

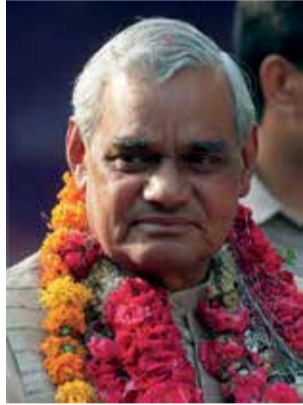
THE DAILY tribune



Halep under pressure as rain halts play **20** SPORTS

WORLD **13** Gunmen attack Kabul

Former Indian PM Vajpayee dead at 93



Atal Behari Vajpayee

New Delhi, India

Three-time Indian prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee died yesterday, sparking tributes from across the political spectrum as current leader Narendra Modi mourned the "irreplaceable loss" of the respected statesman.

The 93-year-old had battled poor health for years but his condition deteriorated sharply in recent days, with doctors placing him on life support.

The sudden turn sparked a flurry of visits from top dignitaries, including Modi, who credited Vajpayee with laying the foundations for the meteoric rise of the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that rules India today. "Atal Ji's passing away is a personal and irreplaceable loss for me," Modi said in a tweet, using a Hindi-language honorific.

Vajpayee was being treated at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi, where he was admitted nine weeks ago.

As a mark of respect, state mourning will be observed by the Government of India from August 16 to 22, said Embassy of Bahrain India in a statement to Tribune.

A condolence book will be kept open by the Embassy on Sunday and Monday from 1000 hrs to 16000 hrs.

India warns of 'extremely grave' crisis as flood toll hits 106

AFP | Kochi, India

Hundreds of troops led a desperate operation to rescue families trapped by mounting floods in India's Kerala state Thursday as the death toll reached 86 with dozens more feared perished.

Helicopters airlifted stranded victims from rooftops and dam gates were thrown open as incessant torrential rain brought fresh havoc to the southern state that is a major international tourist draw.

Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the state now faces an "extremely grave" crisis with downpours predicted to last days more. The region's main airport has been ordered closed

until August 26. The state, famed for palm-lined beaches at resorts such as Bekal and tea plantations, is always battered by the annual monsoon but this year's damage has been the worst in almost a century.

State authorities said 21 more deaths had been confirmed Thursday taking the official toll to 86. Media reports said up to 30 more people were feared dead in landslides and rivers that burst their banks, flooding scores of villages.

At least eight people were killed when an irrigation dam burst and a landslide hit three houses in the town of Nenmara, Palakkad district, authorities said. Vijayan said 80 dams have reached danger levels and ap-



Fire and Rescue personnel evacuate local residents in an inflatable boat from a flooded area at Muppathadam near Eloor in Kochi's Ernakulam district

pealed to the population not to ignore evacuation orders.

Army and coastguard helicopters, lifeboats and navy div-

ing teams have been brought to the stricken state where an extra 540 troops were deployed Thursday. More are due in com-

ing days. The army said helicopters carried out scores of rescue operations. They also dropped food and water and appealed for victims to stand in open fields or on rooftops away from trees so helicopters were not damaged during rescue efforts.

More than 60,000 people have already sought refuge in relief camps.

"At least 6,500 people are stranded in different parts of Kerala and the situation in three districts is particularly grim," a state disaster management official said. Floods have also hit other states, including Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, where eight people at a popular picnic spot were swept away by a sudden surge of water. (See Page 12)

Saudi foils terror plot

- The "extremist" was heavily armed
- Police arrested him after a gunfight
- No one was injured

AFP, National | Riyadh

Saudi forces have arrested a heavily armed "extremist" after wounding him in an exchange of gunfire in the kingdom's central heartland, the interior ministry said early yesterday.

The man had embraced the Islamic State group's "ideology" and was found to be in possession of a machine gun, a pistol and multiple rounds of ammunition, the ministry said in a statement.

The man in Al-Bukhariya city was also wearing what appeared to be an explosives-laden belt, state-run Al-Ekhabriya television reported.

In response, the police shot injured the suspect, the ministry added.

No passerby or security per-



Picture courtesy of ABNA

sonnel were wounded in the pre-dawn arrest in the north central city of Al Bukayriyah.

The incident comes as the kingdom prepares to host the annual hajj pilgrimage from August 19-24.

The kingdom has seen numerous attacks in recent years by extremist groups, including Al Qaeda and ISIS, against security forces.

Last year, Saudi Arabia launched the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition, which gathered defence min-

isters and leading security officials from 41 countries to focus on counter-terrorism co-operation. The Pan-Islamic coalition is tasked with co-ordinating individual efforts to fight terrorism. A Counter Terrorism Centre in Riyadh has been established as its operational arm.

In a visit to the UK in March, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman highlighted the similarities between religious extremists and terrorists in an interview with British newspaper The Telegraph.

The incident comes as the Kingdom prepares to host the annual hajj pilgrimage from August 19-24

"The extremists and the terrorists are linked through spreading their agenda," the prince said in the interview in Riyadh. "We need to work together to promote moderate Islam".

"We want to fight terrorism and we want to fight extremism because we need to build stability in the Middle East," he told the newspaper. "The British and Saudi people, along with the rest of the world, will be much safer if [Britain has] a strong relationship with Saudi Arabia".

HM King appoints Finance Minister as chairman of GOSI

TDT | Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa issued Decree 42/2018 stipulating the structuring of the General Organization for Social Insurance (GOSI) board of directors.

HM the King appointed Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance as Chairman of GOSI.

Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs and Endowments, Ghanim bin Fadhul Al Buainain, Parliament Affairs Minister and Jameel bin Mohammed Ali Humaidan, Labour and Social Development Minister are also appointed to the board representing government.

Shaikh Nawaf bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa, CEO of Electricity and Water Authority, Ahmed Zayed Al Zayed, Chairman of Civil Service Bureau and Mohammed Ali Al Qaed, CEO of the Information and eGovernment Authority will represent government employees. (Continued on page 2)

Boost to tourism

Roman-era tombs discovered in Palestinian village

Idna, Palestinian Territories

A set of Roman-era tombs dating back some 2,000 years have been discovered near the Palestinian city of Hebron in the occupied West Bank during road works, an official said yesterday.

The cemetery dating to the first century AD, when the region was under Roman rule, was found in the village of Idna in the southern West Bank around two weeks ago.



Taleb Jubran, director of the department of tourism and antiquities in Hebron, points to a Roman-era burial site discovered near the West Bank city of Hebron

It was discovered during road work in mountainous terrain in the area, said Taleb Jubran, director of the department of tourism and antiquities in Hebron.

Bones, pottery and some 32 tombs set into stone were found. It was clear to archaeologists that artifacts had been stolen from the site before it was officially discovered, said Jubran.

"This discovery is very important for us to study it and to

preserve it," Jubran said. The tombs were set out over a space of some 50 metres.

Officials also hoped to turn the site into a tourist attraction, while further study of it would continue to turn up details of what was found and its importance, he said.

A large number of remains from the Roman era can be found and visited in Israel and the Palestinian territories as well as the region as a whole.



02 Bahraini pilgrim dies in Mecca

03 Zallaq shown red card

05 Behind the Lens



King announces appointments

Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa issued a Decree yesterday appointing Brigadier Abdulla Hamad Al Kubaisi as General Director for Inspection and Customs Security in the rank of assistant undersecretary in the ministry.

Separately, HM the King also amending some provisions of Law Decree 19/1976 regarding insignia. The law decree stipulated the creation of a new National Action Insignia next to the BDF Insignia in addition to prescribed State Insignia as per Article 1 of Law Decree 19/1976.

The decree stipulates that National Action Insignia be granted to anyone who have rendered useful services in the homeland's interest.

HM the King issues decree structuring GOSI board

Continued from page 1

Other members on the board of directors of GOSI as per His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's Decree include:

Representing private sector employees:

- Khalid Mohammed Najibi, First Vice-Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI)

Aaref Ahmed Hejres, Finance Secretary of BCCI

- Sonia Mohammed Janahi, member of Directors' Board of BCCI

- Souad Mohammed Mubarak, Assistant Secretary-General for Worker Women and Child, at the General Federation of Workers Trade Unions in Bahrain (GFWTUB)

- Ausama Salman Hassan Mohammed, Secretary of GFWTUB

- Meshaal Ali Al Helou, IT Director in Arcapita Group.

Expert members

- Mohamed Ibrahim Al Bastaki

- Dr. Malallah Jaafar Al Hammadi

Updating ID cards

TDT | Manama

The Information & eGovernment Authority (IGA) announced that from 26th August 2018, booking appointments to update the Identity Cards information - at Isa Town branch - will only be conducted online.

Previously applied at the Identity Card Center in Muharrag branch, this mechanism has proved successful and effective in organizing and accelerating transactions.

To book online appointments, visit National Portal at bahrain.bh and enter the 'Appointments Booking and Enquiry' eService accessible under the Identity Card Services. For more information, visit the National Suggestions & Complaints App 'Tawasul' available on the eGovernment Apps Store at bahrain.bh/apps.



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa receiving at Al-Safriya Palace, left, Royal Guard Commander Brigadier His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, who introduced Lieutenant Abdulla Al-Sayyed Ateya, who graduated at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, in the UK, with merit. Lieut. Ateya was conferred the Sword of Honour Award, the Award of Military and Academic Excellence and the Award of Sport Excellence, in an unprecedented achievement in the history of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Separately, HM the King received a number of members of Al Nuaim tribe, right, and praised their key role in the national march. HM King talked about the establishment of the state of Al Khalifa in Al Zubarah and their leadership of the Qatar Peninsula since 1762, noting the allegiance of the tribes of the peninsula to Al Khalifa



Bahraini pilgrim dies in Mecca

- Death occurred during sleep after performing Umrah

- 90 Bahraini and Gulf pilgrims visited the Bahrain Medical Clinic

- All left the clinic, one transferred to hospital

- 5625 pilgrims visited the Holy Lands

- Pilgrims are preparing to leave from Mecca to Mina

TDT | Manama

Thamer Taifoor

A 44-year-old Bahraini pilgrim from "Alajiyad wa Alresala" campaign died in Mecca yesterday.

The preliminary examination, Khalid Almalood, Secretary-general of the Bahrain Hajj Mission said, carried out by the medical committee of the Bahraini mission points to natural causes. Saudi authorities are yet to announce the cause of death.

Almalood said the mishap occurred when the pilgrim returned to the hotel after completing Umrah. The death reportedly occurred in sleep.

Bahraini consulate in Jeddah will complete procedures for burial in Mecca or in Bahrain, according to the wishes of the deceased's family.

Mission's staff consisting of Secretary-General, Chairman of the Medical Committee, Chair-



The 70-year-old Bahraini who suffered a health problem

man of the Security Committee and Chairman of the Evaluation and Follow-up Committee are closely following the situation, said Almalood.

Three more admitted

Three other Bahraini pilgrims were also admitted to hospitals in the Holy Land.

A seventy-year-old Bahraini pilgrim suffered a heart attack and was transferred to Alnoor Specialist Hospital.

The head of "Almawaseem" campaign, Jassim Abel, underwent a minor surgery and has returned to Bahrain. He will travel back to the Holy Lands to complete the rituals of Hajj.

One of the administrators had a car accident and suffered a minor head injury. He left the hospital to complete rituals of Hajj with his campaign.

Dr Ibrahim Obaid, head of the Medical Committee of the Hajj Mission in Bahrain, said that



More than 1.5 million pilgrims arrived to perform Hajj this year

the clinic of Bahrain in Mecca treated about 90 cases of Bahraini and Gulf pilgrims during the three days since its opening on Sunday.

"The cases reviewed by the clinic were minor and varied between influenza, high fever and sore throat as well as pain in the

muscles and joints in addition to the high level of diabetes and pressure in some patients," said Dr Obaid.

All the patients left the clinic except for the seventy-year-old patient who had a heart attack.

According to an official statement, a total of 5625 Bahraini

pilgrims registered for Hajj arrived in Bahrain yesterday.

Pilgrims who joined the pilgrimage campaigns arrived in Mecca by air and the majority of pilgrims performed (Umrah).

The Hajj

Pilgrims are preparing to walk on foot or by bus from Mecca to Mina to start the Hajj and spend the day of "Altarwiya" (The day of fetching water and quenching the thirst) there on Sunday, Eighth of Dhu al-Hijjah in preparation for the morning of Monday (the ninth of Dhu al-Hijjah, August 20 next to Arafat.

The Statistical Commission of Saudi Arabia, in the statistical calendar for the pilgrimage season 1439 Hijri, said more than 32,579 individuals were deployed for health and emergency services.

Saudi General Authority said that there are 9,216 women from the Ministry of Health, the Saudi Red Crescent Authority and the SFDA employees to provide health services to women.

The Saudi General Organization revealed that the total medical and emergency teams at the holy sites reached more than 959.

1.5 million pilgrims

Meanwhile, the General Directorate of Passports in Saudi Arabia announced that the number of pilgrims who arrived in the Kingdom to perform Hajj was about 1,486,958 million pilgrims.

The General Directorate of Passports indicated that the number of pilgrims arriving by air amounted to 1,392,928 million pilgrims, and by land 78,282 thousand pilgrims, and by sea 15,748 thousand pilgrims.

Inspiring youth



Rotary Club Sulmaniya held a regular lunch meeting at the Golden Tulip Hotel on Wednesday. Amal Kooheji presented an inspirational project that the Rotary Club of Adliya is working on for this Rotary year called "Career Tasters and 7ewar-2 new ideas for our Youth". It's a year-long project with the involvement of many parties from students to potential job employers. The idea is finding a job opportunity for young job seekers, showing them the wide range of potential jobs available

Directing Actors Workshop

TDT | Manama

Harpreet Kaur

The 7th Wave Performing Arts School is hosting its first Directing Actors Workshop today.

The workshop will be held today at 7th Wave Performing Arts School from 6:00 pm onwards.

Giulia Tuzzi, Programme Coordinator The 7th Wave Performing Arts School told **tribune**, "During this workshop, we will cover key directing actor skills, work on exercises and scenes, and both demonstrate and experience how directing decisions are made."

The workshop is led by the



jamaan

Bahraini director, Jamaan Alrowaiee. "Jamaan will teach directing actors a quick and efficient way to communicate with each other," said Tuzzi. The workshop is open to all. All participants will receive a certificate.

big story

Zallaq shown red card

The team banned from participating in the “League of Khalid Bin Hamad” for two seasons



Players in action during a game

● **Players aired verbal and racist abuse during the match**

● **Match was cancelled after things spiralled out of control**

● **Higher Organising Committee banned several players**

● **Zallaq won the third edition of the championship in 2015**

TDT | Manama

Thamer Tayfoor

Zallaq youth centre was handed down a two-season ban by the ‘Khaled bin Hamad’ football league for flouting fair play regulations.

