

Lady Gaga ends her engagement to Christian Carino

Singer-actress Lady Gaga has called off her engagement to fiancé Christian Carino. Gaga's representative confirmed the news to people.com saying their relationship ended "a bit ago". **P14**

OP-ED **8**

How to make peace in Afghanistan? Moscow has some lessons

THE DAILY tribune



Khloe Kardashian breaks up with Tristan Thompson **14 CELEBS**

WORLD 6 Putin warns new missiles could target 'decision-making centres'



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VRS enrolment evaluation over Manama

The Civil Service Bureau has completed the evaluation on enrolment and withdrawal applications received under the voluntary retirement scheme.

The CSB highlighted that 120 enrolment applications and 84 withdrawal applications for the voluntary retirement scheme have been accepted. All applications have been accepted in co-ordination with various government entities.

Civilians evacuated Manama

Civilians have been evacuated from the last village in Syria still held by the Islamic State (IS) group.

A convoy yesterday carried hundreds of men, women and children from Baghuz, near the Iraqi border.

The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) alliance have said they are waiting for their removal before launching an offensive against militants.



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Saudi orders release of 850 Indian prisoners

New Delhi

Coinciding with the visit of Crown Prince Mohammed

Indian prisoners lodged in its jails. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said the decision was taken on the

"Another big deliverable! At the request of the PM, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia has ordered the release of

He said HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman has also announced an increase in the quota for Indian Haj pilgrims to two lakh at the

1.75 lakh.

During his visit to Pakistan two days back, HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman had agreed to

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bin Salman to India, Saudi Arabia yesterday ordered release of 850

request of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

850 Indian prisoners lodged in Saudi jails," he said in a tweet.

request of Prime Minister Modi. The present quota is about

release over 2,000 Pakistani prisoners in Saudi jails.

Egypt hangs nine

Convicts found guilty of murdering prosecutor general four years ago

The sentences of the other defendants were not considered because they had been sentenced in absentia.

Amnesty International condemned the executions.

Cairo

Egypt hanged nine men yesterday for the 2015 assassination of the prosecutor general, judicial sources said, bringing to 15 the number of executions it has carried out this month.

Hisham Barakat was killed in June 2015 when a car bomb struck his convoy in Cairo follow-



Egyptian Public Prosecutor Hisham Barakat died in a car bomb attack near his house in the Heliopolis district of Cairo.

ing militant calls for attacks on the judiciary to avenge a crackdown on militants.

The nine men hanged were among 28 people sentenced to death in 2017 for involvement in

his murder.

Their death sentences were upheld in November by the Court of Cassation, which commuted the sentences of six others to life imprisonment.

28 people have been sentenced to death in the prosecutor general murder case.

The sentences of the other defendants were not considered because they had been sentenced in absentia.

The hangings came despite an 11th-hour plea by human rights group Amnesty International on Tuesday for a stay of execution.

Amnesty International condemned the executions.

Last week, Egypt hanged three people convicted of the 2013 murder of senior police officer Nabil Farag.

The previous week, it hanged three young "political detainees" convicted of the September 2013 murder of the son of a judge, Human Rights Watch reported.

No one claimed the 2015 attack against Barakat but authorities pointed the finger at members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood of ousted president Mohamed Mursi.

Since Mursi's overthrow by then army chief and now President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi in 2013, Egypt has struggled to quell a militant insurgency and cracked down on militants who backed him.

Hundreds of Mursi supporters have been sentenced to death, while the former president and top Brotherhood figures have also faced trial.

The Muslim Brotherhood was outlawed and branded a terrorist organisation in December 2013, just months after Mursi's ouster.

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The UK-Bahrain Joint Working Group held a meeting at the Foreign Affairs Ministry's General Court yesterday, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa and the Minister of State for the Middle East at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Alistair Burt. The meeting was held in the presence of Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowment, Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Zayed Al Zayani, Chief of Public Security, Major General Tariq Al Hassan and a number of senior officials from various official bodies in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Minister of Foreign Affairs hailed the achievements of the Bahrain-UK Joint Working Group, which will contribute to deepening the ties of friendship between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Kingdom at all levels, enhancing communication and developing common coordination between the two countries in various regional and international issues, and supporting the common interests of the two countries and their people.



