

Operations at Bapco 'uninterrupted'
 Manama

The National Oil and Gas Authority (NOGA) announced that BAPCO's refinery operations remain uninterrupted, with no impact on the supply of oil products to the local market.

"All our facilities continue to operate safely and without incident. We keep our key stakeholders advised of what we will do in response to such incidents and update our plans as new and relevant information becomes available," NOGA said.

"We have close contact with our Aramco colleagues at the effected facilities and continue to assess the potential implications to our operations in Bahrain, and the crude supply to BAPCO's refinery is uninterrupted to meet the operational requirements of the refinery in compliance with the measures adopted in the Business Continuity Plan."

BAPCO's business continuity plans have been activated in response to the incidents reported from Saudi Arabia on September 14, the NOGA added.

"We develop and practice these plans in response to these kinds of incidents."

EU 'fed up' over Brexit
 Brussels

Luxembourg's PM has attacked Boris Johnson's approach to Brexit, calling the situation a "nightmare".

Xavier Bettel said the British government had failed to put forward any serious proposals for a new deal.



Workshop for representatives of govt service centres held

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Fatal accident driver jailed for three years

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210 fils (includes VAT)



Patriot power

Bahrain signs deal to buy first US Patriot missile system, Reuters reports



HRH the Crown Prince with Trump at the White House.

● **US President Donald Trump said it looked like Iran was behind attacks on oil plants in Saudi Arabia.**

● **Patriot uses an advanced aerial interceptor missile and high-performance radar systems.**

Washington, DC

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, said yesterday that Bahrain has signed an agreement to purchase its first US Patriot missile battery.

HRH the Crown Prince made the announcement to reporters during a meeting with President Donald Trump at the White House.

The Kingdom is the newest and 17th customer of the Patriot worldwide, including the United States, according to De-

“No, I don't want war with anybody but we're prepared more than anybody.”

TRUMP

fenseNews.

Patriot uses an advanced aerial interceptor missile and high-performance radar systems. Patriot was developed at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama, which had previously developed the Safeguard ABM system and its component Spartan and hypersonic speed Sprint missiles.

Patriot systems have been sold to the Netherlands, Poland, Germany, Egypt, Japan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Republic of China (Taiwan), Greece, Spain, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Romania and a few more countries.

Speaking on the occasion, US President Donald Trump said it looked like Iran was behind attacks on oil plants in Saudi Arabia at the weekend that raised fears of a fresh Middle East conflict, but added that he

did not want war with anyone. The attacks damaged the world's biggest crude processing plant in Saudi Arabia and triggered the largest jump in crude prices in decades.

Asked by a reporter in the White House if Iran was behind the attacks, Trump said: "It's certainly looking that way at this moment and we'll let you know. As soon as we find out definitively we'll let you know but it does look that way."

"We have a lot of options but I'm not looking at options right now we want to find definitively who did this. We're dealing with Saudi Arabia. We're dealing with the crown prince and other of your neighbors. And we're all talking about it together. We'll see what happens," he said.

"I'm somebody that would like not to have war," Trump said. "No, I don't want war with anybody but we're prepared more than anybody."

Oil prices surged by as much as 19 per cent after the incidents but later came off their peaks.

The intraday jump was the biggest since the 1990-91 Gulf crisis over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Premier orders to step up security



HRH the Premier chairs the Cabinet.

Manama

Chairing the weekly Cabinet session yesterday, His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa gave directives to the security authorities to tighten preventive and precautionary measures at vital installations and facilities in light of the rapidly-unfolding regional developments.

The Cabinet condemned, in the strongest terms, the heinous attack on two Saudi Aramco's oil facilities, describing it as an outrageous terrorist act that constitutes a serious escalation and poses a threat to the global energy supply and the world economy.

The session reiterated Bahrain's fully-fledged support to sisterly Saudi Arabia and backing of all measures it deems necessary to safeguard its security and stability and defend its interests, calling on the International Community to take urgent action to prevent these brutal attacks and those behind them, a statement by the Cabinet Secretary-General, Dr Yasser Al Nasser, said.

The Cabinet also condemned the Israeli Prime Minister's plans to impose Israeli sovereignty over lands in the occupied West Bank, stressing that it is a serious assault on the historical and legal rights of the Palestinian people, a violation of international legitimacy laws

“International Community should take urgent action to prevent such brutal attacks.”

DR AL NASSER

and resolutions and an escalation that would undermine the peace chances in the region.

In this regard, the session welcomed Saudi Arabia's call for an emergency meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to discuss this issue, noting that the move reflects the keenness of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, to develop an urgent plan of action in the face of challenges.

In this context, the session was informed by the Parliament Affairs Minister about the results of the OIC extraordinary meeting at the level of foreign ministers, held recently in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Among other things, HRH Premier commended the efforts exerted by government departments, and the cooperation of the citizens and community centres during the Ashoora Commemoration season, thus leading to the event's success, and reflecting the depth of the existing community partnership between the citizens and the relevant authorities.

EFFORTS HAILED

Prestigious voluntary work award winners honoured

Manama

The winners of the ninth edition of His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa Award for Voluntary Work were honoured yesterday.

HH Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa presented the Best Voluntary Project prizes to individuals, societies, voluntary associations and expatriate communities in the Kingdom.

The Chairman of Bahrain Basketball Association (BBA) and Good Word Honorary President also honoured 14



Shaikh Isa presented the prizes to individuals, societies and voluntary associations.

voluntary work pioneering personalities representing 13 Arab countries in recognition of their dedicated contribution to serving their societies.

Deputy Premier HH Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa attended the ceremony and stressed the importance of the award in fostering the culture



HH Shaikh Ali at the award ceremony.

of voluntary work to serve communities and societies and highlighted successful models, congratulating the winners and thanking the organisers for

their efforts.

Shaikh Isa stressed the importance of fostering cohesion to strengthen social stability and foster values among new generations, stressing the importance of award which seeks to achieve these goals since its inception.

He said that the Government, chaired by His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa realised the crucial importance of the role played by non-governmental organisations, facilitated procedures and supported constructive initiatives.



BDF Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa received Interior Minister General Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa yesterday. The commander-in-chief reviewed co-operation between the BDF and Interior Ministry in all matters that maintain the security and stability of Bahrain.



BDF Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, yesterday received the newly-appointed British Ambassador to Bahrain Roderick Drummond. The Commander-in-Chief praised the historical relations between the two countries, which has always witnessed development and progress in various fields, wishing the ambassador success in his diplomatic mission.



Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, received here yesterday the Italian Ambassador to Bahrain, Domenico Bellato, who introduced to him the newly-appointed Riyadh-Resident Italian Military Attaché to Bahrain, Massimiliano Macioce. The commander-in-chief wished the new military attaché every success in carrying out his duties. He also lauded the friendship relations between Bahrain and Italy, and discussed with the delegation ways to strengthen bilateral military co-operation.



BDF Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, received the newly appointed Military Attaché at the Saudi embassy to Bahrain, Colonel Fahad bin Ibrahim Al Thunayan. The commander-in-chief reviewed bilateral ties and military co-operation, wishing the attaché success in his military tasks.



Representatives Council Speaker Fawzia Zainal yesterday received President of the Exhibitions and Conventions Society Kazim Al Saeed. She stressed the importance of the tourism sector in Bahrain as one of the pillars of the national economy and a key player in preserving the kingdom's status as an advanced civilisational and cultural destination. She pointed out keenness of the Representatives Council to provide the legislative support to the tourism sector in Bahrain given its role in attracting investments. She also stressed co-operation with the government to develop strategies to boost tourism, especially with the tendency to diversify sources of revenues, reach the stage of financial balance and achieve the goals of Bahrain Economic Vision 2030. The Representatives Council Speaker praised the role of the society in the exhibitions and conventions industry and in grooming Bahraini competencies in this field.



Speaker Fawzia Zainal, yesterday received the newly-appointed British Ambassador to Bahrain Roderick Drummond. Speaker Zainal congratulated the ambassador on his new post, wishing him success in carrying out his duties, in enhancing the bilateral relations and co-operation in various fields, especially the parliamentary one for the benefit of both countries and peoples. Ambassador Drummond expressed his appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa for his keenness to enhance and develop the relations between the two countries, praising the development witnessed by Bahrain. He stressed his country's keenness to further work to promote the distinguished relations between the two countries.



Chief of Staff of Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Lieutenant General Dhiab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi received yesterday Acting Operations Director of the UAE Armed Forces Brigadier Hassan Mohammed Al Hammadi. They discussed strong ties binding the two brotherly countries.

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The delegation of the Kingdom, headed by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Head of the National Committee on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons as well as their Destruction, Dr Shaikha Rana bint Isa bin Daij Al Khalifa, participated in the opening session of the 63rd International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference, held in Vienna, Austria, from September 16 to 20. High-level delegations of senior officials from world countries and organisations also took part in the session. The IAEA holds its annual conference every September in Vienna International Centre, providing a platform for the agency and member states to discuss using nuclear and technological sciences in peaceful manners, as well as ways to strengthen regional and international cooperation in the field of nuclear security. It also reviews the latest activities of the agency at all levels.

Workshop for representatives of govt service centres held

Manama

The Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat) organised an introductory workshop for representatives of government service centres in Bahrain in preparation for the start of the second evaluation cycle which will start in October this year.

The workshop included an explanation of the evaluation guide, the governing criteria, and the evaluation mechanisms, which must be met by the centres, in order to strengthen internal control, and standardise the foundations of quality in the provision of services, as well as to establish an internal culture, to adopt a culture of development, excellence and innovation.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Derasat Chairman, Vice Chairman of the Commit-



The workshop in progress.

tee for Evaluation of Government Service Centres, stressed the commitment of government service centres to develop their methods of delivery and implementation in order to advance the quality of services provided. "We are pleased to host this workshop at Derasat, putting into effect the Centre's objectives to develop community partnership and contribute as a strategic ally with partnering in-

stitutions as well as support the comprehensive development process under the leadership of His Majesty the King," he said.

Derasat is an active contributor to the work of the Committee, both a member and supervisor of the evaluation process, a participant in the central evaluation team, and hosts workshops and provides innovative ideas for the overall development of the service centres.

Fatal accident driver jailed for three years

Bahraini national Ali Al Haddar was killed in the accident

● The accident occurred below Isa Town flyover on the busy highway.

● There were demands from the part of the public to hand down tough punishment to the defendant.

TDI | Manama

An Asian bus driver, who was driving under the influence of alcohol and caused a traffic accident that killed a Bahraini national last month, received a three-year imprisonment yesterday.

The 'drunk bus driver was driving in the wrong direction on Shaikh Isa bin Salman Highway near Sehla, after "missing a turn", as proved by investigations.

The Bahraini victim, identified as Ali Al Haddar, a Bahraini social worker in his twenties, was announced dead on the spot, after the vehicle he was driving got stuck under the bus following a head-on collision.

According to Traffic Prosecution Chief Mohammed Al Dhaharani, the man was also sentenced



Investigators at the accident site.

by the Sixth Lower Criminal Court yesterday to be deported after completing his jail sentence.

As reported earlier by Tribune, the accident occurred below Isa Town flyover on the busy highway.

The Public Prosecution previously confirmed that it had interrogated the defendant, who "wanted to drive towards the Isa Town flyover, but took a wrong turn".

According to the results of the

prosecution's probe, "the suspect stopped the bus on the emergency lane on the right, then he took a U-turn and drove for 800 metres on the left lane, opposite to the oncoming traffic, resulting in the collision with the victim, who was stuck in his vehicle and died on the spot as a result of the injuries he sustained".

The bus driver was charged with unintentionally causing the death of a person, driving under the influence of alcohol, causing

to two months' imprisonment for driving on the emergency lane on Istiqlal Highway near Sanad.

The court also ordered to permanently deport the defendant after he completes his imprisonment sentence.

Traffic Prosecution Chief Prosecutor Hussain Al Sairafi said in a statement issued by the Public Prosecution yesterday that the man drove his truck over the speed limit of the road and "drove in a manner that risked motorists lives and used the emergency lane to overtake vehicles".

As reported by Tribune last week, the trucker was seen in a viral video online while speeding and driving on the hard shoulder of Istiqlal Highway.

In the footage, the man was seen over-speeding and overtaking other vehicles using the emergency lane.

He was filmed by a concerned driver who shared the video on local social media networks, calling the authorities to take deterrent actions against such violators.

A nationwide petition emerged, calling to curb the "deadly" behaviours of truckers on the Kingdom's roads, especially after it claimed the lives of two Bahraini drivers in the same period.



The deceased Ali Al Haddar

damages to others' properties, reckless driving, driving in the wrong direction and driving an unregistered vehicle.

On Sunday, An Asian truck driver was yesterday sentenced

NBR holds workshop on VAT

Manama

The National Bureau for Revenue (NBR) held two interactive workshops recapping general and sector-specific VAT concepts, including invoicing and filing.

Following a question-and-answer session, 202 attendees representing 121 entities were given the opportunity to visit the unique interactive demo-centre that provides innovative learning experiences to ensure effective implementation of VAT.

The workshops are a continuation of a series of workshops organised by the NBR to provide an inclusive platform for all stakeholders from the public and private sector in order to increase businesses' awareness of VAT return filing procedures ahead of deadlines.

For further information, please contact the Call Centre on 80008001 or email vat@nbr.gov.bh, in addition to leveraging the information available on NBR's website (www.nbr.gov.bh), Instagram, Twitter and YouTube channel (@bahrainNBR).

