

Fashion icon Karl Lagerfeld dead at 85

Iconic fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld, the creative director of luxurious fashion brands Chanel and Fendi, died here on Tuesday. He was 85. An official statement issued on Lagerfeld's official Instagram account confirmed the news of his demise. **P14**

OP-ED **8** Very rare scenes from the borderland

THE DAILY **tribune**



Paris Hilton to release new music **14** CELEBS

WORLD **5** Kashmir attack mastermind killed



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Saudi King, Putin discuss relations
Riyadh

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud held a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday.

Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said that the two leaders reviewed outstanding bilateral relations binding the two countries, in addition to other issues of mutual interest.

They also discussed fruitful cooperation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation, towards maintaining the stability of oil markets and spurring global economic growth.

EU-Arab summit to focus on ties
Brussels

European Union High Representative Federica Mogherini expressed her optimism that the EU-Arab League summit in Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt at the end of this week will be a success.

"The EU Arab summit is a personal achievement. It always looked strange to me that the EU has held summits with Latin America, with Africa, with Asia and not with the Arab world that is our first neighbour," she told reporters ahead of an EU foreign ministers meeting in Brussels.



03 Attempt to smuggle drugs from Iran foiled; 11 nabbed

04 MoU set to further boost tourism statistics system

12 AUB profit up 12.7pc



India rolls out red carpet welcome for Saudi Crown Prince

New Delhi

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman arrived in India yesterday for the second stage of his Asia tour.

He was greeted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after his plane touched down at Air Force Station Palam in New Delhi at about 9.15 pm local time.

The two men hugged warmly on the tarmac and the crown prince was presented with flowers before being driven away.

"India is delighted to welcome HRH Mohammed Bin Salman, the



Modi receives Saudi Crown Prince in New Delhi.

India is delighted to welcome HRH Mohammed Bin Salman, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia.

MODI

Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia," Modi said on Twitter.

The crown prince is expected to announce a \$1 billion investment in India's infrastructure and farming sectors during his first visit to the nation.

He is accompanied by leading

Saudi businessmen and officials.

India is hoping the crown prince will announce an investment in its National Investment Infrastructure Fund (NIIIF), a sovereign wealth fund that includes private companies and foreign investors.

The Kingdom is India's top energy supplier and home to more than 3.5 million Indian expatriates.

Saudi Arabia's embassy in New Delhi tweeted a collection of Indian citizens welcoming the crown prince to their country for his first state visit.

Hodeidah pullout deal

Yemen government, Houthis to start first phase of pullout from the port city

● The UN statement said the two sides also agreed "in principle" on Phase 2, entailing full redeployment of both parties' forces in Hodeidah province.

● Disagreement on withdrawal had delayed opening humanitarian corridors in Yemen.

New York

Yemen's government and the Houthi militias have agreed on the first stage of a mutual pullout of forces from the port city of Hodeidah, a key entry point for humanitarian aid, the United Nations said.

The Iran-aligned Houthi movement and the government



The Houthis occupy Hodeidah, the main entry point for the bulk of Yemen's commercial and aid imports.

agreed in talks in December to withdraw troops by Jan 7 from Hodeidah under a truce accord aimed at averting a full-scale assault on the port and paving the way for negotiations to end the four-year-old war.

"The parties reached an agreement on Phase 1 of the mutual redeployment of forces," the UN spokesman's office said in a statement without giving details on what was agreed.

Under Phase 1, the Houthi-

is would withdraw from the ports of Hodeidah, Saleef, used for grains, and Ras Isa, used for oil.

This would be met by a retreat of Saudi-led coalition forces from the eastern outskirts of Hodeidah, where battles raged before a ceasefire went into effect on Dec 18.

The Houthis occupy Hodeidah, the main entry point for the bulk of Yemen's commercial and aid imports, while Yemeni

government forces loyal to President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi are massed on the outskirts.

The UN statement said the two sides also agreed "in principle" on Phase 2, entailing full redeployment of both parties' forces in Hodeidah province.

Two sources involved in the negotiations said both sides had yet to agree on a withdrawal timeline or on a mechanism for local forces to take over security at the ports and city.

"The UN is still discussing how to reduce the gap between the two sides on how to choose the forces that will control the city," one source told Reuters.

The parties could decide within 7-10 days on where they would reposition forces, said the other source, adding that Houthi fighters could pull back as far as 20 km from the port.

Disagreement on withdrawal had delayed opening humanitarian corridors in Yemen.

23

million people rely on humanitarian aid to survive in Yemen, according to UN.

TECH WOES

Schoolgirl, 15, buys a £90 copying robot to write homework

Beijing

A Chinese student who got away with using a 800 yuan (£90) copying robot to write her homework for her was only caught because her assignment had been done 'too quickly'.

The ninth-grader in Harbin, Heilongjiang province surprised her mother after



The 800 yuan copying robot.

completing all her holiday assignments in two days - with perfect handwriting and zero mistakes, according to Chinese reports.

The mother grew suspicious and eventually discovered the machine - a metal frame attached to a pen - in her daughter's room.

The furious mother broke the copy device and scolded her daughter following the discovery, according to Qianjiang Evening News.

The girl admitted to using pocket money received during Chinese New Year to purchase the robot online, the report added.



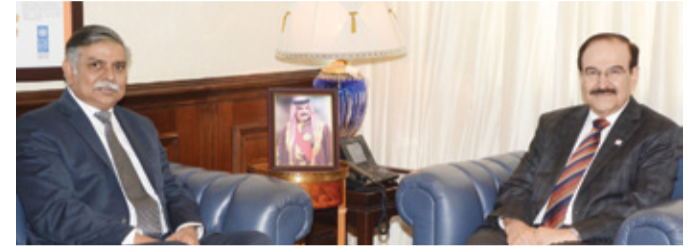
His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa has stressed that the Kuwaiti National Day is a cherished occasion both in Bahrain and Kuwait, given the solid personal, family and popular ties between the two brotherly countries. HRH the Premier said that Kuwait's National Day is also a good opportunity to recall, with pride, the key role played by the Kuwaiti Amir, HH Shaikh Sabah Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah, in his country's renaissance, as well as the landmark national, regional and international achievements attained thanks to his sound policies, expressing sincerest congratulations to the Kuwaiti Amir, government and people, wishing them many happy returns marking the occasion. HRH the Premier made the statements as he visited the Kuwaiti Embassy yesterday, alongside deputy prime ministers and senior officials marking Kuwait's 58th National Day, and 28th anniversary of its Liberation.



Southern Governor Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa has attended the Governorate's celebration to mark the success of the Japanese Village project. He praised the co-operation between the Governorate and sponsors, which accentuates the community partnership between government and private sectors. He said the partnership reflects contribution to promoting small projects in various fields.



Interior Minister, General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa yesterday attended the graduation ceremony of 76 graduates at the Royal Academy of Police (RAP). The academy offers two master's degree programmes; criminal and police science and administration and security science, along with master's degree in English language in co-operation with the University of Huddersfield, in which the ceremony also witnessed the graduation of the first batch of the programme.



Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Dr Abdulhussain Mirza received Indian Ambassador Alok Kumar Sinha and praised the relations between the two countries, especially after the auspicious visit of His Majesty King Hamad to India and His Majesty's directives to increase trade and economic ties between the two countries. They discussed technical and legal procedures for Bahrain joining as a partner in the India-based International Solar Energy Alliance after it was approved by the Council of Ministers. The alliance aims to address challenges facing the expansion of solar energy.



Bahrain Chapter of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India organised a quiz on "Life of Mahatma Gandhi" for children of members. The quiz was hosted by well known Quiz Master from India Miraj Vora. Indian Embassy Second Secretary Renu Yadav was the Chief Guest at the event. Chairperson C A Sridhar presented a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi to Indian Embassy.

ORAT Steering Committee meeting held Manama

The Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications and Bahrain Airport Company (BAC), Kamal Ahmed chaired the seventh meeting of the National Operations Readiness and Airport Transfer (ORAT) Steering Committee.

The committee was formed to oversee the smooth transition of operations to Bahrain International Airport's (BIA) new Passenger Terminal Building as per Royal Order (10) for 2017, issued by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister Prince Salman bin Hamad AlKhalifa. In attendance were BAC Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed Yousif Al Binfalah, representatives from Bahrain Civil Aviation Affairs (CAA), Bahrain Customs, the Ministry of Interior's Airport Police, Nationality, Passport, and Residence Affairs, BAC, private companies operating out of BIA, and Fraport AG Frankfurt Airport Services Worldwide, which is providing a comprehensive ORAT programme for the new terminal.

During the meeting, attendees were briefed on the project's latest developments, including the ongoing operational readiness trials, which will ensure the new Passenger Terminal Building's various functions, systems, and procedures are ready for its launch in the third quarter of this year.

Attendees were also updated on the induction training programmes taking place during the ORAT platform's third phase. The comprehensive training will familiarise employees with the new terminal's standard operating procedures and IT systems, as well as the state-of-the-art equipment used at security checkpoints, registration counters, and luggage areas, to make sure they understand what is required to ensure a safe and seamless travel experience for airport users.



Adviser of His Majesty the King for Media Affairs, Nabeel Al Hamer, yesterday received Ambassador of India to Bahrain, Alok Kumar Sinha. The adviser praised the ambassador's efforts in developing and further bolstering the close bilateral ties in various fields, especially in the media fields.

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Attempt to smuggle drugs from Iran foiled; 11 nabbed

Different quantities of hashish, marijuana and shabu were seized from the accused

● The seized drugs are nearly worth BDI.650 million in the illegal market, according to the directorate.

● Legal proceedings are being taken and the case has been referred to the Public Prosecution, the directorate added.

Manama

Eleven people were arrested by a special team from the Interior Ministry for attempting to smuggle drugs into the Kingdom from Iran through sea, said the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science yesterday.

The seized drugs are nearly worth BDI.650 million in the illegal market, according to the directorate.

The arrested include Ghulam Redha Ali Mohammed, 69, Ahmed Musa Ahmed Musa, 48, Ali Mirza Asaad Mohammed, 57, Jassim Mohammed Ahmed, 44 and Saleh Ahmed Abdullah, 82.

“Mr Ghulam was earlier con-



The accused with drugs haul seized by the special team.

victed of drug smuggling. He has also cases against him for engaging in money laundering,” the directorate said.

Mr Ahmed, the second accused is a major drug dealer, according to the directorate. “He receives large quantities of narcotics and distributes them for money.”

“Mr Saleh, the fifth accused, is part of the illegal money laun-

1.65
million Bahraini dinars is the estimated market value of the drugs seized.

dering racket, which controls the drugs network based in Iran,” it added.

The directorate said that different quantities of hashish, marijuana and shabu were seized from the accused, along with currencies of different nations including Bahraini dinars, Iranian and Saudi riyals.

Legal proceedings are being taken and the case has been re-

ferred to the Public Prosecution, the directorate added.

Coast Guard patrols in the Kingdom have, many a time in the past, succeeded in foiling attempts to smuggle large quantities of narcotics via the sea from Iran. Many accused are facing trial in the Kingdom while scores have been sentenced in drugs smuggling cases.

Terror suspects sentenced

Manama

The Fourth High Criminal Court yesterday sentenced six suspects for undergoing training in the use of illegal weapons and explosives.

Three suspects were sentenced to life in jail and fined BD300. One suspect was handed down seven years in prison, another one five years and the sixth one was sentenced to five years in prison and fined BD300.

The court also revoked the Bahraini citizenship of five suspects.

The Criminal Investigation Directorate (CID) received a notification that a group of terrorists had travelled to Iran and Iraq to receive military training on using weapons and making explosives to commit terror crimes in Bahrain.

Investigations showed that one of the suspects facilitated others' travel to Iraq in 2017 to receive military training at Hizbollah camps there.

The first suspect also recruited another one to set up warehouses to store weapons and bomb-making materials.

He also tasked him to transport the materials used in making bombs. Four suspects, who are at large in Iran, co-ordinated with the terrorist elements via electronic programmes to facilitate operations for them, incite them to receive training and provide them with support to carry out the terrorist acts.

The suspects were referred to the High Criminal Court, which heard the case in the presence of the suspects' lawyers and issued its verdict after providing the suspects with all legal guarantees.

16 convicts sentenced for smuggling weapons

TDT | Manama

The Fourth High Criminal Court yesterday handed down sentences ranging from three years to life to 16 defendants convicted of smuggling weapons from Iran and committing other terror crimes.

The court ordered to punish six defendants with life imprisonment, while six were sentenced to ten years, three to three years and one defendant got a five-year sentence. Three defendants had their citizenships revoked and one defendant was acquitted.

This was announced by Terror Crime Prosecution Chief Advocate General Dr Ahmed



“The defendants were found guilty of possessing and using weapons without a licence for the purpose of committing terrorist acts.”

DR AL HAMMADI

Al Hammadi, who confirmed that the charges the defendants were found guilty of included training on the use and possession of weapons, explosive devices, firearms and ammu-

nition without a licence for the purpose of committing terrorist acts.

The charges also included hiding and sheltering wanted and convicted individuals, and illegally entering and exiting the Kingdom.

Dr Al Hammadi confirmed that 12 of the defendants were fined BD500.

Court files showed that the fourth and seventh defendants were able to smuggle weapons and explosives from Iran into Bahrain through Nabih Saleh Island using a fishing boat.

As a result of the investigations, the Bahrain-based suspects were arrested and interrogated by the Public Prosecution, and subsequently led to the rest.



The weapons that were seized from the convicts.