The team was also given a 500 dinars fine by the Supreme Organising Committee of the ‘Khaled Bin Hamad’ sixth indoor football league according to item No. (17) of the league list.

Sources told the ‘Tribune’ that ban was triggered by the unfortunate incidents occurred during the match between Zallaq Youth Centre and Sanad Youth Centre during the semi-finals on 3 August 2018.

During the game, “a number of players aired verbal and racist abuses at other players which resulted in the scuffle getting out of control and in the cancellation of the game,” sources said.

Announcing the decision, the committee warned all the participating teams in stringent terms not to

repeat such unfortunate behaviour, “which is very far from the spirit of sports”.

“This sort of attitude is not familiar to the Bahraini society which is known for national unity and cohesion,” the statement said.

Several players banned

The high organising committee of ‘Khalid bin Hamad’ also banned Zallaq Youth Centre player, Ahmed Mohammed Khallaf Khashaam, permanently, and debarred him from all activities of the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs.

The committee suspended players of Sanad Youth Centre Mohammed al-Sanadi and Mohammed Ibrahim Mahdi until further notice. Goal-keeper of Sanad Youth Centre, Ali Abdul Nabi Al Khayaat, was also banned from playing, until further notice.

The committee also banned team administrator at Zallaq Youth Centre, Rizk Za’al and player Hamad Eissa until further notice.

The Sanad Youth Centre won the first quarter-finals of the indoor football championship, after beating Safra Youth Centre team by four goals to nil, in a match at Khalifa City Sports Hall.

Whilst Zallaq Youth Centre team managed to snatch the qualification after beating the Salmabad team with four goals to two.

The two teams faced each other in the past in the fourth tournament competition in 2017, and that match was ranked

as the strongest both technically and tactically. It ended with a 1-1 draw, which was decided with a penalty kick for Sanad.

The Zallaq Youth Centre team won the tournament in its third edition, in 2015, after beating Salmabad Youth Centre team with six goals against one, in the final.



This sort of attitude is not familiar to the Bahraini society, that is known for national unity and cohesion

SUPREME ORGANISING COMMITTEE OF THE ‘KHALED BIN HAMAD’

BAZAAR

AL HAWAJ

بازار الحواج

Bahrain Int. Exhibition Centre

14 to 18 August 2018

9:30 AM to 1:30 PM — 4:00 PM to 10:00 PM

ALHAWAJBH

Anchorman to learn his fate on August 28

● **The suspect used fake account to insult ex-MP**

● **Police later identified the suspect's true identity**

● **He was given a three-months jail term**

TDT | Manama

A local anchorman convicted of insulting an MP will learn the fate of his

appeal on August 28, announced the High Appeals Court.

Earlier, a court rejected a proposal to replace the defendant's jail term with social service outside the prison.

The defendant, aged 53, was sentenced to three months in prison for insulting ex MP Mohammed Khalid on his Twitter account.

At the time of registering the case, the true identity of the suspect was not revealed as police found the accounts identify as fake.

However, further investigations revealed the suspect's true identity, which resulted in jailing the anchorman.



The defendant, aged 53, was sentenced to three months in prison for insulting ex MP Mohammed Khalid on his Twitter account

He later confessed to investigators that he himself created the account to attack the MP.

However, the suspect, pleaded before the court to exchange his sentence with a manual work outside the prison which was promptly rejected.

It's worth noting that the 53-year-old defendant was earlier sentenced to two months behind bars for attacking a man in Muharraq with a broken bottle for publishing his image on Instagram and he deemed this act as defamatory.

In this case, however, the judge accepted his request to replace his jail sentence with a manual work.

Cap helps police arrest rioter

TDT | Manama

A cap helped police officers to identify and arrest a suspect who participated in a riot that broke out in Karanah, it was revealed.

According to court files, the cap was worn by the suspect during the riot to conceal his identity.

However, when the suspect tried to flee, the cap fell down which was later retrieved by the police from the crime scene.

The suspect, who is a teenager, according to police, organised the riot along with others to disrupt normal life in the locality.

Two other suspects, also teenagers, were arrested in connection with the case as

confessed by the suspect.

The suspect confessed during interrogations that their plan was to burn tyres on the Budaiya Highway, after meeting near a graveyard in Karanah.

"We used three tyres and tree branches for the purpose. I covered my head with a cap, but it fell down when we tried to flee from the scene," he told prosecutors.

He was arrested two days after the incident.

The trio have been charged with gathering illegally, disturbing public order and possessing firebombs. They are being tried before the High Criminal Court. They appeared yesterday for their first hearing, in which they pleaded not guilty.

Two months ban on 'Kanaad' fishing

TDT | Manama

Bahraini authorities have implemented a ban on butterfly kingfish (Kanaad) fishing, starting today.

The two-month ban, meant to replenish and balance the marine life, will continue until mid-October.

Secretary-General of the Association of Professional Fishermen of Bahrain, AbdulAmeer AlMughni said that the ban does not prohibit fishing using hand lining. However, fishing using spinning and nets are banned.



AlMughni



Representative picture



The fish butterfly kingfish (Kanaad) is a species of Tuna fish. As it is affected by temperature and streams, they migrate from one area to another

The move, he said, helps increase the stocks of Kanaad and achieve a balance within the marine life.

The ban also falls in line with the decision of the Committee on Agricultural Cooperation in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries taken at its 23rd meeting held in Riyadh.

The meeting directed member States to adopt measures including increasing eyeholes in the net, set a size limit so that none of the fish exceeds the size limits can be fished and determine a season to implement the ban.

It's bigger, It's better

Over 100 countries are expected to participate in the 2018 IMMAF world championship in Bahrain

TDT | Manama

Mohammed Zafran

With the participation of around 100 countries from around the globe, Bahrain is all set to host the 2018 IMMAF world championship, one of the biggest competitions to be held in the Kingdom.

"Bahrain is the only country to host the IMMAF world championship apart from the USA," President of the Bahrain Mixed Martial Arts Colonel Khalid Abdulaziz Al Khayat confirmed to Tribune.

The event will be held this year in November. Just as last year, this year's edition will also be part of the Brave International Combat Week.

"In last year's edition held in Bahrain, we had 51 countries participating in the last year's edition, which was bigger than what they had when it was held in Las Vegas in the first, second and third editions," stressed Al Khayat.

Highlighting the merger IMMAF had this year, he said: "Eighty to 100 teams will be participating, maybe even more". He added: "The exact figures could be confirmed only after the registration."

One of the main attractions, of course, is the participation of the home team. Bahrain has emerged as a formidable force after its participation in championships in Asia, Europe and Africa winning gold, silver and bronze medals. In the IMMAF championship, Bahrain was ranked 3 by winning 2 gold and 3 bronze medals.

"We thank HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa for supporting amateurs. Recently we had a player Hussain Ayyad moving from amateur level to professional level by joining brave," said Al Khayat.

The team currently is preparing for the Asian open that will be held in China from 10th



Colonel Al Khayat

to 15th of September.

"This will be the final competition we will participate before the world championship in 2018."

@ Khalifa Sport City

IMMAF, in a statement to *the Tribune*, confirmed the return of the event to the Kingdom in November after its success in 2017.

"The International Mixed Martial Arts Federation's World Championships is set to return to Bahrain from 11 to 18 November 2018, and will again take place at Khalifa Sports City Arena in Isa Town," confirmed IMMAF. Hailing the support of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa and the backing of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, IMMAF said the collaboration in 2017 between IMMAF and the Bahrain Mixed Martial Arts Association has laid strong foundations for this year's event.

"The 2017 Championships broke records with close to 250 athletes representing 48 nations, and the 2018 event has potential to double."

Athletes are urged to contact their national federation for event updates.

Cultivating the future

Capital club hosts farmers in association with Bahrain Development Bank

TDT | Manama

Bringing together two of the most important rising industries in Bahrain, agriculture and entrepreneurship, Capital Club hosted a 'thank you' luncheon for local farmers.

The luncheon, using homegrown ingredients, offered a 6-course menu prepared by Capital Club Head Chef, Chef Miklos. Bahrain Development Bank (BDB) officials were present.

Over the recent years, Bahrain's efforts to increase produce locally and encourage local Food and Beverage outlets to use homegrown products have seen the rise of means and facilities such as hydroponic farming, resulting in a wider use of locally grown greens, vegetables, and fruits.

Self-sustaining methods as such have also given rise to large-scale entities such as the



From a group photo session during the event

Farmer's Market in Salmabad and Peninsula Farms located in South of Bahrain (which even offers goat-milk lifestyle products), which offer the finest and freshest local produce all year round - for commercial and domestic use.

Working closely with the Capital Club Bahrain in support of their aim to achieve the United Nations set of Sustainable Development Goals in Bahrain, the lunch was a means to showcase the agricultural potential in Bahrain. "Our goal

is to encourage other Food and Beverage operators and hoteliers walk with us towards sustainable farming", says Capital Club Bahrain General Manager, Sumeet Jhingan, "and grow 'farm to fork' concept in Bahrain." The use of local goods and aiming for 60% menu to be created using Bahraini products would also result in the reduction of dependence on international produce, he adds. Additionally, as the seasons change within the Kingdom, enhancing the menu by incorporating seasonal ingredients would also keep it fresh and add a speciality factor to a dining experience.

One of the first initiatives in Bahrain to encourage sustainable farming on the island, the partnership between farmers and businesses are steps towards a sustainable Bahrain and an opportunity for international business to want to invest in the Kingdom for its rich harvest.

Behind the Lens

A look into the life and passion of Ghada Khunji, who started her career as a freelance photographer in the fashion industry during early nineties

TDT|Manama

Harpreet Kaur

Ghada Khunji is a graduate of the Parsons School of Design and the International Center of Photography's Documentary Programme, both in New York. She started her career in the early nineties as a freelance photographer in the fashion industry in New York City, and spent two years as a research assistant for photo agencies, including Black Star and Magnum, followed by eight years as a printer and print manager for a high profile clientele including Annie Leibovitz and Steven Meisel.

Khunji's photographs are known for documenting both landscapes and people from all over the world and the inherent dignity of the human element. In her latest work, she focuses the lens on herself by exploring her innermost feelings, thoughts and identity as a woman.

Khunji a recipient of a significant number of awards, including the Lucie Discovery of the Year (2006), American Photo Magazine's Image of the Year Award (2007), as well as the Golden Lights Award for Travel. She has exhibited widely in the US and Europe, and in recent years, in London, Spain, and throughout the Middle East. As the recipient of the Julia Margaret Cameron Award (2012), where she won the first prize in the category of portraiture. One of her recent works was acquired by the Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives (ALJCI) in 2013.

In the same year, she was nominated for the Prix Pictet, the global award in photography and sustainability.

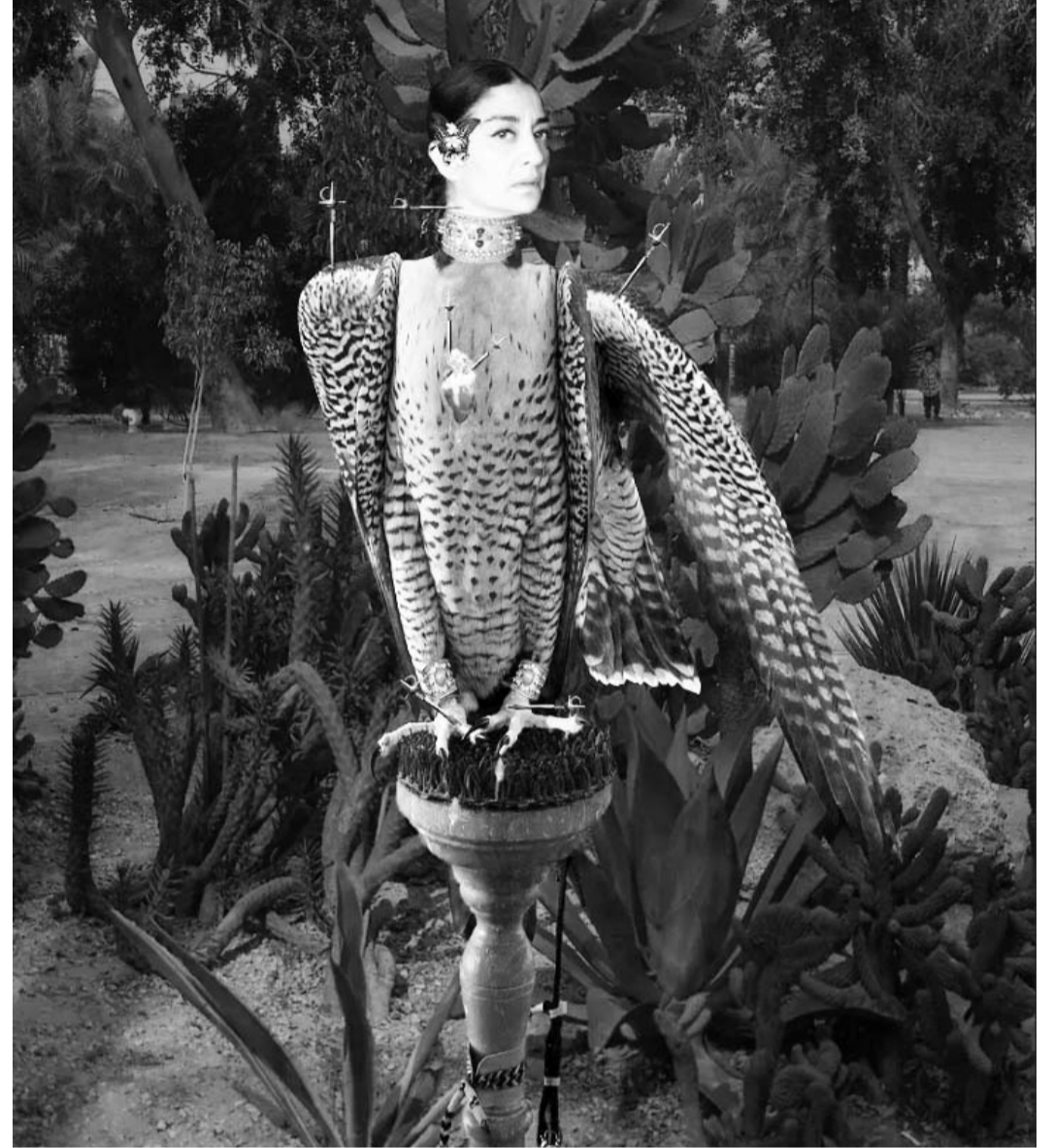
Two years ago she participated in The Colombo Art Biennale which was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Last year she participated in Art Abu Dhabi.

Currently, she is in an ongoing group show, 'I AM', under the patronage of Queen Rania which debuted in Jordan, then London and now touring in the US. Moreover, her upcoming project is a group show inspired by Kahlil Gibran's, The Prophet, which will be held at Sotheby's in London in August.