Tribune yesterday reported that car loans issued by different banks in the Kingdom dropped by more than 10 per cent after the implementation of Value Added Tax (VAT) since the beginning of the current year, latest figures showed.

According to the statistics released by the Central Bank of Bahrain, auto loans have declined by 10.3pc in the first half of 2019, in comparison with the same period last year.

VAT was implemented on January 1, 2019, at a rate of five per cent and it covers 95 commodities including foodstuff, automobiles and utility services.

The drop in car loans is directly linked to decline in car sales and according to a recent report, the implementation of VAT has had an impact on the automobiles market.

Economic experts have opined that this trend is temporary and "car sales will be back on track after a few months".

MoH marks World Patient Safety Day

Manama

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is marking the World Patient Safety Day.

Hospitals and health centres (HCS) in Bahrain are organising health-related activities focusing on patient safety and increasing awareness including hands cleanliness to prevent contamination or contagion to ensure

safety of patients, said Head of Quality and Risk Management Panel Dr Khatoun Shubbar.

Patient and visitors' safety includes increasing awareness, prevention of incidental falls, and to conform to prescribed course of medical treatment.

Patients should ask questions to get the right answers and accurately tell the doctor about their case history.

Awareness also includes training of all HCS workers in how to cope with fire incidents and risk.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) marks the World Patient Safety Day on September 17, this year themed Speak up for Patient Safety.

The WHO wants participating countries to consider how they can encourage patients, families, caregivers, communities, health-

care workers, healthcare leaders and policymakers to come together in a shared commitment to patient safety.

The WHO has identified medication safety as a vital aspect of patient safety and, in April 2017, it launched its third global patient safety challenge 'Medication without harm'.

The goal of this challenge is to reduce the level of severe, avoid-

able harm related to medications by 50 per cent over five years across the world.

It identified three essential action areas in relation to medication safety, and has recently published technical reports in each of these areas: 'Medication safety in polypharmacy'; 'Medication safety in transitions of care'; and 'Medication safety in high risk situations'.

iGA receives Turkmenistan delegation; showcases Bahrain's experience

Manama

The Information and eGovernment Authority (iGA) received a delegation from Turkmenistan's Ministry of Industry and Communication.

The visit was in line with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the governments of Bahrain and Turkmenistan relating to co-operation in eGovernment during the visit of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to the Republic of Turkmenistan last March.

The MoU allows for the sharing of the Kingdom's experience in the field and further strengthening co-operation between the two countries.

The delegation was received



Mr AlQaed receives the delegation.

by iGA Chief Executive, Mohamed Ali AlQaed and other iGA senior management team members and officials.

The delegation was given a presentation of Bahrain's National eGovernment Strategy

and its role in promoting the adoption of modern technology in the government sector, which contributes to improvements in the quality of its services and higher customer satisfaction.



The delegation was given a presentation on Bahrain's e-governance success.

The delegation also learned about major national projects, along with the National Suggestions and Complaints system (Tawasul), the move towards cloud computing, as well as iGA's efforts in the fields of information

security, radio-communications, and statistics.

The delegation was also introduced to Bahrain's efforts to reengineer government services procedures so that they can accommodate the changing and

increasing demands of citizens as well as public and private organisations.

In addition, iGA showcased the Kingdom's experience in the United Nations (UN) eGovernment Survey.

As per the MoU, the Kingdom of Bahrain, represented by iGA, will co-operate with the Republic of Turkmenistan, represented by its Ministry of Industry and Communication, to facilitate co-operation in fields of mutual interest, including policy, standards and eGovernment channels development; eGovernment applications; national statistics; telecommunications; and the development of UN eGovernment Survey indicators, among others.

'Furas' programme, 'a great step' for empowering Bahrain's youth

The 'Opportunities' scheme is part of the youth and sports development programme 'Estijabah'

Manama

The 'Furas' (Opportunities) programme to provide young Bahrainis with vocational training announced by the Personal Representative of HM the King for Charity Work and Youth Affairs and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, is a new and innovative breakthrough for investing in Bahraini youth.

The programme is also an opportunity for young Bahrainis to develop their skills and abilities, highlight their capabilities, and contribute to providing the labor market with qualified and

competent people, Speaker of the Council of Representatives Fawzia Zainal said.

"Youth represent the wealth of the country and its assets to achieve the vision of the Kingdom of Bahrain 2030 within the expanded Bahrain Team. They are crucial to achieve the objectives of the comprehensive national development progress under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa," she said.

Lauding the efforts exerted by HH Shaikh Nasser to develop the youth sector, the Speaker said the parliament fully supported the initiatives to enhance the creativity, aptitudes and capabil-



Youth represent the wealth of the country and its assets to achieve the vision of the Kingdom of Bahrain 2030 within the expanded Bahrain Team.

MS ZAINAL

ities to empower young people to enter the labor market, reinforce national achievements and accomplish further progress and prosperity for the Kingdom.

Designed by the Youth and Sports Affairs Ministry, the programme aims to provide youngsters with opportunities to obtain grants and train in

companies.

HH Shaikh Nasser had underlined His Majesty King Hamad's directives to provide training opportunities for Bahraini youth and promote them as the first priority in the labour market through competence building and partnership with companies.

The 'Opportunities' scheme is part of the youth and sports development programme 'Estijabah'.

The youth of the Kingdom can log on to the portal estijabah.mys.gov.bh and register to find suitable training opportunities.

Companies have also been urged to enter the portal and post training opportunities.

Drone attacks on Aramco condemned

Jeddah

The foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member countries condemned in the strongest terms and unanimously the targeting of two Saudi Aramco plants in Abqaiq and Khurais in the east of the Kingdom.

OIC Secretary General Dr Yousef bin Ahmed Al Othaimen said in a statement today that the ministers expressed their condemnation of the terrorist incident.

He cited the official statements issued by member states, non-members and regional and international organisations that condemned these attacks which destabilise security and stability of the Kingdom and the region, targeting the global energy supplies and the global economy.

He added that the ministers expressed their countries' solidarity with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in all measures taken to confront terrorism and maintain its security and stability, praising its pivotal role in combating terrorism.

Separately, His Highness the Amir Shaikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah strongly condemned attacks Sunday on Saudi Arabia's crude oil facilities in Abqaiq and Khurais on the previous day.

This came in a phone call made to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz, in which His Highness the Amir expressed his full support to Saudi Arabia and reiterated rejection to all kinds of terrorism.

Drones targeted Aramco plants in Saudi Arabia early on Saturday triggering fires. The teams of industrial security at Aramco Company put out fires that erupted at two plants of the company in Abqaiq and Khurais, Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reported.

Bahrain-Kuwait relations discussed

Vienna

On the sidelines of the 63rd International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference in Vienna, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Head of the National Committee on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons as well as their Destruction, Dr Shaikha Rana bint Isa bin Daij Al Khalifa, and her accompanying delegation met with the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Republic of Austria and Permanent Representative to the International Organisations in Vienna, Sadiq Marafi.

The meeting noted strong bilateral brotherly relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the State of Kuwait and reviewed the Kuwaiti experience with the IAEA in building capacities in the fields of health,



Dr Shaikha Rana and her accompanying delegation with Mr Sadiq Marafi.

environment, agriculture, water resources enhancing scientific research and monitoring radioactive leaks.

The meeting also discussed and evaluated a number of important regional agreements within the framework of the

IAEA.

Kuwait will be a member of the IAEA Board of Governors from September 2019 for two

years. Its candidacy has received considerable support from the Middle East and South Asian countries.

BKS lines up grand Onam events



Mr Pillai, Mr Raghu along with other BKS members at the press conference.

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam has lined up grand events named 'Shravanam 2019', marking the Onam festival.

On October 4, the grand Onam feast will be served under the supervision of renowned chef, Pazhayidam Mohanan Namboothiri.

The official inauguration of 'Shravanam 2019' will take place on September 19, 2019 at 7.30 pm. Kerala legislative assem-

bly speaker, P Sreeramkrishnan will be the chief guest and former education minister of Kerala, M A Baby will be the guest of honour.

On the same day, Swaralaya Devarajan Award and BKS Brahmamandhan Award will be presented to the Indian singing sensation Hariharan and playback singer Madhu Balakrishnan respectively.

Vipin Devasya and Shine Joy will be honoured with BKS Young Outstanding Entrepreneur Award, C P Varghese with

BKS Outstanding NRI Award, Khalid Jumawith Indo-Bahrain Friendship Award and Abdul Majeed Theruvath with BKS Business Icon Award 2019.

Prominent leaders, Alphonse Kannanthan (former Indian Minister) and K C Joseph (former minister, Kerala State) will join the celebrations and cultural programmes on various days. Cultural programmes related to 'Shravanam 2019' will come to an end on 27 September, where Ramesh Chennithala (Opposition leader, Kerala Legisla-

tive Assembly) will be the chief guest. South Indian nightingale, K S Chitra's concert will be the main attraction of the day.

A chain of cultural programmes has also been arranged to entertain the public during these days of celebration. Popular Indian singers like Hariharan, Madhu Balakrishnan, Harishankar, Naresh Ayyar, Najeem Arshad, Rakesh Brahmanandan, Sithara, Durga Viswanath, Teenu Tellence will entertain the public from 19 to 27 September.

Other artistes of fame, Soorya Krishnamoorthy, Aatukul Balasubramanyam, Shamna Kasim and Bollywood Hollywood fame Neerav Bavlecha and team have also been lined up for musical, dance and cultural extravaganza.

The doors of samajam are widely open for the public to enjoy the programmes, BKS officials said, at a press conference held yesterday. BKS President P V Radhakrishna Pillai and General Secretary M P Raghu attended.

Air India employee mourned



Shahid Akhtar

TDT | Manama

Shahid Akhtar, an employee of Air India in the Kingdom, passed away yesterday at All India Institute of Medical Science in New Delhi. He was 54.

Mr Akhtar, who hails from Motihari in East Champaran district of the Indian state of Bihar, was working with Air India Reservation and Ticketing Counter since 2002.

His immediate survivors include wife and three daughters.

WORLD
world

North Korea demands security guarantees for nuclear talks



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un welcomed by participants of the 14th National Conference of Teachers at an undisclosed location in North Korea

AFP | Seoul

North Korea yesterday demanded the United States provide security guarantees as a precondition to resuming deadlocked nuclear talks, dampening hopes for progress at a working-level dialogue expected in the coming weeks.

Negotiations between Pyongyang and Washington have been gridlocked since a second summit between the North's leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump in February ended without a deal.

The pair agreed to restart working-level dialogue during an impromptu meeting at the Demilitarized Zone dividing the two Koreas in June, and Pyongyang last week offered

to hold those talks in late September, a move the US said was "encouraging".

But hours later, Pyongyang carried out the latest in a series of weapons tests.

A senior official from the North's foreign ministry said

yesterday that "discussion of denuclearization may be possible when threats and hurdles endangering our system security and obstructing our development are clearly removed beyond all doubt".

North Korea has always insisted that security guarantees would be necessary as part of any deal -- but it has not generally demanded them as a precursor to negotiations.

The director-general of the department of US affairs, who was not named, said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency that working-level talks were expected to be held "in a few weeks".

It was up to Washington whether it would prove to be an opportunity or "an occasion to precipitate crisis", he added.

"A proposal that the US put forward at the negotiations may improve the relations and, on the contrary, may add to the hostility towards each other."

Pyongyang has also threatened to pull out of talks with Washington and has blasted senior US officials in recent months.

Despite the escalation in tensions, Trump has insisted his relationship with Kim remains unharmed, and the pair have exchanged personal letters in the absence of talks.

The North Korean leader asked Trump to visit Pyongyang in a letter sent last month, South Korea's

JoongAng Ilbo newspaper reported yesterday, repeating an invitation issued at their last meeting in the DMZ.

At their first summit in Singapore last year, Kim and Trump adopted a vaguely-worded statement on the "complete denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula" but little progress has since been made on dismantling the North's nuclear programme.

Indonesia arrests nearly 200 over forest fires

The fires, usually started by illegal burning to clear land for farming, have unleashed choking haze across Southeast Asia

AFP | Jakarta

Indonesia has arrested nearly 200 people over vast forest fires ripping across the archipelago, police said yesterday, as toxic haze sends air quality levels plummeting and sparks flight cancellations.

Jakarta has deployed thousands of personnel to battle blazes that are turning land into charred landscapes and consuming forests in Sumatra and Borneo islands, where thousands of schools have been shut over health fears.

The fires -- usually started by illegal burning to clear land for farming -- have unleashed choking haze across Southeast Asia, triggering diplomatic tensions with Indonesia's neighbours.

Yesterday, authorities said they had arrested some 185 people suspected of being involved in activities that led to out-of-control fires sweeping the country.

"Indonesian Police will enforce the law against anyone who is proven to have carried out forest and land burning, whether it was done intentionally or through negligence," National Police spokesman Dedi Prasetyo told reporters in Jakarta.

"This is a last resort. The most important thing is prevention."

Four corporations were also being investigated, he added.

Last week, Indonesia sealed off dozens of plantations where



Smoke spreading from where the forest fire occurred as seen from above Riau province

smog-belching fires were blazing, and warned that owners -- including Malaysia and Singapore-based firms -- could face criminal charges if there was evidence of illegal burning.

Some of the most serious fires occur in peatlands, which are highly combustible when drained of water to be converted into agricultural plantations.

Thick haze in Borneo -- where air quality levels have plummeted to "dangerous" levels in some areas -- caused the cancellation of about a dozen flights Sunday,

national airline Garuda said.