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MoU set to further boost tourism statistics system

BTEA signs MoU with IGA to implement fourth phase of tourism statistics development programme

Manama

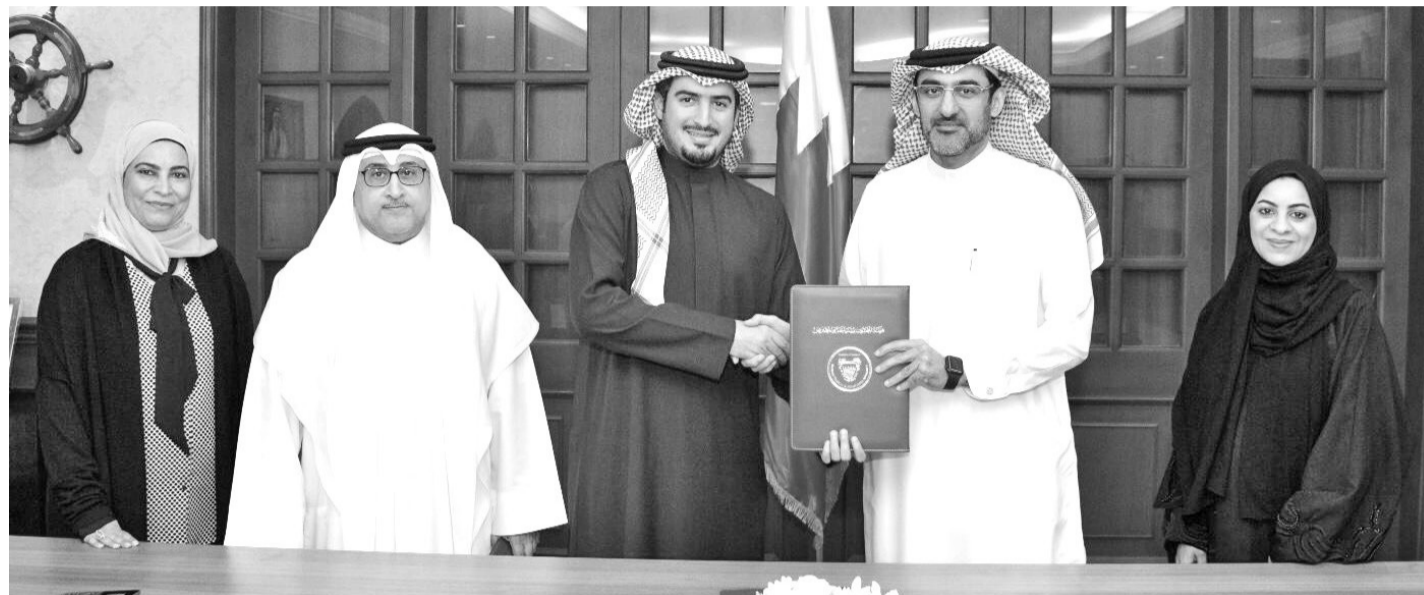
The Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Information and eGovernment Authority to implement the fourth phase of the 'Tourism Statistics Development' Programme.

Since 2015, BTEA has been working to develop a national tourism statistics system and the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), in line with international recommendations and standards of the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Statistics Division.

Before 2015, there were only rough and fragmented estimates about the tourism sector's performance in the Kingdom; without taking into account different kinds of tourism sources and tourism activities.

However in the three last years alone, by collaborating with various public and private entities, the Kingdom has developed sufficient information concerning the supply and demand in the tourism sector.

This milestone achievement was highlighted in the assessments carried out by delegations from World Tourism Organisation and the GCC Statistical Centre; where the continued progress

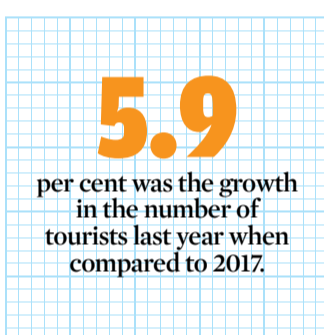


Shaikh Khaled with Mr Al Qaed after signing the MoU.

in tourism statistical reporting and establishment of new data gathering resources in the Kingdom of Bahrain were praised.

The Chief Executive Officer of BTEA, Shaikh Khaled bin Humood Al Khalifa, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Information and eGovernment Authority, Mohammed Ali Al Qaed, signed an agreement to implement the 'Tourism Statistics Development' Program for a full year 2019-2020.

The programme will include over a thousand tourism facilities located in different areas across



Bahrain for a whole year, measuring the production associated with accounts of industries serving incoming visitors in addition

to the number of employees in these industries with the percentages of Bahrainisation and ratio of females working in the tourism industry.

This phase will also focus in implementing a survey to track arrivals through Bahrain's gateways by interviewing a statistical sample of 30,000 people over 12 months, to take into account the seasonal changes of tourism demand; providing a timeline of spending as well as insight into the types of people and trips.

The statistical reports in 2018 revealed that inbound visitors

for tourism purposes has reached 12 million visitors, marking a 5.9 per cent growth compared to the year 2017.

The number of tourist nights spent by international visitors has increased by approximately 500,000 nights compared to 2017, and hotel room stays in four and five star hotels have also increased by about 17pc.

As for tourism trips from 2015-2018, statistics have revealed that there was an annual increase of about 600,000 trips to Kingdom generating approximately BD 100 million.

US-Bahrain total trade hit \$2.3 billion in 2018

TDT | Manama

In the first 10 months of 2018 alone, total trade between Bahrain and the U.S. reached \$2.3 billion, a statement issued by the US Embassy said.

This figure marks a 46 per cent increase over trade in the same period in 2017, which was worth \$1.6 billion.

Of the \$2.3 billion worth of trade through October 2018, Bahrain exports to the US were roughly \$0.8 billion, while US exports to Bahrain were \$1.5 billion.

During this time period, US exports increased by 98.5pc and Bahrain exports remained steady.

Among the top US exports to Bahrain were aircraft, boilers and machinery, vehicles, and boats.



Among the top Bahrain exports to the US were aluminium, oil, textiles, and plastics.

US aircraft exports have increased over 1,200 per cent and totalled \$584 million in this period.

Among the top Bahrain exports to the US were aluminium, oil, textiles, and plastics.

In fact, aluminium exports to the US increased by 9pc, worth \$560 million; oil increased by 27pc.

US Ambassador Justin Siferell stated: "These updated trade figures from 2018 highlight the already-strong and still-improving commercial ties between the United States and Bahrain. We share a long-standing economic partnership focused on multiple sectors - including energy, finance, manufacturing, and trade - underscored by our Free Trade Agreement that has been in force for over a decade.

"This Free Trade Agreement has benefited both the American and Bahraini peoples, boosting opportunity and prosperity for both countries."

Gulf Air, Al Baraka hold talks



Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom, recently welcomed the executive management of Al Baraka Banking Group at the airline's headquarters in Muharraq. Both executive management teams discussed potential business co-operation specifically in geographical areas where the bank currently operates. The meeting also included discussions of new ideas to better serve customers of both the airline and the bank. Above, from left, Ammar Al Saad, Gulf Air Acting Chief Financial Officer, Captain Waleed Al Alawi, Gulf Air Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Tariq Kazim, Acting CEO of Al Baraka Islamic Bank- Bahrain, Adnan Ahmed Yousif, President and Chief Executive of Al Baraka Banking Group, Krešimir Kučko, Gulf Air Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed El Qaq, Senior Vice President, Head of Commercial Banking of Al Baraka Banking Group.

Promoting legislations 'vital to uphold human rights success'

TDT | Manama

The Assistant Foreign Minister, Abdullah Al Doseri, has stressed that the Kingdom attaches great importance to promoting legislation and laws that contribute to safeguarding the Kingdom's achievements in the field of human rights in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and the Constitution.

He noted that the Kingdom, under the reform approach of

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, made many achievements in the fields of political, civil, economic and social rights.

"These achievements include guaranteeing rights and freedoms, women and children's rights, education, communication, health and sustainable development."

He also highlighted the success of the last elections in the Kingdom, with a turnout of 76 per cent, which is the highest percentage in the histo-

ry of Bahrain, noting the win of Fawziya Zainal as the first Bahraini woman to become a Speaker for the Representatives Council.

This came as the Assistant Foreign Minister chaired the 22nd meeting of the High Coordination Committee for Human Rights, which was held today in the General Court of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the presence of a number of representatives from various ministries and relevant authorities.



Mr Al Doseri

The Committee discussed a number of topics on the agenda including the development of human rights work, based on the commitments on the Kingdom at the national and international levels, including co-operation with the United Nations and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the development of a draft national plan for human rights aimed at supporting and developing national efforts in the field of human rights to

promote all civil, political, economic and social rights.

The Committee also reviewed the results of a number of national reports that were submitted by the Kingdom in fulfilment of its obligations under international and regional human rights conventions, such as the report of the Kingdom to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the first periodic report of the Kingdom to the Arab Human Rights Committee, among many others.

world

Kashmir attack mastermind killed

● Two of the militants were Pakistanis, including the group's "chief operations commander" in Kashmir

● Pakistan, which banned the JeM in 2002, has denied any role in the attack.

● Srinagar, India

India's army said yesterday it had killed the mastermind of a major suicide bomb attack in Kashmir which it blamed on Pakistan, as calls grew for reprisals over the deaths of more than 40 paramilitaries and soldiers.

Three militants from the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) group, which claimed responsibility for the suicide attack, were killed in a gunbattle that lasted much of Monday, Lieutenant General Kanwal Jeet Singh Dhillon told a press conference in Srinagar.

Two of the militants were Pa-



Indian security forces personnel are on manoeuvres as a gunfight with militants has happened that killed 4 soldiers, in South Kashmir's Pulwama district, some 10 km away from the spot of recent suicide bombing

kistanis, including the group's "chief operations commander" in Kashmir, the army general said.

Dhillon said the attack had been "masterminded" by Pakistan, and specifically its powerful Inter-Services Intelligence branch.

Pakistan, which banned the JeM in 2002, has denied any role

in the attack.

The attack on a military convoy by an explosives-packed car was the deadliest assault on security personnel in Kashmir for three decades.

Hundreds of Indian soldiers on Monday raided a suspected militant hideout in a village close to the site of Thursday's attack.

Take 'credible' action

New Delhi, India

The Indian government yesterday demanded that Pakistan take "credible and visible action" over a major suicide attack in Kashmir as it rebuffed Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's offer to investigate the bombing.

"We demand Pakistan to stop misleading the international community and take credible and visible action against the perpetrators of Pulwama terrorist attack," said an Indian foreign ministry statement.

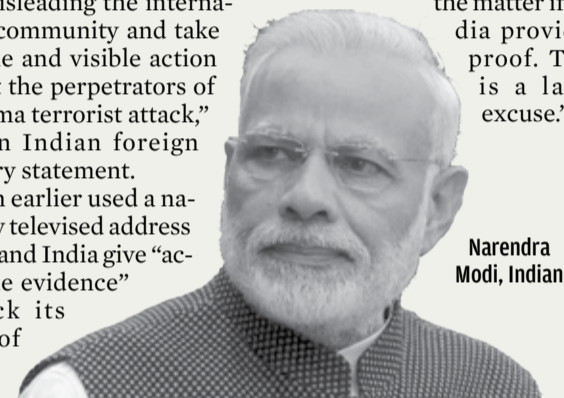
Khan earlier used a nationally televised address to demand India give "actionable evidence" to back its claim of Paki-

stan's backing for the suicide bomber.

He also said Pakistan would retaliate if attacked.

Imran "has neither chosen to condemn this heinous act nor consoled with the bereaved families," said the Indian statement.

"The prime minister of Pakistan has offered to investigate the matter if India provides proof. This is a lame excuse."



Narendra Modi, Indian PM

Besides the three militants, the battle left four Indian soldiers, a policeman and a civilian dead. The deaths of the Indian security men have triggered nationwide anger.

Pakistan 'ready to talk': PM

Warns of retaliation if Delhi attacks

Islamabad, Pakistan

Pakistan is ready to help India investigate the deadliest blast in Kashmir in decades, but will retaliate if Delhi attacks, Prime Minister Imran Khan said yesterday as tensions soared.

Khan used a nationally televised address to demand Delhi share proof of Islamabad's involvement in last week's suicide blast, which killed 41 people in Indian-held Kashmir and unleashed a fresh diplomatic crisis over the disputed Himalayan region.

The attack was claimed by Pakistan-based militant group Jaish-e-Mohammed. Indian officials have said those behind the blast will pay a "heavy price".

If India attacks, "Pakistan won't just think to retaliate. Pakistan will retaliate," said Khan in the address.

Pakistan has denied involvement. Khan said on Tuesday that if any militant group was using Pakistani soil to launch attacks, "its enmity is with us. This is against our interest".

"If you have some

A man looks at an image of Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan on his official Instagram account



”

Pakistan won't just think to retaliate. Pakistan will retaliate

IMRAN KHAN
PRIME MINISTER

actionable intelligence about involvement of Pakistanis, give it to us, I guarantee you that we will take action," he added.

Khan said it was "easy to start a war", but that he hopes "better sense will prevail" in the dispute.

'Defuse tensions'

Moments after the address, Khan's verified Instagram account posted a picture of the premier -- scowling and cross-armed -- along with a message that read: "Don't mess with my country".

Roughly an hour after it was posted the message had more than 30,000 likes, but then was abruptly removed, replaced with video clips of the speech.

Earlier Tuesday, Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi pleaded with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to intervene in the escalating row.

"The United Nations must step in to defuse tensions," wrote Qureshi in a message shared with journalists.

Earlier this week, Saudi Arabia vowed to "de-escalate" the situation during a high-profile state visit by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to Islamabad. He is also due in India this week.



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Invitation to the Annual General Assembly Meeting of the Company's Shareholders.

The Board of Directors of Bahrain Family Leisure Company B.S.C. cordially invites the shareholders to attend the Annual Ordinary General Assembly Meeting to be held on Wednesday 13th March 2019 at 12.00 Noon at Awal Ball Room 3 at the Gulf Hotel, Kingdom of Bahrain. In case the quorum is not reached on this first meeting, the second meeting will be held on Wednesday 20th March 2019, at the same venue and time to discuss the below agenda and to take appropriate decisions.

Agenda of AGM

- Reading out the previous AGM minutes held on 15th March 2018 and approving it.
- Discussing the Chairman's report about the group business for the year ended 31st December 2018 and approving it.
- Listening to the auditor's report on the Company's financial position for the financial year ending 31st December 2018.
- Consider and approve the Company's financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2018.
- Discuss the corporate governance report for 2018 and comply with the requirements of the Central Bank of Bahrain and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism.
- To notify and approve the transactions carried out during the financial year ended 31 December 2018 with any of the related parties as described in note 22 of the financial statements in line with Article 189 of the Commercial Companies Law.
- Discharge the members of the Board of Directors from their liabilities for the financial year ending 31st December 2018.
- Appointment/Reappointment of external auditors for the year ending 31st December 2019 and authorize the Board of Directors to determine their fees.
- Election/re-election of members of the Board of Directors for the next three years.
- New matters that may arise as per Article 207 of the Commercial Companies' Law.