'I consider myself a documentary photographer'

Ghada Khunji told *Tribune*, "Firstly, a lot of people think that I am a photojournalist by the kind of images I shoot, but I consider myself a documentary photographer. Although closely related to photojournalism there is a unique difference. A journalistic piece is assumed to be a news story because it professes a certain truth. But as we know in our time, not even photojournalists have control of the output of the message. They are merely messengers putting their own lives at risk. Photojournalism is the show that everyone's watching. Documentary photography is more intimate. It's when you're backstage.

"For example, when I travelled to Cuba, I did not want to



Images of Ghada Khunji's latest work

focus on its politics but rather on how the locals are living and surviving. Photojournalists cover what is newsworthy and tragic in war-torn countries every day. I would rather show the other side where life exists and goes on regardless.

Breakthrough moment

Khunji got her first camera at the age of 8. "I remember being around 8 years old when I was given my first camera; at that time, I would photograph my family and surroundings."

"Although I went to college to study business, I kept photographing my friends, family, and college life merely for my own pleasure and for the college yearbook.

"It was not until I took my degree in Public Relations, where one of my courses was photography, that I discovered my passion for photography.

"I still remember developing my first black & white film roll and printing an image from the negative in a dark room with a hint of a red safelight.

"The excitement of watching an image slowly appearing in front of my eyes was a breakthrough moment for me."

Documenting Life

"Once I graduated I decided to move to New York and pursue a degree in photography. I was first interested in fashion photography but I soon discovered I was more interested in documenting real life. I was especially into capturing portraits of people.

"I took it upon myself to travel abroad when I had a vacation from college. I started with The Dominican Republic where I

documented local villages. The warmth of the people immediately made me realize what my photographic goal would be, to bring awareness to people and cultures that might otherwise go unnoticed."

Photography wasn't common among women back then. "When I started there did not exist many female photojournalists but today the ratio has grown where more and more females are covering front lines; expressing a woman's view and perspective in war zones.

"Being a documentarian photographer threatened me a lot less than what photojournalists face although the threat was there. That said, it comes down to faith and will, not male or female."

Stronger, determined

Being a graduate of the Bahrain school, back in 1985, it was a challenge for Ghada Khunji to live abroad away from my family. It took her time to adjust but felt "stronger and more determined," as she sees it. According to her, "those years abroad were supremely important for one growing up."

"I learnt to be independent and to work hard to achieve the greatest heights of achievement even through times of struggle and tears. As Frank Sinatra sang, "If you can make it in New York, you can make it anywhere."

She told *Tribune* that it was not about proving herself as a women photographer that mattered. "I did not find it difficult to prove myself as a woman photographer; I only had to prove that I was great at what I did."

"Being female has helped on

many occasions, especially in some of the cultures I have visited, you need to be able to gain their trust, to be able to reassure them that you aren't going to demean them or exploit them. Because I am a woman and because I am of Middle Eastern descent, other women in these quieter, less sought out places, see someone they might be able to relate to, meaning they are more likely to let me into their lives; to let me take their picture."

Exhibitions in Bahrain

The Kingdom, Ghada Khunji said, has produced some very great shows & showcased wonderful photographic exhibitions. "I think what would help is involving more media and publicity so that we can attract a wider and more international audience."

"Since returning from New York, I have expanded beyond documentary photography. As an artist one has to progress to the next level otherwise to vanish in the now. "I have made two grand installations in Bahrain and now I'm working on my third. It will be a surprise; one clue is that the theme is unity. In the meantime, I've been producing two bodies of work that now encompass photomontage.

"As a documentarian, I was true to reality and now I'm creating the opposite; my own imaginary reality. I photograph personal objects; use myself as a muse and montage them as if I'm a painter. The two themes are, The Dark Ages, symbolizing biblical scenarios; and FARIDA, a homage to the great Mexican artist, Frida Kahlo," Khunji added.



business

AMA International celebrates a year of success

TDT | Manama

AMA International School announced ending the school year with the improvement to facilities, students' achievements and a membership in an international school community.

At the beginning of the year, the school started to use the newly constructed middle and high school building equipped with teaching resources such as science, computer and iMAC laboratories that enhanced teaching and learning. Another addition was the multi-purpose hall with LED wall monitor and indoor sports facilities that encouraged students to participate in various activities.

Likewise, the school took pride as being the 6th member school of the Council of Inter-



AMA International school

national Schools (CIS) in Bahrain this school year. CIS is a membership community and a leader in International Accreditation. The school was recommended by the CIS Evaluator to proceed to accreditation process and have the preparatory visit in November 2018 since AMAISB surpassed the expectations for the membership standards.

Looking forward, AMAISB aims to continuously improve its programme offering by horizontally and vertically articulating its curriculum in alignment with the Californian Core Standards. And introducing elective subjects that aim to broaden the interest of students and enhance their fundamental critical thinking skills.

Furthermore, living with the mission of the school to provide relevant knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to embrace the challenges of the dynamic world – the school is sending students to International Competitions this 2018.

Recently, AMAISB students brought honour to the school in international competitions.

In the Scholars' Cup – Global Rounds in Barcelona, Spain, Elyas Zuhair Abdulla Alqasim won four (4) silver medal, a gold medal and he qualified in the 2018 Tournament of Champions. While Robotics coach Francisco Reyes with team members Goh Yiyi, Mohamed Isa Ebrahim, and Ahmed Majeed Husain won the 9th place in the World

Adolescent Robot Junior High Regular Category held in Gau Yun, China.

Adding to the list of exposure, AMAISB students will compete for this November 2018 World Robotics Olympiad (WRO) International Final in Thailand and World Scholars' Cup – 2018 Tournament of Champions in Yale University, USA.

AMAISB is anticipating a successful SY 2018 – 2019 with the offering of the 2018 summer classes to KG and Primary School students designed to prepare them for the new challenges.

Marietta S. Sicat, the school director is looking forward for more success with the available resources such as equipped facilities, articulated curriculum and competent group of teachers and support staff.

Walmart reports Q2 loss

New York | United States

Walmart reported much higher second-quarter sales and robust growth in its e-commerce businesses yesterday, even as it reported a loss on one-time costs associated with selling a Walmart Brazil stake. The world's biggest retailer scored its most robust jump in more than 10 years in US comparable store sales, sending shares sharply higher. But it reported an \$861 million loss following pre-tax costs of \$4.8 billion on the Brazil sales.

Revenues rose 3.8 per cent to \$128.0bn, compared with the year-ago period.

Comparable sales -- the linchpin of company revenues rose 4.5pc.

Arig posts H1 results

● **Negative result was attributed to the creation of a provision**

TDT | Manama

Arig yesterday announced a consolidated net loss of US\$22.4 million attributable to shareholders for the first half of the year 2018, (half-year 2017: net profit was US\$4.1m).

The negative result was attributed to the creation of a provision of US\$21m related to Arig's subsidiary, Gulf Warranties. This provision has been made for likely losses arising out of alleged fraud committed by employees of Gulf Warranties.

"Following our practice of

prudent reserving we have made a provision for some likely losses related to the subsidiary, Gulf Warranties W.L.L. The losses from our Lloyds' book are being addressed through withdrawal from the worst performing syndicate. Arig will continue efforts to maintain a well-balanced portfolio through territorial and product diversification, while benefitting from market opportunities in a controlled manner," said Samuel Verghese, Acting CEO of Arig.

Arig's technical result stood at US\$2.7m for the first half-year (half-year 2017: US\$8.6m), a decline of 68.6 per cent. While Arig's traditional reinsurance portfolio reached a positive technical result of US\$11.3m (half-year 2017: US\$13.9m) representing a reduction of 18.7pc,

Arig will continue efforts to maintain a well-balanced portfolio through territorial and product diversification, while benefitting from market opportunities in a controlled manner

SAMUEL VERGHESE,
ACTING CEO OF ARIG

Lloyd's accounts incurred a technical loss of US\$8.6m (half-year 2017: a loss of US\$5.3m), an increase in loss by 62.3pc. The consolidated investment income amounted to US\$8.8m

(half-year 2017: US\$12.5m), a reduction of 29.6pc.

For the second quarter, net loss was US\$22.9m, compared to net profit of US\$3.6m in Q2 2017. Gross premiums written was US\$ 18.4m (Q2 2017: US\$16.8m), an increase of 9.5pc during the quarter alone.

During the first half, gross premiums written amounted to US\$187.5m (half-year 2017: US\$189.6m), a decrease of 1.1pc compared to the same period in previous year.

Earnings per share as at 30 June 2018 was a loss of US cents 11.3 as compared to a profit of US cents 2.1 as at 30 June 2017. For the three months ended 30 June 2018, the earnings per share was a loss of US cents 11.6 as compared to a profit of US cents 1.8 as at 30 June 2017.

Saudi banks see no significant lira impact

Reuters | Dubai

There has been no significant impact from the depreciation of the Turkish lira on the results and quality of Saudi Arabian bank assets, Talaat Hafez, spokesman for Saudi banks, was quoted as saying in a tweet carried by the kingdom's state TV Alekhbariya on Thursday.

National Commercial Bank 1180.SE, Saudi Arabia's largest bank by assets, said there was limited impact from the decline of the lira on the bank. The currency has lost nearly 40 per cent against the dollar this year, driven by worries over Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan's growing influence on the economy.



Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Dr Abdulhussain Mirza paid an inspection visit to the installation of solar energy systems in the multi-storey parking lot of the Avenues Complex. He was received by company Managing Director Dr Maher Al-Shaer, consulting company and other top officials. The minister was briefed on the progress of the installation of solar energy systems in the new parking building complex, which would produce about 250 kilowatts of solar energy with 880 solar panels. The whole project took less than seven months to complete.

Lending a helping hand



Bahrain Financing Company officials handing over a check for Rs 35 Lakh to Kerala Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund to support the state & people of Kerala as part of its corporate social responsibility. Pancyly Varkey (GM - BFC), Leny Mathew (Head of Treasury), Somanathan Kulangareth (Head of Dealing), Deepak Nair (Head of Retail Sales) and Roger Menezes (Head of Corporate Business) spoke to media on the occasion. The statewide floods that hit Kerala and neighbouring areas earlier this month have caused havoc and unfortunately, a rising death toll.

Air France unions want French CEO

Paris | France

Trade unions at Air France called yesterday for the company to name a French chief executive amid reports that the board is set to nominate Canadian Ben Smith at the helm of the group.

Nine out of ten unions issued a joint statement saying it was "inconceivable that the Air France company, French since 1933, falls into the hands of a foreign executive whose candidacy is being promoted by a competitor".

The statement appeared to be referring to Delta Airlines, the US airline which owns 8.8 percent of the capital of Air France-KLM, the parent group formed out of the merger of Air France and KLM of the Netherlands in 2004.

The union statement, which said the new boss needed "intimate knowledge... of the French social model", said that the board was expected to hold a teleconference on Thursday to discuss the nomination.

The Franco-Dutch airline has been searching for a new boss since Jean-Marc Janaillac resigned in May.

Hong Kong spends \$2bn to defend currency peg

Hong Kong | China

Hong Kong's de facto central bank said yesterday it had bought up more than US\$2 billion worth of local currency to maintain a long-held peg to the US dollar.

The intervention -- which began Wednesday and was the latest in a series of moves to support the currency this year -- comes as the US dollar rockets on the back of turmoil in emerging markets and the ongoing Turkish lira crisis.

The buyout means that the Hong Kong Monetary Authority will have just \$12 billion in its reserves by the end of the week, the lowest level in a decade, Bloomberg News said.

Norman Chan, chief executive of the HKMA said the outflow of funds is a "normal and inevitable process for Hong Kong dollar interest rate normalisation".

On Thursday, the Hong Kong dollar was trading at HK\$7.8495 against the US dollar, very close to the edge of its permitted range of HK\$7.75-7.85.

Under the city's Linked Exchange Rate System, the HKMA is required to buy the local currency at HK\$7.85 to US\$1 to ensure exchange rate stability.

The southern Chinese financial hub has maintained a decades old peg with the US dollar, which keeps Hong Kong at the mercy of Fed policymakers.

The city's dollar was linked to the greenback in 1983 in a bid to prevent a sell-off as it wobbled over fears about China's reunification talks with Britain.

Stocks regain composure

Asian indices fell on concerns over Turkey's crisis

China has accepted a US invitation to trade talks

London stocks were aided by strong UK retail sales

London | United Kingdom

European and US stocks rebounded yesterday on news that Beijing and Washington will hold trade talks, while the Turkish lira rose after Qatar offered to invest \$15 billion in Turkey.

Frankfurt, London and Paris shares bounced higher, having shed more than 1.5 per cent the previous day on Turkey fears and Chinese growth concerns.

Meanwhile, the Dow was 1.0pc higher as trading opened on Wall Street.

"Investor risk sentiment has received a boost on two fronts," noted OANDA analyst Dean Poplawell.

"Reports that China has accepted a US invitation to trade talks in late August and news that Qatar has pledged to invest



Pedestrians walk past an electronic board showing share prices on the Tokyo Stock Exchange (top C) and the world's major markets in Tokyo

\$15 billion in Turkey are helping market risk sentiment and pressuring the dollar."

Earlier, Asian indices fell on concerns over Turkey's crisis, but losses were capped by hopes of an end to the tit-for-tat trade war between China and the United States.

Modest recovery

Emerging market currencies staged a modest recovery after a tumultuous week for the Turkish lira, which plumbed record lows against the dollar.

The lira's plunge -- ongoing

for weeks -- turned into a rout last Friday when US President Donald Trump tweeted that his administration was doubling aluminium and steel tariffs for Turkey.

Trump's decision was made amid a bitter row over Ankara's detention of an American pastor. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey was facing an "economic attack".

However, the prospect of US-China talks "has prompted a rebound in the Chinese renminbi from its recent lows, while the continued recovery in the Turk-

Key figures around 1330 GMT

Market/Index	Change	Value
London - FTSE 100	▲ 0.7pc	at 7,550.37 points
Frankfurt - DAX 30	▲ 0.2pc	at 12,185.80
Paris - CAC 40	▲ 0.4pc	at 5,328.15
EURO STOXX 50	▲ 0.3pc	at 3,367.94
New York - Dow Jones	▲ 1.0pc	at 25,407.65
Dollar/Turkish lira	▼	at 5.74 lira from 5.94 lira late on Wednesday
Euro/Turkish lira	▼	at 6.55 lira from 6.74 lira
Euro/dollar	▲	at \$1.1380 from \$1.1345
Pound/dollar	▲	at \$1.2710 from \$1.2697
Dollar/yen	▼	at 110.63 from 110.74 yen
Tokyo - Nikkei 225	▼	at 22,192.04 (close)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng	▼	at 27,100.06 (close)
Shanghai - Composite	▼	at 2,705.19 (close)

ish lira has alleviated short term concerns of a collapse in the currency", noted CMC Markets analyst Michael Hewson.