Rival Lion Air said about 160 Borneo flights had been affected at the weekend.

Meanwhile, nearly 150,000 people have been treated for acute respiratory infections linked to the haze in recent months, according to Indonesian health authorities.

While forest fires are an annual problem, the situation this year has been worsened by drier weather in Indonesia, with diplomatic tensions soaring as toxic smog drifts over to neighbour-

ing Malaysia and Singapore.

The haze pushed Singapore's air quality to unhealthy levels for the first time in three years at the weekend.

In 2015, Indonesia suffered its worst forest fires for almost two decades, which dramatically increased its greenhouse gas emissions.

Huge fires tearing through the Amazon are also compounding concerns about the long-term impact of such blazes on keeping global temperature levels stable.

S. Korea opposition party leader shaves head in protest

AFP | Seoul

South Korea's main opposition party leader shaved his head yesterday to protest against the controversial appointment of a new justice minister despite allegations of corruption against his family.

Law professor Cho Kuk began his duties as the justice minister last Monday as state prosecutors carry out a probe into his daughter's schooling and an investment in a private equity fund suspected of dubious operations. The appointment infuriated opposition lawmakers and



Main opposition Liberty Korea Party leader Hwang Kyo-ahn has his head shaved during a protest outside the presidential Blue House in Seoul

created an even sharper divide in parliament.

Yesterday, Hwang Kyo-ahn -- the main opposition Liberty Korea Party leader -- said he would shave his head to urge the resignation of "criminal Cho Kuk".

A stern-looking Hwang arrived outside the presidential Blue House and was shorn of his neatly parted black hair as the South Korean anthem blared in the background.

"I'm here to pledge my determination by shaving my head," Hwang told the crowd. "I will not step back."

Buzz off! Angry bees delay Air India flight

AFP | New Delhi

An Air India flight was delayed by several hours after a swarm of bees landed on the cockpit window, attacking ground staff when they tried to remove them, officials said.

The insects landed on the window just before the plane

was due to leave the eastern city of Kolkata on Sunday with 136 passengers, including Bangladesh's information minister.

Ground staff tried to shoo the insects off, angering them, and when attempts to use the wind-screen wipers failed officials switched to 'plan b' and blasted them off with water.



A swarm of bees on the cockpit window of the Air India flight

"Fire tenders were deployed to spray water to dislodge the honey bees and they could be driven away after nearly an hour-long operation," airport official Kaushik Bhattacharya told AFP.

The flight to Agartala in north-eastern India eventually took off more than three and a half hours late.

NOTICE

With regard to the cancellation of the Wholesale Bank

license of "Investcorp Bank B.S.C"

With reference to the Resolution of the Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain No. (52) of 2019 pertaining to the cancellation of the Wholesale Bank license of "Investcorp Bank B.S.C" issued on 9th Muharram 1441H, corresponding to 8th September 2019, the Central Bank of Bahrain hereby provides notice that the Wholesale Bank license of "Investcorp Bank B.S.C" issued on 28th June 1982, registered under commercial registration no. 12411-1 has been cancelled, with effect from the date of issuing and publication of the above resolution in the Official Gazette.

The man with million-euro pigeon

Ingelmunster, Belgium

Belgian pigeon breeder Joel Verschoot could probably have settled down to a comfortable retirement in March after he sold the world's most expensive racer.

Armando the pigeon won worldwide headlines and netted Verschoot 1.25-million euros (\$1.4-million) when he won over Chinese buyers in an online auction.

Now the famous bird toils for a Beijing public works magnate, fathering what his new owner must hope will be a new generation of feathered champions.

But 64-year-old retired abattoir worker Verschoot is not done yet. He still consecrates up to 10 hours a day tending for and racing his charges.

Before Armando set the online pigeon auction world alight earlier this year, the Flemish fancier's most expensive protegee was 400,000-euro Nadine.

Now Verschoot wants to better his record. He has hidden away two of Armando's heirs -- "a son and a daughter" -- in the hope they mate and raise a brood.

Standing in his garden in Ingelmunster, a small town near Kortrijk in West Flanders, Verschoot still remembers the "incredible" record-setting auction.

When Armando's sale came up, two Chinese buyers went head to head, raising each other by 100,000 euros a time until one was forced to retire from the field.

"We never

er

thought it could go up like that," he told AFP, recalling how his then 50-year-old father introduced him to pigeon fancying at a young age.

Joel was the only one of the elder Verschoot's nine children to take an interest in training his father's 50-strong racing flock.

Now he has 300 birds of his own, and fame in the sport.

Since retiring from the abattoir in 2015, Verschoot has turned a hobby into an international business, fuelled by the rise of Chinese interest.

Belgian birds have a global reputation as racers and Nikolaas Gyselbrecht, CEO of the online site Pigeon Paradise, says China accounts for 40 percent of sales.

Verschoot's -- and later Armando's -- reputation was built in middle-distance races of 500 to 700 kilometres (300 to 400 miles).

Best in Europe

As a trainer, he explains, his speciality was keeping apart male and female pairs for two weeks before the day-long race.

The lovesick birds, he reckons, are all the more determined to return to each others' bosom at speeds of up to 80 kph after this enforced celibacy.

"Quick, quick, quick, back to the house and the women!" he chants.

Armando was not merely randy,

however, he was also "crafty", his trainer explains: expert at dodging power cables and airborne predators.

He came second in a race in Limoges, France in 2017 and 2018, and won last year's meet at nearby Angouleme.

At the start of this year things got serious at the race in Poznan, Poland, that acts as a kind of pigeon Champions League for the best birds in Europe.

He won. And now his champion's DNA is much sought after.

The Chinese buyer is thought to have kept Armando in a training loft in Belgium, the equivalent of the stud at a thoroughbred racing stable.

"Soon Armando will have grandchildren which will go on the market, for more and more," Verschoot beams.

Some purists are less excited by the arrival of big money deals in their traditional sport.

"Ordinary fanciers would never be interested in a pigeon for his sperm," complains Bernard Ancia, of specialist weekly La Colombophilie Belge.

"That's not what's going to promote our sport."

Maybe Belgium's pigeon racing scene has room for a variety of approaches, after all between 18,000 and 20,000 Belgians are licensed breeders.

But Ancia is pessimistic. "You have to give up a lot of your time, and it's rare that a breeder is followed into the hobby by his wife or kids," he said.

Armando the pigeon won worldwide headlines and netted Verschoot 1.25-million euros (\$1.4-million) when he won over Chinese buyers in an online auction

Joel Verschoot

Monkey business: Macaque island draws tourists -- and criticism

Nha Trang, Vietnam

Menacing macaques snatch bags of crisps, water bottles, cookies and crackers from uneasy tourists on Vietnam's Monkey Island, a popular attraction decried as cruel by activists calling for an end to animal tourism in Southeast Asia.

Tourists are encouraged to show the monkeys their empty hands if they don't want to be accosted by the aggressive macaques, who routinely steal

Tourists are encouraged to show the monkeys their empty hands if they don't want to be accosted by the aggressive macaques, who routinely steal snacks, hats, and even mobile phones from visitors, who nervously laugh and snap pictures.

snacks, hats, and even mobile phones from visitors, who nervously laugh and snap pictures.

"They grabbed my biscuits and climbed on my body," Dinh Thi Hoa told AFP on the small island in Nha Phu bay in south-central Vietnam.

"I didn't even have time to open my bag, the monkey took it from me and opened it!" she said, smiling, after a gang of macaques rifled through her rucksack.

It is one of countless animal tourism sites across Vietnam where for just a few dollars visitors can ride elephants or ostriches, or see costumed bears and tigers perform at circuses.

Over on Monkey Island, macaques ride motorbikes, lift weights and shoot basketballs in their own packed circus performance that ends with a monkey in a frilly skirt collecting tips from the audience.

Elsewhere on the island, vis-

itors eagerly place bets on a monkey swimming race to close out a morning of animal entertainment.

It's cruel work, according to some.

"Monkeys don't choose to walk on their hind legs, ride bikes, or perform other meaningless and humiliating tricks -- they've simply learned to fear what will happen if they don't," said Jason Baker, animal rights group PETA's vice president of international campaigns.

"Travel companies and tourists must stop buying tickets to cruel exhibits like Monkey Island," he added.

There are about 1,200 macaques on the small island, where vaccine experiments were once carried out by Soviet scientists before it was transformed into a tourist attraction in the 1990s.

Monkey Island manager Truong Nguyen Phuoc An says the animals are never beaten, and are well looked after thanks to tourist dollars.

"We can have money to maintain the island and buy more food for the monkeys," he said, as tourists boarded boats under a searing midday sun.

Throng of visitors stream though every week, mostly Vietnamese, Chinese and Russians who jet across the bay from the beach resort hotspot Nha Trang.

Many are happy to see the monkeys, brushing aside claims the animals should be left alone.

"I think they are well-fed and happy, it's perfect," said Kirill, a 19-year-old visitor from Russia.

Trump to join Modi in mass rally

● Donald Trump to join Narendra Modi in Houston's 'Howdy, Modi!' event on September 22

● More than 50,000 Indian-Americans from across the US have registered for the event

AFP | Washington

President Donald Trump will join Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a massive gathering of Indian-Americans in Houston, the White House said Sunday, in a symbolic show of the bond between the two leaders and countries.

The September 22 rally -- dubbed, with a touch of Texan twang, "Howdy, Modi!" -- will mark a rare joint appearance between a US president and a foreign leader before an ethnic community, and be the pair's third meeting this year.

Organizers say that more than 50,000 people have registered for the event, which will take place inside the NRG Stadium of the Houston Texans football team.

The gathering is "a great opportunity to emphasize the



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump meet in Biarritz, France during a Group of Seven summit in August 2019

strong ties between the people of the United States and India, to reaffirm the strategic partnership between the world's oldest and largest democracies and to discuss ways to deepen their energy and trade relationship," the White House said.

The White House said Trump would travel the same day to Ohio to showcase an Australian-owned factory alongside Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who will be on a state visit.

The two joint appearances amount to a day-long attempt to nurture relationships with foreign leaders by Trump, whose brash style and outspoken remarks have frequently unnerved allies.

Reaching across aisle

Organizers of the event has planned a cultural performance and invited speakers including Steny Hoyer, the number-two Democrat in the House of Rep-

resentatives.

The joint event shows "the personal chemistry and friendship" between Trump and Modi, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, the Indian ambassador to the United States, told AFP.

"These are two leaders who are used to thinking outside of the box," he said, describing the joint appearance as "unconventional and unique."

"The event will also reflect the strong bipartisan support



This is for the first time in recent history that the leaders of the two largest democracies would be addressing a joint rally anywhere in the world

there has been for US-India relations," he said, describing Indian-Americans as an "organic bridge" between the world's two largest democracies.

Shringla said that Modi would also meet in Houston with energy companies before heading to New York for the UN General Assembly.

Some four million Americans trace their origins to India and the community is among the most educated and prosperous in the United States.

The average Indian-American household earned some \$100,000 in 2015, nearly double the US average, according to the Pew Research Center

Colombia plane crash kills seven: authorities



Rescuers work at the site where the plane crashed

Reuters | Bogota

A small plane crashed near the southwestern Colombian city of Popayan on Sunday, killing seven of the nine passengers aboard, the city's mayor and the country's civil aviation authority said.

The incident occurred just a few minutes after the aircraft, owned by a small local company, took off from the airport in Popayan, a city of about 270,000 surrounded by mountains. The other two passengers were injured and were being treated at a hospital, Popayan Mayor Cesar Gomez said.

Photographs on social media showed parts of the airplane scattered atop houses in the area. Gomez said he had convened a working group to assist residents who had been affected.

Dutch national missing in Spain's flooded southeast

AFP | Madrid

Rescuers were yesterday searching for a Dutch national reported missing in southeastern Spain where torrential rains and flooding have claimed six lives, police said.

The alarm was raised on Sunday afternoon after a member of the public reported seeing "a body sucked into the water in a canal" in Dolores, a town 40 kilometres (25 miles) southeast of Alicante.

The person was believed to be a 66-year-old Dutch man, a police spokesman said.

Southeastern Spain has been battered since Thursday by torrential rains, causing huge flooding and chaos on the roads in several provinces, leaving



A man stands next to the overflowed Segura river in Almoradi

many areas cut off.

Six people have died as a result of the flood and rescuers

have evacuated thousands of people from their homes with the help of some 1,300 troops.

After causing havoc in the regions of Valencia, Murcia and western Andalucia, the storm has since moved towards the central and west of the country, causing widespread flooding.

Yesterday, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez was again visiting several affected areas, this time in the southern region of Andalucia and in Castilla La Mancha in the centre.

Only several central and northern regions were on alert for intense rain yesterday, Spain's AEMET weather agency said, flagging Castilla La Mancha, Castilla y Leon, La Rioja, Aragon and Galicia in the far northwest.

Spain's king opens talks to break political impasse

AFP | Madrid

Spain's King Felipe VI began meeting parliamentary leaders yesterday in an eleventh-hour bid to form a government and head off what would be the country's fourth elections in as many years.

Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's Socialists won elections in April, but only secured 123 of the parliament's 350 seats, leaving him dependent on support from the radical leftwing Podemos and several smaller regional parties.

Until now, Podemos leader Pablo Iglesias has refused and Sanchez only has until September 23 to be confirmed as

premier -- or face fresh elections on November 10.

In a bid to break the deadlock, the king began two days of talks with party leaders. He will meet Iglesias on Tuesday afternoon and Sanchez later that evening.