Abdul Latif Khalid Al Aujan
Chairman of the Board

Importance notice to the shareholders:

- The financial statements for the year ended 31 st December 2018 are available on the Bahrain Stock Exchange Website.
- You can obtain a copy of the power of attorney through www.bflc.com.bh
- Any shareholder registered in the company's register of shareholders on the date of the meeting shall have the right to attend in person or to give in writing any person to attend the meeting and to vote on his behalf, taking into consideration that his agent is not the Chairman or Members of the board of directors or employees of the Company.
- In case the shareholder is a company, the agent attending the meeting must submit a letter of authorization from the shareholder who is entitled to be the principal of that shareholder. The authorization must be written and issued by the person authorized by the company and stamped with the company's stamp.
- The power of attorney must be deposited at least 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting at Bahrain Financial Harbor - Bahrain Clear - Gate No. 4 - post Box 3203, Manama-Kingdom of Bahrain Tel: 17261260 - Fax 17256362 or e-mail: csd.info@bahrainbourse.com with confirmation of receipt before the deadline. It is worth noting that the power of attorney issued after the deadline is not valid for meeting purposes.
- Each candidate who wishes to nominate himself or another representative must provide all the required documents either by hand or via the international express courier service, which will be delivered to the company address (Bahrain Family Leisure Company, Floor 10, Office 1006, PO Box 11612 Manama) or by e-mail to: finance@bflc.com.bh. These documents must be submitted to the Company no later than 28 February 2019 in order to complete formalities prior to the meeting.
- For any inquiries, please contact the Public Relation and Investor Relations Department at 17215080.

China data leak exposes mass surveillance in Xinjiang

Beijing, China

A Chinese technology firm has compiled a range of personal information on 2.6 million people in Xinjiang -- from their ethnicity to locations -- according to a data leak highlighting the wide extent of surveillance in the restive region.

Xinjiang is home to most of China's Uighur ethnic minority lives and has been under heavy

police surveillance in recent years after violent inter-ethnic tensions.

Nearly one million Uighurs and other Turkic language-speaking minorities in Xinjiang are reportedly held in re-education camps, according to a UN panel of experts.

The leak was discovered last week by security researcher Victor Gevers, who found that Chinese tech company SenseN-

ets had stored the records of individuals in an open database "fully accessible to anyone".

The records included information such as their Chinese ID number, birthday, address, ethnicity, and employer.

The exposed data also linked individuals to GPS coordinates -- labelled with descriptions such as "mosque" -- captured by tracking devices around the region.



Within a 24-hour period, more than six million locations were saved by SenseNets' tracking devices, according to Gevers, who works at Dutch online security non-profit GDI Foundation and posted his findings on Twitter.

"You can clearly see they have absolutely no clue about network security," he told AFP, describing SenseNets' IT skills as belonging "to the early 90s".

'Invasion' of polar bears in Russian Arctic over

Moscow, Russia

An "invasion" of aggressive polar bears in inhabited areas of Arctic Russia has come to an end, officials said yesterday, ten days after the animals came to the area looking for food.

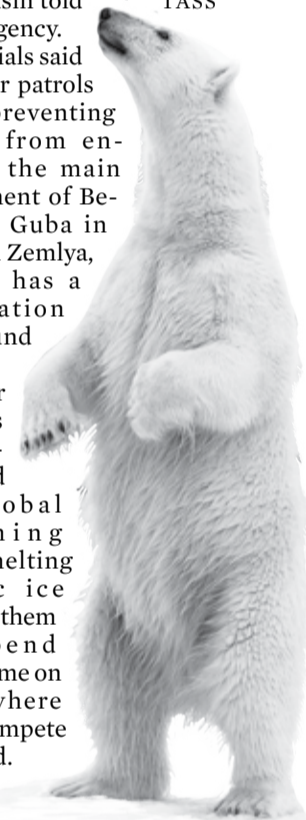
Officials in the remote northeastern Novaya Zemlya archipelago declared a state of emergency last week after 52 bears were seen entering homes and public buildings. Local authorities appealed for help from Moscow to tackle the "unprecedented" situation on the archipelago, where Russia has bases for military personnel.

"The mass invasion of polar bears into inhabited areas has ended," Novaya Zemlya authorities said in a statement, adding that emergency measures had been lifted.

"The threat has been minimised," the head of the local government, Zhigansha Musin told TASS news agency.

Officials said 24-hour patrols were preventing bears from entering the main settlement of Belushya Guba in Novaya Zemlya, which has a population of around 3,000.

Polar bears are affected by global warming with melting Arctic ice forcing them to spend more time on land where they compete for food.



'Kissing sailor' in iconic NY picture dies age 95

Washington, United States

The sailor pictured kissing a woman in Times Square as people celebrated the end of World War II has died at age 95, his daughter told *The Providence Journal*.

George Mendonsa had a seizure Sunday after falling at an assisted living facility in Middletown, Rhode Island, his daughter Sharon Molleur said.

In the famous image, one of four taken by Alfred Eisenstaedt for *Life* magazine, Mendonsa is seen ecstatically bending over and kissing a woman in a white nurse's uniform.

The picture was published by *Life* as "V-J Day in Times Square."

Mendonsa, who served in the Pacific during World War II, was on home leave when the picture was taken.

He had long claimed to be the sailor in the picture, but it wasn't confirmed until recently with the use of facial recognition technology.

Greta Zimmer Friedman, the woman in the picture, died in 2016 at the age of 92.

Eisenstaedt did not get the names of the kissing strangers.

He later described watching the sailor running along the street, and grabbing any girl in sight.

"I was running ahead of him

The picture was published by *Life* as "V-J Day in Times Square." Mendonsa, who served in the Pacific during World War II, was on home leave when the picture was taken



George Mendonsa in 2009, holding a copy of Alfred Eisenstaedt's iconic World War II photo. (Courtesy of Washington Post)

with my Leica looking back over my shoulder but none of the pictures that were possible pleased me," he wrote in "Eisenstaedt on Eisenstaedt."

"Then suddenly, in a flash, I saw something white being grabbed. I turned around and clicked the moment the sailor kissed the nurse. If she had been dressed in a dark dress I would never have taken the picture."

Back Guaido or 'lose everything'

Trump tells Venezuela military

Miami, United States

US President Donald Trump on Monday urged Venezuela's military to accept opposition leader Juan Guaido's amnesty offer, or stand to "lose everything," as a crisis deepened over President Nicolas Maduro's refusal to let in desperately needed humanitarian aid.

Bringing in humanitarian aid is crucial to the viability of Guaido, who has denounced Maduro's re-election last year as fraudulent and in January declared himself interim president, a move recognized by some 50 countries.

He has given the Maduro government until Saturday to let shipments of mainly US aid into the country, which is in the grip of a humanitarian crisis due to shortages of food and medicine exacerbated by hyperinflation.

Addressing supporters and Venezuelan expatriates

in Miami, Trump said he had a message for officials helping keep Maduro in place.

"The eyes of the entire world are upon you today, every day and every day in the future.

"You cannot hide from the choice that now confronts you. You can choose to accept president Guaido's generous offer of amnesty to live your life in peace with your families and your countrymen.

"Or you can choose the second path: continuing to support Maduro. If you

choose this path, you will find no safe harbor, no easy exit and no way out. You will lose everything."

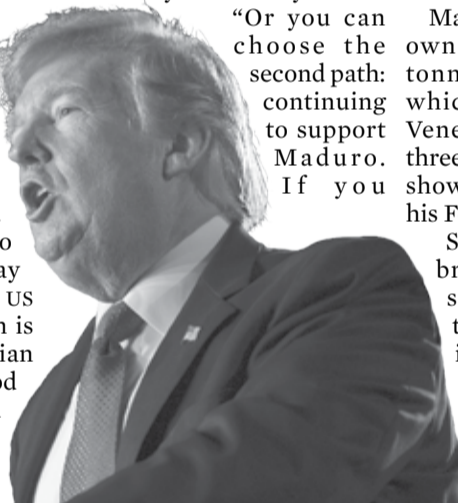
Guaido has set a target of signing up to a million volunteers to help bring in the aid, with 600,000 already registered.

"On February 23, we have the opportunity to save the lives of hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans," he said.

Maduro countered with his own announcement of 300 tonnes of aid from Russia, which he said would reach Venezuela by Wednesday -- three days ahead of a potential showdown brought about by his February 23 deadline.

Speaking at an official event broadcast on TV, Maduro said the shipment contained "high-value medicine."

Maduro has previously announced the arrival of aid from China, Cuba and Russia, his main international allies.



Critically Endangered



A veterinarian from the zoo of Besancon feeds "Soa", a female crowned sifaka, in Besancon, eastern France. The crowned sifaka is a critically endangered species from Madagascar. There were only 6 females over 20 individuals living in 7 zoos worldwide end of 2018

Aussie rodent becomes first 'climate change extinction'

Sydney, Australia

Australia officially declared a Great Barrier Reef rodent extinct yesterday, making it the first mammal believed to have been killed off by human-induced climate change.

The rat-like Bramble Cay melomys -- whose only known habitat was a small sandy island in far northern Australia -- has not been spotted in a decade.

Researchers from Queensland determined a key factor in its disappearance was "almost certainly" repeated ocean inundation of the cay -- a low-lying island on a coral reef -- over the last decade, which had resulted in dramatic habitat loss.

Australia's environment ministry yesterday said it had officially transferred the animal to the "extinct" list.

The declaration was expected. The researchers completed a



Aerial view of Great Barrier Reef

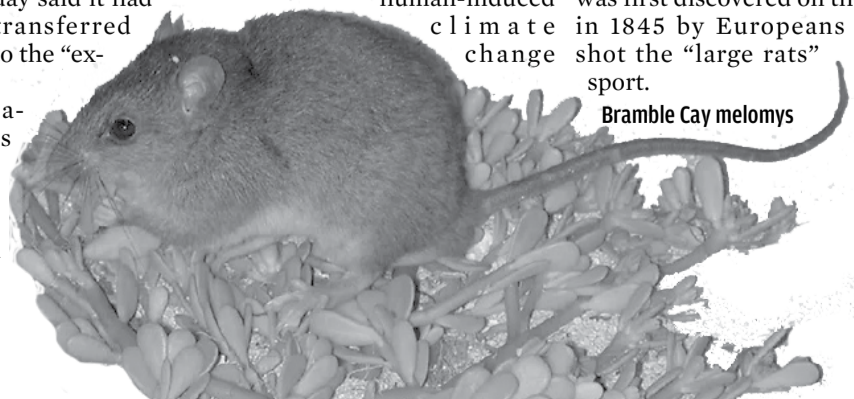
wide-ranging survey in 2014 in a bid to track down the species, but found no trace.

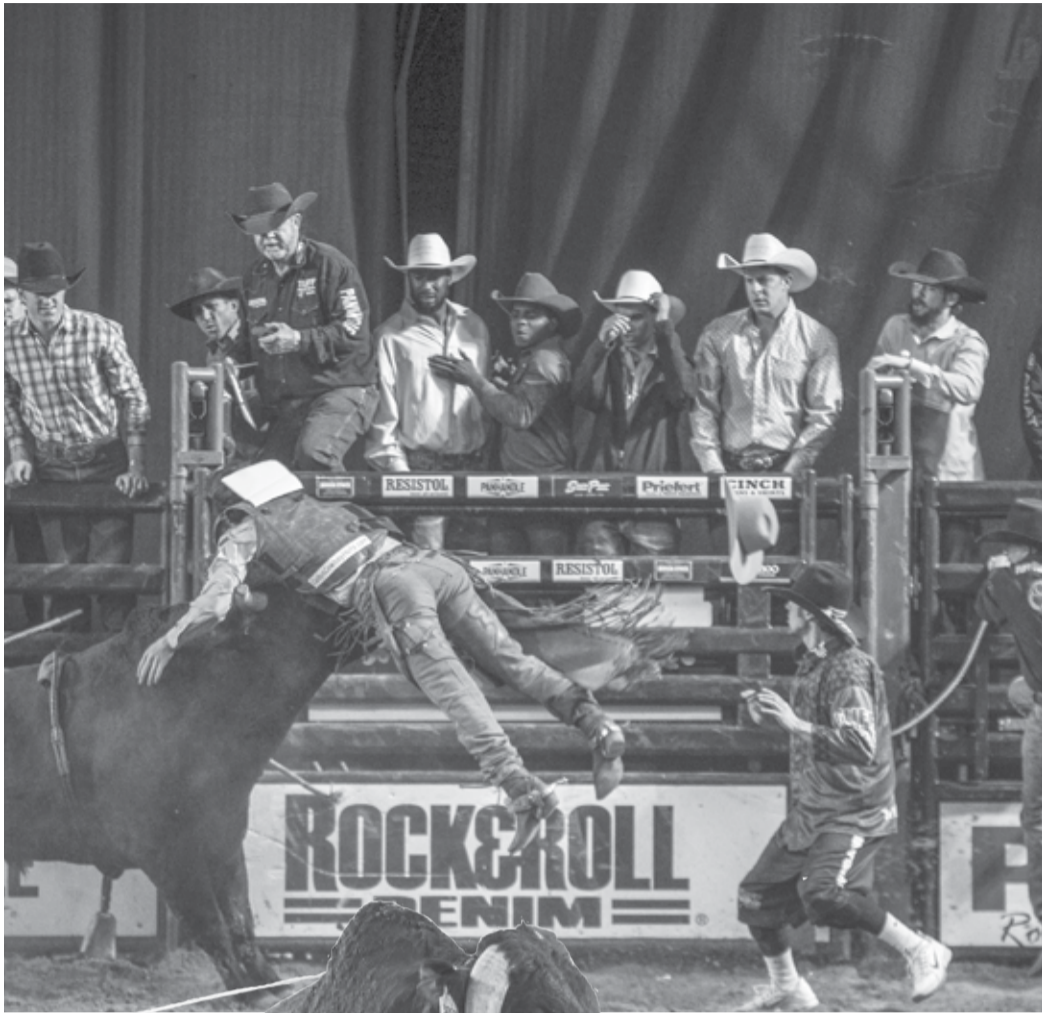
Available data on sea-level rise and weather events in the Torres Strait region "point to human-induced climate change

being the root cause of the loss of the Bramble Cay melomys", a study released in 2016 said.

The *Melomys rubicola*, considered the Great Barrier Reef's only endemic mammal species, was first discovered on the cay in 1845 by Europeans who shot the "large rats" for sport.

Bramble Cay melomys





Roscoe Jarboe of New Plymouth Idaho gets bucked off a bull during the Tuff Hedeman Bull Riding Tour

The longest eight seconds

A bull gets roped after bucking off its rider

Riding a bull in Texas

El Paso, United States

Anyone who doubts that some seconds last a lot longer than others should try riding a bull at the Tuff Hedeman Bull Riding Tour in El Paso.