China's Vice Commerce Minister Wang Shouwen, the deputy representative on international trade negotiations, will meet senior US treasury official David Malpass at Washington's invitation, Beijing said in a statement.

Traders saw a glimmer of hope of an easing in the ongoing trade battle that has seen the two sides hit each other with reciprocal tariffs on goods worth \$34 billion.

In Europe on Thursday, London stocks were aided by strong UK retail sales data for July.

Bayer tumbles again

Frankfurt meanwhile gained 0.2pc, despite another plunge in the share price of Bayer.

The German chemicals and pharmaceuticals giant dived 5.9pc to 76.10 euros, rocked by media reports of new legal risks stemming from its acquisition of US seeds and pesticides maker Monsanto. The stock had fallen even more dramatically on Monday after a US jury ordered it to pay almost \$290 million in damages to a dying California groundskeeper who said Monsanto's blockbuster weedkiller Roundup -- whose active ingredient is glyphosate -- had caused his cancer.

Taiwan hotel axes Marriott contract over naming row

AFP | Taipei, Taiwan

The owner of a Starwood-branded hotel in Taiwan said yesterday it will terminate its contract with Marriott International, in protest over the US group caving in to Beijing pressure to list the island as part of China.

Marriott was strongly criticised by Chinese authorities in January for listing Taiwan -- along with Tibet and Hong Kong -- as separate countries, all regions which Beijing claims under its authority.

After the Chinese government shut down Marriott's local website for a week, the hotel chain apologised and changed the listing to "Taiwan, China."

But the Four Points by Sheraton in Zhonghe, a district of the capital Taipei, announced

-- in a front page advertisement in local newspaper the Liberty Times -- it will terminate its franchise agreement with the parent group.

"We are sternly protesting against Marriott International unilaterally listing our hotel as 'Taiwan, China'" on the simplified Chinese version of a booking website for members, the advert read, adding it would "dissolve" its contract.

Simplified Chinese is used in mainland China. A more complicated traditional version is used in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and on that version of the website the island is still listed as "Taiwan".

Four Points by Sheraton is a brand of business hotels under the Starwood brand, which was bought by Marriott in 2016.

Lily Cheng, a spokeswoman

for the Zhonghe hotel, told AFP its name will now be changed and it will no longer take reservations from Marriott's booking system. "Of course it will cause some impact, but our main customers are corporates, and Taiwanese people, and other booking websites," she said.

Marriott did not immediately respond to a request for comment. China has taken a number of airlines, hotels and other companies to task in recent months for listing Taiwan as a separate country on their websites.

The foreign ministry lodged an official protest with the US for allowing Taiwan president Tsai Ing-wen to transit in Los Angeles en route to Paraguay this week, during which she gave a rare public speech by a Taiwanese leader on US soil.

US media hit back at Trump

Washington | United States

US newspapers big and small hit back yesterday at President Donald Trump's relentless attacks on the news media, launching a coordinated campaign of editorials stressing the importance of a free press.

Leading the charge was The Boston Globe, which had issued an appeal for this drive -- accompanied by the hashtag #EnemyofNone -- that has been joined by more than 200 newspapers around the country.

"Today in the United States we have a president who has created a mantra that members

of the media who do not blatantly support the policies of the current US administration are the 'enemy of the people,'" the Globe editorial said.

"This is one of the many lies that have been thrown out by this president, much like an old-time charlatan threw out 'magic' dust or water on a hopeful crowd," it added in a piece entitled "Journalists are not the Enemy."

The *New York Times*, one of the most frequent targets of Trump's criticism, ran a short, seven-paragraph editorial under a giant headline with all capital letters that read "A FREE

PRESS NEEDS YOU" and with the statement that it is only right for people to criticize the press, say, for getting something wrong.

"But insisting that truths you don't like are 'fake news' is dangerous to the lifeblood of democracy. And calling journalists the 'enemy of the people' is dangerous, period," the Times wrote. Across the country, other papers joined in.

"At a practical level, we journalists sit through boring government meetings and learn about public school financing formulas, so you don't have to," said The Arizona Daily Star.

Magic Leap's expensive but magical AR graphics

The Magic Leap One, under development for years and often derided as fiction by naysayers tired of its non-appearance, has finally arrived.

Magic Leap, the multi-billion dollar augmented reality technology startup, has finally shipped its long-awaited headset -- currently only available to a limited number of U.S. software developers.

After years of scathing reports that its rumoured technology was a billion dollar investment scam, the Magic Leap One has proven to be real, and although expensive at \$2,295, is impressing developers with its lightweight visor and computing power. But equally it is drawing criticism for its price point and the feeling that this version is just a stepping stone to a finished product still some years away.

The firm's founder, Rony Abovitz, says the company is looking to raise more financing, and is ready for a long-term battle with rivals Microsoft and Apple, which are developing their own AR headsets.

So far, the company has raised \$2.3 billion from the likes of Google, Alibaba, Qualcomm and Warner Bros.

LIGHTWEAR
Headstrap: Slides apart to match user's shape
Forehead/nose pads: Adaptable for more comfortable fit
Headset available in two head sizes

LIGHTPACK
Power: Portable computer connects to Lightwear and drives visuals
Input: 3D tracking, touch pad, button and trigger offer user multiple interactions

CONTROL
Lightwear Control: 7.5 hours continuous use
Lightpack: Powered by Nvidia's next-generation Tegra X2 chip

Sensors: Map room so graphics can be integrated into space
Vision: Prescription lenses for wearers of eyeglasses

FIELD OF VIEW
Average VR headset: 40°
HoloLens*: 30°
Magic Leap One: 110°

AR field of view not as immersive as virtual reality (VR)

View appears tinted, with graphics laid on top

Price: \$2,295

VR shuts out physical world (total immersion). Augmented reality adds digital elements to live view

*Microsoft AR headset for Windows 10 (shipped Mar 2016, price \$3,000)
Sources: UPLOAD VR, The Verge, CNET, Magic Leap Pictures: Magic Leap, IKEA © GRAPHIC NEWS

Gulf equities mostly down

● Gulf markets subdued ahead of Eid holiday

● Emerging markets weak on strong dollar

● Qatar witnesses biggest loss on profit-taking

Reuters | Dubai

Gulf equity markets were mostly flat to lower yesterday, lacking momentum ahead of a long holiday next week when markets will mostly be closed for Eid al-Adha.

In the absence of strong catalysts, Gulf stocks passively tracked emerging assets, which languished in bear market territory as the dollar held strong.

"Given a more nervous global backdrop for risk assets and an increase in volatility within emerging markets specifically, it's unsurprising Gulf equities are softer," said Akber Khan, senior director of asset management at Al Rayan Investment.

"Compounding this is the upcoming week-long Eid holiday which retail and institutional investors are looking to de-risk ahead of."

Investors are keen to book profits given the strong perfor-



Qatar's main index witnessed the sharpest decline among its regional peers

mance of some equity markets in the region, he added.

Qatar's main index witnessed the sharpest decline among its regional peers.

Qatari stocks are up more than 10 per cent so far this year, bolstered in recent months by its move to increase its foreign ownership ceiling to 49pc from 25pc to boost its weighting on global indexes.

The index was down 1.5pc on Thursday, with Qatar Islamic

Bank witnessing the biggest decline at 4.6pc.

In Saudi Arabia, commodity and banking stocks led the declines on the Tadawul index, which was flat.

Saudi Basic Industries Corp (SABIC), the world's no. 4 chemical maker, was down 0.7pc. Saudi Arabian Mining Company (Ma'aden) declined 2.5pc.

Samba Financial Group and Banque Saudi Fransi declined 0.7pc and 0.2pc respectively.

There has been no significant impact from the depreciation of the Turkish lira on the results and quality of Saudi Arabian bank assets, Talaat Hafez, spokesman for Saudi banks, was quoted as saying in a tweet carried by the kingdom's state TV Alekhbariya on Thursday.

Earlier on Thursday National Commercial Bank, Saudi Arabia's largest bank by assets, said there was limited impact from the decline of the lira on the

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▲	7,867
DUBAI	▼ 0.5%	2,803
ABU DHABI	▲ 0.4%	4,907
QATAR	▼ 1.5%	9,448
KUWAIT	▲ 0.2%	5,382
BAHRAIN	▲ 0.3%	1,347
OMAN	▲	4,390
EGYPT	▼ 0.3%	15,310

bank.

The currency has lost nearly 40pc against the dollar this year, driven by worries over Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan's growing influence on the economy and his repeated calls for lower interest rates despite high inflation.

Dubai's index was slightly down, with blue-chip stocks mixed in trading. Dubai Islamic Bank, the emirate's oldest Shariah compliant lender, declined 1.2pc.

Emirates NBD, Dubai's biggest lender, was down onepc amid continued concerns among investors about its deal in May to buy Turkey's Denizbank for \$3.2 billion.

Elsewhere in the region, Abu Dhabi's benchmark rose 0.4pc. Abu Dhabi National Energy Company, also known as Taqa, gained 6.2pc.

Lenovo posts Q1 profit

Hong Kong, China

Chinese technology giant Lenovo yesterday recorded a sharp rise in first quarter net profit as the company's turnaround gathered pace.

The PC maker posted a \$77 million net profit in the quarter to June 30 -- up from a \$72 million loss in the same period last year.

"The Group remains confident in its core PC business, and aims to grow ... without compromising on profitability," chairman Yang Yuanqing said in a statement.

Analyst Jackson Wong said competition between PC makers "is not as fierce as it is in the mobile sector", while Lenovo's focus on hardware has also contributed to the positive results.

Lenovo also reported a 19 percent rise in revenue to \$11.91 billion -- its second consecutive quarter of double-digit revenue growth.

The tech giant is turning its fortunes around following a \$189 million net loss for the full fiscal year, dragged down by a \$400 million non-cash write-off charge from deferred income tax assets.

The company's shares rose up to six percent to HK\$4.72 mid-morning after the results were released.

Oil price steadies

Reuters | New York

Oil rose slightly as global markets steadied yesterday, recovering some of the previous day's 2 per cent slide, though a weakening outlook for crude demand kept prices in check.

The oil market had felt the effects on Wednesday of a large build in US inventories that added to concern over the outlook for fuel demand, while crude was also swept lower by broader selling of industrial commodities such as copper.



Representative picture

"There's still an overhang from the report yesterday," said John Kilduff, a partner at Again Capital Management in New York. Surging imports that boosted inventories despite high refinery run rates weighed on the market, he said. China and the United States have implemented several rounds of tit-for-tat trade tariffs and threatened further duties

on exports worth hundreds of billions of dollars, which could knock global economic growth.

The crisis gripping the Turkish lira, meanwhile, has rattled other emerging markets and reverberated across equities, bonds and raw materials.

Brent crude oil futures LCO1 were up 43 cents at \$71.19 a barrel by 11:35 a.m. EDT, while U.S. crude futures CL1 rose 44 cents to \$65.45.

US crude had earlier hovered around its 200-day moving average of \$65.18 a barrel, an important technical benchmark. Moving below that level could trigger a further surge downward.

Brent crude futures are resting on the 200-day moving average, a key technical level, for the first time in a year. Analysts say a break below this point could trigger another swift sell-off.

China to widen foreign access to A-shares

Shanghai, China

China's securities regulator said it will allow individual foreign investors working in the country to buy and sell yuan-dominated Chinese A-shares, the latest incremental step by Beijing to widen access to its long-cloistered equities markets.

The change would go into effect on September 15 and also applies to foreign employees of Chinese-listed companies who are working for those firms outside the country, the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) said in a statement issued late Wednesday. Previously, foreign access to Chinese stocks has been largely through B-shares, which are denominated in foreign currencies and geared toward international investors, while only qualified foreign institutional investors could buy into

the larger pool of A-shares.

But a number of steps in recent years have widened the door, including the establishment of programmes under which international investors on Hong Kong's more open stock market can buy some shares on China's exchanges in Shanghai and Shenzhen, and vice-versa.

A similar connection between London's exchange and the mainland Chinese bourses also has been proposed.

In June more than 200 Chinese companies debuted on the emerging market index compiled by MSCI, which is expected to lead to billions of dollars of new investment in those Chinese shares by global funds.

The CSRC said the move was being taken to "deepen the opening up of the capital market, enrich the investment, broaden channels for capital

Japan's trade surplus with US slumps in July

Tokyo, Japan

Japan's politically sensitive trade surplus with the United States shrank sharply in July, according to official data published Thursday, as the two allies continue to cross swords over US trade policy.

The surplus with the US shrank 22.1 per cent with reduced shipments of motor vehicles and microchip-making equipment dragging down the figure.

Despite a close political and economic relationship, Japan was not spared from President Donald Trump's tariffs on steel and aluminium products and Tokyo has warned it could retaliate at the World Trade Organization.

Top officials from both sides met in Washington last week but no breakthrough was announced after the talks.

Overall, Japan logged a trade deficit of 231.2 billion yen (\$2 billion) last month, compared to a surplus of 406.6 billion yen recorded in the same month last year.

With the yen strengthening against the dollar, exports registered their slowest growth in four months, rising 3.9pc year-on-year. Meanwhile, imports jumped 14.6pc.

Japan's deficit with its biggest trading partner China shrank 17.8pc as exports rose 11.9pc, a double-digit rise for the fifth consecutive month.

Malabar Group donates INR 2 Crore to Kerala

TDI | Dubai

Malabar Group has announced a contribution of 2 crore Indian rupees to Chief Minister's distress relief fund to deal with the devastating flood in the Kerala state.

Malabar Group Chairman M P Ahamed informed the press that the Group will associate with district administrations at local levels in lending helping hands to the needy.

Group has already started distributing food and drinking water to the flood victims through Malabar Gold



MP Ahamed

We are hoping the earliest possible recovery and praying to the almighty for the restoration of the affected areas

SHAMLAL AHAMED
MANAGING DIRECTOR - INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS
OF MALABAR GOLD & DIAMONDS

& Diamonds jewellery outlets across the state. MP Ahamed expressed grief and solidarity to the distressed suffering from the unprecedented flood and landslides.

Shamlal Ahamed, Managing Director - International Operations of Malabar Gold & Diamonds commented "We would like to express our deepest sympathy and offer our sincere help to those suffering from the impact of the flood. We are hoping the earliest possible recovery and praying to the almighty for the restoration of the affected areas".

Eliminating disc

For her art is a way to express her perception, dreams, and aspirations of women. Meet Ella Prakash who started her really special journey with art at the age of 20

TDT | Manama

Harpreet Kaur

Bahrain-based Indian artist Ella Prakash is best known for her inventive techniques and vibrant use of colours. Started her art career in 1984, art for her has been a way to express her perception, dreams, and aspirations of women.

Focusing on the topic of discriminations and double standards faced within the walls of her society. She always visually manages to incorporate all the elements of this topic and create an impact insincere positivity.

