 7,577.20 points (close)
Frankfurt - DAX 30:	▲ 0.4pc at 12,387.34 (close)
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ 0.7pc at 5,614.38 (close)
EURO STOXX 50:	▲ 0.5pc at 3,519.70
New York - Dow:	▲ less than 0.1pc at 27,362.92
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 0.7pc at 21,535.25 (close)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng:	▲ 0.2pc at 28,619.62 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 0.2pc at 2,937.62 (close)
Pound/dollar:	▼ at \$1.2406 from \$1.2516 at 2100 GMT
Euro/pound:	▲ at 90.41 pence from 89.95 pence
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.1216 from \$1.1258
Dollar/yen:	▲ at 108.28 yen from 107.87 yen
Brent North Sea crude:	▲ 20 cents at \$66.68 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▼ five cents at \$59.53 per barrel

"The takeaway from the subdued response to the earnings news is that the good earnings news was already priced in," said market analyst Patrick O'Hare at Briefing.com.

He pointed to a drop in JP Morgan's shares in pre-market trading as the bank cut its forecast for net interest income -- the difference between the interest rates it charges consumers for loans and the interest it must pay for deposits.

"The post-report weakness in an industry behemoth like JPMorgan Chase has taken some wind out of the market's sails," said O'Hare.

The blue-chip Dow was marginally higher in late morning

trading, nearly breaking the 27,400 level for the first time. But both the broader S&P 500 and tech-heaving Nasdaq Composite dipped.

Corporate profits are expected to be broadly lower owing largely to a global slowdown and trade war between the US and China.

A Chinese official on Tuesday rejected claims from US President Donald Trump that Beijing is being forced to make a trade deal because of its slowing economy, as the two sides prepare for more talks.

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Monday said that top American and Chinese trade negotiators were due to speak by

telephone in the coming days, but no face-to-face talks have been scheduled yet.

Asian equities closed mixed, with investors taking a breather after a recent rally.

European shares ended the day higher as they got a boost as the euro and pound fell against the dollar, which favours exports.

The pound slumped to \$1.2397, the lowest level since April 2017, as Brexit worries also weighed on the unit.

The pound slid despite official data showing that Britain's unemployment rate at 3.8 per cent in April, the lowest level since 1974.



Hyundai honoured best sales staff from all its distributors worldwide with a trip to Seoul, Korea. The trip from 19 to 22 nd of March 2019 was held under the title 'Global Top Sales Consultant Club 2019'. Shadi Kfoury and Mohammed Saeed were selected from Hyundai Bahrain - First Motors.

CAMPUS



Education Minister Dr. Majid Al Nuaimi (C) presents a souvenir to British Ambassador Simon Martin (2nd L) on the occasion of the end of his tenure as Ambassador of the United Kingdom. The Minister praised the efforts made by the Ambassador during his work to develop cooperation in the field of education

AGU professor calls for reconsideration of Ibn Khaldun's theories

TDT | Manama

Urban Planning Professor at the Arabian Gulf University (AGU) Dr. Ahmed El Kholei recently stated that the thesis presented by leading Arab historian and philosopher Ibn Khaldun around six centuries ago are considered as an advanced vision in urban planning as they are based on cultural specificities of Arab and Islamic societies.



Dr. Ahmed El Kholei

Dr. El Kholei mentioned this in a scholarly article he prepared and was published by the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. He highlighted that innovation is not just about discovering something new, but it may also be a re-use of what exists.

"This article paper attempts to re-understand Ibn Khaldun's treatises in the field of urban science because it is based on the cultural specificities of Arab and Islamic societies, contrary to the proposals of the United Nations and the World Bank; which

considers a general formula for all peoples. Ibn Khaldun's views did not receive the appropriate appreciation due to the weakness of the Western translations, which dealt with his ideas and extracted many of their vocabulary from their context," he explained.

Dr. El Kholei recommended in his scholarly article to adopt the theories of Ibn Khaldun as a foundation to develop and implement urban plans and to support the development of a sense of citizenship, with a view to achieve sustainable urban development.

Pakistan School excel in SSC II

TDT | Manama

Students of Pakistan School have again maintained consistency by clinching excellent results in the Federal Board Result of SSC II 2019 following the historical trend that has been set for the last three years.