Sixteen hospitals have been presented with certificates of accreditation during a ceremony held at the Grove Hotel Bahrain in Amwaj Islands. The National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA) hosted the ceremony under the patronage of the Supreme Council for Health (SCH) President Lieutenant-General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa. The hospitals, which include two government-managed medical facilities, passed the NHRA assessment successfully, based on a total of 2,365 items in 149 criteria. Six hospitals were rated in the diamond category after achieve more than 95 per cent of the accreditation criteria. Four hospital were rated in the platinum category (91-95 per cent) and six other in the golden category (80-89pc).



The Information and eGovernment Authority (IGA) conducted an awareness session for government entities to present the eGovernment Excellence Award 2019 categories, held in its 10th edition under the patronage of HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman of the Supreme Committee for Information and Communication Technology.



The British University of Bahrain yesterday signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the BENEFIT Company, Bahrain's leading provider of Financial Technology Services. The agreement will pave the way for wide ranging co-operation between the two organisations, including opportunities for student internships, joint research projects and opportunities for training and development. The British University of Bahrain is Bahrain's newest University and was developed in collaboration with the University of Salford, Manchester, one of the UK's leading universities for teaching, research and industrial collaboration. All academic programmes offered at BUB are awarded by the University of Salford, offering students in Bahrain the opportunity to obtain a world-class British degree without leaving home.



The New Horizon School held its 19th Annual Sports Day at its Jannusan premises on 19th and 20th February. Over 1,900 children participated to uphold the theme 'PARTICIPATION IS WINNING IN ITSELF'. School Principal Nirmala Jose highlighted health as more valuable than all the other possessions in life. She urged the staff members, students and parents to direct their personal lifestyle to promote the holistic development of body, mind and spirit. The days marked revelry through presentation of spectacular drill displays.



Shri Gujarati Samaj Bahrain has appointed a new executive committee under the chairmanship of Ravi Parekh. Mr Ravi is a well-known businessman among the community members in the Kingdom. The objective is to bring all sections of the Gujarati Community together and create a strong fabric in society and to organise innovative events and programmes all year long to entertain all members, the samaj said in a statement issued.



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Derasat to launch 'Two Prosperous Decades'

Manama

Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat), extended sincere congratulations and appreciation to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain for the honour of presenting to His Majesty a book titled "Two Prosperous Decades", at a special ceremony held at Al Sakhir Palace on the occasion of the eighteenth anniversary of the public referendum on the National Action Charter.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa announced that the book will be launched on March 4 in a special event at the premises of the Derasat Centre in Awali.



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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, yesterday met the United Kingdom's Minister of State for the Middle East, the Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP, at Gudaibiya Palace. HRH the Crown Prince and the UK's Minister of State for the Middle East discussed a wide range of areas of co-operation, noting the close and historic bilateral relationship between Bahrain and the UK. HRH the Crown Prince and the UK's Minister of State for the Middle East also reviewed issues of mutual interest and highlighted the commitment of both countries to further strengthening bilateral military cooperation to promote regional stability.

Agriculture sector's contribution stressed

TDT | Manama

His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Isa bin Salman Educational Fund, yesterday attended the opening ceremony for the 2019 Bahrain International Garden Show, at Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre.

HH Shaikh Isa affirmed that the ongoing support of HM the

King and HRH Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, the Wife of HM the King and President of the National Initiative for Agricultural Development, reflects Bahrain's commitment to prioritise agriculture as an integral part of the Kingdom's development.

HH Shaikh Isa recognised the importance of advancing the agriculture sector's economic contribution in line with Bah-

rain's diversification efforts and environmental stewardship.

HH Shaikh Isa then launched a progress report on the implementation of the United Nation's Sixth Sustainable Development Goal in the Kingdom and a Soil Maps project that outlines the Kingdom's soil properties. HH Shaikh Isa later presented awards to winners in various categories.