Back in July, Sanchez made two attempts to secure confirmation by the assembly but failed due to the dispute with Iglesias, which they have yet to resolve.

The Socialists had initially agreed, very reluctantly, to form a coalition with Podemos, offering it several government portfolios, but Iglesias refused, saying the posts did not carry enough political clout.

Frenchwoman was world's oldest person, researchers say

AFP | Paris

Frenchwoman Jeanne Calment, who died aged 122 two decades ago, should keep the title of the oldest person on record, researchers said yesterday, rejecting claims of fraud.

Ageing specialists Jean-Marie Robine and Michel Allard -- who declared her the longest-lived person in the 1990s -- said a review of old and new data confirmed that she "remains the oldest human whose age is well-documented."

"Recently the claim that families Calment and Billot (her in-laws) organised a conspiracy concerning tax fraud based on identity fraud between mother and daughter gained international media attention," Robine, Allard and two other researchers wrote in The Journals of Ger-

ontology.

"Here, we reference the original components of the validation as well as additional documentation to address various claims of the conspiracy theory and provide evidence for why these claims are based on inaccurate facts," they wrote.

Calment died in 1997, setting a record that is still unsurpassed. She used to joke that God must have forgotten about her.

Last December, Russian researchers claimed in a report that Calment had died in 1934 and that her daughter Yvonne took on her mother's identity to avoid paying inheritance tax.

They said the woman who died in 1997 was Yvonne, not her mother, and at a mere 99 years of age.

The Russian claims were



Jeanne Calment during her 119th birthday celebration

based on biographies, interviews and photos of Jeanne Calment, witness testimony, and public records of the city of Arles in southern France where she lived.

Meeting Van Gogh

The new article insists Calment's identity "has not been usurped," according to a statement from the French research institute INSERM, where Robine



works as research director.

The authors of the new article, it said, cross-checked the original data used to validate Calment's identity with newly uncovered documents, and showed "there was neither tax fraud nor falsification of Jeanne Calment's identity."

The team also turned to mathematical modelling to counter the argument that her old age

was impossible.

In every 10 million centenarians, one can reach the age of 123, they said, "a probability that is certainly small, but that is far from making Ms Calment a statistical impossibility."

"All the documents uncovered contradict the Russian thesis," Robine told AFP.

The INSERM stressed that it could not "support any requests for exhumation" of the body, on which no autopsy was performed after Calment's death.

Born on February 21, Calment became the biggest attraction of the southern French city of Arles since Vincent Van Gogh, who spent a year there in 1888.

She said she had met the artist when he came to her uncle's store to buy paints, and remembered him as "ugly as sin" and having an "awful character".

Why has Greta Thunberg got so many people riled?

The 16-year-old climate change activist has been inundated with abuse from those who should know better

GAVIN ESLER

The fictional master detective Sherlock Holmes once said: “You know my method. It is founded upon the observation of trifles.” Then there is his most famous observation: “When you have excluded the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.”

With the great detective in mind, I’ve been puzzling over a modern mystery: why do some people actively loathe Greta Thunberg? She is the 16-year-old Swedish activist who is trying to save the world from climate change. Ms Thunberg has inspired schoolchildren all over the world to protest in the Fridays for Future movement. The idea is to shake powerful people out of their lethargy – or blatant ignorance – over climate change.

Last Friday, she demonstrated with American students at the White House. She has been honoured with Amnesty International’s ambassador of conscience award for 2019, putting her alongside previous recipients such as Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai and the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei. So why does she inspire such rancour?

For example, she travelled from Europe to the US to attend the coming Climate Action Summit in New York on a zero-carbon yacht, choosing to sail across the Atlantic rather than fly. The point was obvious: air travel is bad for

the planet. It was a fortnight’s crossing in hurricane season, during which she suffered seasickness. Yet some sniffed that it was mere gesture politics, even if it was for a good cause. Some of the critics went much further. A contributor to the right-wing US TV channel Fox News, Steve Milloy, a former member of the Donald Trump transition team, ranted that Ms Thunberg was an “ignorant teenage climate puppet”. Mr Milloy is a strong supporter of the US fossil fuel and tobacco industries. Another middle-aged critic is the British businessman Arron Banks. He helped bankroll the British Brexit referendum in 2016. Mr Banks, who is more than three times older than Ms Thunberg and has two daughters, tweeted: “Freak yachting accidents do happen in August”, comments which were reported to Twitter and were described as “vile” by a British MP. Mr Banks claimed he was merely joking. Another 50-something, British radio host and former journalist Julia Hartley-Brewer, tweeted: “Hi Greta, I’ve just booked some long haul flights for my family to enjoy some winter sun on the beach this Christmas. Level of guilt being felt: 0%.”

Which brings us back to Holmes and the “observation of trifles”. Why would these apparently secure, established middle-aged adults troll a teenager who cares about her – and our – future? Stumped for answers, I spoke



Swedish environment activist Greta Thunberg speaks at a climate protest outside the

to environmental campaigner and columnist George Monbiot. He himself is no stranger to verbal attacks for his views. He explained that such abuse could be rooted in shame or guilt. The

Despite John Bolton exit, don’t expect thaw in

RAGHIDA DERGHAM

With US national security adviser John Bolton having recently departed the White House, the question being asked is whether president Donald Trump will decide to soften the hardline approach taken by his administration in dealing with an uncertain world or if he will stay the course.

It is hard to determine whether Mr Bolton resigned or was dismissed. Either way, the vacuum left by his exit might give the mercurial president a free hand to intervene in matters regarding foreign policy that could have profound consequences. Regardless of their differences or Mr Bolton’s quirks, he did manage to protect his boss from making mistakes while guaranteeing consistency in US foreign policy. But with him gone, will there be shifts in American behaviour towards Iran, Afghanistan, Venezuela and North Korea?

The two men had been divided on how to deal with the world at large. Mr Trump places great emphasis on the art of deal-making for he views himself as a good negotiator but his brand of deal-making applies more to the business world than it does to foreign affairs. Brokering deals requires flexibility and Mr Bolton proved an obstacle in this regard because he valued consistency and toughness even more.

That said, one country towards which Mr Trump is unlikely to change his robust policy is Iran.

Thus far, he has avoided military strikes against the regime, despite concerns Tehran has been accumulating ballistic mis-



Donald Trump and Emmanuel Macron have divergent views on how to deal with Iran given the present circumstances.

siles, which prompted Mr Trump to shred the 2015 nuclear deal struck by his predecessor. While maintaining effective sanctions against the Iranian regime, as well as against militia groups it sponsors in the Middle East – including Hezbollah in Lebanon – Mr Trump has now signalled an openness to talk to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in the hope of reaching a more comprehensive deal than the one Barack Obama secured.

Given that he is up for re-election next year, Mr Trump will

be determined not to be dragged into a war with the Iranians. But securing a grand bargain with the regime will be a daunting challenge for his administration.

In response to the recent US pull-out, the Iranian regime has threatened to withdraw from the 2015 deal altogether and resume its nuclear activities. This is seen as a way to push the European parties to the deal to come up with ways to circumvent US sanctions while at the same time applying pressure on Mr Trump to soften his stance. This tactic has

worked to the extent that the US president has expressed a willingness to talk.

France, meanwhile, offered Iran access to \$15 billion in credit to stave off economic collapse, if Tehran returns to the terms of the deal and negotiates over security issues, including its regional policies. However, according to a source in Washington, the US has made it clear to French President Emmanuel Macron that his plan is unacceptable. The US reportedly told Mr Macron that it does not need him “to build a

bridge” between Washington and Tehran, just for the sake of having a sit-down with the Iranian leadership.

There have been suggestions that a US-Iran meeting is possible on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting later this month in New York. The US sees this as an opportunity for dialogue but will not lift sanctions just to entertain the notion of having talks. That puts the US at odds with the position expressed by Mr Rouhani, who has insisted on the lifting of sanction

President Donald Trump is not likely to be dragged into a war, but robust policy towards Tehran is expected to continue

1980

After weeks of strikes at the **Lenin Shipyard** in Gdańsk, Poland, the nationwide independent trade union **Solidarity** is established.

1980

Former Nicaraguan President **Anastasio Somoza Debayle** is killed in Asunción, Paraguay.

1983

Vanessa Williams becomes the first black Miss America.



1988

The 1988 **Summer Olympics** are opened in Seoul, South Korea.



at the White House in Washington, DC.

people who publicly despise Greta, Mr Monbiot suggested, know that the science is clear and cli-

mate change is real. They know that unchecked, it will destroy life on earth, so they compen-

sate for the uselessness of their own generation by transferring their guilt into being angrily

A Sherlock Holmes investigation would conclude that the threat is not from a Swedish teenager or a touring rock band but from basic science and the human need to survive.

patronising towards young people determined to resist. A kind of generational angst might be at work here, he suggested, but there is more to it. Recently a British Conservative MP, David Davies, jumped into the fray, attacking the rock band The 1975 for campaigning against climate change because they were also on a world tour. Mr Davies wrote an open letter, sarcastically asking: "I just wondered how you are going to get to these places?... Will you be sailing in a £4m superyacht like your mate Greta?" It's difficult to believe, given the chaos in British politics in Westminster, that attacking a 16-year-old girl and a rock band is top of any politician's agenda, but Mr Davies went ahead anyway. There is a common theme here. All those attacking climate activists appear to believe that be-

cause campaigners cannot avoid all use of fossil fuels, they should do nothing. Instead, the critics need to recognise that if we all do something, and do it quickly, we might be able to buy time for an orderly transition to other energy sources. Thinking governments are already trying. You can see it in the solar energy farms in the UAE, or the way education has become a top priority in the region, or in the UAE's status as – in the words of one contributor to a regional conference I attended – a kind of "Hong Kong" for the region, an economic and financial centre, preparing the future for generations to come. You can see it on the roofs of houses in rainy Britain where homeowners have fitted solar panels. And you can see it in the worldwide outrage over the burning of the Amazon rainforest.

A Sherlock Holmes investigation would conclude that the threat to the fossil fuel economy is not from a Swedish teenager or a touring rock band but from basic science and the human need to survive. We need to change or die. And once you eliminate the impossible then what remains is clearly the truth.

Climate change is a problem created by humans. That means it can be fixed by humans – all of us. As Ms Thunberg says: "I'm not that special. I can't convince everyone." True – but she might just be irritating many of the right people.

US-Iran relations

Brokering deals requires flexibility and Mr Bolton proved an obstacle in this regard because he valued consistency and toughness even more.

cently restated their loyalty to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as well as to the country's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. In a speech this week marking the Shia Muslim celebration of Ashura, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said his party would accept being killed 1,000 times by the "Americans and Zionists" rather than abandon Mr Khamenei, whom he called the heir of Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammed. Mr Nasrallah said his "axis of resistance" was prepared to take part in any war on behalf of Iran.

That Mr Nasrallah declared loyalty to Iran rather than his native Lebanon was telling, even more so at a time when David Schenker, the US assistant secretary for near eastern affairs, was making his first visit to Beirut. It was met with a robust response, with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo reportedly calling for a "gloves-off approach" against Hezbollah and its backers. Mr Schenker himself told Lebanese officials: "The window of opportunity is still open but it has started to close. All those concerned must know we are very serious."

This could mean more sanctions. What is troubling, however, is whether it would translate to more than that.

Mr Schenker's Lebanon visit was purportedly to highlight the danger of Hezbollah's actions across the region, said to include manufacturing precision rockets in Lebanon. Lebanese leaders have been warned that unless they take action to rein in the group, their country could experience an outbreak of war. Confrontation remains a possibility.

These militia groups have re-

CIVILIAN'S TRIBUNE

Terrorist strikes against Saudi Arabia are attacks against us all

It doesn't matter whether the latest attacks against Saudi oil facilities came from Iraq or Yemen – whether they were launched by Kataib Hezbollah or the Houthis, it is obvious to us all that these attacks were authorised and planned in Tehran.

The latest attacks have grabbed news headlines because strikes against the world's most important oil installations endanger the economy and international oil supplies.

Yet there have been hundreds of such attacks; including against airport facilities, Saudi cities and even the holy sites in Mecca and Medina.

This is in addition to attacks against oil tankers and the use of militias and terrorists to undermine security in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and elsewhere.

Whether or not the world knows it, Iran believes it is already at war against the Arab world and the West. Iran launches these attacks because it believes that it can get away with it and that it won't face consequences. On the contrary, Iran seems to believe that with such provocations it can force America and Europe to offer it concessions, even after it has restarted its nuclear programme.

Tehran appears to think that

the more aggressively and violently it behaves, the more it will win in some kind of future deal; no matter how many innocent people it kills or how much this damages the world economy.

We should therefore expect to see hundreds more such attacks, and they will perhaps get worse – UNLESS Iran is forced to realise that any such attacks against peace-loving states will incur a very high cost. Whatever happened to the UN? In the past these aggressions would have resulted in decisive action by Security Council members. European states try to appease Iran; yet if you appease a bully, they only get more violent and more ambitious.

Meanwhile, the US makes threats, but never follows through on them.

These attacks came immediately after Trump sacking John Bolton and asking President Rouhani to meet him. This sent a signal to Iran that the strategy of maximum pressure was dead; especially after America kept granting sanctions waivers to key states like China, India and Iraq, so that Tehran could continue to sell its oil and use the money to fund regional terrorism and militancy.

Iran's Ayatollahs are now out of control. They must

quickly be made to realise that when they attack great nations like Saudi Arabia, or fund terrorism in Bahrain and Iraq, or attack the ships of non-aggressive states like Japan and Norway; the full weight of international justice will land on their heads.