The results almost like that of the last year have once again proved the exemplary academic planning and goal setting of all the stake holders.

This is the outcome of the constant support of the parents, relentless hard work of our beloved students, dedicated, focused and professional teaching of teachers, comprehensive academic planning of the Principal Attiq ur Rehman and the incessant support and guidance of the Chairman Board of Management, Sami ur Rehman.

22 Students clinched 'A+' positions, with an equal number of 22 fetching 'A' grades followed by 30 students with 'B' grades.

Since, day one of the start of the academic session, the Principal, Pakistan School Attiq-ur-Rehman took solid steps for the advanced and comprehensive preparation aimed at achieving the best results in the board exams.

Additional coaching to the weak students, extensive revision of the syllabus, solving more than 20 past question papers, exam oriented teaching strategies with a number of tests at frequent intervals and many

parent- teacher meetings had been arranged to make sure the academic progress of the students.

An award ceremony was arranged on 14 July 2019 in the school premises at Isa Town to honour the achievements of the students. Rana Rashid was the Chief Guest alongside other guests, the Chairman BOM, Members BOM, other community members, teachers, and parents attended the ceremony.



Students during an award ceremony to honour their achievements

MOW receives 63 Interns



Interns during a meeting prior to their training

TDT | Manama

Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs & Urban Planning has recently received 63 Interns from University of Bahrain as well as from private universities as part of their summer course needs, which counts towards their total credit.

The students are from different majors, ranging across engineering, accounting, media, and chemistry.

The Ministry held an infor-

mational meeting, in which specialists of the HR department have presented a brief and general explanation to the interns about the general aim of the summer training project that the MOW is aiming for.

They also focused on the communal responsibility of the ministry in its mutual cooperation with universities and institutes to qualify Bahraini trainees for the labour market as they are the future of the work environment.

RCSI delegates meet in Dublin

TDT | Manama

A delegation from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland - Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain) travelled to Dublin in Ireland for the eighth annual RCSI International Education Forum (IEF).

Among the attendees were colleagues from RCSI campuses in Bahrain, Dublin and Malaysia, who came together to discuss innovations and challenges within shared programmes.

This year's event, which included a half-day 'Ed-i-Med' symposium, was held at RCSI's headquarters in Dublin City Centre and focused on the theme of 'Transforming Healthcare Education Project (THEP).'

Since its inception in 2012, the IEF has become an integral component of RCSI's curriculum



RCSI delegates after the event

and assessment development, as it seeks to enhance initiatives across its international campuses.

The week-long event featured presentations, keynote speech-

es and interactive workshops, along with a demonstration of latest virtual reality technology.

The conference included open sessions focused on faculty-wide strategies; curriculum;

assessments and planning, with international experts and guests invited to engage with faculty to share their experiences and perspectives and facilitate discussion.

Royal University for Women organizes open day

TDT | Manama

Royal University for Women is having an Open Day for high school graduates and their parents on Thursday, July 18th. This event will take place in the university campus in West Riffa from 10 am till 4 pm, where it will gather all students who are interested to know about the university to discover the campus, colleges, facilities provided and meet with faculty in person.

The Acting President of the Royal University for Women, Dr. David Stewart said, "This event comes as part of the uni-

versity's mission in providing academic guidance for the prospective students who are willing to study in this university. This opportunity allows them to meet with the academic staff, tour the campus and know about the achievements of the university including the first private university to obtain accreditation from the Higher Education Council in the Kingdom of Bahrain, BQA accreditation in 2nd Institutional review and having International Accreditation Service for Schools, Colleges and Universities in the UK (ASIC)."

celebs



Melissa Benoist to make her directorial debut with 'Supergirl' season 5

Los Angeles

"Supergirl" star Melissa Benoist is set to make her directorial debut with the 17th episode of season five.

The 30-year-old actor, who has been essaying the titular character in the CBS/CW DC Comics-based superhero drama series since 2015, said she always wanted to direct an episode in the show, but things could not materialise due to "scheduling conflicts".

"I've been wanting to direct since season 3, but couldn't last year because of scheduling conflicts, so David Harewood did it first, Benoist told Entertainment Weekly.

"I just felt really drawn to it for a couple of seasons now, just because you know the show so well, and you get to know the character, and the world, and the tone of the show so well that you can't help but envision certain scenes in a certain way. I want to play with that," she added.