As in all great rodeo classics, the rider has to hang on with just one hand as the bull bucks and kicks.

Some 25 contestants tried their luck and skill Saturday night in El Paso: the challenge was to ride a bull for at least eight seconds without getting thrown and without touching it with their free hand.

The Tuff Hedeman Bull Riding Tour is named after a four time world bull riding champion, who today is retired.

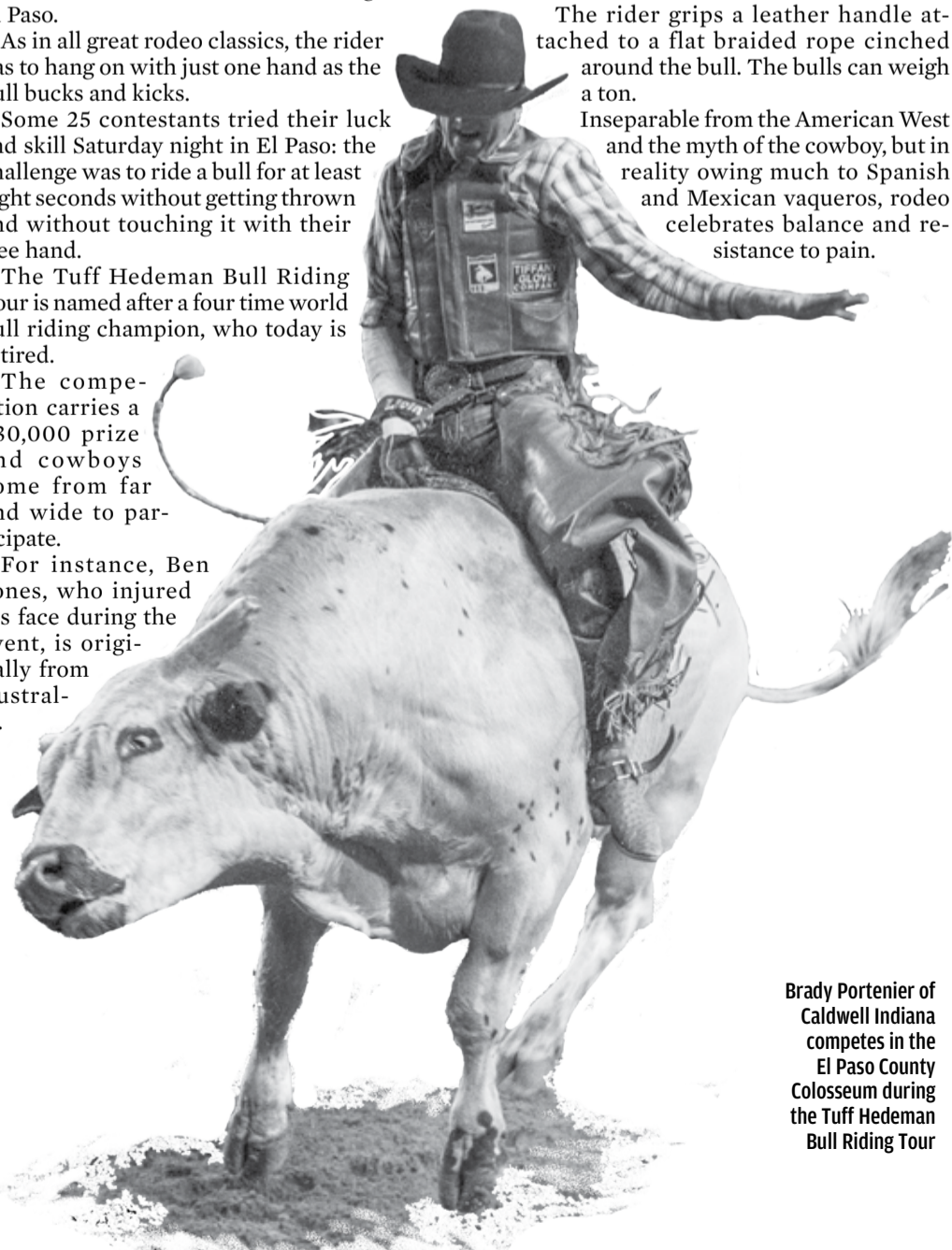
The competition carries a \$30,000 prize and cowboys come from far and wide to participate.

For instance, Ben Jones, who injured his face during the event, is originally from Australia.

Inseparable from the American West Juan Alonzo, a Texan, can also testify to the dangers of rodeo. He served in the US army for five years, and while on a tour of duty in Iraq, he trained on a wooden barrel.

The rider grips a leather handle attached to a flat braided rope cinched around the bull. The bulls can weigh a ton.

Inseparable from the American West and the myth of the cowboy, but in reality owing much to Spanish and Mexican vaqueros, rodeo celebrates balance and resistance to pain.



Brady Portenier of Caldwell Indiana competes in the El Paso County Colosseum during the Tuff Hedeman Bull Riding Tour

'Killer' cells raise hope of universal flu vaccine

Paris, France

Scientists said Monday they had discovered immune cells that can fight all known flu viruses in what was hailed as an "extraordinary breakthrough" that could lead to a universal, one-shot vaccine against the killer disease.

Influenza epidemics, largely seasonal, kill hundreds of thousands of people each year, according to the World Health Organization.

Due to its mutating strains, vaccine formulas must be regularly updated and only offer limited protection currently.

Researchers in Australia said that "killer T cells" -- found in over half the world's population -- had shown in testing to be effective in fighting all common flu varieties.

This means the cells could potentially be used to develop an all-encompassing flu shot that did not need to be changed annually, and even be effective in people who don't naturally possess them.

"Influenza viruses continuously mutate to evade recognition by our immune system,

and they are vastly diverse, making it nearly impossible to predict and vaccinate against the strain that will cause the next influenza pandemic," said Marios Koutsakos, a researcher at the University of Melbourne's Doherty Institute. T cells are a type of white blood cell that roams the body scanning

for abnormalities and infections. They are essential for human immunity against a host of invading bacteria and viruses.

So-called "killer" T cells are unique in that they can directly target and kill other infected cells.

Koutsakos and his colleagues used mass spectrometry -- a scanning technique that helps separate molecules based on their mass -- to identify parts of the virus that are shared across all flu strains, and realised that killer T cells could effectively fight variations of influenza A, B and C.

Flu is especially dangerous for elderly people, children and those with compromised immune systems, as well as certain ethnic groups who never developed immune responses to the disease.

The team behind the research has patented their discovery, and researchers said they hoped it would enable them to develop a universal influenza vaccine "to reduce the impact of pandemic and seasonal influenza around the world".



Universe just got bigger

New Universe map unearths 300,000 more galaxies

Paris, France

A new map of the night sky published yesterday charts hundreds of thousands of previously unknown galaxies discovered using a telescope that can detect light sources optical instruments cannot see.

The international team behind the unprecedented space survey said their discovery literally shed new light on some of the Universe's deepest secrets, including the physics of black holes and how clusters of galaxies evolve.

"This is a new window on the universe," Cyril Tasse, an astronomer at the Paris Observatory who was involved in the project, said.

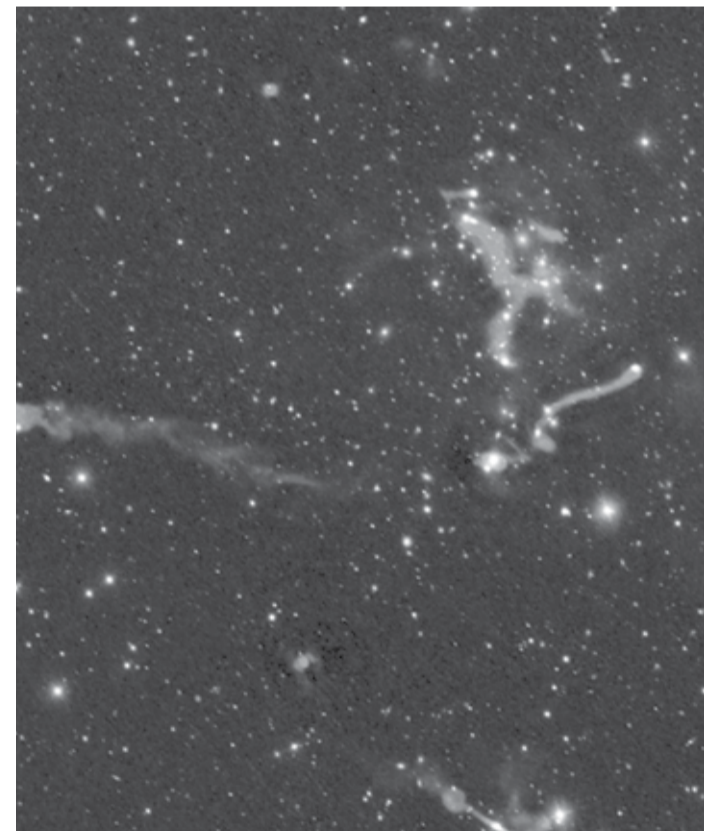
"When we saw the first images we were like: 'What is this?'" It didn't look anything at all like what we are used to seeing."

More than 200 astronomers from 18 countries were involved in the study, which used radio astronomy to look at a segment of sky over the northern hemisphere, and found 300,000 previously unseen light sources thought to be distant galaxies.

Radio astronomy allows scientists to detect radiation produced when massive celestial objects interact.

The team used the Low Frequency Array (LOFAR) telescope in the Netherlands to pick up traces -- or "jets" -- of ancient radiation produced when galaxies merge. These jets, previously undetected, can extend over millions of light years.

"With radio observations we can detect radiation from the tenuous medium that exists



This handout released by Paris Observatory - PSL shows an image taken with the Low-Frequency Array (LOFAR) radio telescope of diffuse emissions of material in a galaxy cluster

between galaxies," said Amanda Wilber, of the University of Hamburg.

"LOFAR allows us to detect many more of these sources and understand what is powering them."

The discovery of the new light sources may also help scientists better understand the behaviour of one of space's most enigmatic phenomena.

Black holes -- which have a gravitational pull so strong that no matter can escape them -- emit radiation when they engulf other high-mass objects

such as stars and gas clouds.

Tasse said the new observation technique would allow astronomers to compare black holes over time to see how they form and develop.

"If you look at an active black hole, the jets (of radiation) disappear after millions of years, and you won't see them at a higher frequency (of light)," he said.

"But at a lower frequency they continue to emit these jets for hundreds of millions of years, so we can see far older electrons."

Very rare scenes from the borderland

Presidential powers include the power to manufacture a threat where none exists



ROGER COHEN

I have a suggestion for President Donald Trump. Instead of fanning fear, stroll across the Paso del Norte Bridge into Ciudad Juárez.

Join the 70,000 people crossing four bridges who daily form the human tissue linking the United States and Mexico. They work, they study, they eat, they shop, all part of what Dee Margo, the mayor of El Paso, calls “one region, one culture.”

I crossed the bridge. Things slow down, as they do when you move from the developed to the developing world. Secondhand clothes for sale hang on simple brightly painted homes, the poorest made of pallets and corrugated iron roofs.

Juárez, home to many of the foreign-owned assembly plants known as “maquiladoras,” has a violent history and big social problems, but in the dusty streets and cafes serving steaming bowls of tripe-and-bean soup I discerned no tension.

“It’s simple,” Julián Cardona, a photographer, told me. “Everyone here knows Trump hates brown people. We call him ‘Trompudo,’ or ‘big mouth.’”

From that mouth seeps the sinister spectre of an “invasion.” Thousands of active-duty troops are dispatched to the border. Concertina wire spreads.

The government shutdown that ended on Jan 25 was followed soon by Trump’s declaration of a national emergency



Central American immigrants speaking this month with a United States Border Patrol agent at the border fence in El Paso.

to build his wall. Presidential powers include the power to manufacture a threat where none exists.

“From my vantage point in El Paso there is no crisis,” Margo, the mayor, told me. “You look south and you can’t tell where El Paso merges into Juárez.”

Bridges, in other words, trump walls.

At one of the shelters run by the nonprofit Annunciation House, I met Iris Galindo Maldonado, an undocumented

43-year-old woman from Guerrero state, in southwestern Mexico, who entered the United States on Jan 15 with her 10-year-old daughter to request asylum. Her husband was killed seven years ago by drug dealers angered by his refusal to cooperate with them. She said they have threatened her in turn for refusing to help them smuggle cocaine.

“I’ve already lived,” she told me. “I hope the American authorities support me for my

daughter, so she’s not in danger, she’s not menaced, and gets educated. I told her, even if we stay one week, two weeks, however long it is, use the opportunity to learn English. She’s already in school, and I pray to God a lot.”

Galindo has been processed by ICE, fitted with an ankle bracelet, and let go to face a long wait in American limbo, along with several hundred thousand others, before her day in immigration court. She has no family in the United States.

El Chapo’s conviction isn’t



IOAN GRILLO

People lined up for hours outside the federal court in Brooklyn last week for a chance to hear the jury instructions at the trial of Joaquín Guzmán, known as El Chapo. On Feb 12, the jury handed out guilty verdicts on all counts, including murder conspiracy and money laundering. During the trial, while American audiences were focused on the courtroom, the Mexican government held a news conference on forced disappearances south of the border. The figures were alarming. The two stories — of Guzmán being tried in New York and the continuing bloody tragedy here in Mexico — are intrinsically connected.

Government officials said at the Feb. 4 news conference that Mexico has records of more than 40,000 people who have vanished, many in the areas where drug traffickers are strongest. Investigators have discovered 1,100 graves, and there are a stunning 26,000 corpses in

public morgues that have not been identified. “This reveals the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis,” said Alejandro Encinas, Mexico’s undersecretary for human rights. “Our territory has become a huge clandestine grave.”

Amid the details about Guzmán’s personal allure and venality presented during the three-month trial, it was easy to forget that his real significance was his position at the top of the Sinaloa drug cartel, one of the forces that plunged the nation into a painful armed conflict that has led to so many massacres, mass graves and refugees.

The tales of Guzmán running naked through tunnels with his lover, the glamour of his beauty-queen wife coming dutifully to the court, the brutal murder of police informants, the inventiveness of smuggling cocaine in cans of chile pepper — it all made entertaining coverage. As a TV reporter mused to me in the Brooklyn courtroom, it all provided a certain light relief away from the divisive political climate that dominates American news.