HH Shaikh Isa at the opening ceremony of 2019 Bahrain International Garden Show.

Lending a helping hand

BRCS steps up support to Syrian refugees at Lebanon camps



The delegation at one of the Syrian refugee camps in Northern Lebanon.

● Blankets, clothes, heaters and food parcels were provided to Syrian refugees as part of special winter aid.

TDT | Manama
Harpreet Kaur

The Bahrain Red Crescent Society (BRCS) has intensified its humanitarian efforts to help refugees in winter through distributing winter aid to around 350 refugee families from Syria residing in North Lebanon camps.

The aid included winter essentials, such as blankets, clothes, heaters and food parcels after storms in Lebanon flooded Syrian refugee camps compounding the misery of people enduring powerful winter winds and biting cold.

Dr Fawzi Amin, General Secretary of BRCS, explained that BRCS delegation in Akkar distributed winter aid in a humanitarian gesture that affirms the solidarity of Bahraini people with these refugees.

Dr Fawzi praised the delegation's initiatives including distributing games to kids, which "made them happy in the midst of sufferings".

Dr Fawzi noted the importance of BRCS keenness to intensify efforts of "Warm Hearts" Campaign launched in 2014, where heaters



Dr Fawzi hands over toys to a child refugee.

350 refugee families benefited from the relief aid provided by the BRCS.

aid a matter of life and death.

Speaking to Tribune, Dr Fawzi said, "The initiative is a continuation of our support to the Syrian refugees. This year there were floods in the northern part of Lebanon at the Lebanon Syrian border, which destroyed many refugee camps.

"Our eight-member team visited the refugee camp in Lebanon along with a few volunteers from Lebanon to appraise the situation.

"In future, we are not only planning to help Syrian refugees but also providing help to the needy in countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh.

"We are planning to visit almost 10 countries by the end of this year to provide aid and engage in voluntary work."

were distributed to hundreds of Syrian refugees at Lebanon.

Both Bahraini government and Bahraini people have been offering unparalleled help to the Syrian refugees across the world.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recently declared that more than a million Syrian refugees in Lebanon are suffering from difficult living conditions, making relief



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- HE Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance, Bahrain
- HE Mr Zayed R. Alzayani, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Bahrain
- HE Mr Rasheed Mohammed Al Maraj, Governor, Central Bank of Bahrain
- Steve Wozniak, Co-Founder, Apple Computers

In partnership with The Economic Development Board of Bahrain, Euromoney Conferences will host the eighth GCC Financial Forum in Bahrain on 26-27 February 2019.

The Forum will give C-level financial professionals from the Gulf and beyond, an in-depth strategic overview of the global drivers of change in finance and the implications of this evolution for financial services professionals of every stripe, and for the future of their businesses.

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Innovation fest Unbound returns to the Kingdom

Anchor event of StartUp Bahrain Week will be attended by over 75 speakers

● **Event features innovative topics including building a sustainable tech ecosystem, the growing FinTech industry, artificial intelligence, sustainability, venture capital and blockchain.**

TDT | Manama

World-renowned innovation festival Unbound will return to Bahrain on March 6 and 7 to showcase some of the most inventive brands, start-ups, and government initiatives seen in Bahrain and across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Expecting to double in size from last year, Unbound Bahrain moves to a new venue, Bahrain National Theatre for the 2019

edition.

The MENA region's largest and most exciting innovation festival, Unbound Bahrain is the anchor event of "StartUp Bahrain Week" held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander, Chairman of the Economic Development Board (EDB) in association with the EDB and supported by Tamkeen (The Labour Fund) as a strategic partner and startup community in

Bahrain.

The festival celebrates the Kingdom's commitment to creating a digital economy and fuelling a digital future for the wider MENA region.

The festival will host over 75 speakers and more than 3,000 local, regional and international delegates, including inspiring entrepreneurs sharing their experiences on starting and growing a business venture.