Being a celebrated artist across the globe, Ella has been mentioned in numerous national and international press such as Blouin Art info, West London Living, Notting Hill & Holland Park Magazine, Gulf daily news, Deccan Chronicle and Delhi Millennium post.

Ellas, who is currently the Ambassador for Arts of India in Bahrain, also held exhibitions in London, New York, Miami, Hamburg, India and UAE.

“When you start painting you always have a base idea of what your finished work should be but more importantly allow yourself to prepare as many as alterations of your base idea. Simply because once your mind has decided to steer your thoughts, you start to unravel the emotions and strokes that you never thought you could express,” Ella told Tribune.

Art to liberation

“My art focuses closely on the medium of painting, which seems almost like a liberation, opening up the potential to give



Ella Prakash's painting Titled 'My World'

SEIZING OP

Using art to beat the odds at refugee camp

CNN | Amman

Sitting alone outside a ramshackle caravan in Jordan's Zaatari Refugee Camp, Mohamed Jokhadar sips coffee from a stained cup and reflects.

Jokhadar is a Syrian refugee who, like so many refugees around the world, was violently torn from the life he once knew by civil war. Living in a refugee camp, he had to face reality. “I came to the realisation that I'm here and I'm not leaving,” he says.

Amid the canvas tents, temporary buildings and lost hope, Jokhadar chose to embrace his new life and seize opportunities within the camp.

Today, he not only owns a barber shop, but operates as an artist who chronicles the horrors unfolding in his homeland.

Refugee crisis

The Zaatari Refugee Camp, in Mafraq Governorate, opened in 2012 to host Syrians, like Jokhadar, fleeing military conflict in their country. Today, it is home to approximately 80,000 Syrian refugees, according to the UNHCR.

There are 68.5 million people worldwide who have been forcibly displaced, according to the UNHCR, and the increasing number of refugees, internally displaced people and asylum-seekers is mainly being driven by the war in Syria, the body said in 2014.

The Zaatari Refugee Camp, however, is no longer the desolate, foreboding place it once was. In just six years, it has been transformed from a barren tract of land into a bustling metropolis, thanks to its inhabitants' talent, zeal and determination to build a real community.

Tough choices

Jokhadar, aged 32, and his family were forced to leave their home in the city of Homs, in 2012, after extreme



Syrian refugee Mohamed Jokhadar in front of a mural he painted at the Zaatari Camp

shelling overtook the city.

Syrian Mohamed Jokhadar painting on a caravan, adding some colour to the Zaatari Refugee Camp.

At first, they moved within Syria. “We thought we'd stay in an area close to the Syrian border until the situation in Homs got calmer,” he says. But it never did.

In January 2013, Jokhadar entered the Zaatari Camp on foot with his wife and nine-month-old daughter. He was accompanied by his elderly parents, his brother and sister-in-law, and their three children.

Two years later, inside the caravan, Jokhadar says. “I knew living here was between a hard choice and your family.”

A change in s

In Syria, Jokhadar's business

1947

The Radcliffe Line, the border between Union of India and Dominion of Pakistan is revealed

1945

Korea is divided into North and South Korea along the 38th parallel

1945

Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta declare Indonesia (Dutch East Indies) independent from the Netherlands



1903

Joseph Pulitzer donates \$1 million to Columbia University & begins the Pulitzer Prizes in America

EXPRESSING PERCEPTION

Crimination through art



Prakash's painting Titled 'Energy Manifestation'

issue of form and background, space and lines a new level of concentrated minimalism. I work in a very limited palette colours and change the palette dependently on a series of work."

of seamless cubic patterns with underlying various perspectives of women within transparent layers to capture their distinctive personality."

"My current abstract series in oil called 'A Change - Transformation', I chal-

“My journey with art has been really special as at the age of 20 my first painting was sold

ELLA PRAKASH

lenged myself to unlearn the pattern of control where I seek in representation; thus, reinventing the language of anatomy, chiaroscuro, and storytelling. Where these paintings are distinctive for their bold brush strokes, where I express my work through palette knife using vibrant colours, the end result is a direct and spontaneous gesture on canvas that, in turn, is based on insight gained in previous work and which gives these paintings their inescapable explosiveness."

Achievements

"My journey with art has been really special as at the age of 20 my first painting was sold. It was a group exhibition at Bahrain art society and where my painting was singled out and sold the first day. Further, I have been awarded the 10th International the American Juried Art Salon Awards in 2010, In 2009 was awarded the Top Ten International Art Competition, Women in the Arts, Artrom Gallery Rome, Italy and In 2009 2nd Art Contest, Abstract, Honourable Mention by Art vita.com

Ella Art Gallery

"Similarly, Ella art gallery is a brainchild which was established as an artistic venture in 2004. It is my art gallery in Adliya.

The whole idea behind Ella art gallery was "where art meets emotion" and where the artist's paintings and artwork resonate just that. Every piece is a unique form of expression and strikes the hearts chords like a symphony."

Ella Impressions

Further, 'Ella Impressions' is a fresh take on fashion through the eyes of an artist and will bring a delightful and elite sophistication to the world of fashion with its spunky colour palette and clean and minimalistic forms and shapes. It is a high-end brand which is going to take an emotional twist to the generic high-end labels and give you a Renaissance of art."

"The main objective of the brand is to create a luxury line of affordable art through fashion for its buyers. It will launch with an introductory collection for both genders and encompass an entire range of bespoke merchandise for its niche clientele and will be available internationally. It is all set to become a trendsetter in both retail and online shopping sectors."

"Painting has always been my companion in the journey of life. To me, my art is symbolic of my journey not only as an artist but as a person in entirety. My art is a reflection of who I am and, 'Ella Impressions' fashion line is just a more beautiful portrayal of the journey of my life through my paintbrush."



Ella Prakash

OPPORTUNITIES



in Jordan



Jokhadar's paintings before the war always depicted happiness, a reflection of his life in Syria

ter, Jokhadar's wife gave birth to a son in a refugee camp would be hard," he said. "I reached a point where you need to choose between a hard life or, God forbid, losing a member of your family."

style

Jokhadar had worked in the family construction business, but his passion was always art. In fifth

grade, his art teacher had encouraged him to embrace his creative side. "She told me I was destined to become a painter," he says.

Jokhadar began painting at his home in Homs for hours every day; sometimes from dusk until dawn. His paintings were filled with rich colours, and his speciality was portraits of beautiful, hopeful faces.

Now as a refugee, Jokhadar has sought self-expression and solace through his art -- although he says the war has affected his style and his color palette.

"I began wanting to say something through my art, to send a message," he says. "I was living a hard life and I wanted to illustrate it through my paintings."

In the camp, Jokhadar began volunteering as an art teacher at one of the schools. However, to make a living, he bought a barber shop the day after he entered the Zaatari Camp. He works there every afternoon, but is always happiest with a paintbrush in his hand.

While Jokhadar's staff look after customers, he paints in a corner of the shop. Customers are often

intrigued by his activity, and many have asked if they can join him in his art corner.

Now, when he's not trimming someone's beard, he is teaching another refugee the basics of art.

Against all odds

Jokhadar is not the only refugee bringing creativity into the Zaatari Camp. Safwan Harb, for example, is a 28-year-old refugee from Daraa, south-west Syria, who entered the Zaatari Camp in 2013.

As a child, he was diagnosed with polio and lost control of his lower limbs, but that hasn't stopped him from seizing opportunities in the camp.

In 2014, Harb and his brother founded the Syrian Art Group, which currently consists of 30 members, who organize plays and train others how to act, produce and write scripts. The group has performed on several occasions around the camp.

"The Syrian Art Group is like a family to me," Harb says. "It allowed us all to discover our passions and build a long-lasting support network."

Paul Fean is the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) acting youth specialist in Jordan, who works to help young refugees gain skills and build relationships.

He says Harb and Jokhadar are representative of the entrepreneurial, creative spirit found in refugee camps.

"In my experience working with refugees," Fean says, "I've found a strong motivation, interest and desire to make a better future for themselves, their families and their communities."

He says one camp he's worked in gained electricity because of refugees who taught themselves how to weld. Communities within another camp were able to become mobile, because refugees rehabilitated old bicycles and distributed them around the camp.

"Refugees have a lot of skill and potential that they can draw on," Fean says. "They just need opportunities and our support."

WORLD

N. Korea assassination trial to proceed

Shah Alam, Malaysia

The murder trial of two women accused of assassinating the half-brother of North Korea's leader can proceed, a Malaysian court ruled yesterday, in a blow to their families who insist the pair were tricked into carrying out the dramatic hit.

After hearing the prosecution case, the judge said there was sufficient evidence to support a murder charge against Siti Aisyah from Indonesia and Doan Thi Huong from Vietnam, accused of murdering Kim Jong Nam with nerve agent VX at Kuala Lumpur airport.

Judge Azmi Ariffin said the evidence presented in court since the trial started in October pointed to a "well-planned conspiracy" with a group of North Korean suspects who are still at large.

Colombia says 19 killed in bus crash

Quito, Ecuador

Colombia's government said Wednesday that 19 of the victims of a deadly bus crash in Ecuador were its citizens, as Quito lowered the overall death toll from the accident.

Ecuador's foreign ministry said in a statement that 23 people were killed in the Tuesday crash, instead of 24 as previously announced.

Twelve Colombians, four Venezuelans and two Ecuadorians who died in the accident have been identified, the statement said.

The bus, which had foreign license plates, overturned and crashed into three houses after a collision with an all-terrain vehicle near Quito.

'Iceman' sentenced to death in Thailand

Bangkok, Thailand

A Malaysian drug dealer dubbed the "Iceman" was sentenced to death yesterday by a court in Thailand after he was convicted of running a narcotics network that funnelled huge profits into legitimate businesses.

Tun Hung Seong was arrested in April last year after a tipoff that he had hired a man to smuggle nearly 300 kilogrammes of crystal meth -- known as ice -- through the violence-scarred south.

Investigators believe he acted as a gatekeeper to the Malaysian drug market just over the border and laundered money through karaoke bars, hotels and restaurants.

Flood worsens in India's southern state



Kochi's International airport apron is seen flooded following monsoon rains



Residents look at houses destroyed by floods at Kannappankundu in Kozhikode

● 10,000 kilometres of roads have been destroyed

● 34 dams and reservoirs have been opened

AFP | Kochi, India

The government says 10,000 kilometres (6,000 miles) of Kerala roads have been destroyed or damaged and hundreds of homes lost.

It has ordered the opening of gates at 34 dams and reservoirs where water levels reached danger levels.

Indian television broadcast images of cars and livestock washed away in the floods while men and women waded through chest-high waters that flowed through village streets.

Many used social media to send rooftop distress calls, some



Fire and Rescue personnel evacuate local residents in an inflatable boat near Eloor in Kochi's Ernakulam district

with video.

In Kerala families could be seen paddling boats provided by the military, while in some areas families commandeered local wooden boats to ferry themselves to safety.

A member of parliament from Kerala, Shashi Tharoor, shared on Twitter an appeal for help made by a woman who said

she was trapped on the third floor of a temple with phone batteries running out.

"Over 36 people including myself and family stranded here. Phone network and charge finishing please help in any possible way," Devika Sreekumar said in the Facebook post.

Greeta Mathew pleaded for

help for her family in a Twitter message.

"Anybody reading this, PLZ HELP. My relatives are stuck on the upper floor of house with an 8 months pregnant lady, in Edayaranmula, Pathanamthitta dist. All rescue control rooms' numbers busy. No rescue team reached yet. No contact with family since last evening," she

said.

North and central Kerala has been worst hit by the floods but all 14 of the state's districts have been put on "red alert" as heavy rain is predicted for several days.

In the main city of Kochi, the international airport will remain closed until at least August 26, authorities said.

Bahrain remembers former Indian PM AB Vajpayee

TDI | Manama

Residents of Bahrain are cherishing the fond memories of Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to the Kingdom two decades ago.

Vajpayee, the Indian politician who thrice served as Prime Minister of India, had visited several countries in the Middle East.

As part of delegations, and on diplomatic assignments, Vajpayee had travelled (from 1965-1993) to several countries including East Africa, Canada, Japan, Switzerland and Geneva.

He led the Indian Delegation to the Human Rights Commission Meeting at Geneva in 1993 and the Delegation of Standing Committees of External Affairs to Gulf countries including Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait.

During his visit to Bahrain, Vajpayee had Darshan at the Krishna Temple in Manama.

In 1988, the Thattai Hindu Community (THC) President Baboo H Kewalram wrote a letter to Vajpayee which reads: 'Hearty congratulations on being



File images from AB Vajpayee's visit to Bahrain

appointed as the Prime Minister of India. You will kindly recall that during your recent visit to Bahrain you had Darshan of Shree Nathji Temple at Manama when the Temple priest told you that you would be the next Prime Minister of India'.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee wrote a reply to the above letter which is kept in the records of the Manama temple: 'Dear Shri Kewalram, I am in receipt of your letter of 10th March 1998. I am thankful to you and all the

members of the Thattai Hindu Community in Bahrain for their greetings and good wishes. They are a source of inspiration and strength to me in serving the nation to the best of my ability'.

THC Vice Chairman Bhagwan Asarpotta said, 'Vajpayee had visited Shri Krishna temple when he was the opposition leader. I have fond memories of him visiting the temple. I remember he made a speech at the THC auditorium in which each sentence was thought-pro-



voking."

"He reached the temple by Sheraton accompanied by around 8 cars but only 4 cars could enter the temple area. And he said in Hindi that those who could enter the temple was lucky," reminisces Asarpotta.

In 2003 when Vajpayee was the Prime Minister, India and Bahrain signed five agreements, including an extradition treaty that deals with concrete steps to combat terrorism and strengthens bilateral cooperation in con-

trol of crime. The agreements which were signed in the presence of visiting Bahrain Prime Minister HRH Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, also included a memorandum of understanding on foreign office consultations.

The Indian Embassy has informed that a condolence book for the departed dignitary will be kept open by on August 19 and 20 from 10am to 4pm at the Embassy building in Seef.

Gunmen attack Kabul

● The training centre is overseen by the National Security Directorate

● Commandos were also deployed to the scene

Kabul | Afghanistan

Gunmen attacked an intelligence training centre in Kabul yesterday, officials said, as families buried loved ones killed by a suicide bomber a day earlier in the war-weary Afghan capital.

The attack on the training facility was the latest incident in a blood-soaked week that saw militants deliver crippling blows to government forces across Afghanistan.

"Clashes are ongoing and the area is cordoned off by the Afghan security forces," said Kabul police spokesman Hashmat Stanikzai.

The firefight erupted near a training centre overseen by the National Security Directorate -- Afghanistan's intelligence agency -- with the gunmen holed



An Afghan resident (R) weep for his relative following a suicide attack in Kabul on August 15, 2018

up in a construction site near residential buildings, an official at the scene said.