But the focus on the individual can distract from the size of the crisis in Mexico. The Feb 12 verdict followed more than

200,000 murders over the past decade, a level of bloodshed that has ripped at the heart of the nation. More than 100 journalists have been slain, including my friend and colleague Javier Valdez, whom one of the witnesses against Guzmán was questioned about. An entire movement has grown of family members of those killed and disappeared, pushing to see the violence against their loved ones punished, or at least to find the bodies.

In the face of such slaughter, it is obviously good that Guzmán, a leader of one of the drug cartels involved, is convicted and is likely to spend the rest of his life in a tough prison. But considering this was the biggest trial to date related to Mexico’s catastrophic drug war, it seems only a bittersweet victory in the battle for justice.

It is a painful fact that Guzmán was convicted in the United States and not in Mexico, where he has sown corruption and terror. After he escaped



Emma Coronel Aispuro, the wife of Joaquín Guzmán Loera, known as El Chapo, after her husband was convicted of conspiring to murder rivals, money laundering and more.

from two top security prisons here, the Mexican government conceded that its institutions were not powerful enough to hold him and extradited him north. As a result the charges were mostly related to his trafficking drugs to Americans rather than murdering Mexicans.

In the trial, 14 fellow criminals testified against their former cohort, using the long-criticised system of cooperating witnesses. One of them, Juan Carlos Ramírez Abadía, alias Chupeta, confessed to ordering as many as 150 murders, mostly in his home country, Colombia, yet hoped to have

The catastrophe that is Mexico’s drug war is so much bigger than one man

1933

Adolf Hitler secretly meets with German industrialists to arrange for financing of the Nazi Party's upcoming election campaign.

1935

Caroline Mikkelsen becomes the first woman to set foot in Antarctica.

1942

Lieutenant Edward O'Hare becomes America's first World War II flying ace.



1943

American movie studio executives agree to allow the Office of War Information to censor movies.



The government shutdown that ended on Jan 25 was followed soon by Trump's declaration of a national emergency to build his wall.

filled with a certain ideology and paints everything with it. To supporters of the wall, I ask: Is it time to take down the Statue of Liberty?"

Rep Veronica Escobar, the successor to Beto O'Rourke, now a possible Democratic presidential candidate, took me down to the spot, near a stretch of existing wall, where border agents detained an eight-year-old Guatemalan boy, Felipe Gómez Alonzo, in December. He later died in US custody.

The spot is over the Rio Grande, in the United States, but just short of the wall, raising the question of the barrier's usefulness. That is a question the president has refused to address with any seriousness. His wall is much less about security than macho symbolism — "a monument to bigotry," in Escobar's words.

I got talking to an agent who stopped us as we stepped south of the wall. He said agents in that area detained "300 bodies a day." He said the "bodies" were jumping the line. He said by the time their cases came before an immigration judge, "the bodies

are somewhere else so they get to stay." So, he concluded, "we really have no authority to enforce the law."

Bodies, I noted, is a term generally used for dead people. Would it not be better to call them people or human beings, as this is what they are? The agent said he didn't mean that they are dead, but that "bodies" was the favoured term.

I was subsequently advised not to read too much into this "law enforcement vernacular." Border agents are under a lot of pressure. Their gestures of humanity — a birthday cake, a soccer ball — tend to go unrecorded. Still, if you talk about bodies you are liable to see bodies: that is to say, people stripped of their humanity, their agonising choices, their humble ambitions and their hopes. It is then easier to treat them with callous harshness, to forget what we Americans are and where we came from.

When I walked back across the bridge, a US passport control officer pored over my passport for several minutes: the Iranian visa, the Iraqi visa, the Chinese visa, the Indian visa. She asked what I do, whether I had crossed the bridge before, why I had entered Mexico. She was hostile.

"This guy's from The New York Times," she said, turning to the agent next to her. "What should I do with him?"

He looked me over. "Let him go," he said. I thanked her for the warm welcome home. "Just doing my job," she said.

Trump's rhetoric is not innocuous.

(Roger Cohen is a columnist with The New York Times.)

(In collaboration with New York Times)

n't enough

his sentence reduced in return for his testimony. With audio recordings of Guzman setting up drug deals, you have to question whether it was necessary for prosecutors to work with such hardened criminals.

"Lunatics, drug dealers, maniacs, given sweetheart deals," the defence lawyer Jeffrey Lichtman said in his closing arguments. In rebuttal, Assistant United States Attorney Amanda Liskamm said, "The day that cocaine conspiracies are made in heaven is the day we can call angels as witnesses."

These witnesses spoke of bribes to Mexican officials, from the police and soldiers right up to the former President Enrique Peña Nieto, who was accused of receiving \$100 million. Tragically, this came as little surprise to people here in Mexico, where there have long been accusations of corruption at the very top.

Yet there is little hope they will lead to punishment. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has said the Mexican government would need more solid evidence to go after Peña Nieto. "We can't judge him if we don't have proof," he said. He has also said that going after former presidents could

The tales of Guzman running naked through tunnels with his lover, the glamour of his beauty-queen wife coming dutifully to the court.

plunge the country into confrontation while he is trying to build unity.

Questions about the dubious practices of American agents were shut down by the prosecution and judge. The jurors were not allowed to hear about the so-called Fast and Furious debacle, in which agents watched as thousands of guns were trafficked south, including a .50-caliber rifle found in the last hideout of Guzman. Or about the cooperating witness who had previously claimed that his cartel had been protected by the United States government while it informed on rivals.

And despite Guzman's infa-

my, there are questions about whether he was truly the biggest drug trafficker in Mexico or just one of various powerful kingpins, including his fellow Sinaloa trafficker Ismael Zambada, called El Mayo, who is still at large. Indeed, the prosecution said in its closing argument that it didn't matter if Guzman wasn't the supreme head of the Sinaloa cartel, so long as he was one of its bosses.

A veteran agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration once admitted to me that the policy of taking down kingpins didn't stop the flow of drugs. But he said that it did stop certain drug traffickers who were becoming too infamous and powerful, which made them a threat to governments.

Perhaps the conviction of Guzman at least shows to aspiring drug traffickers that they cannot become as notorious as El Chapo and escape the law. But for the families looking for their loved ones in the mass graves here in Mexico and the families of those who have died of drug overdoses in the United States, the search for justice and peace continues.

(Ioan Grillo is a contributing opinion writer.)



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Senator Sherrod Brown: "He couldn't get the Mexicans to build the wall. He couldn't get Congress to vote the money in. This is in fact the first emergency declaration like this, with that kind of construct, where he got turned down by Congress and then went ahead and did it"

@EdwardTHardy

02



Inspired by the vision of Atal Ji and Balasaheb Thackeray Ji, BJP-Shiv Sena alliance will continue working for the well-being of Maharashtra and ensuring the state once again elects representatives who are development oriented, non corrupt and proud of India's cultural ethos.

@narendramodi

03



The lawsuit filed by 16 blue states without standing claims Trump has no Constitutional powers to reallocate funds to the wall based upon his declaration of a national emergency. Um, no powers other than those granted to him in the National Emergencies Act which Congress passed.

@mitchellvii

04



As I predicted, 16 states, led mostly by Open Border Democrats and the Radical Left, have filed a lawsuit in, of course, the 9th Circuit! California, the state that has wasted billions of dollars on their out of control Fast Train, with no hope of completion, seems in charge!

@realDonaldTrump

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

Wide Angle

Oscars 2019: The battle for best picture



JOEL INDRUPATI

For the first time ever, a Netflix movie 'Roma' has a chance to win the Oscar Award in the Best Picture category.

It won't be easy. On Sunday evening, at Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles, only one of these eight movies will be announced as the winner — 'Roma', 'A Star is Born', 'The Favourite', 'Bohemian Rhapsody', 'Black Panther', 'Green Book', 'Vice' and 'BlacKkKlansman'.

In the movie, 'Roma', the director of Alfonso Cuarón, tells us an intimate story of a domestic worker in Mexico City in 1971, based on his own childhood. It's natural outlook, its black and white magic, and its heart-tugging story makes it a top runner.

If 'Roma' wins, it could also be for the first time ever, that an Oscar for best picture and best foreign language film would be going to the same film.

But, the biopic 'Bohemian Rhapsody' - which has nominations in five categories - is my favourite.

And, while on favourites, I must say that 'The Favourite', according to my friends, seems to have a bigger chance.

A film, figuratively speaking is the soul of its director. So, when a film gets nominated for 'Best Picture' but when its director does not get nominated for 'Best Director', it hurts the filmmakers.



It is sad that Bradley Cooper, the director — this was his directorial debut — did not receive an Oscar nomination. But it is good that Bradley Cooper, the actor, has received one.

In fact, this would be his third nomination for the Best Actor Award; after 'Silver Linings Playbook' (2012) and 'American Sniper' (2014).

Let's hope he will be 'third time lucky', and finally win an Oscar for acting. Even though, not surprisingly, just a few days ago, he has already won a Grammy Award, for singing!

His performance "Shallow" (with Lady Gaga), which was adjudged the Best Pop Duo/Group Performance, is from the same movie: 'A Star Is Born'.

'Black Panther' is a great movie too, but is unlikely to win an Oscar, according to some movie critics. They say that a superhero movie with a mainly black cast will never win the big one. But, it is sure to take home at least a few awards, from the six nominations it has got.

A film, figuratively speaking, is the soul of its director. So, when a film gets nominated for 'Best Picture' but when its director does not get nominated for 'Best Director', it hurts the filmmakers.

In 2013, when 'Argo' got nominated for 'Best Picture' while director Ben Affleck did not get nominated for the 'Best Director' category, actor Bradley Cooper had commented: "Ben Affleck got robbed."

Strangely, now, Bradley Cooper himself is in that situation. His movie 'A Star Is Born' is nominated, but his directorial effort has been snubbed.

In 2013, 'Argo' had won. In 2019, let's just hope Bradley Cooper won't be robbed of his film, or of his acting.

business

APM IPO Bahrain's most successful: EY

26 IPOs raise US\$2,946.2m in 2018 in MENA region

● GCC recorded a total of 18 IPOs in 2018

● Saudi Arabia leads in both IPO volume and value

TDT | Dubai

Bahrain witnessed one of the most successful Initial Public Offerings during 2018 in the form of APM Terminals, as the MENA region as a whole raised US\$2,946.2m through 26 IPOs in 2018, a new report said.

The report lists the IPO of the port operator APM Terminals in Q4, 2018 as Bahrain's most successful with APM raising US\$32 million in Q4 2018.

The IPO was oversubscribed by 5.4 times, making it the most successful IPO in Bahrain in over a decade, the report by EY MENA IPO Eye says.

The report, however, says it witnessed a decline in IPO activity in the region as several entities across the region deferred their plans for IPOs.

IPO values, according to EY MENA IPO Eye, decreased year-on-year by 24.6 per cent and activity declined by 23.5pc from 2017.

"This can be attributed to various reasons including challenging economic conditions affecting regional businesses and global trade concerns," said Phil Gandier, MENA Transactions Leader, EY.

"Regulatory changes and a rising interest rate environment over the past year have also contributed to decreased activity. However, despite the slowdown, 26 IPOs were recorded in the region across sectors over the past year, indicating an appetite for more diversified activity," added Gandier.

18 deals in GCC

In the GCC, 18 deals were recorded in 2018 with a total value of US\$2,564.6m. Saudi Arabia led IPO activity in 2018 with 12



Representative picture (Courtesy of Getinthering)



Phil Gandier



IPOs worth US\$1,472.4m.

7 IPO in Q4

In the fourth quarter of 2018, the MENA region witnessed seven IPOs, of which one was a REIT listing, for a total deal value of US\$1,085.1m.

Saudi Arabia witnessed two IPOs in Q4 2018, including Alkhabeer REIT which raised US\$64.1m and the National Company for Learning & Edu-

cation which raised US\$66.7m. Tadawul is working on several initiatives including launching stock index futures (planned for Q1 2019) and launching a special incentive program for local companies to list.

The country is also planning the privatization of more than 20 companies in 2019 in sectors such as water, agriculture, energy, and sports. To help increase transparency, the government plans to retain minority interests in the businesses and undertake IPOs and other transactions for a certain percentage of each asset.

GCC plan for 2019

Nasdaq Dubai plans to launch futures trading on the MSCI United Arab Emirates equity index in 2019 to provide investors with a new avenue to gain exposure to UAE companies.

In Kuwait, S&P has issued a statement that the country will be added to the S&P Dow Jones Global Benchmark Indices with an emerging market classification in 2019. The Kuwait Stock Exchange is currently awaiting MSCI's decision in 2019 on upgrading the exchange to emerging market status from the current frontier market status.

Gregory Hughes, MENA IPO Leader, EY says: "While the interest from several companies across the MENA region to ex-

ecute an IPO is high, especially for those looking to access international investors and exchanges, many plans have been delayed for numerous reasons, including underperformance of businesses due to the challenging economic environment, global market volatility, and the time it takes to adapt to public company listing requirements."

North Africa sees three listings in Q4

In the wider MENA region, Egypt, Morocco, and Algeria recorded one deal each amounting to a total value of US\$176.7m. The IPO of Sarwa Capital on the Egyptian Stock Exchange raised US\$123.2m during Q4 2018. The government of Egypt delayed the sell-off of a 4.5pc stake in the state-owned Eastern Tobacco Company owing to market volatility. Many private IPOs tentatively planned for the quarter were also pushed to 2019 citing market volatility.

In Morocco, the IPO of Mutandis SCA raised US\$44.0m in Q4, making it the second IPO in 2018 on the Casablanca Stock Exchange.

Global IPO Activity

Globally, IPO activity continued to slow down in Q4 2018, with 326 IPOs raising US\$53.7b, marking a decrease of 34pc and 10pc respectively, compared to Q4 2017.

LuLu Financial Group gets EMI licence in Philippines

TDT | Abu Dhabi, UAE

LuLu-Phils International Exchange, Inc. a subsidiary of the UAE-based LuLu Financial Group, received approval from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to diversify into electronic money.

The electronic money issuer (EMI) licence allows LuLu-Phils to move into the digital wallet space. The Exchange is currently engaged in remittances and currency exchange.

"This is a historic moment for our company. We are thankful to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for issuing this licence. Having our own e-money licence is a key element of our APAC expansion and will allow us to offer a wider range of financial service products to our customers," said Adeeb Ahamed, Managing Director, LuLu Financial Group.

The new EMI licence enables the company to offer customers wallet to wallet, wallet to bank account transfers, bill payments, recharge, and merchant payments.