Daniel Seal, Founder and CEO at Unbound, said: "Unbound is delighted to be returning to the MENA region. This year's event promises to be the biggest yet, with speakers from across the globe discussing the very latest in innovation. With startup battles, awards and showcases, Unbound Bahrain provides startups with unique opportunities to connect with investors and help make ideas become a reality. In a very short space of time, Unbound has become the go-to platform for MENA

”
This year's event promises to be the biggest yet, with speakers from across the globe discussing the very latest in innovation.

DANIEL SEAL

innovators to embrace opportunities in Bahrain and the wider region."

The Middle East is embracing digital disruption with technology at the heart of economic diversification. As Governments look to increasingly partner with the private sector to help drive growth and efficiencies, Unbound Bahrain will showcase the latest innovative products and services being developed by startups from around the world.

Pakiza Abdulrahman, Manager of Business Development

– Startups at the Bahrain Economic Development Board, said: "The EDB is committed to fostering a supportive environment for start-ups and has found a perfect partner in Unbound to showcase the benefits of doing business in Bahrain and the Middle East. Unbound comes with an immersive experience of running this international event in London, Miami and Singapore, and we are thrilled to host them for a second year to showcase GCC and MENA's startup trends.

"As digital disruption changes the face of the modern economy, we must do all we can to enable startups and the next generation of innovative technologies. Getting the right balance of soft infrastructure; access to funding; and mentorship in place is crucial to our success and Unbound Bahrain will be the ideal platform to learn more about the technological trends shaping our society."

3,000
local, regional and international delegates, including inspiring entrepreneurs are expected to attend the event.

Kidnappers' jail term upheld

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Appeals Court has upheld the sentences issued against 10 men convicted of kidnapping a man and forcing him to confess that he was a police informer.

The defendants are said to have been abducted from Buri village.

They allegedly pushed him inside their car after telling them that they were undercover agents.

"They took me to a remote farm, and they mercilessly attacked me after they handcuffed me with a zip tie.

"The tenth defendant used a phone to record my voice as I was forced to say that I was a police informer," the victim

”
The tenth defendant used a phone to record my voice as I was forced to say that I was a police informer.

VICTIM

told prosecutors.

The incident happened on September 4, 2017, and the defendants were put on trial over accusations of kidnapping and beating a man as well as disguising as police officers.

The first three defendants were earlier sentenced to five years behind bars each, while the remaining eight accused were handed down three years in prison each.

Asian 'drugged people in attempt to rob them'

TDT | Manama

An Asian man attempted to drug travellers in an effort to steal their belongings, it was revealed.

According to a statement issued by the Bahrain National Airport Police Station, the accused, who visited the Kingdom for transit, drugged hot drinks, which he offered to the travellers at the airport.

His crime came to light after several travellers at the airport were found in an unconscious state.

The Police Station chief said in the statement that the Asian man was arrested later and was found to be in possession of sleeping pills and drugs.

He will be questioned by the Public Prosecution before facing a trial, the statement concluded.

Rare diseases awareness campaign launched

Manama

For the seventh consecutive year, Al Jawhara Centre for Molecular Medicine, affiliated to the Arabian Gulf University (AGU), is launching a national awareness campaign on rare diseases.

This is in conjunction with World Rare Disease Day to be observed on February 28 under the slogan 'Show you are, show you care'.

Diseases are classified as rare

”
All activities of this year campaign are dedicated to increase the awareness about rare diseases patients, their need for medical and social support, help and tolerance.

DR SKRYPNYK

whenever they affect less than one in every 2,000 or more people. There are 100 million individuals in the world affected with a rare disease and nearly 15 million in the Arab world. Most rare diseases are genetic, and accompany the patient for a lifetime, although the effects of some may only manifest at an older age.

Dr Cristina Skrypnik, Medical Genetics Consultant at Al Jawhara Centre and Head of the Organising Committee said: "All activities of this year campaign are dedicated to increase the awareness about rare diseases patients, their need for medical

and social support, help and tolerance. We aim to increase the education about rare disorders and to create a solid bridge in between the medical, academic and social community."