Meanwhile, states like Britain, France and Germany should acknowledge that Iran is not a normal state which they can do business with and which will play by the rules. Iran promised Britain that the tanker that was stopped in Gibraltar would not be used to transfer oil to the terrorist, genocidal Assad regime. Yet a week later, this same ship turned up on the coast of Syria. Iran lies so naturally and easily, that diplomats who should know better are deceived again and again.

Until the world comes to its senses, the GCC states and the Arab world as a whole should show a united face to Iran and the world, forcing acknowledgement that such aggressions can never be tolerated. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Saudi Arabia. Yet our thoughts and prayers alone are insufficient if we don't want to see such terrorist crimes – over and over again – targeted against us all.

Citizens for Bahrain



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Our day-to-day existence is very much alive with hope, although there is no guarantee of our future. There is no guarantee that tomorrow at this time we will be here. But still we are working for that purely on the basis of hope. So, we need to make the best use of our time.

@DalaiLama

02



Because we have done so well with Energy over the last few years (thank you, Mr. President!), we are a net Energy Exporter, & now the Number One Energy Producer in the World. We don't need Middle Eastern Oil & Gas, & in fact have very few tankers there, but will help our Allies!

@realDonaldTrump

03



We are all incredible creators. The only difference is our point of focus... Stop paying attention to other people's drama. Start focusing more on your own dreams and goals.

@MyPowertalk

04



Slovenia has made a niche for itself in the fields of Artificial Intelligence, defence and clean water technologies. India's growth and Slovenia's technology and manufacturing capacity complement each other.

@rashtrapatibhvn

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

business

CBB Sukuk Al-Salam Securities oversubscribed by 301pc

TDT | Manama

The Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) announced that the monthly issue of the Sukuk Al-Salam Islamic securities, has been oversubscribed by 301 per cent.

Subscriptions worth BD 129.223 million were received for the BD 43 million issue, which carries a maturity of 91 days.

The expected return on the issue, which begins on September 18 and matures on December 18, is 2.79pc compared to 2.90pc of the previous issue on August 21.

The Sukuk Al-Salam are issued by the CBB on behalf of the Government of Bahrain.

Chinese dairy giant eyes takeover



Mengniu milk products are seen on a shelf at a store in Beijing

AFP | Beijing

Chinese dairy company Mengniu announced yesterday it had made a takeover offer for Australian infant formula producer Bellamy's in a deal valued at around US\$1 billion.

Hong Kong-listed Mengniu has been eyeing global expansion in recent years, and said it was drawn by the Australian group's local operations and supply chain, as well as its "leading organic brand position".

"Our sales growth ambitions for Bellamy's in Australia, and the broader Asia Pacific region, will see investment in the local dairy industry to ensure the required capacity is in place to achieve these plans," Mengniu CEO Lu Minfang said in a statement to the Australian Stock Exchange yesterday.

Under the proposed deal, Mengniu would pay AUS\$12.65 (\$8.69) per share plus a shareholder dividend, marking a 59 percent premium on Bellamy's Friday closing share price.

Bellamy's CEO Andrew Cohen said that Mengniu offered a "strong platform for distribution and success in China".

The board of directors at the Australian group have given their support to the takeover, which still needs to receive approval from the company's shareholders and Australia's Foreign Investment Review Board.

iGA shares Bahrain's experience with Turkmenistan

iGA receives Turkmenistan delegation to showcase Bahrain's Experience in the field of eGovernance

● The visit was in-line with an MoU signed between the two countries earlier

TDT | Manama

The Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA) received a delegation from Turkmenistan's Ministry of Industry and Communication at its headquarters in Muharraq.

The visit was in line with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the governments of the Kingdom of Bahrain and Turkmenistan relating to cooperation in eGovernment, which was signed during the visit of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to the Republic of Turkmenistan last March.

The MoU allows for the shar-



iGA officials during a meeting with the delegation from Turkmenistan

ing of the Kingdom's experience in the field and further strengthening cooperation between the two countries.

The delegation was received by iGA Chief Executive, Mohammed Ali AlQaed and other iGA senior management team mem-

bers and officials.

The delegation was given a presentation of Bahrain's National eGovernment Strategy and its role in promoting the adoption of modern technology in the government sector, which contributes to improvements in

the quality of its services and higher customer satisfaction.

The delegation also learned about major national projects, along with the National Suggestions and Complaints system (Tawasul), the move towards cloud computing, as well as iGA's

efforts in the fields of information security, radiocommunications, and statistics.

The delegation was also introduced to Bahrain's efforts to reengineer government services procedures so that they can accommodate the changing and increasing demands of citizens as well as public and private organizations. In addition, iGA showcased the Kingdom's experience in the United Nations (UN) eGovernment Survey.

As per the MoU, the Kingdom of Bahrain, represented by iGA, will cooperate with the Republic of Turkmenistan, represented by its Ministry of Industry and Communication, to facilitate cooperation in fields of mutual interest, including policy, standards and eGovernment channels development; eGovernment applications; national statistics; telecommunications; and the development of UN eGovernment Survey indicators, among others.

SUVs to be won as Lulu celebrates 12th anniversary

TDT | Manama

Sixteen elegant and all-terrain Nissan Patrol SUVs are up for an anniversary raffle draw at Lulu Hypermarket as the retail giant gets ready to unveil its promotion-packed 12th anniversary celebrations.

The eight hypermarkets in Bahrain will be giving customers a chance to win the stylish Nissan Patrol car by entering a raffle draw when they spend just BD 5.

Lulu is also offering many exciting money-saving deals on groceries, home appliances, clothes, footwear, toys, electronic and much more, that is easy to do.



Along with one day, two day and three day offers, there will be exclusive discounts in all the

departments from September 18 to 23.

Customers can continue to

rack up raffle chances till December 21st 2019. The more one spends, the better the chances of

driving away with the SUV along with some of the 1000 consolation prizes.

"Completing 12 years as Bahrain's favourite shopping experience is a great feeling and we are delighted to share this joy with our customers," said Juzer Rupawala, Director of Lulu International Group.

"Our high quality of products and services with reasonable pricing is the main reason why we have such a large and ever growing customer base. We also ensure we have a wide variety of products for the customer to choose from to our customers. This anniversary celebration is a thank you from Lulu to You," he added.

Purdue files for bankruptcy in bid to settle opioid crisis cases

AFP | Washington

Purdue Pharma has filed for bankruptcy in a settlement agreement in a move it hopes will head off further legal proceedings in relation to its role in spreading the opioid crisis in the US, the company said in a statement on Sunday.

Owned by the wealthy Sackler family, the pharmaceutical giant is facing thousands of state and federal lawsuits blaming its prescription painkiller OxyContin for plunging millions of Americans into addiction.

If approved by a bankruptcy judge, Purdue says that it expects the proposed restructuring to provide more than \$10 billion to help tackle addiction and see the new company's profits re-directed in ways that benefit the claimants and the American people.



Purdue Pharma headquarters stands in downtown Stamford

Purdue Chairman Steve Miller said the settlement will "provide billions of dollars and critical resources to communities across the country trying to cope with the opioid crisis."

The company has filed for reorganization under Chapter 11 of the US Bankruptcy Code and, if the proposal receives court approval, it will then dissolve and transfer its assets to a trust managed by a new governing board.

Bankrupt Aigle Azur's unions seek more time for Air France talks

Reuters | Paris

Staff representatives at bankrupt French airline Aigle Azur have asked for more time to discuss a takeover by Air France-KLM at a court hearing yesterday, as the field of potential buyers narrowed, the CFDT union said.

Air France, which submitted a bid last week, has agreed to combine its offer with Air Caraïbes parent Dubreuil group, two sources told Reuters, confirming French media reports.

Air France wants to buy Aigle Azur's medium-haul business serving Algeria and the surrounding region, along with valuable take-off and landing slots at Paris Orly. Air Caraïbes has bid for the long-haul operations to destinations including



An Airbus A320-200 aircraft, operated by Aigle Azur, lands at Orly Airport

Brazil.

The CFDT and CFTC unions together representing a majority of Aigle Azur's French staff also offered to renegotiate contract conditions in order to avoid a liquidation.

Air France declined to comment. A spokeswoman for rival bidder easyJet was not immediately available. A third offer led by a former head of

Air France's Hop! unit has been withdrawn, people with knowledge of the process said.

Higher fuel costs and stiffer low-cost competition have led to a recent wave of bankruptcies among smaller European airlines including Air Berlin, Germania, British-based Monarch, Latvia's Primera Air and Swiss SkyWork.



A traditional motorcycle taxi on Lagos roads -- overladen and not a crash helmet in sight

Turning chaos into opportunity

Motorbike taxi apps jostle for trade on crowded Lagos roads

Lagos

Banker Yemi Adegbola used to leave his home in Lagos before 4 am each day, but would still arrive late to work because of the notorious traffic in Nigeria's biggest city.

Now he says he has "dumped his car" for one of a raft of new motorbike ride hailing apps that developers hope can speed up journeys for the roughly 20 million residents of the economic capital.

For years the jams -- known locally as "go-slows" -- have been a nightmare for Lagosians.

Potholed roads, reckless driving and too many cars have helped turn the daily commute into an ordeal that often lasts for hours.

People miss appointments and business suffers as one of Africa's largest markets grinds to a standstill.

Sensing an opportunity, a growing number of ride hailing services have stepped into the chaos -- bringing order to the "okada" motorbike taxis that have long whizzed perilously around Lagos.

First to launch was Gokada in 2018, pioneering an Uber-style system for two-wheeled transport that had already been successfully rolled out by firms elsewhere.

It has since been followed by other operators like Maxokada and ORide -- and the competitors are looking to overtake each other with better technology, lower prices and more services.

'Open market'

Before these startups, Lagosians in a hurry had to put their faith in the army of unregulated "okada" riders weaving hazardously through the traffic.

Often untrained and unfamiliar with the city, they were seen as dangerous and blamed by the police for a rise in petty crime.

The authorities clamped down and in 2012 banned the 100cc bikes from 475 roads and highways around the city.

This year some 3,000 mo-

torcycles were impounded and destroyed for violating the restrictions, police said.

The ride hailing apps provide a striking difference.

Their drivers are decked out in bibs and helmets in company colours, carry safety kits with them and have more powerful bikes that can make longer trips.

Passengers are charged an Uber-style tariff, and no longer have to resort to haggling each time they hail a ride.

A traditional "okada" ride can cost between 50 naira (14 US cents, 12 euro centimes) and several hundred naira -- depending on the distance, area and the mood of the driver.

New entrant ORide kick-started its services in May and is looking to tap into the abundant opportunities with 3,000 trained drivers.

The firm -- part of the OPay online payment service -- is looking to expand operations as part of a \$50 million push and already works in six

other cities in Nigeria.

"It's an open market in which everybody has something to offer. There's so much to cover in Nigeria," Iniabasi Akpan, OPay country manager, told AFP.

Unlike other players which allow users to hail a ride both online or on the streets, passengers can only pay via the OPay app, developed by Norway's Opera Software.

The firm has comprehensive insurance that covers both riders and passengers and secures it drivers with asset financing contracts that sees them pay back the cost of their new bikes in 18 months.

Bumps in the road

Overall the two-wheeler taxi market is forecast to reach \$9 billion worldwide by 2021, according to India-based Tech Sci. But it has not been all smooth riding since the apps launched.

Accidents remain unavoidable in the confusion of Nigeria's roads, online tools have faltered, drivers have looked to inflate fares and corrupt officials still prey on road-users.

Gokada in May announced over \$5 million in new funding and said it hoped to branch out into other forms of transport and eventually push outside Nigeria.

But last month the firm shut down for two weeks after its chief executive Fahim Saleh encountered some of the navigational problems when a short journey ended up taking much longer.

The driver he ordered took 15 minutes to pick

him up, admitted he wasn't using GPS and then set off on a circuitous route to the destination.

"How could I be the CEO of Gokada, the company that pioneered motorcycle ride-hailing in Nigeria and be experiencing this?" Saleh wrote in an online post.

"I told the pilot to pull over to the side of the road, I would hop over the median and wait for an Uber. 'This is what it has come to,' I thought."

The disappointment chimed with the gripes of some Nigerian users who have complained of navigation problems while using the various apps and accuse drivers of deliberately taking longer routes to increase fares.

Firms have sought ways around the issues.

Gokada relaunched its 2.0 service with a fresh fleet of bikes after giving drivers more training and incorporating features

like helmets with inbuilt mobile headsets.

ORide has a monitoring unit set up to track its drivers.

Despite the bumps in the road, riders said the apps were helping them bolster their business and offering a key lifeline.

"This scheme has taken many out of poverty by creating jobs," ORide driver Johnson Onipede said, sitting on his light green bike as he waited for his next ride.

Onipede said his main headache remained one familiar to all Lagosians -- venal local thieves.

He said riders needed help getting small gangs of thugs, known as Agberos or Area Boys, to stop their extortion and harassment.

"Both the government and company should help us to stop the Agberos and Area Boys because they are making life unbearable for us."



Tayo Bamiduro, founder and CEO of motorcycle taxi app MaxOkada

Saudi funds, oil assurance steady stocks

● Gulf markets rose as cheaper valuations attracted the investors

● Saudi stock market index closed 1pc higher

Reuters | Dubai

Saudi Arabian stocks were supported by domestic funds yesterday after top oil producer Saudi Aramco assured some clients that there will be no supply shortage as a result of Saturday's attack on its facilities.