LuLu-Phils. International Exchange, Inc. headquartered in Manila, Philippines began its commercial operations in May 2014. The financial services company currently has five branches in the Philippines including two at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Terminal 1 and 3) and one



This is a historic moment for our company. We are thankful to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for issuing this licence

ADEEB AHAMED, MANAGING DIRECTOR, LULU FINANCIAL GROUP

each at Clark International Airport, Robinsons Place Mall in Las Pinas City and Ermita in Manila.

"We're always looking to deliver better and faster financial service to our customers and this licence will enable us to provide a wide product portfolio and ensure significant savings for our customers," added Adeeb Ahamed.

Alba wins British council safety award – 'Merit'

TDT | Manama

Aluminium Bahrain (Alba) has been awarded the International Safety Award – Merit by the British Safety Council.

Alba is one of the 248 organisations to win a Merit in the 2019 International Safety Awards for its extreme ownership and commitment to protect and maintain the safety, health and well-being of its workforce in 2018.

Commenting, Alba's Chief Executive Officer, Tim Murray said: "We believe that our Safety performance is directly linked to our productivity."

Congratulating Alba, Mike Robinson, Chief Executive of the British Safety Council,



Tim Murray

congratulated said: "The award is in recognition of their commitment and efforts to keep their employees and workplaces free of injury and ill health."



Bahrain Airport Services Company (BAS) honoured more than 110 staff, who participated in BIAS 2018 last November. Salman Al-Mahmeed, the CEO, praised the efforts and dedication of the staff. He stressed the importance of teamwork and team spirit, reflecting the ability to achieve gains for BAS. Above, employees during a group photo session at the honouring ceremony

GHG brings Bahraini hospitality to UAE

Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay - Dubai marks the first phase of the group's expansion plan across the region



Pictured cutting the ribbon (L-R): GHG Vice Chairman, Fawzi Ahmed Kanoo, Dr Shaikh Ahmed bin Saif Al Nayhan and GHG Chairman, Farouk Almoayyed, together with GHG Board members, management and guests



Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay

Opens first property in UAE, The Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay

TDT | Manama

Gulf Hotels Group (GHG) celebrated the official opening of its first UAE property, The Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay.

The opening ceremony was held under the patronage of Dr

Shaikh Ahmed bin Saif Al Nahyan, who was Vice -Chairman of Gulf Hotels Group in 1995/96 and Chairman from 1997 to 1999.

The 4 star Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay marks the first phase of the Group's expansion plan across the region and is fully operational, forecasting an occupancy of 75 per cent for the first 3 months of the year.

The property has 270 rooms, categorised between Stand-

The 4 star Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay is fully operational, forecasting an occupancy of 75 per cent for the first 3 months of the year

ard Rooms, Superior Rooms, Deluxe Rooms, Grand Deluxe Rooms, Executive Suites, Luxury Suites and 2 Penthouse Suites. Guests can also enjoy Club Lounge/benefits, business centre, swimming pool, gym, and a choice of six dining options that include Café Délices, Al Waha Restaurant, Naisa Oriental Restaurant, Sports On 4, The Canal Lounge, and The Other Office Karaoke.

Business travellers can

take advantage of the meeting rooms that are equipped with state-of-the-art AV equipment.

On this occasion, Chairman of the Group, Farouk Almoayyed said: "GHG has been committed to delivering the highest standards of Bahraini hospitality since the opening of the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa back in 1969. Recognising a significant increase in demand in the MENA region,

we believe this is the right time to launch our expansion plans."

Garfield Jones, Gulf Hotels Group CEO, said, "The Gulf Court Hotel offers visitors a true taste of Arabic hospitality that our hotels in Bahrain - the Gulf Hotel, The K Hotel and Asdal Gulf Inn - are renowned for. It also builds on the company's reputation for delivering excellent food, beverage and leisure product."



Gulf Air officials with the executive management of Al Baraka Banking Group at the airline's headquarters in Muharraq, Bahrain. They discussed potential business cooperation specifically in geographical areas where the bank currently operates. In picture (from left to right): Ammar Al Saad - Gulf Air Acting Chief Financial Officer, Captain Waleed Al Alawi - Gulf Air Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Tariq Kazim - Acting CEO of Al Baraka Islamic Bank- Bahrain, Adnan Ahmed Yousif - President & Chief Executive of Al Baraka Banking Group, Kresimir Kucko - Gulf Air Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed El Qaq - Senior Vice President - Head of Commercial Banking of Al Baraka Banking Group.

BCCI closed sessions continue

TDT | Manama

In implementation to the directives of His Royal Highness the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and in a bid to support the growth and success of small businesses, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) continues holding its closed-sessions.

The forthcoming closed session will be held today from 11 am to 1 pm in Al Majlis Hall of Bait Al Tijjar building, and will deliberate about the education,

food wealth, hospitality, tourism, and health sector.

It is worth mentioning that another closed session will be held in Al Majlis Hall and is scheduled for tomorrow. The session will extend between 11 am and 1 pm and will centre on the financial sector, commercial markets, industry, transport, logistics, and telecommunication.

Interested members should register to attend the sessions, by sending their details to alaa@bcci.bh

Oil spill fears for ship stranded on Pacific reef



Picture courtesy of the Guardian

Wellington, New Zealand

A bulk carrier stranded on a coral reef off the Solomon Islands is being battered by heavy seas whipped up in a tropical cyclone, sparking fears a major environmental disaster.

Officials said water had already breached the hull of the MV Solomon Trader, which ran aground on February 5, and one unconfirmed report said oil was leaking from the vessel. The 225-metre (740-foot)

ship hit a reef near Rennell Island, the largest raised coral atoll in the world, part of which is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

NDMO director Loti Yates said there was "no sign of oil spillage" although the Guardian, citing government sources, said there was some leakage which was forming a slick.

Island Sun News reported the Hong Kong-flagged ship's owners Bintan Mining had flown in salvage experts from Australia and the US.



Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) Sameer Nass alongside his first deputy Khalid Najibi and Chief Executive Officer Shaker Al Shater recently participated in the 129th meeting of the Union of Arab Chambers held in Muscat-the Sultanate of Oman. On the sideline of their participation, Nass, Najibi, and Al Shater met Sayyid Asaad bin Tariq Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, and Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan. The meeting probed the prospect of economic cooperation among Arab countries and stressed the importance of consolidating efforts to step-up trade, stimulate joint projects, and encourage the flow of investments. BCCI's delegation headed by Sameer Nass also took part in a ceremony organised by Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) marking 45 years since its inception.

Dubai extends rally

Market Indices	Value	Change
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES	15,591.79	
PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,289.88	
CEMENT	4,310.57	
UTILITIES	9,946.87	
TEXTILES & FOOD INDUSTRIES	7,174.47	
TELECOMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	8,284.55	
RETAIL	1,603.18	
CONSTRUCTION	1,288.90	
DEVELOPMENT	2,739.29	
	6,153.02	
	1,960.79	
	7,189.72	
	7,691.42	

Representative picture

● **Dubai property stocks extend gains**

● **Saudi's Mobily rises on fourth-quarter profit**

● **Nine of 11 Saudi banks slide**

● **Telecom Egypt jumps on dividend, deal with Vodafone Egypt**

Reuters

The Dubai stock market extended gains as it rose for a fifth session yesterday, mainly driven by property stocks after strong fourth-quarter earnings.

Saudi Arabia's market fell as investors booked profit after the market gained significantly this year. Banks had led the rally, then were hit hard, with nine of 11 banks falling.

In Dubai, the benchmark index rose 0.6 per cent with the most heavily traded stock, Emaar Properties, gaining 3.1pc and its unit Emaar Malls rising 1.9pc. The stocks have gained in recent sessions after posting robust fourth-quarter earnings, boosting the index.

Property firms, which were partly behind the index's poor performance last year, showed signs of recovery reflected in the fourth-quarter results and increased construction contracts, though remained vulnerable to further falls in property prices.

Rating agency Standard & Poor's said on Tuesday it expects Dubai residential property prices to fall further in 2019 because of a gap between supply and demand, then stabilise in 2020.

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▼ 0.6 pc to 8,517 pts
DUBAI	▲ 0.6 pc to 2,566 pts
ABU DHABI	▼ 0.1 pc at 5,035 pts
Qatar	▼ 0.5 pc to 9,982 pts
EGYPT	▼ 0.5 pc to 15,156 pts
KUWAIT	▲ 0.7 pc to 5,461 pts
BAHRAIN	▲ 1 pc to 1,393 pts
OMAN	▼ 0.4 pc at 4,057 pts

Saudi Arabia's index fell 0.6pc with bank Samba Financial Group dropping 2.2pc and Riyadh Bank shedding 2.1pc.

The index is still up nearly ninepc this year, outperforming other major Gulf markets, with foreign investors leading the rally. Saudi exchange weekly data showed foreigners were net buyers every week this year.

Telecommunications firm Etihad Etisalat (Mobily) rose 2.5pc after it posted a fourth-quarter profit which, it said, was its first profit since the second quarter of 2016.

Qatar's index was down 0.5pc. The Abu Dhabi index edged down 0.1pc with heavy-weight First Abu Dhabi Bank slipping 0.3pc.

Outside the Gulf, Egypt's blue-chip index 0.5pc, snapping a seven-day winning streak with 18 of its 29 stocks declining. The index had gained 16.3pc this year as the Egyptian economy strengthened.

Telecom Egypt jumped 3.5pc, however, after it agreed to provide Vodafone Egypt with transmission and infrastructure services for 10 years, in a deal valued at 10.85 billion Egyptian pounds (\$618.15 million). Vodafone Egypt also proposed a dividend payout of 5.5 billion pounds to Telecom Egypt.

AUB profit up 12.7pc

● **Board of Directors recommended a distribution comprising of a cash dividend of US cents 5.0 per share**

● **Fourth quarter net profit was US\$169.3 million**

● **Net interest income jumped by US\$ 64.1m (+7.3pc) to US\$ 940.5m**

TDT | Manama

Alhli United Bank (AUB) reported a net profit attributable to its equity shareholders of US\$ 697.5 million for the year 2018, representing a rise of 12.7 per cent as compared to the net profit of US\$ 618.7m in 2017.

The Board of Directors recommended a distribution comprising of a cash dividend of US cents 5.0 per share (2017: US cents 4.5 per share) together with a bonus ordinary share issue of 10pc (2017: 5pc).

Operating income increased from US\$ 1,119.4m to US\$ 1,210.6m in 2018 (+ 8.1pc), mainly driven by an increase in net interest income.

Net interest income jumped by US\$ 64.1m (+7.3pc) to US\$ 940.5m (2017: US\$ 876.5m),



”

AUB continued its solid performance in 2018 against the backdrop of a continuing general difficult operating environment. Achieving a very robust growth of 12.7pc in net profit over 2017 demonstrates its strong underlying fundamentals and the resilience of its diversified business and geographic model

MESHAL AL-OTHMAN
AUB CHAIRMAN

helped by an increase in average interest earning assets and to the repricing and re-positioning of the loan portfolio, complemented by an effective interest rate risk management strategy.

Net operating income increased from US\$ 1,030.4m to US\$ 1,124.3m in 2018 (+ 9.1pc).

Equity attributable to the owners of the bank increased by 2.4pc to US\$ 3.9 billion in 2018 (2017: US\$ 3.8bn).

Basic earnings per share increased by 12.2pc to US cents 8.3 for the year ended 31 December 2018 (2017: US cents 7.4).

For the fourth quarter, net

profit was US\$169.3m as compared to US\$ 150.0m in the year ago quarter.

Operating income was US\$ 303.5m as compared to US\$ 294.2m in Q4/2017 (+3.1pc). Net operating income was US\$ 279.1m, higher by 6.7pc compared to US\$ 261.6m in Q4/2017.

Solid asset quality levels were sustained with a gross non-performing loans ratio of 1.9pc (31 December 2017: 1.9pc) while the specific provision coverage ratio increased to 85.5pc (31 December 2017: 85.1pc).

The total provision cover-

age ratio, inclusive of credit loss provisioning under IFRS 9 but excluding very substantial non-cash collaterals available, improved to 214.7pc as at 31 December 2018 (31 December 2017: 154.3pc).

The Group's total assets grew by US\$ 2.3bn (+6.8pc) to reach US\$ 35.5bn at 31 December 2018 driven by a growth in the non-trading investments portfolio to US\$ 7.6bn (31 December 2017: US\$ 6.0bn). Asset growth was funded from an increase in customer deposits (+US\$ 1.7bn) and through repo borrowings (+US\$ 0.6bn).



Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC) took part in the 25th meeting of the Arab Fertilizer Association (AFU) in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, from February 12 to 14. Company President Dr Abdulrahman Jawahery said GPIC said the share of Arab exports in world markets had reached 71 per cent phosphate rock, 81 per cent superphosphate, 49 per cent ammonia, 25 per cent urea and 41 per cent of other products. More than 133 companies and organisations, as well as representatives from the largest representative bodies of the sector from more than 33 countries, were present at the event, along with over 500 well-known personalities in the fertilizer sector from around the world.



Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) recognised 17 Integrated Management System (IMS) auditors with certificates of appreciation for assisting the Internal Audit Department during the Company's recent ISO recertification. The comprehensive IMS recertification audit, which was conducted in 2018, verified BAC's compliance with ISO standards across the business. In attendance during the award ceremony were senior BAC management, including BAC Chief Executive Officer Mohamed Yousef Al Binfalah, who personally presented the certificates.

Huawei's founder says world can't live without it

Beijing, China

The founder of Chinese telecom giant Huawei has hit back at US efforts to blacklist the company, saying defiantly that the world cannot do without Huawei and its "more advanced" technology.

"There's no way the US can crush us," Ren Zhengfei said in an interview with the BBC.

"The world cannot leave us because we are more advanced."

Ren, 74, also denounced as "politically motivated" the December arrest of his daughter, Huawei Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou, who is accused of violating US sanctions against Iran and faces an

extradition hearing in Canada next month.

"We object to this," he said. "But now that we've gone down this path, we'll let the courts settle it."

Ren Zhengfei



CAMPUS

Pakistan School excel in WSC

TDT | Manama

Pakistan School honoured their students who qualified for the Global Round in the World Scholars Cup (WSC) Bahrain Round 2019.

Pakistan School students won more than hundred gold

and silver medals in different categories in the competitions held in St. Christopher's School, Bahrain.

24 students have qualified for the global round which will be held in The Hague, Netherlands.

A special felicitation ceremo-

ny in honour of the participant students was held in the Jinnah Hall of the school where the students and teachers were awarded certificates.