Live television footage showed humvees patrolling the empty streets while gunfire echoed and a helicopter circling above.

Commandos were also deployed to the scene to help contain the fighting, according to

another security official.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the incident.

Bloody week

The attack comes just hours after a suicide bomber detonated explosives inside an education centre in a predominantly Shiite area of western Kabul, where students were studying

for college entrance exams, killing at least 37 people.

The attack was claimed by the Islamic State (IS) group Thursday via their Amaq propaganda service, as families of the dead held a mass funeral where mourners wept and clutched the wooden coffins.

An industrial-sized digger helped soften the arid ground for the fresh graves as men removed rocks from the soil with pickaxes.

Mourners decried the unrelenting bloodshed, while others dismissed murmurs of possible ceasefires and peace negotiations between the government and the Taliban, even though the attack was claimed by IS.

"Death to your ceasefire and death to your ghost peace talks," cried one of the funeral attendees. "They are killing our educated people and everyday they are killing us."

The surge in violence comes just weeks after Afghans marked an unprecedented country-wide ceasefire between the Taliban and government forces in June, giving some temporary relief to civilians.

The brief respite sparked hopes the truce could clear the



Despite the many terrorist attacks by anti-state elements, the city is greatly developing and was the fifth fastest-growing city in the world as of 2012

way for talks to end the nearly 17-year-old conflict.

However the devastating attacks across the country in recent days have led many to question how such negotiations could move ahead.

"Everyday we are witnessing deadly attacks in Kabul and other major cities. So, I believe the Taliban do not believe in peace talks," said shopkeeper Shahen-shah Shahin in Kabul.

Rescue efforts continue after Italy bridge collapse

Genoa | Italy

Italy's populist government was on a war footing yesterday with the Italian operator of the bridge that collapsed and killed dozens in the port city of Genoa as desperate efforts to find survivors in the rubble went into a third day.

Shares in Atlantia, the holding company of infrastructure giant Autostrade per l'Italia, plummeted after the government said it would seek to revoke its lucrative contracts.

On the ground, rescue workers toiled among bulldozers and cranes to find survivors amid the ruins of a vast span of the Morandi bridge that collapsed on Tuesday, sending about 35 cars and several trucks plunging 45 metres (150 feet) onto railway tracks below.

"We were unlucky last night, we did not find anyone. We are still looking for cavities that can hide people, living or not," said fire official Emanuele Gissi, adding that the unstable rubble has made the search operation



Rescuers at work amid rubble and wreckage

"dangerous".

"We are trying to cut the big pieces of concrete that fell off the bridge, after which we will move them with the cranes and send in search dogs. Then our personnel will try to see if there are any positive signs."

The government has blamed Autostrade per l'Italia, which operates and maintains nearly half of the country's motorways, for the tragedy that Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said Thursday has claimed at least

38 lives.

Children aged eight, 12 and 13 were among the dead, Interior Minister Matteo Salvini said Wednesday, adding that more people were still missing. Sixteen people were injured.

Three Chileans, who live in Italy, and four French nationals were also killed.

The government has announced a year-long state of emergency in the region, with five million euros going towards recovery work.

Trump blacklists critical ex-CIA chief Brennan

Washington | United States

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday revoked the security clearance of former Central Intelligence Agency director John Brennan, and warned several other prominent critics they too risk being blacklisted.

In a highly unusually directive, Trump claimed that Brennan -- a former station chief in Riyadh who rose to lead the formidable spy agency -- had become "erratic."

Brennan is a frequent Trump critic. Just hours before Trump issued the edict, the former CIA chief had accused the Republican leader of failing "to live up to minimum standards of decency, civility, & probity."

And after Trump's surprise decision was made public at a White House briefing, Brennan quickly hit back, accusing the president of trying to curb free speech in a "politically motivated" action that he said should "gravely worry all Americans."

In his statement, Trump

suggested the ex-spy chief had tossed around "unfounded and outrageous allegations -- wild outbursts on the internet and television -- about this administration" and engaged in "increasingly frenzied commentary."

Brennan, who has briefed Republican and Democratic presidents, could now lose access to classified information -- a courtesy usually afforded to former senior officials of all political stripes.

The White House has been besieged by a scandal over a former aide's tell-all memoir in recent days and often tries to defuse crises by stoking new controversy.

It said that eight other officials could also lose their clearances, including former director of national intelligence James Clapper, former CIA director and four-star general Michael Hayden and ex-FBI director James Comey.

The individuals were accused -- without details -- of politicizing and monetizing their public service and security clearances.

Schumacher not being moved from Switzerland

Geneva | Switzerland

Ex-Formula One champion Michael Schumacher is not being moved from his home in Switzerland to the Spanish island of Mallorca, a spokeswoman said Thursday, refuting a report by a Swiss magazine.

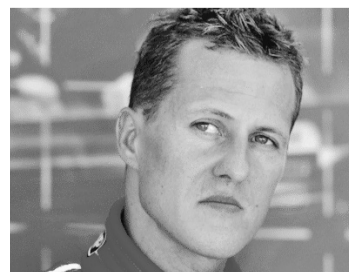
Swiss news magazine L'Illustré reported this week that the seven-time world champion, who sustained serious head injuries in a 2013 skiing accident, was being moved to a vast prop-

erty in the village of Andratx on Mallorca, recently purchased by his wife Corinna.

A number of media around the world have picked up the story in recent days, prompting the family to exit its habitual silence on all private matters.

"The Schumacher family does not plan to move to Mallorca," family spokeswoman Sabine Kehm told AFP in an email.

L'Illustré based its story on a comment from Andratx mayor Katia Rouarch, saying she could



Michael Schumacher

"officially confirm" the 49-year-old German sportsman would be

settling in the village.

"Everything is being put in place to accommodate him," she told the magazine.

But it appears that the vast property that Corinna Schumacher reportedly bought from Real Madrid president Florentino Perez in Andratx for some 30 million euros (\$34 million) is meant to be used as a vacation home for her and the couple's two adult children.

Schumacher fell and hit his head against a rock while skiing

in the French Alps with his family in December 2013.

He spent time in hospital in Grenoble and Lausanne before being brought to his home on the shores of Lake Geneva in Switzerland in September 2014 to continue his rehabilitation.

Schumacher's family has avoided providing any details about his health, insisting it is not a public issue, and his current condition remains a mystery.

Man who smashed Trump Hollywood star justifies attack

Los Angeles | United States

A US man accused of taking a pickaxe to President Donald Trump's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame justified his actions on Wednesday as he pleaded not guilty to a felony vandalism charge.

"I don't personally think there should be any charges brought against me because what I did, I believe, was a rightful and just act, and I think that the repercussions of it were only positive," Austin Mikel Clay, 24, told ABC7 after appearing in court in Los Angeles.

Clay, who faces three years in prison if convicted, smashed Trump's star in Hollywood on July 25 and then reportedly called police and told them "see you soon" before leaving the scene.

He later turned himself in to police in Beverly Hills.

It was the second time Trump's star had been vandalized in less than two years.

In October 2016, a man dressed as a construction worker smashed the star with a pickaxe and sledgehammer. James Otis pleaded no contest to felony vandalism and was sentenced to three years' probation and agreed to pay \$4,400 for the damage.

Chinese MH370 relatives ask to meet Malaysia PM

Beijing | China

Chinese relatives of those who disappeared on board Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 on Thursday asked to meet the country's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad when he visits China this week.

The plane disappeared in March 2014 with 239 people -- mostly from China -- on board, while en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing.

Amid a heavy police presence, about a dozen relatives gathered outside the Malaysian Embassy in Beijing where they handed over a letter addressed to the Malaysian government.

"We ask that Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir, or other representatives (of the Malaysian government) meet with Chinese relatives of those on board MH370 during the official visit," the letter read.

Mahathir, who became Malaysia's premier for a second time after a shock election victory in May, will arrive in China Friday for a five-day visit, including a meeting with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Monday.

Other requests include resuming the search, a monthly meeting with airline and Malaysian officials, as well as for investigators to thoroughly explain the recent investigation report.

A similar letter was also given to the foreign ministry.

WORLD

features

The art of living in the Amazon



Drone view of the Jaraua river, at Mamiraua Sustainable Development Reserve in Amazonas state

Swimming in the Amazon river also means learning to avoid flesh-eating piranhas

AFP | Mamiraua Reserve, Brazil

Learning to swim in the Amazon river basin also means learning to avoid flesh-eating piranhas and snapping caimans.

Residents of the Mamiraua and Amana Sustainable Development Reserves, deep in the Amazon rainforest, are experts at the art of survival. But they're just as at home caring for local plants and animals.

Life here is a balancing act: you learn to avoid dangerous creatures, harvest the jungle fruit, and go with the flow as the seasons change and the river rises and falls.

Roads are scarce -- and in many areas, non-existent -- so the rivers serve as highways, affected only by the changing water level.

Some riverside homes jut into the water on a raft or logs that allow them to float if the tide rises. Other homes are built on stilts for protection from high tides.

The main source of income for Amana reserve residents is harvesting acai.

The purple fruit, known scientifically as *Euterpe oleracea*, looks like a dark grape and is popular in Brazil. Nutrient-dense and antioxidant-rich, it is increasingly popular in health stores in the United States and Europe.

"Here we have plenty of acai," said Joao, 52, who lives in the village of Boa Esperanca. "But today we've picked enough."

Harvesters, usually children, climb up acai trees -- which look like coconut

palms but have a thinner trunk -- to break off the long drooping branches packed with rows of berries.

It's a risky aerial feat some 20 meters (65 feet) above ground. To train, the children practice on shorter trees.

Monster fish, bald monkeys

The rainforest also provides locals with the extraordinary pirarucu fish, also known as paiche or arapaima (scientific name: *Arapaima gigas*).

This can weigh up to 200 kilos (440 pounds) and grow to three meters (10 feet) long. It is coveted for its tasty meat but vulnerable to

overexploitation.

The Mamiraua Institute wants fishing to be carefully controlled and local residents, who recognize the fish as an important source of income, set quotas.

But that close relationship with surrounding fauna is not always what scientists of the Mamiraua Institute would like to see.

Dona Maria, 71, has taken home a baby bald uakari monkey (*Cacajao calvus*) -- a symbol of the reserve and a legally protected species.

The red-faced primate is known for its coat of long fur that sharply contrasts with its bald head and bright red face.

"For me, it's like a little dog. We found it in the jungle and it's always in my arms," says the woman, who happily cuddles the monkey.

200

The rainforest provides locals with pirarucu fish which weigh up to 200 kilos and grow to three meters



Children of Boa Esperanca village play in streets of the community at the Amana Sustainable Development Reserve in the state of Amazonas, Brazil



People await the departure of wooden boats in one of the many improvised ports along the riverside in the city of Tefe, about 500 km west of Manaus, capital of the state of Amazonas, Brazil

What World Cup?

Usually, the silence in Sao Raimundo do Jaraua, a riverside village of some 20 homes, is interrupted only by the gentle splash of river dolphins emerging for air, or the cawing of an unseen bird.

The rest of Brazil -- Latin America's economic powerhouse with mega-cities like Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo -- might as well be on a different planet.

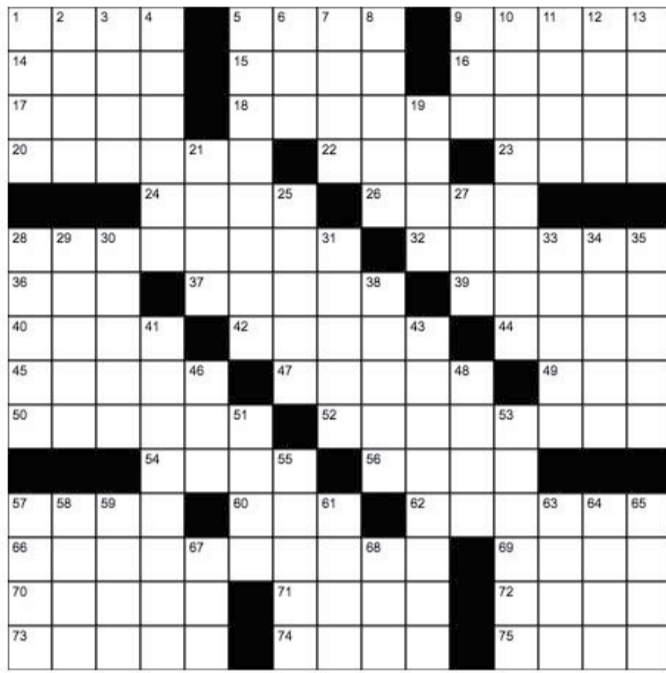
During the World Cup in June, one village family invited scientists with the World Wildlife Fund-Brazil and the Mamiraua Institute to watch Neymar and the rest of the team battle away in Russia. The television was powered by a diesel generator.

But neighbours appeared indifferent to the fate of the national team.

One family chatted, ignoring the action, while two children rowed out on the river and a group of young people showed up exhausted after a day of fishing.

entertainment

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



System of rule; 69- Nick Charles's wife; 70- This is only ___; 71- Arrow poison; 72- RR stops; 73- Hawaiian state birds; 74- Celestial body; 75- "___ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto);

Down

1- Crew needs; 2- Yikes!; 3- Wyo. neighbor; 4- One-celled organism; 5- Bookish; 6- Sawbuck; 7- Util. bill; 8- Office subs; 9- Everything; 10- Dawdler; 11- Divine Secrets of the ___ Sisterhood; 12- Steven Chu's cabinet dept.; 13- Sweeney ___; 19- Inner surface of the hand; 21- Flaw, so to speak; 25- Bombastic; 27- Western Hemisphere org.; 28- Flora and fauna; 29- Type of sanctum; 30- Sacred song; 31- Like salt; 33- Irritated; 34- English architect Jones; 35- Male deer; 38- Kidney-related; 41- Some Annapurna climbers; 43- Sparkling; 46- Sundial number; 48- Fashion first name; 51- Govt. agent; 53- In ___ (sort of); 55- Big rigs; 57- Alaska's first governor; 58- Cast a ballot; 59- Tied; 61- Dispatched; 63- Small children; 64- Sp. ladies; 65- Comfort; 67- ACLU concerns; 68- PBS supporter;

Across

1- A Chaplin; 5- Editor's note; 9- So far; 14- Excuse me; 15- Prefix with conference; 16- Grassy plain; 17- ___ Cop; 18- Without a job; 20- Astute; 22- Tax pro; 23- Division of a hospital; 24- Can of worms?; 26- Sow chow; 28- Bearing two branches; 32- New Zealand natives; 36- Officeholders; 37- Swollen part; 39- Pen-iless; 40- ___ epic scale; 42- Cassette half; 44- Lamb's pseudonym; 45- Fax forerunner; 47- Subfusc; 49- Ovum; 50- Axilla; 52- Brandy distilled from cider; 54- Intentions; 56- Falsehoods; 57- Daredevil Knieval; 60- Loser to DDE; 62- Deadly fly; 66-

BEETLE BAILEY



WORD OF THE DAY

Volatile

Definition:

1 a : characterized by or subject to rapid or unexpected change, (b) : unable to hold the attention fixed because of an inherent lightness or fickleness of disposition (2) a : tending to erupt into violence : explosive, (b) : easily aroused, (c) : lighthearted, lively (3) : readily vaporizable at a relatively low temperature (4) : difficult to capture or hold

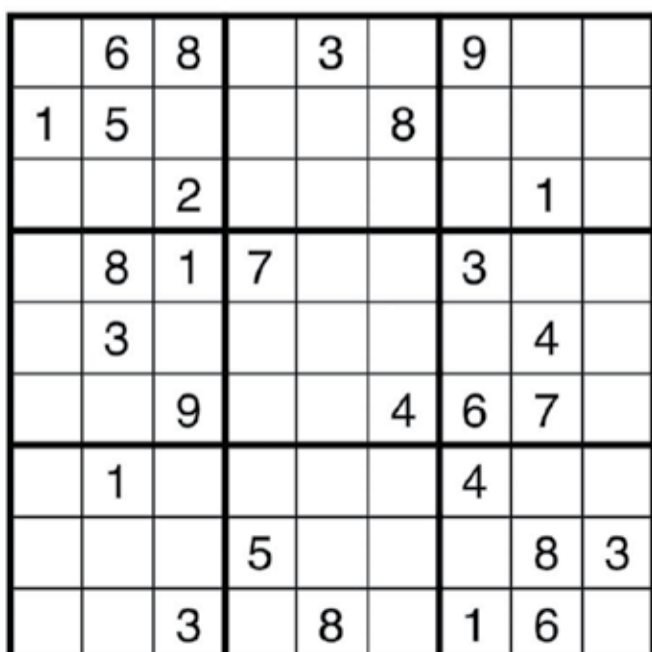
permanently : evanescent, transitory (5) : flying or having the power to fly

Did You Know?