The attack shut about 5 per cent of global supply, sending oil prices as much as 19.5pc higher, their biggest intra-day percentage gain since 1991's Gulf War.

Despite Aramco's assurance, concerns remain over oil supply which could be disrupted if the outage continued for long, while a full return to normal oil



Traders look at a screen at Saudi Stock Exchange

production volumes "may take months", sources told Reuters.

It could also have a wider impact on Saudi Aramco's planned initial public offering (IPO) on its home market.

"The attacks could complicate Aramco's IPO plans given rising security risks and potential im-

pact on its valuation," Eurasia wrote in a note to clients.

After losing 1.1pc on Sunday, the country's stock market index closed 1pc higher with its biggest lender National Commercial Bank surging 4.2pc and Al Rajhi Bank rising 1.4pc.

Traders cited buying by local

and regional investors, as most foreign active investors have already exited the index, which is trading roughly flat year-to-date after it rose as much as 20pc at its peak in May.

"Our channel checks suggest most of the 'active' foreign money in KSA has already exited the

Closing Bell

SAUDI ▲ 1pc to 7,827

ABU DHABI ▲ 1.7pc to 5,161 points

DUBAI T ▲ 0.3pc to 2,878 points

QATAR ▲ 1.1pc to 10,512 points

EGYPT ▼ 0.4pc to 14,970 points

BAHRAIN ▼ 0.7pc at 1,524 points

OMAN ▼ 0.3pc to 4,009 points

KUWAIT ▼ 2.2pc to 6,101 points

market and what is left is passive funds, who have to stay invested," said Vrajesh Bhandari, senior portfolio manager at Al Mal Capital.

It means local and regional institutions and retail investors are calling the shots and that supply can be relatively better controlled with some support from domestic funds, Bhandari added.

Other major Gulf markets also rose as cheaper valuations attracted the investors.

The Abu Dhabi index rose

1.7pc boosted by a 2pc jump in the United Arab Emirates' biggest lender First Abu Dhabi Bank and a 2.6pc Emirates Telecommunications Group

"In terms of fundamentals, certain high quality companies across MENA are currently being undervalued and investors are gradually adding to their exposure," Bhandari said.

Qatar's index gained 1.1pc with petrochemical maker Industries Qatar up 2.3pc and Qatar National Bank 1.3pc higher.

In Dubai, the index was down 0.3pc with the market heavyweight lender Emirates NBD gaining 0.8pc.

The emirate's largest lender has risen 17.5pc this month after it raised its foreign ownership limit to 20pc from 5pc and announced its intention to lift the limit to 40pc.

Outside the Gulf, Egypt's blue-chip index was down 0.4pc with real estate investment firm Talaat Mostafa Group Holding dropping 2.1pc.

Saudi on track to partly restore oil output

AFP | Riyadh

Saudi Arabia is believed to be on track to quickly restore at least a third of its oil production lost to devastating attacks, as it scrambles to soothe market jitters ahead of a mega stock listing.

Oil prices rocketed yesterday after the strikes on Abqaiq -- the world's largest oil processing facility -- and the Khurais oil field in eastern Saudi Arabia knocked out nearly half of the top crude exporter's production.

Seeking to assuage nervous markets, Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman has said the kingdom would use its vast inventories to partially make up for lost production, and the US also authorised the release of its strategic reserves.

But benchmark Brent crude surged by 20 per cent yesterday -- the biggest gain since the 1991



An Aramco oil facility near al-Khurj area, just south of the Saudi capital Riyadh

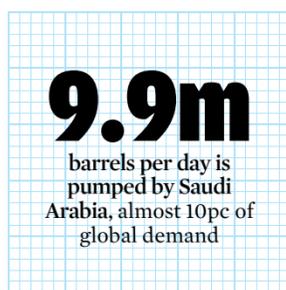
Gulf War -- after US President Donald Trump hinted at a military response to the attacks his administration has blamed on Iran.

The Energy Intelligence specialist newsletter cited industry sources as saying Aramco was "close to restoring as much as 40pc" of the lost production, or about 2.3 million barrels per

day (bdp).

The Wall Street Journal cited people familiar with the damage estimates as saying the hit facilities would take weeks to return to full production capacity.

However, one of its sources told the newspaper: "We should be able to have two million barrels a day back online... by tomorrow (Monday)."



Industry consultant Energy Aspects also estimated the country would be able to restore almost half the lost production as early as Monday.

Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya television said yesterday that Aramco was ready to restart the Khurais plant, which handles 1.5 million bpd.

The kingdom pumps 9.9 million bpd, almost 10pc of global demand, of which seven million bpd is destined for export.

Apple takes fight against 13-billion-euro EU tax order to court

Reuters | Luxembourg

Apple will launch a legal challenge on Tuesday to a European Commission order to pay 13 billion euros (\$14.4 billion) in Irish back taxes in a landmark case in the EU's crackdown on tax avoidance by multinational companies.

The iPhone maker is expected to send a six-man delegation headed by Chief Financial Officer Luca Maestri to the two-day court hearing at the Luxembourg-based General Court, the EU's second highest court.

In August 2016, the Commission said tax rulings by Ireland in 1991 and in 2007 had artificially reduced Apple's tax burden for over two decades, effectively making it illegal state aid.

European Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager pointed to a 0.005% tax rate paid by Apple's main Irish unit in 2014 as an example of the unusually low payments by the company.

Apple is expected to argue that it did nothing wrong as it had followed Irish and US tax laws. It made similar arguments in a blog following an EU tax ruling a couple of years ago.



The Apple logo is displayed at an event at their headquarters in Cupertino, California

It will tell the court that the bulk of its taxes are owed to the United States because the majority of the value in its products including design, engineering and development, is created there.

Ireland, which has accused the Commission of exceeding its powers and interfering with the EU member's national sovereignty over tax affairs, is also challenging the EU ruling.

The Irish tax regime is a key attraction for multinational companies, which employ around 10% of the country's workforce.

Luxembourg is backing Ireland while Poland is supporting the Commission. Vestager has also gone after sweetheart deals offered by the Netherlands to Starbucks, Luxembourg to Amazon, Fiat and Engie as well as a British tax scheme for multinationals.

VW settles Australia emissions cheating scandal

AFP | Sydney

Volkswagen has agreed to pay up to Aus\$127 million (\$87.3 million) to settle multiple class action suits brought by Australian motorists over a diesel emissions cheating scandal, the parties' lawyers said yesterday.



Logo of VW behind a car

The German car giant, which owns brands ranging from luxury Audi to lower-end Skoda,

said in 2015 that 11 million diesel engines globally were affected.

Owners of about 100,000 Australian cars will be able to seek compensation from Volkswagen under the terms of the in-principle agreement, which the automaker has agreed to without admitting liability and must still be approved by the Federal Court.

"This is an important step in providing a measure of justice and redress to the thousands of Australian motorists who claim they were financially impacted by the diesel emissions issue," said Julian Schimmel, principal lawyer of Maurice Blackburn, the firm behind one of the class actions.

US group Advent wins \$5 bln battle for Britain's Cobham

Reuters | London

US private equity firm Advent International won its battle to buy Britain's Cobham for \$5 billion yesterday, taking advantage of the weak pound to pounce on the defence and aerospace group.

Chairman Jamie Pike told a shareholder meeting the management had "pushed as hard as they could push" and engaged in some "arm wrestling" before finally settling on a price that marked a 50 per cent premi-

um to the three-month average share price before the deal was announced.

In the latest of a series of buy-outs in Europe as private equity firms seek new targets for their bumper cash balances, the deal was struck at 165 pence per share. The stock was trading at 161 pence yesterday morning.

Cobham, which employs 10,000 people to make its pioneering air-to-air refuelling system and communications for military vehicles, has a storied history but has faced difficulties



A Eurofighter Typhoon jet lands in Payerne, Switzerland

in recent years.

Launched in the 1930s, Cobham equipment came to the fore ahead of World War Two and in the 1982 Falklands conflict. Its technology is now used in aircraft such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and Eurofighter Typhoon as well as advanced naval vessels, satellites and military vehicles.

However, the company is still recovering from a string of profit warnings in 2016 and 2017, which forced it to raise cash from shareholders and prompt-

ed Chief Executive David Lockwood to embark on a turnaround strategy more than two years ago to improve its financial and operating performance.

Final results from yesterday's shareholder vote are not yet in, but the deal crossed the line with the 93pc approval from proxy votes. Advent has a track record in buying British technology, having snapped up electronics company Laird for \$1.65 billion last year. Cobham's Lockwood was Laird's chief executive between 2012 and 2016.

SHOW



DREAM GIRL (PG-15)(HINDI/COMEDY/ROMANTIC)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM
CITY CENTRE : 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
SEEF (I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN
WADI AL SAIL: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM
SAAR: 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + (11.00 PM THURS/FRI)
AYUSHMANN KHURRANA, NUSHRAT BHARUCHA, ABHISHEK BANERJEE

THE GOLDFINCH (15+)(DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE : 12.00 + 3.00 + 6.00 + 9.00 + 12.00 MN
SEEF (II): 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
WADI AL SAIL: 12.45 + 6.00 + 11.15 PM
SAAR: 3.00 + 8.30 PM
ANSEL ELGORT, OAKES FEGLEY, ANEURIN BARNARD

OFFICIAL SECRETS (PG-15)(THRILLER/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE : 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
SEEF (II): 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 + 12.00 MN
WADI AL SAIL: 10.30 AM + 3.45 + 9.00 PM
SAAR: 11.30 AM + 4.15 + 9.00 PM
KEIRA KNIGHTLEY, RALPH FIENNES, MATT SMITH (XI)

SECTION 375 (15+)(HINDI/DRAMA/THRILLER)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
CITY CENTRE : 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
SEEF (II): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM
WADI AL SAIL: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
SAAR: 1.45 + 6.30 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)
AKSHAYE KHANNA, RICHA CHADHA, AJAY BAHL

STRANGE BUT TRUE (PG-15)(DRAMA/THRILLER)

SEEF (II): 5.45 + 7.45 + 9.45 + 11.45 PM
MARGARET QUALLEY, NICK ROBINSON, BRIAN COX

PAILWAN (PG-15)(ACTION/DRAMA/SPORT)

OASIS JUFFAIR : KANNADA : 10.30 AM + 5.00 PM
OASIS JUFFAIR : HINDI 1.45 + 11.30 PM
SEEF (I): KANNADA 12.30 + 3.45 + 7.00 + 10.15 PM
SEEF (I): HINDI 11.00 AM + 2.15 + 5.30 + 8.45 + 12.00 MN
AL HAMRA: KANNADA : 3.00 PM
AKSHAYE KHANNA, RICHA CHADHA, AJAY BAHL

THE BIG TRIP (PG)(ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 11.30 AM + 1.15 PM
SEEF (II): 10.45 PM + 12.30 + 2.15 + 4.00 PM

WADI AL SAIL: 11.30 AM + 1.15 + 3.00 + 4.45 PM
SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT, SHRADDHA KAPOOR, VARUN SHARMA

ANGEL HAS FALLEN (PG-15)(ACTION/THRILLER)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 12.00 + 5.45 + 11.30 PM
OASIS JUFFAIR (VIP): 2.45 + 8.30 PM
CITY CENTRE : 10.30 AM + 11.30 AM + 1.00 + 2.00 + 3.30 + 4.30 + 6.00 + 7.00 + 8.30 + 9.30 + 11.00 PM + 12.00 MN + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
CITY CENTRE VIP (I): 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
SEEF (II): 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 + 12.00 MN
WADI AL SAIL: 10.45 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
SAAR: 12.45 + 6.00 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)
GERARD BUTLER, MORGAN FREEMAN, JADA PINKETT SMITH

IT CHAPTER TWO (15+)(HORROR/DRAMA)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 2.30 + 8.15 PM
OASIS JUFFAIR (VIP): 11.30 AM + 5.15 + 11.00 PM
CITY CENTRE : 1.00 + 4.30 + 8.00 + 11.30 PM + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
CITY CENTRE (IMAX 2D) : 2.45 + 9.00 PM
SEEF (II): 11.00 AM + 2.15 + 5.30 + 8.45 PM + 12.00 MN
WADI AL SAIL: 10.30 AM + 1.15 + 4.30 + 7.45 + 11.00 PM
SAAR: 12.45 + 4.00 + 7.15 + (10.30 PM THURS/FRI)
JAMES MCAVOY, JESSICA CHASTAIN, BILL HADER

FAST & FURIOUS: HOBBS & SHAW (PG-15)(ACTION/THRILLER)

CITY CENTRE: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM



Margaret Qualley in "Strange but True"

● The twists and turns of 'Strange but True' live up to its title until the ending

Margaret Qualley is the daughter of Andie MacDowell; that fact makes her show business royalty, and partly explains why she's so visually striking and has such an intuitive rapport with the camera. But her emergence into the spotlight—starting with HBO's "The Leftovers" and continuing with scene-stealing roles in FX's "Fosse/Verdon" and "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood"—was still startling. She seems like a fully-formed screen artist who's been around forever, even though some of her co-stars probably have shoes that are older than her.

As Melissa Moody in "Strange But True," a young woman who returns home five years after her boyfriend's death on prom night yet claims to be pregnant with his child, Qualley is a sweet, upbeat, can-do type of heroine, someone you'd expect to see on a TV series about an intrepid girl detective or a small town kid

trying to save the family farm. But she radiates eerie gravitas whenever she appears onscreen, and it's not just because of the weirdness of her story or the way that her character's pregnant belly enters the frame before the rest of her. Qualley is the best thing in "Strange But True," a psychological thriller adapted from John Searles' novel by Eric Garcia ("Matchstick Men") and

directed by Rowan Athale.