Melissa Benoist



Damien Chazelle in early talks with Emma Stone, Brad Pitt for his next 'Babylon'

Los Angeles

Damien Chazelle is working on his next feature film "Babylon" and the filmmaker wants to reunite with his "La La Land" star Emma Stone for the project. The makers are also in talks with Brad Pitt to join the film, which will be his second Hollywood-set period drama after upcoming "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood".

According to Deadline, Chazelle has penned the screenplay and is attached to direct the movie.

As per sources neither Stone nor Pitt has officially boarded the project.

Marc Platt, who produced "La La Land", is one of the producers on "Babylon" along with Olivia Hamilton, Matthew Plouffe and Toby Maguire.

Emma Stone

Exact plot details are currently under wraps, but the story is said to be set during the movie industry's transition from silent films to talkies.

Chazelle wants to cast Stone in the role of Clara Bow, the early sex symbol and box office star of the movie industry.

The filmmaker is right now busy with his Netflix series "The Eddy", while Stone is fresh out of the success of Yorgos Lanthimos' "The Favourite" and TV series "Maniac".

Brad Pitt, Damien Chazelle



Latin musician Maluma in talks to star opposite Jennifer Lopez in 'Marry Me'

Los Angeles

Jennifer Lopez

Latin music superstar Maluma is in negotiations to feature alongside pop diva Jennifer Lopez and Owen Wilson in romantic comedy "Marry Me".

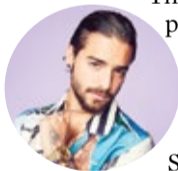
If things work out, the Colombian-born singer, whose real name is Juan Luis Londono Arias, will play the fiance to Lopez's pop star in the film, reported Entertainment Weekly.

The story revolves around a pop superstar (Lopez) who, moments before marrying her rock-star fiance at Madison Square Garden, finds out he was cheating with her assistant and melts down onstage. She picks a random math teacher (Wilson) out of the crowd to marry instead.

Directed by Kat Coiro, the film is based on a graphic novel by Bobby Crosby.

John Rogers and Tami Sagher have adapted the screenplay with a rewrite by Harper Dill.

Maluma became a global sensation after collaborating with Madonna for the song "Medellin", the debut single off her latest studio album, 'Madame X'.



Maluma

Lea Michele boards ABC's 'Same Time, Next Christmas' movie

Los Angeles

Lea Michele

Actor Lea Michele is set to star in ABC's Christmas movie titled "Same Time, Next Christmas".

In the movie, the "Glee" alum will play Olivia Henderson, a young woman who meets her childhood sweetheart during her family's annual Christmas visit to Hawaii.

After being separated by distance and time, the duo reunite at the same Hawaii resort years later and the sparks fly, but the circumstances force them to stay apart.

"This holiday season holds special importance to me as I get to celebrate both my role in this film and my first-ever holiday album. I'm honored to return to ABC with this movie event, and I am excited to share the holidays with everyone," Michele said in a statement to Variety.

"Same Time, Next Christmas" is scheduled to air in December this year.



Hugh Grant would kill social media if he had the option

Los Angeles

Hollywood star Hugh Grant says the triumph of technology over democracy is "terrifying" and if he had the option, he would just pull the plug on social media.

Grant has been active in UK's press reform initiative with his Hacked Off campaign after it came to light that he was among the celebrities whose phones were hacked by a prominent British tabloid for gossip.



Hugh Grant

Austin Butler to play Elvis Presley in Baz Luhrmann's biopic

Los Angeles

Director Baz Luhrmann has roped in actor Austin Butler to play music legend Elvis Presley in a biopic for Warner Bros.

Hollywood veteran Tom Hanks is playing Presley's manager, Colonel Tom Parker, in the movie and the studio decided to cast Butler after they auditioned a few actors in full hair and make-up last month.

"I knew I couldn't make this film if the casting wasn't absolutely right, and we searched thoroughly for an actor with the ability to evoke the singular natural movement and vocal qualities of this peerless star, but also the inner vulnerability of the artist, Luhrmann said in a statement.



Austin Butler

Oliver to return in new role for 'The Haunting of Hill House' second chapter

Los Angeles

Oliver Jackson-Cohen, star of "The Haunting of Hill House", has joined the second season of the show.