Volatile was originally for the birds—quite literally. Back in the 14th century, volatile was a noun that referred to birds (especially wild fowl) or other winged creatures, such as butterflies. That's not as flighty as it sounds. Volatile traces back to the Latin verb volare, which means "to fly." By the end of the 16th century, people were us-

ing volatile as an adjective for things that were so light they seemed ready to fly. The adjective was soon extended to vapors and gases, and by the early 17th century, volatile was being applied to individuals or things as prone to sudden change as some gaseous substances. In recent years, volatile has landed in economic, political, and technical contexts far from its avian origins.

SUDOKU



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



How to play

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

YOUR STAR TODAY



Aries

The influence of the planetary aspects will bring an end to any lethargy you've been feeling. It's an excellent day to head outside and do something active. Gardening or landscaping can make great use of your energy and creativity. Fresh air and physical exertion will benefit your health.



Taurus

Take charge of your health today. You'll likely wake up feeling energetic. Take advantage of the energy boost from the planetary movements to actively do things that maintain your sense of well-being. Consider emotional and spiritual aspects of your health. Sit outside in the fresh air.



Gemini

If you saw something in a craft shop or art studio that you'd like to buy but can't afford, consider making it. Even if you don't think you're artistic, you could surprise yourself if you try. There are resources for novice crafters. They can give you the needed support and instructions.



Cancer

It's the perfect day to head outside. You'll likely be feeling positive and energetic, and the fresh air, sunshine, and physical activity may be long overdue. Even if this is a workday, make the most of your breaks and lunch hour by walking. This evening could be the opportune time to get together with friends.



Leo

It won't be surprising if you're frustrated with a close friend or partner who's far less ambitious than you. The energy in the air can emphasize your dynamic ways of reaching goals and achieving success. Others who are passive or fearful may be difficult for you to understand.



Virgo

See about using your good relationships with friends and loved ones to get group activities going today. You're probably feeling great, and the idea of socializing appeals to you. See about inviting people over for supper or cards. If you're feeling especially lively, some sports may be just the ticket to get you moving.



Libra

If you lack a regular exercise routine, today's a great day to remedy that. Exercise doesn't have to exhaust you or hurt. Even activities like walking or yoga are excellent ways to stay healthy. Play a sport that appeals to you and you combine fun with exercise. Even dancing is a fantastic means of exercise.



Scorpio

Put your ambition into action today. The day's planetary aspects should find you feeling energetic and positive, so take steps to achieve your goals. Nothing will happen if you don't actively pursue them. The years can pass quickly. You don't want to be sitting in a rocker wondering "what if."



Sagittarius

Don't hesitate when it comes to taking on a project or making plans today. Extra energy will complement your organizational skills, making a perfect combination for handling almost anything. Write down your plans and goals to help stay focused.



Capricorn

Today should go well for you. Expect to feel a renewed energy and fresher perspective, especially concerning anything work related. Make the most of this by finishing projects that have been stalled or organizing your desk or closets. Feel confident that you can handle any task quickly.



Aquarius

Today you may feel very creative and ambitious. You might want to use this energy to work on an artistic project, or you may choose to channel it into such activities as organizing your home or workspace. If you plan for it, there should be plenty of time to do both if you have a mind to. Make the most of the day.



Pisces

Don't be surprised if you feel super today. Chances are good that you'll enjoy renewed physical strength, with energy to spare. It might be a good day to tackle any projects that require muscle. Perhaps there are household repairs that need tackling or furniture to move. You might want to go to the gym.

SPORTS

Thomas, Froome to ride in Tour of Britain

Froome set to appear in race for first time since 2009



Geraint Thomas and Chris Froome

AFP | London

Tour de France champion Geraint Thomas and the man whose crown he took in July, Chris Froome, will compete in next month's Tour of Britain rather than the final Grand Tour of the season, the Vuelta a Espana.

Both riders have rarely graced their home Tour in the past decade, Thomas finishing seventh last year in what was his first appearance since 2011 and Team Sky team-mate Froome last competing in 2009 when he finished 50th for his previous team Barloworld.

Thomas, 32, was only drawn to compete last year because the race finished in his home city of Cardiff and has been lured back for what will be his first major race since the Tour de France as this year's edition begins in Pembrey Country Park, Carmarthenshire, Wales, on September 2.

The Vuelta gets underway on August 25.

"As soon as I'd finished the Tour I knew I wanted to ride the Tour of Britain and race on home roads," Thomas



As soon as I'd finished the Tour I knew I wanted to ride the Tour of Britain and race on home roads. It starts in Wales which will be special, and then I get to go and race across the whole of the United Kingdom. I can't wait

GERAINT THOMAS

told the Team Sky website.

"It starts in Wales which will be special, and then I get to go and race across the whole of the United Kingdom. I can't wait.

"I want to go to the race in the shape to compete and enjoy it. We'll have to see how the next few weeks go but I'm looking forward to it and I know we will have a strong team there."

Four-time Tour de France champion Froome, who finished third behind

Thomas in this year's Tour, said he had focussed on the Vuelta in the past four years finally winning it in 2017.

"It's been a long time since I've raced the Tour of Britain," said Froome.

"The Vuelta a Espana has always been such a big goal and sadly coincided with the Tour of Britain, but not doing La Vuelta this year gives me the chance to come back to the UK and race on what looks like a great parcours.

"I'm really looking forward to riding. I always remember there being a great atmosphere at the Tour of Britain and the race has only got bigger over the years. I'm really looking forward to coming back," added the 33-year-old Kenyan-born star.

Surprisingly given their dominance especially of the Tour de France, Team Sky has only won the Tour of Britain once when Bradley Wiggins prevailed in 2013.

Following the start in Wales, this year's race will take riders into the West Country and up to Cumbria before returning to its regular finishing circuit in central London on September 9.

Sainz to replace Alonso

Reuters | London

Carlos Sainz has signed a multi-year deal to replace Fernando Alonso at McLaren from the 2019 Formula One season, the team confirmed on Thursday.

Double world champion Alonso announced his retirement from the sport on Tuesday, ending months of speculation about his future.

Sainz will enter his fifth season of Formula 1 when he joins the McLaren team next year.

The 23-year-old Spaniard, currently on loan at Renault from Red Bull, sits 11th in the drivers' championship standings with Renault.

"I'm delighted to finally be able to confirm that I'll be a McLaren driver from the 2019 season," Sainz said.



Carlos Sainz

"It's something I've been looking at for a while and I'm very excited about this next chapter in my career.

"Fernando is of course one of them, so it's particularly special that I'll be taking his seat as part of the next generation of Spanish racing drivers behind the wheel of a McLaren."

It is not clear who will be Sainz' team mate at McLaren next season, though current driver Stoffel Vandoorne and British youngster Lando Norris are favourites for the seat.

McLaren chief Zak Brown executive said Sainz, who began his Formula One career with Red Bull-owned Toro Rosso, would bring a lot of racing experience to the role.

"We've been assessing him for some time now and rate him very highly among the next generation of young talent emerging through the ranks in Formula One," he said.

"Although he's just 23, he'll be starting his fifth season in the sport with us and will bring with him a huge amount of racing experience, both in Formula One and with our partner Renault."

Bahrain's first global sports media streaming platform launched

TDT | Manama

Brave Combat Federation announced the launch of Brave TV, the first online sports media streaming platform from the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Brave Combat Federation will provide two events exclusive for those who subscribe the platform initially.

Brave Combat Federation expanded its global reach by being broadcasted live through Abu Dhabi Sports in the MENA region, StarSat and VodaCom for Africa, FloCombat for the United States of America, Combate in Brazil, B1B in Bulgaria and Fite TV in USA, UK, Canada and Australia.

The rest of the world will be covered through online services provided by Brave TV.

The launch marks a major success for the initiative which functions under the instructions of HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

The platform will feature extensive martial arts content as well as related licensed material, including docu-

mentaries, programs, live events and competitions.

Brave Combat Federation has estimated that more than a billion mixed martial arts fans it can potentially reach through online streaming.

Brave TV will give global exposure to athletes and the sport by ensuring total global coverage for the organisation found in Bahrain.

The launch marks the first of its kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Currently Brave Combat Federation is the fastest growing mixed martial arts organisation in the world. The launch of Brave Combat Federation has enabled swift growth of sports media and online powered web streaming services.

Currently Brave Combat Federation has announced upcoming events in Colombia, UAE, Pakistan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, India and South Africa. The development will boost the upcoming Brave International Combat Week 2018 which is the largest sports initiative to be hosted in Bahrain with participation confirmed from over 103 nations.

BRAVE 14 features two Combat Sambo champions



Ikram Aliskerov with the Russian squad during 2017 Combat Sambo World Championships

TDT | Manama

Brave Combat Federation features two Combat Sambo World champions in the fight card for Brave 14 hosted in Tangier, Morocco.

Velimurad Alkhasov claimed the gold in Combat Sambo World Championships in 57 kg category during 2016 while Ikram Aliskerov had secured the gold in Combat Sambo World Championships during the year 2017.

This marks the first time a global mixed martial arts promotion is featuring multiple Combat Sambo World Champions in the same fight night.

Ikram Aliskerov will be facing Diego Gonzalez from Sweden in his third

appearance for the Brave Combat Federation.

Ikram is undefeated in his professional MMA career with five straight wins. In his previous appearance he defeated South African superstar in a bout that went the distance.

The former ACB flyweight champion Velimurad will be competing after an absence of two years.

The flyweight division will have a decisive battle when Velimurad clashes with the veteran Brazilian Jiu Jitsu specialist, Sean Santella. Sean Santella had specified that he will not be discounting Velimurad for his professional record due to his vast Combat Sambo experience and background.



France top new-style FIFA rankings

● **Germany slump to 15th spot**

Reuters | Zurich

World champions France predictably shot to the top of the FIFA rankings published on Thursday while previous leaders Germany slumped to 15th after their humiliating first round exit in Russia.

The rankings were the first to be issued since France beat Croatia 4-2 in the World Cup final on July 15 and also the first since FIFA replaced its much-criticised previous formula.

France were followed by Belgium, the team they beat 1-0 in the semi-finals, with Brazil dropping one place to third after their quarter-final exit against the Belgians. Surprise finalists Croatia leapt from 20th to fourth.

Quarter-finalists Uruguay



Hugo Lloris lifts the trophy as France celebrate winning the World Cup

climbed nine places to fifth while England's run to the semi-finals took them up to sixth place from a previous twelfth.

Argentina dropped to 11th after a chaotic campaign which included a 3-0 group stage defeat by Croatia on the way to a last 16

exit against France where they lost 4-3.

Hosts Russia, who began the tournament at a modest 71st



The new FIFA ranking method, which is based on the Elo method of creating sports rankings, adds or subtracts points based on the result of a match rather than calculating an average. The amount added (or subtracted) is calculated based on the strength of the opponent and the importance of the match

place, leapt 21 spots after their surprise run to the quarter-finals.

FIFA said its new formula, approved by the FIFA Council before the World Cup, relied on adding or subtracting points, depending on the results of matches, rather than averaging points over a given period of time.

The global soccer governing body said the new system was developed over two years during which "a large number of different algorithms was tested and extensively discussed".

FIFA said the new system would no longer weight matches according to which region they were played in and this would provide "fair and equal opportunities for all teams across all confederations".

FIFA said the removal of an annual average point calculation, which was part of the previous formula, would have a number of benefits, including reducing the ability of teams to influence their ranking by avoiding friendlies.

Zverev loses after poor performance



Alexander Zverev

Express | Cincinnati

Alexander Zverev crashed out of the Cincinnati Masters with a surprising 5-7, 6-4, 7-5 defeat to Robin Haase.

Zverev, ranked No 3 in the world, has had a turbulent season and he struggled again with his opening match at a Masters 1000 event.

The German narrowly edged the first set 7-5 but was then broken once in the second to lose 6-4.

Both players then threw everything at the decider but it was Haase who took the ascendancy with an early break to lead 4-2.

Zverev bounced back by winning the next three games in a row to give himself hope of a turnaround.

But Haase broke again in the

11th game before serving for the match, which he won with his second match point.

Haase will face either Bradley Klahn or Pablo Carreno Busta in the third round.

Meanwhile, Zverev will have plenty to ponder before he returns to action at the US Open later this month.

The 21-year-old has played little tennis during the American hard-court season as he also lost to Stefanos Tsitsipas in the Rogers Cup quarter-finals last week.

So it is looking highly unlikely he will finish the season strongly, although 1996 Wimbledon winner Richard Krajicek has recently tipped him to have a bright future.

"I like (Alexander) Zverev, who struggles a little bit in the Grand Slams," he said.

La Liga announces plans to play regular season games in US

Reuters | Madrid

La Liga's organising body announced yesterday that it plans to hold regular season Spanish top flight games in the United States in the future.