The second-best thing in the movie is every other actor, a bomber crew of big talents that includes Connor Jessup as Melissa's boyfriend Ronnie, who died in the aforementioned wreck; Nick Robinson as Ronnie's brother Philip, still on crutches; Amy Ryan and Greg Kinnear as the brothers' now-separated parents; and

Brian Cox and Blythe Danner as Bill and Gail Erwin, Melissa's adoptive parents. Even performers who have just one scene make a powerful impression. (In terms of impact vs. screen time, Allegra Fulton's cameo as a fortune teller is right up there with Gloria Foster's only scene in the original "The Matrix"; she has the voice of a streetwise fairy godmother who always tells the



Margaret Qualley's performance as a mysteriously pregnant ingenue is the saving grace of this silly, overworked suburban thriller

hard truth).

The storytelling is less assured, though. It's a pleasure to watch a movie that's told in complete, self-contained scenes with beginnings, middles and ends, and that doesn't lean on constant editorializing music and exposition dumps to create the illusion of excitement. Athale and Garcia are going for a lean-and-mean approach, and it works well enough at first, because the character interactions are organized around sharply defined conflicts (Melissa vs. everyone but Bill and Gail) and goals (to deliver or discover information).

For the most part, the situations play to the actors' strengths—particularly Danner, who has become the Earth Grandma of American cinema, and Kinnear, who can play genial and deprived with such equal facility that never know what to expect from his characters. The movie is mesmerizing as long as we aren't sure whether we're watching a horror film (or fantasy) about immaculate conception or a movie that's building up to a rational explanation.

But some of the characters are better-served by the dialogue than others (Ryan is stuck with the worst lines, mostly sour and stilted exposition), and there are too many moments where you can finish the characters' sentences for them. And after a certain point, you start looking at that nearly-all-star cast and wondering which of these seemingly decent if distressed people is up to something evil, and it dawns on you that this is a contrived domestic thriller that's using superior performances and brooding atmosphere to make you think there's something deeper going on. The pretence of ambiguity and complexity turns out to be a tease.

ALADDIN (PG)(ADVENTURE)

CITY CENTRE: 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM
WILL SMITH, NAOMI SCOTT, MENA MASSOUD

MISSION MANGAL (PG-13)(HINDI/DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 10.30 AM + 3.45 + 9.00 PM
AKSHAY KUMAR, VIDYA BALAN, ANIRBAN BHATTACHARYYA

PORINJU MARIAM JOSE (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 1.45 + 8.00 PM
JOJU GEORGE, CHEMBAN VINOD, NYLA USHA



ITTYMAANI (PG)(MALAYALAM)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
SEEF (I): 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM
AL HAMRA: 12.00 + 9.00 PM
MOHANLAL, SWASIKA, RADHIKA SARATHKUMAR

BROTHER'S DAY (PG-13)(MALAYALAM)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 10.30 AM + 4.45 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM
PRITHVIRAJ SUKUMARAN, MIA GEORGE, MADONA SEBASTIAN, AISHWARYA LEKSHMI

LOVE ACTION DRAMA ()(MALAYALAM)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM
SEEF (I): 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
AL HAMRA: 6.00 PM + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)
NIVIN PAULY, NAYANTHARA, AJU VARGHESE

GANG LEADER ()(TELUGU)

FROM FRIDAY 13th
SEEF (I): 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
NANI, PRIYANKA ARULMOHAN, KARTIKEYA GUMMAKONDA

MOVIE REVIEW

Strange but True: family dysfunction wrapped in a thriller

celebs

Britney Spears



Robert Downey Jr to be back as Iron Man in 'Black Widow'

Los Angeles

Actor Robert Downey Jr will be back as the enigmatic superhero Iron Man in the Marvel Cinematic Universe with "Black Widow".

Downey will be seen reprising Tony Stark aka Iron Man one more time in the prequel "Black Widow", which will release in 2020, reports "deadline.com".



Robert Downey Jr

Downey Jr, who won hearts all across the world as enigmatic superhero Iron Man, bid adieu to his superhero avatar with "Avengers: Endgame" this year. In fact, Scarlett Johansson's Black Widow aka Natasha Romanoff also died in the film.

Laura Dern debunks Bradley Cooper dating rumours

Los Angeles

Actress Laura Dern has dismissed all dating rumours with actor Bradley Cooper and says they are just friends.

The "Big Little Lies" star and "A Star is Born" actor-director were seen dining together in New York City, weeks after Cooper's split from his longtime girlfriend Irina Shayk in June.



Dern says their relationship is strictly platonic.

'Dream Girl' opening weekend: Ayushmann starrer rakes in Rs 44.57 crores

Mumbai

Ayushmann Khurrana's latest release 'Dream Girl' which received a fantastic response from the audience on the first day of its release has registered strong growth at the box office in its opening weekend.



The film Ayushmann which saw a heroic start after minting Rs 10.05 crores on the first day has managed to rake in Rs 44.57 crores over the weekend.

Britney Spears pens a sweet birthday message for sons

Los Angeles

Britney Spears is the proud mother of her two boys Sean Preston and Jayden James Federline and is always vocal to express her love for her kids.

This time the singer took to social media to express her love towards her sons, who recently celebrated their 13th and 14th birthdays.

Taking to social media the 37-year-old pop star posted a sweet family photo at the beach when they were toddlers.

"Oh, how they've grown... Mamma loves you guys very very much!!!! May you get all your bday wishes and more," She captioned the snapshot.

According to Fox News, her elder son Sean Preston turned 14 on Saturday and younger son Jayden turned 13 on Thursday.

Beyonce announces 'Making the Gift' TV special on ABC

Los Angeles

Beyonce

American singer-songwriter Beyonce will now be taking over your TV screens after she announced her documentary special with ABC network called 'Making The Gift'.

"ABC Network. 10 pm," the 38-year-old Emmy-nominated singer wrote on her Instagram, alongside a short clip of the documentary special.

According to the teaser, which the network also shared on YouTube, fans can expect to see an "intimate" look at the creation of every single song.

The album, which is described as a "love letter to Africa," showcases some of the top musicians like Jay-Z, Kendrick Lamar, Pharrell, Childish Gambino, and many emerging African artists.

The singer made sure that the album should feel more authentic as possible.



Reynolds sneaks in jab at Jackman in congratulatory post

Canberra

Actor Ryan Reynolds was full of praise for his friend Hugh Jackman as he celebrated the star being honoured with Australia's Companion of the Order title.

Jackman was awarded the highest of the four levels of the Order of Australia, and was joined by his wife of 23 years, Deborah-Lee Furness, for the ceremony by Governor General David Hurley in Australia's capital Canberra on September 13, reports aceshowbiz.com.

While "The Wolverine" star enjoyed the moment, Reynolds praised his friend on social media.



Ryan Reynolds

"Hugh is one of the finest, kindest, hardest working, generous and most talented people I've had the privilege to call my friend, There's nobody better," he wrote.

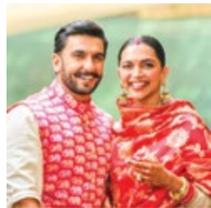
The "Deadpool" star later re-posted a photograph of Jackman after his win, joking in the caption: "None of this changes the unfortunate fact."

Why Deepika calls Ranveer a 'trashcan'

Mumbai

Deepika Padukone has called hubby Ranveer Singh a "trashcan", for his tendency to finish off whatever she leaves on plate at the dining table.

The actress' latest meme on Instagram is a hilarious post that has her poking fun at her actor-husband's habit. In the meme, a girl and a boy are seated at a table, eating. While the boy sips at his drink, the girl has trouble finishing her food. Then she throws the remaining food into the boy's mouth, which is wide open like a trashcan. "Open wide, trashcan!" she tells him.



Ranveer and Deepika

"That's us" wrote Deepika, and tagged Ranveer.

Ranveer on his part commented on the post. "Hahahahaha! BASICCC," he wrote.

"That's cute," wrote a user, while another showed solidarity to the star couple: "You aren't alone".

"All husband and wife relation is the same," wrote another user. A Ranveer fan used the situation to gush about him: "Ranveer is the love everyone deserves."

Sara Ali Khan to bring alive Saif, Amrita's hits at IIFA Awards

Mumbai

Sara Ali Khan is excited but nervous about performing at the 20th edition of International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards.

Sara added that she will dance to hit songs of father Saif Ali Khan and her mother Amrita Singh at the awards show.

"I have been watching IIFA Awards since childhood. I have travelled with my father to IIFA Awards. I remember two years ago, IIFA was held in New Jersey and I was in New York with my father. But I couldn't attend the function because he said, 'why do you want to attend, you haven't been invited?'"

So, this year's IIFA Award is really special to me because I have been invited. I will be performing and now I feel I have become a part of this industry," said Sara, while interacting with the media at the dance rehearsals of the award ceremony on Sunday in Mumbai.



Sara Ali Khan

Sara said she would be performing with Ranveer Singh and Madhuri Dixit Nene at the award show. "I am doing rehearsals for my performance and I am shooting for David (Dhawan) sir's along with it so, I am not getting enough time but whatever time I am getting, I am making sure to do rehearsals as much as possible because Big stars like Ranveer Singh and Madhuri Dixit are to perform on this platform so, it is obvious that I am feeling bit nervous so, I am hoping to perform better at awards."

GoT wins big at Creative Arts Emmy Awards

Los Angeles

"Games Of Thrones" dominated the Creative Arts Emmy Awards by taking home 10 trophies.

The 71st Emmy Awards kicked off with a two-night event starting with the Creative Arts Emmy Awards ceremony, held at Microsoft Theater here, reports "variety.com".

"Game Of Thrones", which wrapped up its story with the final season earlier this year, dominated the craft and technical categories at the ceremony on Sunday.

The series won in visual effects, single-camera, non-prosthetic make-up, main title design and drama series casting categories.

The popular fantasy drama set a new record by earning 32 nominations at the 2019 Emmys.



This is the most ever for a single season of a show. The show was in the race to win in 18 categories on Sunday, out of which it took home 10 trophies.

HBO's "Chernobyl", which dramatises the story of the 1986 nuclear accident, won seven awards, followed by Amazon Prime Video's "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" with six wins, which included acting accolades for Jane Lynch and Luke Kirby.

Elli AvrRam: I'm on cloud nine

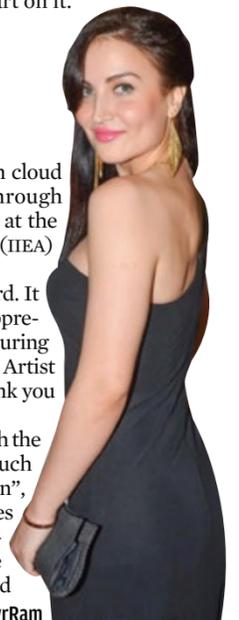
Dubai

Actress Elli AvrRam says she is on cloud nine after bagging the Breakthrough Bollywood Artist of 2019 award at the India International Excellence Awards (IIEA) held here.

"I am delighted to have won this award. It feels amazing when your hard work is appreciated and I am grateful to IIEA for honouring me with the 'Breakthrough Bollywood Artist of 2019' award. I am on cloud nine. Thank you IIEA," Elli said.

Lately Elli has been creating waves with the special dance numbers in various films, such as "Chamma chamma" in "Fraud Saiyan", and "Zilla hilela" in "Jabariya Jodi", besides her role in the Netflix series "Typewriter". She also made her presence felt in the teaser of the Tamil movie "Paris Paris" and the Kannada film "Butterfly".

Elli AvrRam



Virat Kohli flaunts Anushka's initials on t-shirt

Mumbai

Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli showcased his love for his wife Anushka Sharma by flaunting a t-shirt with the actress's initials.

Virat shared a picture which shows him lost in deep thought and captioned it: "Caught in the moment. Pic credit @anushkasharma."

The skipper is seen dressed in a white tee with the letter "A" in red and a heart on it.



Virat Kohli

SPORTS
sports**David de Gea signs new deal at Man Utd**

AFP | London

David de Gea has signed a new long-term contract with Manchester United, the Premier League club announced yesterday, ending months of speculation over his future.

"David de Gea has signed a new long-term contract with Manchester United, keeping him at the club until at least June 2023," United said on their official website. "There is an option to extend for a further year."



David de Gea

De Gea joined United from Atletico Madrid in 2011 and has made 367 appearances for the club.

"It has been a privilege to spend eight years at this great club and the opportunity to continue my career at Manchester United is a genuine honour," said the 28-year-old.

Marseille stun struggling Monaco

Marseille battled back from 2-0 down to beat AS Monaco 4-3

AFP | Paris

Marseille came back from two goals down to beat winless Monaco 4-3 in a Ligue 1 thriller in the principality on Sunday as close-season signing Dario Benedetto scored twice.

Andre Villas-Boas' side climbed to fourth in the early table after recovering from falling 2-0 behind to Wissam Ben Yedder's double in the first half an hour.

"It's four goals away from home, it's good. And with the victories, confidence is coming back," Dimitri Payet, who scored Marseille's third goal, told Canal+.

Monaco, who only narrowly avoided relegation last term, remain second-bottom with just two points from their opening five matches and have already conceded 14 goals.

The pressure is once again mounting on coach Leonardo Jardim, who was sacked early last season before returning after an ill-fated spell in charge from Thierry Henry.

Marseille are now only two points adrift of reigning champions and leaders Paris Saint-Germain, and behind Rennes and Nantes on goal difference.