Titled, "The Haunting of Bly Manor", the sophomore season of the Netflix horror anthology series, will feature Jackson-Cohen as a "charming young man" named Peter, reported Variety.

In "The Haunting of Hill House", he played Luke Crain, the older twin of Victoria Pedretti's character Nell, who struggles with addiction and purging the memories of Hill House from his mind.



Oliver Jackson-Cohen

Hilary Duff's fiance Matthew Koma thinks he resembles Tom Selleck

Los Angeles

Los Angeles



Hilary Duff recently shared a family photo on social media and her fiance Matthew Koma thinks he looks like Tom Selleck in the picture.

On Monday, the 'Lizzie McGuire' actor shared a family photo on Instagram featuring her fiance and her two kids, 7-year-old Luca Cruz, which she shares with ex-husband Mike Comrie, and her newborn daughter banks.

The picture shows Duff holding her daughter in her arms, while her son and Koma sit on either side of her.

"Morning gang," the actor captioned the picture. Sporting a mustache instead of his usual scruff Koma looks unrecognizable in the picture. Realising the same the American singer-songwriter took a jibe at his own look and commented, "Where'd you meet Tom Selleck," referring to the popular 'Magnum, P.I.' and 'Midway' actor.



Tom Selleck



Greta Gerwig, Noah Baumbach to co-write Margot Robbie's 'Barbie'

Los Angeles

Writer-director Greta Gerwig and Noah Baumbach are co-writing the long-awaited "Barbie" movie.

Margot Robbie will star in and produce the project via her LuckyChap banner, reported Variety.

The "Barbie" movie has been

in the works since last year. The project was earlier set up at Sony, and had first Amy Schumer then Anne Hathaway attached to star with Alethea Jones directing.

The project later moved to Warner Bros where Patty Jenkins was being considered as the helmer, but no formal announcement was made by the studio.

SPORTS

sports

Arsenal open US tour with win

Arsenal began their preseason tour with 3-0 friendly win in Colorado

AFP | Los Angeles

Brazilian Gabriel Martinelli scored in his Arsenal debut Monday as the English Premier League club launched their pre-season tour of the United States with a 3-0 friendly win over the Colorado Rapids.

Bukayo Saka and James Olayinka also scored for the Gunners, who cruised to the victory at Dick's Sporting Goods Park in suburban Denver.

Martinelli, the 18-year-old forward signed from Ituano on July 2, was given a surprise start in attack by Unai Emery and sent an early chance wide.

Saka, 17, was an energetic presence and put Arsenal up 1-0 in the 13th minute as he collected a through-ball from Eddie Nketiah.

Another teenager -- 18-year-old Olayinka -- doubled the score in the 29th, seizing a stray pass from defence and racing in to fire into the top left corner of the net.

Martinelli, having missed his early chance, capped the scoring in the 61st when he slotted home



Eddie Nketiah of Arsenal takes on Kellyn Acosta of Colorado

a cross from close range.

The Rapids, in the midst of the Major League Soccer season, fielded a mostly reserve side that featured several players

from the lower-rung Colorado Springs Switchbacks.

Arsenal, too, started a reserve team as they begin their build up to the Premier League season

after again failing to secure a Champions League berth.

The tour hasn't started without controversy. Captain Laurent Koscielny refused to travel



Arsenal started a reserve team as they begin their build up to the Premier League season after again failing to secure a Champions League berth

to the US, and a group of influential Arsenal supporters' organisations published a statement on Monday hitting out at Stan Kroenke's "passive ownership".

Under a hashtag "WeCareDo You" the statement decried a "soulless" atmosphere at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium and a lack of transfer strategy.

Kroenke, who began investing in the club in 2007 through his company Kroenke Sports Enterprises and took full ownership in 2018, also owns the Rapids as well as the NFL's Los Angeles Rams.

Brazil government delegates show appreciation to Shaikh Khalid

TDT | Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation has been a key player in Brazil's MMA community since the Bahraini promotion first landed in the country, more than two years ago. Since then, BRAVE CF has elevated that market and has given opportunities to dozens of Brazilian fighters to grow on an international platform. During the Brazilian government delegation visit, they showed their appreciation for the efforts of BRAVE CF.