Principal Attiq Ur Rehman congratulated the participants and praised them for bringing fame to the school.



Pakistan School students during the special felicitation ceremony

QES conducts open day

TDT | Manama

Quality Education School organised Open Day for students of all grades, including students of Khalil Kanoo Campus at Al Zamil Campus, Muqabah. This event marked the 5th of its kind with participation from parents and students, along with faculty members at its peak.

The event was inaugurated by the Board of Director and Chief Guest Bhagwaan Asarpota and saw the attendance of Board Directors Prakash Devji, Narendra Kapoor, Anoop Kewalram as well as Kunal Kewalram.

Stalls included a variety of street food items, a supply of fresh fruits, a new fragrance line, nursery and games. An art and science exhibition was organised by the respective departments that showcased numerous projects done by students of both campuses.

The aim of this event was to encourage and engage parent participation in school activities along with motivate parents, students and faculty members to work together as a team.



Students and staff during the event

NMS conducts orientation program

TDT | Manama

The New Millennium School, DPS Bahrain, organised an orientation program for the students of class X and XII, along with their parents. The orientation aimed to prepare them for the forthcoming Board Examination 2018-19.

Principal Arun Kumar Sharma, in his motivational speech, gave valuable pointers to the students and parents to manage stress, nervousness and anxiety and emphasized on the need of well-structured approach to excel in the examination. He also discussed at length the subject-specific strategies to be adopted



NMS students and their parents during the event

to secure good marks.

Time management, proper planning and schedule, thorough revision, healthy diet and good sleep were a few tips given.

He also advised the students to keep away from any kind of malpractice and insisted on following the school's core value of honesty.

The orientation was highly beneficial for the student and parents who went back with a positive motivation for the upcoming Boards Exam.

NMS grabs 283 gold medals in WSC



New Millennium School students celebrate the victory

TDT | Manama

The New Millennium School-DPS has won 283 gold medals in the regional round of the World Scholar's Cup (WSC) held on February 8 and 9.

In addition to the gold medals the students won 301 silver medals, 3 mementoes and 1 trophy in different categories. 150 scholars participated in 50 different teams representing NMS.

Ananya Santosh Kumar Nair

of grade VIII was honoured as the Island Top Scholar, School Top Scholar and the Highest Scorer in Subject Challenge (History). Akshat Pradeep Kumar was the highest scorer in the Scholar's Challenge.

The Team comprising of Ananya Santosh Kumar Nair, Akshat Pradeep Kumar and Meryl Liza Manu, was honoured as the overall 2nd Top Champion team, 6th in Scholar's bowl, 2nd in Team Writing, 4th in Team Debate and 3rd in

the Challenge Round. Samiya Shakeel Shaikh, was the winner of the Debate Showcase.

Most of the participating teams, qualified for participation in the Global Round to be held at, The Hague - Amsterdam from the 21st to 26th July.

Chairman Dr. Ravi Pillai, the Managing Director Geetha Pillai and the Principal Arun Kumar Sharma and Staff congratulated the students, parents and the mentors for this laudable achievement.

AMA celebrates Sports Day

TDT | Manama

AMA International University - Bahrain (AMAIUB) joined the Kingdom of Bahrain to celebrate Bahrain National Sports Day on its third year of occurrence as a national event on February 12, 2019.

During the opening program, the university officials, namely: Dr. Marie Redina M. Victoria, University President; Buena Gracia A. Canzana, Vice President for Administration and Finance; Dr. Geraldo C. Talisic, Vice President for Academic Affairs; and Dr. Amin El-Meligi, Dean of Students Affairs, emphasized that such celebration adheres to the Kingdom's principle of community sport and



The University staff and students in action during the Sports Day celebrations

expanding public health awareness, thus asserting the proverb, "A sound mind in sound body."

Among the sports activities organized by the Office of the Students Affairs together with

the Student Council were football, basketball, table tennis and fitness exercise, which were actively participated in by the students, faculty members and administrative staff.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MOHAMMED FOUAZ S/O ZULFIKAR UDDIN holding Indian Passport No. **Z3073438** dated 22/08/2016 issued at **BAHRAIN**, having permanent residence at **NO. 69 TMS LAYOUT, 33 MAIN, 5TH CROSS, JP NAGAR, 1ST PHASE, JP NAGAR, BANGALORE-78, KARNATAKA** presently residing at **BUILDING 1525 ROAD 4313 BLOCK 943, RIFFA, BAHRAIN** will henceforth be known as (Given Name) **MOHAMMED** (Surname) **FOUAZ** objection(s), if any, may be forwarded to Embassy of India, P.O. Box 26106 Al Seef, Kingdom of Bahrain.

"I, BHARTI DEVI d/o MEWALAL holding Indian Passport No. **M 1151270** dated 19.08.2014 issued at **INDIA** having permanent residence at (full address in India) **NAYA BABER ALI KHERA M.N. 1 POST - SAFIPUR, UNNAO, PIN: 209801, UTTAR PRADESH INDIA.** Presently residing at (full address in Bahrain) **BUILDING. 914, ROAD. 31, BLOCK. 623, KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN** will henceforth be known as (given name) **BHARTI** (Surname) **DEVI.** Objection (s), if any, may be forwarded to Embassy of India, P.O. Box 26106 Al Seef, Kingdom of Bahrain.

celebs

Meghan Markle travels to New York for a secret baby shower with friends

Los Angeles

Meghan Markle is all set to celebrate her baby shower with her friends in New York.

The Duchess of Sussex made a secret trip to New York City to celebrate the arrival of her and Prince Harry's first child, who is due in April. A source told People magazine that Meghan's friends are throwing her a baby shower before she heads back to London.

The former actor hails from Los Angeles, where her mother Doria still resides. The mini-homecoming comes shortly before Meghan and Harry are heading to Morocco for a three-day visit for two of their key causes: girls' education and youth empowerment.

According to People, Meghan who now lives in the U.K., has maintained close friendships with those who were by her side before she was royalty.



Meghan Markle



Paris Hilton

Paris Hilton to release new music

Los Angeles

Socialite and reality TV star Paris Hilton has revealed that she is working on new music and it will be out soon. The track will mark her first in 12 years. In 2006 the hotel heiress released her debut album "Paris".

The album peaked at Number. 6 on the Billboard 200, and the debut single, "Stars are Blind," reached 18 on the Hot 100.

"Back in the studio. New music coming soon" Hilton posted on Twitter.

In 2008, Hilton announced that she had finished a second album, but it was never released.

Queen to perform at Oscars 2019

Los Angeles

Rock band Queen will perform at the upcoming 91st Academy Awards ceremony, with Adam Lambert on vocals.

The Motion Picture Academy made the announcement on social media on Monday, reports variety.com.

The move comes in the wake of the blockbuster success of "Bohemian Rhapsody", the biopic about the band and its late singer, Freddie Mercury. The film is nominated for five Academy Awards including Best Picture.

The band now performs under the name Queen + Adam Lambert, with two of the four original members - guitarist Brian May and drummer Roger Taylor - fronted by former "American Idol" star Lambert, who has won critical applause in his role as the group's frontman over the past few years. Bassist John Deacon has not performed with Queen for many years.

It was an unhealthy dynamic: Mandy on Ryan

Mandy Moore

Los Angeles

Singer-actress Mandy Moore says she had an unhealthy relationship with her former husband-singer Ryan Adams.

On one of the episodes of Marc Maron's "WTF" podcast, Moore opened up about her marriage with Adams, who has been accused of sexual misconduct and emotional manipulation by multiple women, including Moore, reports variety.com.

She said: "I was living my life for him. It was an entirely unhealthy dynamic. I had no sense of self. I felt like I was drowning. It was so untenable and unsustainable and it was so lonely. I was so sad. I was lonely with him."

The "Tangled" star said

Adams was highly dependent on her.

"I would do little jobs... it's not like I completely stopped working. But it would become abundantly clear while I was working, things would completely fall apart at home."

"I couldn't do my job because there was a constant stream of trying to pay attention to this person who needed me and wouldn't let me do anything else," Moore added.



Ryan Adams



SNIPPETS

Fashion icon Karl Lagerfeld dead at 85

Los Angeles

Iconic fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld, the creative director of luxurious fashion brands Chanel and Fendi, died here on Tuesday. He was 85.

An official statement issued on Lagerfeld's official Instagram account confirmed the news of his demise.

"The House of Karl Lagerfeld shares, with deep emotion and sadness, the passing of its creative director Karl Lagerfeld on February 19, 2019 in Paris, France. He was one of the most influential and celebrated designers of the 21st century and an iconic, universal symbol of style."

"Driven by a phenomenal sense of creativity, Karl was passionate, powerful and intensely curious. He leaves behind an extraordinary legacy as one of the greatest designers of our time, and there are no words to express how much he will be missed," the official statement read.

Lagerfeld was battling pancreatic cancer, reported dailymail.co.uk.

He began his fashion career with the fashion house in 1983, a decade after Coco Chanel died. He was known for distinctive look in his later years, regularly wearing dark suits, a pony-tail and sunglasses.

Henry Golding silent on replacing Craig as James Bond

Los Angeles

"Crazy Rich Asians" star Henry Golding has maintained silence amidst speculations that he is replacing actor Daniel Craig as James Bond in "Bond 26".

When TMZ.com spoke to Golding about the buzz, he said: "I couldn't possibly say anything about that."

Earlier, it was reported that current Bond star Craig will not be a part of "Bond 26", due to which rumours started that actors like Idris Elba or Golding may step into Craig's shoes.

Craig is a part of "Bond 25", scheduled to release on April 8, 2020.



Karl Lagerfeld



Henry Golding

Katy Perry, Orlando Bloom planning big engagement party, no wedding plans yet

Los Angeles

Katy Perry and Orlando Bloom are busy celebrating their engagement but have not figured out their wedding plans just yet.

A source close to Orlando Bloom told People magazine that

Bloom and Perry are still basking in the joy of their recent relationship.

The source further added, "They are still busy enjoying and celebrating their engagement."

"They haven't shared any wedding details yet. They are planning a big engagement party for all of their friends," the source said, adding, "It will be very special."

The Bloom source also shared details of the actor's proposal to Perry, stating that Orlando had planned this for a while.

The actor sought her parents' permission before popping the question to the singer. "Katy's family knew he was proposing. He talked to her par-

ents about it before," the source continued.

Even with all the advance planning, Perry, 34, apparently had no idea the proposal was imminent, the insider added.

Perry shared her first photo with Bloom on Friday, posting a close-up image of the pair surrounded by numerous heart-shaped balloons, while showing off her unique flower-shaped diamond ring, which features a colourful jewel in the centre.

Orlando Bloom and Katy Perry



Keira Knightley

Keira Knightley film calls for unity in divided times

London

Keira Knightley said her new film "The Aftermath", set in the bombed-out ruins of Hamburg just after the end of the Second World War, had important lessons on building bridges that were very relevant for today's divided societies. The romantic drama sees Knightley play Rachael Morgan, who moves to Germany to be with her husband, a British colonel who has a leading role in the reconstruction effort in Hamburg. They move in with a German widower and his troubled daughter.

Her co-stars, Australian Jason Clarke who plays her husband Lewis and Swedish Alexander Skarsgard, who plays a German architect also attended the world premiere at London's Picturehouse Central on Monday.

"It's very relevant for now. It's about building bridges, it's about how we see each other as human beings and we don't demonize each other and that's obviously something that we need to do right now," Knightley said.

Gwyneth Paltrow to Exit Marvel Cinematic Universe

Los Angeles



Gwyneth Paltrow

For the last decade, Gwyneth Paltrow has popped up in the Marvel Cinematic Universe as Pepper Potts, Iron Man's secretary and eventual girlfriend. But in an interview with Variety, the actress said that she's planning on retiring the character after this summer's "Avengers: Endgame."

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SPORTS
sports

United outclass Chelsea

● Manchester United dump holders Chelsea out of FA Cup to pile pressure on Maurizio Sarri

● Ander Herrera and Paul Pogba headed first-half goals to claim a 2-0 win that sets up a quarter-final with Wolves

AFP | London

Paul Pogba drove Manchester United into the FA Cup quarter-finals and pushed Chelsea manager Maurizio Sarri closer to the sack as the troubled holders crashed to a 2-0 defeat on Monday.

Pogba set up United's opening goal for Ander Herrera with a majestic cross and the France star added the second himself as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side produced a commanding display at Stamford Bridge.

Chelsea's lacklustre fifth round exit -- their first FA Cup defeat since the 2017 final -- was another painful blow for Sarri, who is facing a fight to save his job following a dismal debut season.

Chelsea suffered their heaviest defeat for 28 years when they were thrashed 6-0 at Manchester City earlier this month, an indignity that came just weeks after a humiliating 4-0 loss at Bournemouth.



Paul Pogba of Manchester United beats Antonio Ruediger (2) and Cesar Azpilicueta of Chelsea as he scores his team's second goal

Amid claims Sarri has lost the support of his players, the former Napoli boss watched aghast as Chelsea collapsed again for a fifth defeat in their last 10 games.

Sarri was subjected to chants of "you don't know what you're doing" and "you're getting sacked in the morning" from frustrated Chelsea fans, who called for their former star Frank Lampard, now in charge of Derby, to replace the Italian.

It was the worst possible start to a defining period for Sarri, whose stubborn tactics and dubious man-management have come under intense scrutiny.

Chelsea, currently outside the Premier League's top four, return to action against Malmö in the Europa League last 32

second leg holding a 2-1 lead on Thursday.

Assuming he hasn't been axed by demanding Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich before then, a shock defeat against Malmö would be catastrophic for Sarri ahead of next Sunday's League Cup Final date with Manchester City.

United are through to the last eight for a fifth consecutive season as they look to win the FA Cup for a record-equalling 13th time and first since 2016.

Ending United's nine-game winless run at Chelsea was another feather in Solskjaer's cap as his team bounced back from last week's Champions League last 16 first leg loss to Paris Saint-Germain.

Solskjaer went unbeaten in his

first 11 games and the interim boss showed his tactical skills by out-witting Sarri with his switch to a midfield diamond formation.

Fatal flaws

Even Solskjaer's risky decision to select reserve goalkeeper Sergio Romero in place of David De Gea paid off.

In a frantic opening, Romero was called into action when David Luiz drilled a dipping freekick over the United wall.

Romero kept out Luiz's effort and scrambled to his feet to save Pedro's powerful shot from the rebound.