"Maybe we've dared to play a little more," added Payet. "In



Dario Benedetto has now scored four goals in five Ligue 1 appearances

the last quarter of an hour we suffered too. It's not always nice to watch, but you have to know how to be efficient."

Monaco grabbed the lead in the 17th minute after Bouna Sarr inadvertently handled a ball over the top towards Islam Slimani, with Ben Yedder stepping up to slam home the penalty and score his second goal for the club since joining from Sevilla.

Ben Yedder wasted little time in netting his third, latching onto Slimani's perfectly-weighted ball nine minutes later, before slotting into an empty net after his initial effort was kept out by Marseille goalkeeper Steve Mandanda.

But the away team hit back as Argentinian striker Benedetto scored for the third straight game.

They were level three min-



Olympique de Marseille's Argentine forward Dario Benedetto (L) celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal

utes before the break, as Valere Germain ended a seven-match goal drought with a back-post diving header.

More misery for Monaco

Monaco's defensive woes continued and they fell behind just after the hour mark when some sloppy play in midfield allowed Payet to advance and drill an excellent long-range strike into the bottom corner.

Benedetto, who signed for Marseille from Boca Juniors last month, piled further misery

onto Monaco by powering home his side's fourth goal midway through the second half.

Keita Balde came off the bench to pull one back for the hosts with 15 minutes to play, and seconds later Mandanda denied Balde and Slimani in quick succession to prevent Monaco from levelling.

But Marseille closed out their most impressive victory under Villas-Boas with relative comfort in the final moments.

Earlier on Sunday, Christian Gourcuff's Nantes moved into

third as Kalifa Coulibaly's goal secured a 1-0 win over Reims, while Saint-Etienne came back from two goals down to draw 2-2 with Toulouse.

Neymar scored a spectacular overhead kick in injury time on Saturday to snatch PSG a 1-0 win over Strasbourg, despite being relentlessly booed by his team's fans at the Parc des Princes after failing to force a close-season return to Barcelona.

Benedetto has now scored four goals in five Ligue 1 appearances

Root plots Ashes success Down Under after series draw

AFP | London

Captain Joe Root put the focus firmly on winning the Ashes in Australia after England levelled their home series on Sunday, saying he was "desperate" to take the team forward.

England won at The Oval by 135 runs in the fifth and final Ashes Test to tie the series at 2-2, ending their historic World Cup-winning season on a high.

It meant the series finished in a draw for the first time since 1972, although holders Australia retain the urn.

Root described the summer as "a huge success for English cricket" after their World Cup triumph in July.

He said the foundations were in place for England to build on, praising Rory Burns for his contributions at the top of the order and paceman Jofra Archer, who only made his Test debut last month.

"Throughout the whole series we've shown a lot of character," said Root, who described 2-2 as a fair result.

"At times we've been out-skilled... but we've always fought very hard and that's a very pleasing thing," he said.

"Hopefully that will be a massive stepping stone and starting point for us to really kick on as a team now."

The Ashes will next take



England captain Joe Root celebrates after taking a wicket



At times we've been out-skilled... but we've always fought very hard and that's a very pleasing thing

JOE ROOT

place in Australia in 2021-22 and Root said he was "in it for the long haul".

"I'm desperate to take this team forward," said the skipper.

"I'm in a very privileged position to be captain of the Test team and I'll do everything I can to get us very well prepared

for going down there and hopefully doing something very special."

Root said the performance in the fifth Test was a "blueprint" of how he wanted his team to play but there was still room for improvement.

"You look at this week in particular," he said. "It looks as like we just started to really get to grips with Test cricket after a very long period of one-day cricket."

"We've got a period now and an opportunity in the next two-and-a-half years to really push and do everything we can to prepare extremely well for that tour of Australia so that's going to be a huge focus for me and I like to hope for English cricket."

Watford battle back to salvage draw against Arsenal

AFP | London

Arsenal squandered a two-goal lead as Watford hit back to draw 2-2 in new manager Quique Sanchez Flores's first game of his second stint in charge at Vicarage Road on Sunday.

Flores's return following the dismissal of Javi Gracia after four games of the Premier League season seemed to be going flat as Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang struck twice in the first half.

But Tom Cleverley halved the deficit in the 53rd minute after some dreadful Arsenal carelessness and Watford were rewarded for a much-improved display when substitute Roberto Pereyra converted an 81st-minute penalty awarded after he was



Watford's Roberto Pereyra celebrates scoring their second goal with Abdoulaye Doucoure

brought down by David Luiz.

Watford came agonisingly close to winning it with Gerard Deulofeu curling just wide and then Abdoulaye Doucoure having a stoppage-time shot saved

by Bernd Leno after a counter-attack.

Victory would have put Arsenal into third place but they ended the day seventh in a cluster of clubs on eight points.

Paine proud of Australia despite defeat

AFP | London

Australia captain Tim Paine said it was mission accomplished even though his team lost the fifth and final Ashes Test against England on Sunday to draw the series 2-2.

Paine said Australia, who won at Edgbaston and Old Trafford but lost agonisingly to a Ben Stokes-inspired England at Headingley, had achieved their main objective in retaining the urn.



Tim Paine plants a kiss on the Ashes urn

"We're taking the urn home so that's certainly what we came to do," he said. "We're thrilled by that, a little disappointed by this game obviously,

puts a bit of a dampener on it." "We can be really proud of the way we've come over here, which is a challenging place for Australians to come and play and win," he added.

"To win two Test matches pretty convincingly, should have won a third (at Headingley) -- let that slip no doubt."

Paine said winning the first Test at Edgbaston, where Australia triumphed by 251 runs, had been crucial for his side's confidence.



World number one Novak Djokovic hits a return (file photo)

Djokovic in Brisbane, Nadal in Perth as ATP Cup draw made

AFP | Sydney

World number one Novak Djokovic will begin his 2020 season in Brisbane, Rafael Nadal in Perth and Roger Federer in Sydney after yesterday's draw for the ATP Cup, the new world tennis team event.

The championship, which will take place from January 3-12 in the lead-up to the year's first Grand Slam, the Australian Open in Melbourne, will feature 24 nations split into six groups across Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

Eight teams -- with up to five players each -- will emerge from the round-robin stage to compete in the knockout phase in Sydney until one is left standing.

Most of the world's top 30 men will take part, with ties comprising two singles and one doubles match.

At the draw in Sydney, Djokovic's Serbia were pitted

against France, South Africa, Germany, Greece, Canada and wildcard entry Australia in Brisbane.

Nadal's Spain will face Japan, Georgia, Russia, Italy and the United States in Perth while Federer's Switzerland take on Belgium, Austria, Croatia, Argentina and the Andy Murray-led Britain.

The final five nations in the ATP Cup standings, based on the ranking of their number one singles player, will be determined by the second entry deadline of November 13.

The new-look start to the year offers Aus\$22 million (\$15 million) in prize money and a maximum of 750 singles and 250 doubles ATP rankings points.

It will be held on the back of a revamped Davis Cup, run by the International Tennis Federation, in November, bringing together 18 nations in one place for a week at the end of the 2019 season.

Reus plots Dortmund path past Barcelona

AFP | Berlin

Borussia Dortmund captain Marco Reus insisted yesterday that his team could beat Barcelona regardless of whether Lionel Messi plays or not, but feared however that Dortmund would 'have to suffer' when the two sides meet in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Messi is a doubt for Tuesday's game amid ongoing struggles with a calf injury, but Reus suggested Dortmund could win if they play to their own strengths instead of obsessing over the opponent.

"We have to concentrate on ourselves. We have a good team, we are at home, and we can win the game," said Reus at a press conference yesterday.

"It will of course be a tough game tomorrow, and we are going to have to suffer a lot," he said.

Tuesday's Champions League opener is a baptism of fire for Dortmund as they

look to qualify from a fiercely difficult group which pits them against Barcelona, Inter Milan and Slavia Prague.

Yet Reus said his side were confident they could make a perfect start by beating Barcelona on Tuesday.

"It is important to start well in the group. We are confident enough to say that we can win the game," he said.

"We want to test ourselves against the best clubs. We have to be bold, push forward and try to score goals."

Both sides come into the game on the back of impressive results against top-four rivals in their domestic leagues at the weekend, as Dortmund thrashed Bayer Leverkusen 4-0, and Barcelona beat Valencia 5-2.

The injured Messi watched that win from the stands, meaning he is still waiting to make his first appearance for Barcelona this season.



Marco Reus

Klopp expects bumpy ride as Liverpool eye Istanbul return

Liverpool start their bid to win a seventh European Cup with a trip to Napoli for their Group E opener today

AFP | London

Jürgen Klopp has warned Liverpool that retaining the Champions League will be even harder than their incredible march to victory in Madrid last season.

Klopp's side start their bid to win a seventh European Cup with a trip to Napoli for their Group E opener today.

The Reds have reached the last two Champions League finals, beating Tottenham in the Spanish capital in June after losing to Real Madrid 12 months earlier.

But Klopp believes Liverpool face a daunting task to make it to the final in Istanbul's Ataturk Stadium -- a venue which carries extra resonance for the club after they won the 2005 Champions League with an astonishing comeback against AC Milan in the same stadium.

Before Liverpool can dream of emulating Steven Gerrard and company's triumph by the banks of the Bosphorus, Klopp knows they will have to run the gauntlet in what he expects to be a fiercely contested tournament.

Napoli are expected to pose the sternest test to Liverpool in a group which also includes unfancied Salzburg and Genk.

Carlo Ancelotti's team came within a whisker of ending Liverpool's European campaign in the group stage last season when Alisson Becker's superb late save denied Arkadiusz Milik to preserve a 1-0 win at Anfield that sent the Reds into the last 16 at the expense of Napoli.

Even if Liverpool should advance to the knockout rounds without so much drama this season, Klopp is wary of the restocked superpowers certain to be lying in wait in the latter stages.

"I will have no problem with it (reaching the final) if it hap-



Klopp expects daunting ride as Liverpool eye Istanbul return



We have the same chance like everyone else, but that is all, and I don't see us, the English teams, dominating. I really think a lot of teams have a good chance

JURGEN KLOPP

pens again, but at this moment I am not too sure it will," he said when the draw was made in August.

"We have the same chance like everyone else, but that is all, and I don't see us, the English teams, dominating. I really think a lot of teams have a good chance.

"Look at the squad Borussia Dortmund has and tell me we are stronger than them. That is

incredible. They can make five changes and you think: 'Really, they didn't play last week? Why?' There are a lot of quality teams.

"Juventus will be there, PSG will be there. Real Madrid? Do you think they gave up already? Bayern Munich now finally brought in Perisic and Coutinho which is a big boost."

'Like a rock'

While Liverpool will always have a special relationship with the Champions League after the club's dominance of the competition in the 1970s and 1980s, it is not hard to believe that some die-hard Kopites would happily exchange their continental supremacy for a season of domestic bliss.

Having erased the pain of that 2018 final defeat against Real, Liverpool's main goal this term is to end the club's long wait to win the English title.

Pipped to the Premier League trophy by Manchester City on

the final day of last season, Liverpool are desperate to win the title for the first time since 1990.

That desire has been clear to see in a blistering five-game winning streak which has already taken them to the top of the table this season.

Even an injury to Alisson has failed to interrupt their flow and the Brazilian keeper's replacement Adrian admits Liverpool's rock-solid defence -- marshalled by the imperious Virgil van Dijk -- has made his life much easier as the former West Ham player adapts to his new club.

"It's easy to play with them; you have some of the best players in the world, the best defenders, midfielders and attackers. From the back, I need to help on the occasions when I have to," Adrian said.

"I'm really proud to have won the last few games. We are in a good moment, we are like a rock -- all together, the manager, the staff, players and fans. The club is living a great moment."

Bianca Andreescu feted in hometown

AFP | Mississauga, Canada

Bianca Andreescu, who beat Serena Williams in the US Open final to become Canada's first Grand Slam singles champion, was honoured with a rally in her hometown on Sunday.

"I am truly blessed," the beaming 19-year-old told hundreds gathered to celebrate her achievement.

"I did not get here overnight. There has been a lot of hard work and sweat that went into it, a lot of downs, a lot of ups."

Bonnie Crombie, the mayor of Mississauga, a suburb of Toronto, presented Andreescu with a key to the city.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, in the midst of campaigning for second term, was also on hand.

"She is an inspiration to all Canadians old and young, but to be honest, especially an inspiration to young Canadians because she showed that



US Open champion Bianca Andreescu of Canada with her trophy (file photo)

young people can do anything," Trudeau said.

Andreescu's stunning 6-3, 7-5 victory at Flushing Meadows denied Williams a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title.

In the course of a year she

has climbed from 200th in the world rankings to a career high fifth.

Her rise has been another source of pride for Canadian sports fans, who saw the Toronto Raptors claim the NBA championship in June.

Pliskova qualifies for WTA Finals in Shenzhen

Reuters | London

World number two Karolina Pliskova has become the second singles player to qualify for the season-ending WTA Finals in Shenzhen after top-ranked Ash Barty, the WTA Tour said yesterday.

The 27-year-old Czech won the inaugural Zhengzhou Open on Sunday, adding to trophies won in Brisbane, Rome and Eastbourne, and will make her fourth appearance in the Oct. 27-Nov. 3 Finals which offer \$14 million in prize money.

"It's always a goal of mine to qualify for the WTA Finals, and I'm proud to have done it for my fourth time. I look forward to competing against the best players of the season," Pliskova said.