The delegates pointed out that BRAVE Combat Federation has made a huge impact in the country and thanked HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa for the interest shown by the promotion in reviving the mixed martial arts scene in the country.

The delegates sent their appreciation from Brazil president Jair Bolsonaro.

Marcos Ferraz and Thiago Jose Zanini Godinho, Special Advisor of Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Tourism of Brazil, travelled to Bahrain to sign a new deal between BRAVE CF and Brazil, and to discuss possible cooperations through BRAVE CF to elevate both countries in the fields of tourism and sports.

Bahrain's fans to enjoy packed schedule of FIVB U21 Worlds



Action from Bahrain's friendly match with Iran played on Monday night

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain's volleyball fans are in for a special treat this weekend as a packed three days of matches are set to take place in the preliminary round of the FIVB Volleyball Men's U21 World Championship 2019.

Eight games are scheduled for each day of the opening phase, beginning on Thursday, July 18, at two of the indoor arenas at Shaikh Isa Sports City in Riffa.

The first pair of contests are scheduled to get underway at 11.30am, while each day's final clashes begin no earlier than 7pm.

Fans are invited to attend all the fixtures and cheer on their favourite teams. Entrance is free of charge.

In the preliminary round, the 16 participating under-21 national teams have been

divided into four groups of four. Pool A consists of China, Morocco, Puerto Rico and hosts Bahrain, while Pool B is composed of Cuba, Argentina, Egypt and Korea. Pool C includes Russia, Iran, the Czech Republic and Tunisia, while Pool D features Italy, Canada, Brazil and Poland, who are the defending champions.

On Thursday, action begins with Cuba taking on Korea and Iran facing Tunisia. They will be followed at 2pm by Argentina playing Egypt and Russia battling the Czech Republic.

At 4.30pm, Morocco and China play in one game while Poland and Brazil go head to head in the other. That then leads to the day's final two contests between Bahrain and Puerto Rico, and between Italy and Canada.

The preliminaries continue until Saturday, July 20.

Shoukat CC lift NHSC trophy



Players and officials after the final match

TDT | Manama

In a thrilling encounter Shoukat CC defeated Jai Karnataka by one wicket to lift the prestigious Indian Club NHSC trophy 2019.

Chasing 39 runs in the final of the 7 a side softball cricket tournament, Shoukat crossed the mark in 5.5 overs with a wicket spare.

Man of the final Zahid (9 not out, 7 balls, 1x4) hit a boundary to seal the match for his side. Opener Muneeb (10) gave winning team a good start.

Batting 1st Jai Karnataka gathered a good score of 38 for 2 wickets in 6 overs. Openers Arun Shetty 18*(16b, 1x6) & Sunil 15(15b, 1x6) played well.

In the earlier semifinal matches, Shoukat CC defeated

Physio Zone by 6 runs while Jai Karnataka won against Super Tools, Fire & Safety by 11 runs

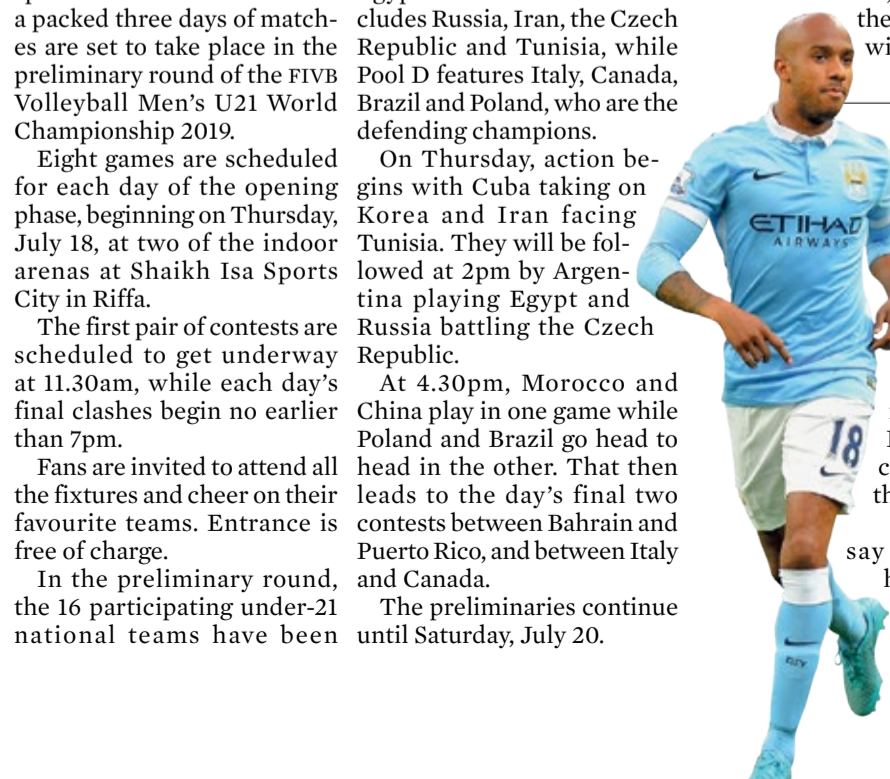
Individual prizes:

Best Batsman: Arun Shetty (Jai Karnataka)

Best Bowler: Muneeb (Shoukat CC)

Man of the Final: Zahid (Shoukat CC)

Man of the series: Muneeb (Shoukat CC)



Everton sign midfielder Delph from Man City

AFP | Liverpool

Everton said on Monday that they have signed England midfielder Fabian Delph from Manchester City on a three-year deal.

Everton did not say how much they had paid for the 29-year-old England international.

al, who joined City from Aston Villa in 2015.

Delph played 89 games for City, winning two Premier League medals. He also has 20 England caps.

"When I look to bring a new player into our squad, the first thing I look for above all the other things is quality and Fabian is a player with high quality," Everton manager Marco Silva told the club web site.

"But what they can bring to our dressing room is also im-

portant."

The site also quoted Delph. "Every time I have played against Everton, whether it was home or away, straight away the first thing that comes to mind when you see the fans is passion," he said.

"You are always going to hear Evertonians and I'm excited to play at home and hear them when I am playing."

"Hopefully we can push together, fans and players, to do something special."

“When I look to bring a new player into our squad, the first thing I look for above all the other things is quality and Fabian is a player with high quality”

MARCO SILVA

N. Zealand coach wants rules review

● New Zealand coach Gary Stead calls for Cricket World Cup's rules to be overhauled after 'hollow' World Cup final

● England were handed victory because they had a superior boundary count

AFP | Wellington

New Zealand coach Gary Stead has called for the Cricket World Cup's rules to be overhauled, labelling the showpiece final "hollow" after England defeated the Black Caps on a technicality.

The teams could not be separated at the end of both regular play and a Super Over shootout, so England were handed victory because they had a superior boundary count.

"It's a very, very hollow feeling that you can play 100 overs and score the same amount of runs and still lose the game, but that's the technicalities of sport," Stead told reporters in remarks released by New Zealand Cricket yesterday.

He said such a thrilling match, which has been hailed by many experts as the greatest one-day game in history, deserved a better way to determine the result.

"There's going to be many things they look at over the whole tournament -- I'm sure when they were writing the rules they never expected a World Cup final to happen like that," he said.

"I'm sure it'll be reviewed (and) there's many different ways that they'll probably explore."

Stead shrugged off suggestions England had been mistakenly handed an extra run after a throw from a fielder hit the bat of a diving Ben Stokes' and deflected to the boundary in the



New Zealand's Martin Guptill (C) is assisted by teammates and England's Chris Woakes (R)

final over of regular play.

England were awarded six runs but former umpire Simon Taufel said they should only have got five as the batsmen had not crossed for their second run when the throw was made.

"I didn't actually know that," Stead said. "But at the end of the day the umpires are there to rule."

"They're human as well, like players, and sometimes there's a mistake but that's just the human aspect of sport."

'We didn't lose'

Skipper Kane Williamson pointed out his team was not defeated on the pitch, saying it instead fell victim to "fine print" in the rules.

He said that was a shame but the New Zealanders had signed up to the rules that governed the tournament.

"At the end of the day nothing separated us, no one lost the final, but there was a crowned winner and there it is," he told Newstalk ZB.