Gonzalo Higuain should have opened the scoring from Cesar Azpilicueta's teasing cross, but the Argentine striker headed



Paul Pogba has been directly involved in 15 goals since Ole Gunnar Solskjaer took charge

wide.

Those misses proved fatal for Chelsea, whose early pressure was rendered irrelevant by another lapse of concentration in the 31st minute.

Mata picked out Pogba on the left wing and the United midfielder, unchecked by the slow-to-react Antonio Rudiger, unfurled a sublime cross that looped towards the far post.

Herrera timed his run perfectly to meet Pogba's delivery in stride and Marcos Alonso fatally lost his man as the Spanish midfielder planted a close-range header past Kepa Arrizabalaga for his first goal since December.

Pogba was only just getting warmed up and he single-handedly ripped Chelsea part to double United's lead on the stroke of half-time.

Playing an incisive pass down the right flank to Rashford, Pogba surged into the Chelsea area and muscled his way above Azpilicueta to meet his teammate's pin-point cross with a diving header that Kepa couldn't keep out.

Brave signs exclusive broadcast deal with TV5 in the Philippines

TDT | Manama

Brave CF, the flagship global MMA promotion based in the Kingdom of Bahrain, announced the signing of an exclusive broadcast deal with TV5 in the Philippines, prior to its first event in the country, Brave 22, in March.

Property of MediaQuest Holdings and founded in 1960, TV5 is the flagship broadcaster in the country and home of ESPN5, the Filipino version of the "world-wide leader in sports". TV5 will join Abu Dhabi Sports, the official broadcaster of Brave CF, and the Brazilian conglomerate Globo, among others, as one of the official homes of Brave in broadcast television.

Shaikh Khalid announces new boxing challenge

TDT | Manama

HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa announced the launch of a new challenge, namely a 100-round-boxing fight.

Part of the First Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, President of Bahrain Athletics Association and Honorary President of Bahrain Mixed Martial Arts Federation's humanitarian and sports initiatives, the event will take place next November and its proceeds will be dedicated to the families of the martyrs of duty and the injured veterans.

On this occasion, HH Shaikh Khalid expressed his delight at announcing this initiative in which he will be participating.

Indian Club to organise 6s Hockey Tournament

TDT | Manama

Indian Club has announced that it will be organising a one day international 6 a side hockey tournament.

The Indian Club Syril Mack Memorial International 6s Hockey Tournament powered by BMMI is scheduled to be held on 22nd Feb 2019 at the Club's premises.

A total of 10 teams, local and international, will be participating in this prestigious tournament and will be vying for the coveted trophy.

Don Bosco Kuwait, Saudi Legends, Bhusaval Tigers and Naqi Strikers are some of the teams taking part in this tournament.

Back-to-back days of exhilarating experiences at BIC this weekend

TDT | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) is set to host a packed weekend of on-track action and mesmerising thrills.

On Friday, motorsport enthusiasts can enjoy a series of unique activities in the Ultimate Track Experience while on Saturday, the public can attend an Open Track Day.

Both offerings are amongst the most popular for race fans at BIC. This weekend, they will each be taking place along the Sakhir circuit's 2.55-kilometre Inner Track.

Friday's Ultimate Track Experience will be held from 8am



A car on track during an Open Track Day at BIC

features a 1,340cc engine which can generate 185bhp. It launches from zero to 100kph in 3.6 seconds. This drive costs BD126, and completing the Clio Cup drive is a prerequisite to taking part in the SR1 experience.

Then, on Saturday, Open Track Day will be held from 9am to 4pm. It is expected to draw in scores of participants and their sports cars and motorbikes, some of which are rarely ever seen hitting the streets. Many of these top-of-the-line automobiles will be coming from all over the Gulf, including from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, the UAE and Bahrain.

to 1pm. It is set to include drives in a Clio Cup sports car and in a Radical SR1 prototype, as well as passenger rides in the Clio Cup and an ultra-quick Radical SR3. The Radical SR1 prototype

Lantern edge Infonas

TDT | Manama

Lantern Z XI beat Infonas by 57 runs in a CBA Division C 25 overs League match.

Lantern won the toss and elected to bat first. Openers Zakil (110) scored a brilliant century and Ajay's (51) half century helped Lanterns to score 209 at the end of 25 overs. In second innings Infonas finished for 152 runs and lost the game to Lantern by 57 runs. Amir became the top scorer with 56 runs for Infonas while Rashed took two wickets for Lanterns XI.

Brief Score: Lantern Z XI 209/3 in 25 overs (Zaki 110, Ajay 51) beat Infonas 152/6 (Amir 56, Rashed 2/24) by 57 runs

Other Match Results
Bnl Titans 169/5 in 25 overs (Ershad 50, Ibrar 31, Shyju 2/19) beat SNCS TransFast 150/10 (Anu 38, Shakeel 36, Ratan 3/30, Mohan 2/19) by 19 runs

FOG Printing 166/9 in 25 overs (Hardeep 53, Shyam 25, Sanito 6/18) beat Rebel CC 125/10 (Naresh 30, Hardeep 2/15) by 41 runs

Tornado Riders 145/5 in 22.3 overs (Vijeesh 44, Sonu 27, Anil 2/10) beat Indian Delights 144/9 (Jerin 26, Vijeesh 3/20) by 5 wickets



Ershad - Titans



Hardeep - Fog

Rebel II 96/6 in 22 overs (Ajith 31, Nafees 2/10) beat Azeem CC 98/10 (Qadeer 47, Umair 5/16) by 4 wickets.

Alyousuf Exchange 167/7 in 25 overs (Suresh 64, Anoop 37, Hamza 2/22) beat Bassali Tigers 128/10 (Numair 34, Sujith 3/24) by 39 runs.



Saleh Isa bin Hindi Al Mannai, The King's Advisor for Youth and Sport Affairs, Reyadh Sater, BBK Chief Executive and Bahrain Tennis Federation officials with winners of 24th BBK Juniors Open Tennis Championship during the closing ceremony. Mohammed Al Khadem won the Unisex Under 8 while Hashim Al Tobli won Unisex Under 10 and Jaber Abdul Aal won Under 14 Boys Singles.

Bahrain Merida conquers Oman



Italian Sonny Colbrelli of team Bahrain celebrates as he crosses the finish line

TDI | Manama

Sonny Colbrelli opened Bahrain-Merida's account at the Tour of Oman yesterday, winning stage four in a bunch sprint.

The Italian was clearly the strongest in the final, with clear air between him and second-placed Greg Van Avermaet (CCC Team). Clément Venturini (Ag2R) was a close third place after what was a tough day in the saddle for the 120-strong peloton.

The Tour of Oman was the shortest stage of the contest at 131km, which had a slightly uphill finish, and was marked by a long break with the last three riders caught in only the final kilometres. However, the Italian cyclist deservedly conquered it, posting a time of 3:17:09.

Commenting after the race, Colbrelli said: "Today was the first time I felt good here," explaining that he'd struggled to adapt to the Middle Eastern heat on the opening three stages. "That's good for the morale ahead of the next races."

Mladenovic stuns Osaka

Halep makes winning start in Dubai, Svitolina boosts hat-trick bid

● Naomi Osaka's first match since her Australian Open triumph didn't quite go to plan

AFP | Dubai

Naomi Osaka stumbled badly in her first match since winning the Australian Open as the world number one went down in a flurry of errors to exit the Dubai Championships yesterday.

Dubai-based Frenchwoman Kristina Mladenovic claimed a 6-3, 6-3 victory to reach the third round as Osaka made 25 unforced errors.

The rout, which featured seven breaks of the Osaka serve, took barely an hour, sending Mladenovic into a Wednesday contest with Carla Suarez Navarro.

"This is my home tournament, I live here," world number 67 Mladenovic said. "It's great to get a win like this in front of a big crowd."

"Beating the number one is always special."



This is my home tournament, I live here. It's great to get a win like this in front of a big crowd

KRISTINA MLADENOVIC



Naomi Osaka of Japan reacts during day three of the WTA Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

The second set was riddled with seven consecutive breaks of serve before Mladenovic finished off the job with a winner to the empty court on match point.

Osaka stunned the tennis world last week by announcing her split from coach Sascha Bajin despite winning back-to-back Grand Slam titles at the US and Australian Opens.

She said earlier this week that she would not prioritise "success over happiness" when asked about the sacking, and she never looked like winning in Dubai as she also served five double faults.

Earlier yesterday, Simona Halep and Petra Kvitova both won their opening matches, while Elina Svitolina made a strong start to her bid for a third straight title.

Kvitova, the 2013 winner, re-

covered from losing a first-set tiebreak to defeat Katerina Siniakova 6-7 (3/7), 6-4, 6-4 and squeeze into the third round.

Halep, Dubai champion in 2015, saw off 2014 Wimbledon finalist Eugenie Bouchard 7-6 (7/4), 6-4.

The Romanian said she is still feeling the effects of her weekend defeat in Doha by Elise Mertens.

"It was a good match because I won it. I tried to finish the points faster because I'm a little bit tired," Halep said.

"She played well, the level was pretty good. At some points I really ran very well. I'm confident. I feel good on court even if I'm tired."

A third former world number one also advanced as Angelique Kerber beat Dalila Jakupovic 7-6 (7/4), 6-3.

Kvitova, Wimbledon champi-



Simona Halep of Romania serves in her match against Eugenie Bouchard of Canada

on in 2011 and 2014, said she was unfazed about the early midday start to her match.

"I don't really care if I play the first match," the Australian Open runner-up said. "Now I'm done, so I have a free afternoon."

"I'm not sure what I'm pleased with... maybe with my comeback at the end."

Svitolina benefits from Jabeur injury

Local favourite Ons Jabeur was forced to retire with the Tunisian trailing Svitolina 7-6 (7/4), 4-0.

Jabeur took a fall late in the opening set, rolling her ankle while also hitting her shoulder.

She took a medical timeout out but was only able to carry on in the second set for four games.

Third seed Svitolina is hoping to become the first women to win three Dubai titles.

"That is a big motivation for me here," the Ukrainian said. "Today I didn't really feel in a match mood, I don't know why."

"I was struggling a bit, I had a very slow start. Hopefully tomorrow will be better."

"I told myself that I'm here to make history of the tournament."

Elsewhere, Hsieh Su-Wei defeated Belarusian Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-1, 6-2 while Viktoria Kuzmova accounted for seventh seed Kiki Bertens, beating this month's St Petersburg champion 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (8/6).

American Jennifer Brady downed French 14th seed Caroline Garcia 6-4, 7-5 as her compatriot Sofia Kenin defeated Russian 11th seed Daria Kasatkina 6-3, 2-6, 6-4.

A third US player, Alison Riske, advanced 6-2, 6-3 over Alize Cornet.

Leclerc keeps Ferrari on top

● Ferrari's new recruit follows Vettel's lead on second morning of testing in Barcelona

● Reigning champion Lewis Hamilton completed most laps with 74

Reuters | Barcelona

New recruit Charles Leclerc kept Ferrari on top of the timesheets with a full race distance before lunchtime on the second day of Formula One's pre-season testing in Spain yesterday.

After team mate Sebastian Vettel led the way on Monday with the fastest time and most laps, Kimi Raikkonen's 21-year-old replacement slotted in seamlessly with a time not far off the German's best.

The Monegasque produced a best time of one minute 18.247 seconds and did 73 laps, compared with Vettel's Monday 1:18.161 and 72 laps, in partially cloudy conditions and an ambient temperature of 14 degrees Celsius.

Five times world champion Lewis Hamilton, working through the Mercedes testing programme, did one more lap than Leclerc however.



Ferrari's Monegasque driver Charles Leclerc drives during the tests

Ferrari's times have been quicker than anything from last year's weather-affected first four-day test at the Circuit de Catalunya.

Rule changes, with new aerodynamic regulations, were expected to make the cars around 1.5 seconds a lap slower. But the evidence so far has been that much of the lost time has been regained.

By the time the season starts in Australia on March 17 cars can be expected to be going even faster, but Pirelli's F1 tyre boss Mario Isola cautioned that the picture might be distorted.

He said the asphalt had been new for testing last year, with a very smooth surface that had evolved further.

"I believe the influence of the Tarmac is higher, and the (warmer) temperature is playing a big effect. We know that," he told reporters.



Leclerc got to within a tenth of a second of Sebastian Vettel's time from Monday

Ferrari-powered Haas were second fastest, with Denmark's Kevin Magnussen taking his turn and producing a best lap of 1:19.234.

Alfa Romeo were third with Italian newcomer Antonio Giovinazzi taking over from Raikkonen who tested on Monday and using harder tyres than others.

In terms of mileage, Red Bull

did the third most with Frenchman Pierre Gasly putting in 69 laps in another strong showing for the new partnership with Honda.

Australian Daniel Ricciardo, who has joined Renault from Red Bull, did the least laps of the morning (28) but that was due to his rear wing flying off at speed.

He returned to the pits with the Renault engineers setting to work.

"On-track fun for Daniel. We're testing his reaction skills. They're good," the team said jokingly on Twitter. "Car and driver are back in the garage. Rear-wing assessing is in full flow."

Williams were again absent, with the team hoping to get their car to Barcelona for Wednesday's third day amid speculation that senior heads could roll as a result of the delay.

No chance Icardi going to Juventus, says Inter president

AFP | Milan

Inter Milan's Chinese president Steven Zhang on Monday ruled out selling unsettled Argentine forward Mauro Icardi to Serie A rivals Juventus.

It follows comments from Juventus sporting director Fabio Paratici that the champions would keep an eye on the striker's situation in the summer after he was stripped of the captain's armband during the week.

"Will Icardi ever join Juventus? No, never," said Zhang after a shareholders' meeting at the San Siro on Monday.

"This has been spoken about a lot in the past week and a lot of confusion has been created."

"I would like to put an end to this topic because the club has already made a decision and continuing to talk about it doesn't help us to achieve our goals."

"Icardi is a great player, he's a professional and a very important member of our family."

"We are in negotiations to renew his contract, and he's an important player for this club."

Icardi, who turned 26 yesterday, watched from the stands with his wife and agent Wanda Nara as Inter beat Sampdoria 2-1 on Sunday.

Icardi, whose current contract expires in 2021, arrived from Sampdoria in 2013 and has scored 122 goals in 210 games, winning the award for Serie A's most prolific scorer twice.

Nara, also a regular on Italian television, tearfully revealed on Sunday that the forward had only learned of his demotion on Twitter.

"It was like taking away a leg. It is not our intention to leave," Nara told Mediaset's football talk show Tiki Taka.



Mauro Icardi