"LaLiga, Spain's top-flight soccer competition, and Relevent, a multinational media, sports and entertainment group, today announced a first-of-a-kind 15-year, equal joint venture to promote soccer in the U.S. and Canada," said a statement.

"As part of the agreement, LaLiga plans to bring a regular season club match to the United States, the first to be played outside of Europe."

La Liga did not give any details on when the first game across the Atlantic was set to take place and did not immediately respond to a request for information from Reuters.



Real Madrid's Gareth Bale in action at Hard Rock Stadium, Miami, USA

Spain's biggest clubs Real Madrid and Barcelona recently returned from pre-season tours in the United States. They played against top European sides such

as AC Milan, AS Roma, Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United in the International Champions Cup, a tournament organised by Relevent.

In July 2017, the two sides played each other in a friendly 'Clasico', selling out Miami's Hard Rock stadium.

La Liga president Javier Tebas has spoken on many occasions about his desire to play regular season games outside of Spain and mimic the NFL's highly successful policy of playing official games in London since 2007.

"We're devoted to growing the passion for soccer around the world. This ground-breaking agreement is certain to give a major impulse to the popularity of the beautiful game in the U.S. and Canada," Tebas said.

"Relevent has filled stadiums across the U.S. with the International Champions Cup, we're thrilled to partner with them on a joint mission to grow soccer in North America."

Ronaldo exit no excuse for Madrid - Casemiro

Reuters | Tallinn

Ronaldinho cannot use the loss of Cristiano Ronaldo as an excuse for underachieving this season, midfielder Casemiro said after losing the UEFA Super Cup 4-2 to Atletico Madrid in Real's first competitive game since their talisman joined Juventus.

"Of course we miss Cristiano, but that's in the past now," Casemiro told reporters after his side were overpowered by their city rivals in extra time in Tallinn in coach Julen Lopetegui's first match since succeeding Zinedine Zidane.



Casemiro and Cristiano Ronaldo

"We cannot talk about Cristiano to cover things up, because any team would miss Cristiano. We are upset about losing a trophy but this is just the start.

We have total confidence in our coach and giving excuses is not what Real Madrid do."

Real have not yet signed a replacement for the man who

scored 451 goals and led them to four Champions League titles in the last five seasons.

The club received 105 million euros (\$119.4 million) from Juve for Ronaldo in July, but the only new recruit at the Bernabeu has been goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois from Chelsea.

Casemiro, however, said the loss to Atletico did not mean his side had to go out and make urgent signings.

"One result doesn't mean we have a better or worse squad, those in charge of the club will decide whether or not we need more signings," added the Brazilian.

Ozil's racism claims are 'nonsense': Kroos



Mesut Ozil and Toni Kroos.jpg

AFP | Berlin

Germany midfielder Toni Kroos says Mesut Ozil was 'out of order' to make accusations of racism within the German set up as he retired from international football last month.

"Basically Mesut is a long-serving national team player and deserved a better exit as a footballer," Kroos, 28, told German daily Bild.

"I have played with Mesut for many years and know that he is a nice guy. But the way he retired was out of order.

"The proportion of his statement which was fair and justified was unfortunately overshadowed by a much higher proportion of nonsense.

"I think he himself knows that racism does not exist within the national team and the DFB.

"On the contrary, we are always committed to diversity and integration.

"Mesut was a good example of that, like many of our team mates."

Ozil, 29, created a furore last month when he retired from international football in an explosive three-part statement in which he accused German FA (DFB) president Reinhard Grindel of racism.

"In the eyes of Grindel and his supporters, I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose," wrote Ozil, sparking a racism storm in Germany and triggering fierce debate about integration.

Ozil fell offside with German fans and was booed during pre-World Cup friendlies after he and fellow midfielder Ilkay Gundogan posed for pictures with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in May, raising questions about the pair's loyalty to Germany.

Only a handful of Germany players have spoken about the saga, which captain Manuel Neuer described as 'stressful' while Thomas Mueller said there is "no question of racism within the team".

Head coach Joachim Loew has yet to comment.

Real 'must improve in all areas': coach

Bleacherreport | Madrid

Julen Lopetegui stressed Real Madrid "have to improve in all facets" after their first competitive match under his management saw them suffer a 4-2 extra-time defeat to bitter rivals Atletico Madrid in the UEFA Super Cup.

Atleti's Saul Niguez and Koke struck in quick succession in the additional period at Tallinn's A. Le Coq Arena after the game ended 2-2 in normal time.

Real had been 2-1 up, with Karim Benzema cancelling out Diego Costa's first-minute opener and Sergio Ramos then converting a 63rd-minute penalty, before Costa netted his second of the contest to draw things level.

Lopetegui was quoted by AS as saying in his post-match press conference: "We had good game phases but it was not enough.

"We have to congratulate Atletico, I believe that they have won deservedly.

"We are not happy and the negative is that we have conceded four goals and this is not normal. This will have to be improved, without a doubt.

"We have to improve in all facets, we do not like when we make mistakes and we have to improve in everything, not only in individual errors.

"(It is a) feeling of frustration and sadness. But knowing that responsibility forces us to get



Real Madrid conceded four as they lost to rivals Atletico in Tallinn

"We have to improve in all facets, we do not like when we make mistakes and we have to improve in everything, not only in individual errors. (It is a) feeling of frustration and sadness"

JULEN LOPETEGUI

up and try to improve and start the league as we want to start."

Real, having not only seen Lopetegui's predecessor Zinedine Zidane but also club record goalscorer Cristiano Ronaldo depart the club over the summer, begin their 2018-19 La Liga campaign on Sunday when they host Getafe.

While they have won the Champions League in each of the last three years and four of the last five, they have claimed the LaLiga title only once in that time, and finished third last term.

Lopetegui said when asked about Real's hunger having won the Champions League so many times: "We want to focus on the season without thinking about the last years and get the best out of the team.

"We want to get up now and think about the league, which makes us excited. The team has won few LaLigas in recent seasons and we want to start well.

"They are not less hungry for having won the Champions League. They were hungry, eager, excited to win this title."

Ex-Portugal boss to coach South Korea



Paulo Bento

AFP | Seoul, South Korea

Former Portugal boss Paulo Bento will be unveiled Friday as South Korea's new coach, the Yonhap news agency reported yesterday.

Bento took the Portuguese reins in 2010 after four seasons in charge of Sporting Lisbon and guided the national side to the Euro 2012 semi-finals, but was sacked two years later after an ignominious home defeat to Albania.

He later had stints in charge of Brazil's Cruzeiro and Olympiakos in Greece, and was appointed coach of Chinese Super League club Chongqing Lifan in December last year.

The CSL side sacked him last month after he failed to improve the side's fortunes.

"Bento has been named as the new coach," Yonhap news agency quoted a Korea Foot-

ball Association (KFA) official as saying.

A KFA spokesman declined to comment, saying the new coach will be unveiled on Friday.

Bento -- a tough-tackling defensive midfielder capped 35 times by Portugal -- would replace South Korean Shin Tae-yong, whose contract expired last month.

The contract terms remain unclear but his annual wage is expected to be higher than the 1.5 billion won (\$1.4 million) received by Germany's Uli Stielike, who coached South Korea from 2014-17, Yonhap added.

South Korea -- who reached the World Cup semi-finals in 2002 -- exited Russia 2018 at the group stage after defeats to Sweden and Mexico, despite stunning Germany to eliminate the defending champions.

Lahm to be figurehead if Germany host Euro 2024

AFP | Berlin



Philipp Lahm

Former World Cup winner Philipp Lahm will be the head of the organising committee if Germany win the bid to host Euro 2024, it was confirmed on Thursday.

Germany and Turkey are the only two candidates bidding to host the European championships in six years time with a decision by European football's governing body UEFA set to be made on September 27.

Lahm, 34, stepped down from international duty after leading Germany to the 2014 World Cup title and retired from all football in May 2017 after winning a joint record eighth Bundesliga title with Bayern Munich.

Rooney strikes twice as DC down Portland 4-1



Wayne Rooney in action

AFP | Washington

Wayne Rooney scored twice as DC United, fighting for their Major League Soccer playoff lives, beat the Portland Timbers 4-1 on Wednesday.

With MLS still buzzing from the dazzling tackle and pass from Rooney that led to DC's stoppage time game-winner over Orlando on Sunday, the former England and Manchester United star was again the difference maker.

After Portland took the lead on Samuel Armenteros' 35th-minute strike, Rooney scored the equalizer shortly



Rooney's goal scoring capacity was evident during 2009-10 seasons when he scored 34 goals in 44 matches which fetched him "Football Writer 'Player of the Year'"

before halftime, finding open space to receive a through ball from Yamil Asad and firing a left-footed shot past an on-rushing Jeff Attinella.

Jamaican defender Oniel Fisher put DC United ahead 2-1 in the 47th, and two minutes after bouncing a shot off the crossbar Rooney scored again, blasting a free kick past Attinella.

Darren Mattocks came on for Rooney in the 86th minute and rounded out the scoring in stoppage time.

With the win DC jumped from 11th and last to eighth place in the Eastern Conference, pulling within six points of playoff position.



Halep under pressure as rain halts play

AFP | Cincinnati, United States

The women's draw took a beating on Wednesday in Cincinnati, where world number one Simona Halep's was still battling when rain halted play.

The top-seeded Romanian stood 4-6, 6-3, 3-3 against Australian qualifier Ajla Tomljanovic when storms rolled in to bring the night session to an end on a day that had already seen one three-hour rain delay. Halep had regained some momentum after falling two breaks down in the third set, with both women taking medical timeouts.

Halep was just one of the top women to run into trouble in the combined WTA and ATP Masters hardcourt tournament -- the last major



Halep had been a win away from No.1 three times in 2017. She would've become world No.1 last year had she won the final of the French Open (she lost to Jelena Ostapenko), her quarterfinal match at Wimbledon (she lost to Johanna Konta) or the final of Cincinnati (she lost to Garbine Muguruza)

tuneup for the US Open.

Defending champion Garbine Muguruza, playing for the first time since losing in the second round of her Wimbledon title defence, fell 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 to Lesia Tsurenko.

"It was a very ugly match, but I'm happy that I fought, even if the level wasn't very high," said Muguruza, who got a late start to her buildup to the US Open because of an arm injury.

"At the end she managed to come back in the third set and play better and found a way to win the match," said Muguruza, who was at least pleased to report that she played without any pain in her arm.

Second seed Caroline Wozniacki, however, retired with a left knee injury after surrendering the first set 6-4 to Kiki Bertens.

The Dane also lost her opening match a week ago in Montreal, following a second-round defeat at Wimbledon.

Wimbledon champion Angelique Kerber, the fourth seed, claimed her 40th win of the season, but she had to recover from a set down and needed two chances to serve for a 4-6, 7-5, 6-4 victory over Russian Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.

"This was really a match where I was fighting after the first set to coming back," Kerber said. "It was an important match to get my rhythm, feel the ball, especially now after few weeks off."

US Open champion Sloane Stephens bucked the upset trend, winning easily into the third round 6-3, 6-2 over German qualifier Tatjana Maria.

Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus continued her successful tournament debut, beating ninth seed Karolina Pliskova 2-6, 6-3, 7-5. Australian 16th seed Ashleigh Barty defeated Estonian Kaia Kanepi 7-5, 6-3.

Ailing Djokovic advances

In the men's draw Novak Djokovic battled stomach issues to beat Adrian Mannarino and reach the third round.

The Wimbledon champion called for the doctor during the second set but put aside his discomfort to progress 4-6, 6-2, 6-1 over the Frenchman before rain halted afternoon play for nearly three hours.

"I wasn't feeling well, I didn't have a great night and wasn't feeling that well for the first set and a half," said Djokovic, who has won every Masters 1000 title except Cincinnati.

"I made it through, and with the help of the doctor and God...I'm just, you know, happy that I managed to overcome the challenge."

Fifth seed Grigor Dimitrov launched his title defence with a 7-6 (7/5), 7-5 win over Mischa Zverev, the Bulgarian belting 33 winners in a match that started late.

Wimbledon finalist Kevin Anderson beat Jeremy Chardy 7-6 (8/6), 6-2 while Canadian Milos Raonic advanced over Malek Jaziri of Tunisia 6-3, 7-5.

Wawrinka ousts Kei Nishikori



Stan Wawrinka

Kydoos | Cincinnati

Kei Nishikori made a second-round exit from the Western & Southern Open on Wednesday, losing in straight sets to former world No. 3 Stan Wawrinka.

The 2016 U.S. Open champion from Switzerland showed his game is back on track following a prolonged absence with a knee injury that saw his ranking tumble to 263 in June.

Wawrinka, 33, converted 60 percent of his first serves and lost just six of the 31 points in which he did so, allowing just one break in a 6-4, 6-4 win

over 28-year-old Nishikori.

After both players held serve through the first three games of the opening set, world No. 23 Nishikori broke Wawrinka to take a 4-1 lead.

However, the Swiss won the next three games to draw level at 4-4, before earning three break points in the ninth game. Nishikori fought his way back to deuce, but Wawrinka secured the break to go up 5-4 before serving out the set.

Wawrinka held serve throughout the second set and did not face a single break point as he booked his ticket to the round of 16.

Kyrgios victorious after bizarre encounter

Sky News | Cincinnati

Nick Kyrgios is through to the third round of the Cincinnati Masters after a chaotic encounter with Borna Coric.

Kyrgios completely lost the plot in the second set when a line call went against him, smashing a ball petulantly into the night sky before chuntering with the crowd as he gave up on the set.

But he then bounced back in the decider, eventually prevailing 7-6 0-6 6-3, to set up a clash with Hyeon Chung or Juan Martin del Potro.

All was relatively serene during a hard-fought first set between two of the best young players on tour - Kyrgios winning the tie-break 7-1.

But Coric went 2-0 up in set two and, when he then had a passing shot called in, an incredulous Kyrgios smashed the ball into the stands - and started ranting about the umpire.

The set continued but Kyrgios made only sporadic effort, informing his team in the stands that he was going to 'tank', and complaining of boredom while Coric was preparing to serve.

At set point, Kyrgios hit a tame return and



Nick Kyrgios

began walking to his chair before Coric had even finished off the point.

However, Kyrgios then upped his game in set three, producing some brilliantly flamboyant tennis - including power-packed forehands with both feet off the floor - and clinching victory with a service winner.

"I knew I was always going to compete in the third set," said Kyrgios.

"I competed too hard in the first set to sort of just let the match slip and not give

myself a chance to win, at least.

"The second set, when I was 4-0 down, I knew there was no real point going out there and competing and obviously waste energy trying to battle back.

"I knew at 4-0, if I lost the set 6-0, I was going to be serving first in the third set. I think I carried a lot of momentum from the first game, and it ended up being a smart move."

Kyrgios made the final in Cincinnati last year, before losing to Grigor Dimitrov.

"I competed too hard in the first set to sort of just let the match slip and not give myself a chance to win, at least"

NICK KYRGIOS