The New Zealand captain and his teammates have been widely

There's going to be many things they look at over the whole tournament -- I'm sure when they were writing the rules they never expected a World Cup final to happen like that. I'm sure it'll be reviewed (and) there's many different ways that they'll probably explore

GARY STEAD

praised for the grace with which they accepted the gut-wrenching defeat.

"Williamson has shown sports fans and elite athletes alike how to behave with humility, how to accept heartbreak," stuff.co.nz columnist Kevin

Norquay wrote.

"You don't need to smash your equipment, yell at the umpire, or swear at and threaten rival batsmen, even with the stress of a World Cup on your mind; this news will be foreign territory to some."

There have been calls in New Zealand to give the team a ticker-tape parade, regardless of the result.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said that was unlikely but she wanted to ensure that the players received "a heroes' welcome" when they returned to the country.

New Zealand Cricket said they were in discussions with the government about when that would take place.

"At the moment, however, with some players arriving back at different times, some not arriving back at all, and others having alternative playing commitments, it's just not practical," they said.

"Hopefully, given the interest surrounding this, we can organise something appropriate in the weeks to come."

World Cup success can spur England to Ashes glory: Root

Reuters | London

England's Cricket World Cup triumph can be the perfect launch pad to complete a memorable double by winning the Ashes series against Australia this year, test skipper Joe Root has said.

Hosts England ended a 44-year wait to win the World Cup as they beat New Zealand side on boundary count after a tied Super Over in a dramatic final on Sunday.

Shifting focus to the five-match Ashes series, which begins on Aug. 1, the 28-year-old said England were full of confidence as they bid to reclaim the urn having already achieved one of their targets.

"It's what we set out to do two or three years ago and we're halfway there," Root told reporters.

"This will give the guys confidence and we've talked about taking that forward into a series like that."

England beat Australia in the World Cup semi-finals at



England's Joe Root with the trophy during the celebrations

Edgbaston, the venue for the first Ashes test, and Root said they were looking forward to getting back there.

"The way we played against Australia in that semi-final... the guys who were involved relished it and will want a bit more: the feeling of euphoria we felt at that ground," Root added.

"To potentially be able to experience all that again is very exciting. Ashes cricket always has a different edge to it so that in itself will get everyone going."

Solskjaer confident De Gea will sign new deal soon

AFP | Perth

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said yesterday he was optimistic that goalkeeper David De Gea would sign a new deal to remain at Old Trafford as Manchester United prepared to face old rivals Leeds in Perth.

United's pre-season tour of Australia has been overshadowed speculation over the futures of several stars, including De Gea who is in the last year of his contract and has been linked with French champions Paris Saint-Germain.

The Spaniard is reportedly close to signing a new five-year deal with United worth in excess of £350,000 a

week that would make him the highest paid goalkeeper in the world.

De Gea was rested from United's pre-season opener against Perth Glory on Saturday but will line up against Leeds on Wednesday to wrap up the Red Devils' 10-day visit to the Western Australia city.

"He'll play and hopefully we can agree (on a new deal) with David, as I've said a few times," Solskjaer told reporters.

"That'll be up to David to announce when that happens, if and when."

The United boss refused to be drawn on whether Leicester City and England centre-back Harry Maguire was on his way to Old Trafford.

David De Gea



British PM May hosts victorious England cricket team

Reuters | London

British Prime Minister Theresa May hosted the World Cup-winning England cricket team in the garden of her Downing Street residence on Monday, describing their win as "one of the great sporting spectacles of our time".

England ended their 44-year wait for a first 50-overs world title by beating New Zealand in a nailbiting final Super Over on Sunday.

May, a keen cricket fan, was at the match and, after the win, posted a video clip on Twitter of herself dancing.

The prime minister, who is due to stand down next week, greeted the players in front of her residence and posed for pictures with the team and the



England's Eoin Morgan and Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May lift the trophy as they pose with the team

trophy. "When the odds were against you in the biggest game of your lives, you simply and stubbornly refused to lose. It is that deter-

mination, that character, that has made you world champions. But, more than that, you have made history," May told the players during the drinks reception,

according to remarks released by her office.

"You have helped the nation fall in love with cricket once again," she said, adding that

the match was "a final for the ages".

Since being unceremoniously dumped out of the 2015 edition of the tournament in Australia,

the England side have reinvented themselves as one-day cricket specialists and had headed into the World Cup as overwhelming favourites.