Dr Skrypnik thanked AGU for the great continues support of this awareness campaign and is looking forward to develop a national plan for rare disorders in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

A special event dedicated for families and patients will be held in Aljawhara centre on 27 February, aiming to share their experiences and provide support.

A movie and lectures about rare disorders impacts into daily life of the society will be presented in main universities in Bahrain.

A rare disorders day booth will be active on 28 of February during the second Pearl Paediatric Conference held in Bahrain and organised by Arabian Gulf University.

A flyer and informative leaflets about inheritance types and genetic testing will be distributed in all events venues.



Diseases are classified as rare whenever they affect less than one in every 2,000 or more people.

VAT tourist refund scheme



The Assistant Undersecretary of Development and Policy of Public Revenues, Rana Faqihi, yesterday signed a contract with the international payment specialists Planet Payment, at the Ministry of Finance and National Economy. The contract has been signed to begin work on the tourist refund scheme for VAT paid by tourists during their stay in the Kingdom. Planet Payment has been chosen to oversee Bahrain's VAT tourist refund scheme based on their knowledge and expertise in the field of international payment solutions. Planet has been operating for 30 years in 58 different countries regionally and worldwide, and currently operate the UAE's VAT tourist refund scheme.

Expat dies after suicide attempt



The deceased Sachin

● **Sources said he swallowed large number of pills in bid to end his life.**

TDT | Manama

A 28-year-old expatriate passed away at Salmaniya Medical Complex yesterday after being admitted there following a suicide attempt two days ago.

The deceased, Sachin, hailing from the Indian state of Kerala had arrived in the Kingdom only a month ago to work as a salesman.

Sources said he swallowed large number of pills in bid to end his life.

Social workers and company officials are in efforts to fly back the body home, it is learnt.

Prominent neurosurgeon to revisit RBH



Dr Sabah

TDT | Manama

Royal Bahrain Hospital announced that Dr Sabah Al Rashed, a dedicated neurosurgeon will be revisiting the hospital for consultations today.

Dr Sabah is a highly qualified and well-experienced consultant neurosurgeon who is skilled in Clinical research and Adult and Paediatric Neurosurgery conditions, the hospital said.

Dr Sabah will be available for consultation in all aspects of neurosurgery including brain and spine tumours, peripheral nerve surgeries, head trauma and microscopic and endoscopic surgeries, it added.

"Dr Sabah has several publications in pronounced international journals and is currently leading the research and education department in a regional neurosurgery facility as modern clinical approach nowadays is evidence-based which will be delivered as up to date knowledge and experience."

To book appointment, call 17246800 or book online on www.royalbahrainhospital.com. Royal Bahrain Hospital Mobile App can be downloaded to book appointments and more on iOS and Android devices.

WORLD
world

Terrorism, extremism a common concern with India: Saudi Prince

● **Modi agrees with Saudi Arabia to strengthen cooperation on counter-terrorism, naval and cyber security**

AFP | New Delhi, India

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Indian leader Narendra Modi vowed yesterday to increase pressure on countries that fuel terrorism.

Neither mentioned a target, but their accord came as Modi has stepped up warnings to Pakistan following a suicide attack in Kashmir that left at least 40 paramilitaries dead.

Modi again slammed the "barbaric attack" last week as he said: "To tackle this menace effectively, we agreed that there is a need to increase all possible pressure on countries supporting terrorism in any way.

"It is extremely important to eliminate the terror infrastructure and stop support to terrorists and their supporters."

Prince Mohammed, who arrived in Delhi from a two-day visit to Pakistan as the cross-frontier tensions heightened, had offered to help the neighbours end the showdown over the bombing.

"Terrorism and extremism is a common concern for India and Saudi Arabia," the crown prince said after talks with Modi.

"I want to state that we are ready to cooperate with India, including through intelligence sharing," he added.

Earlier, Prince Mohammed



Indian President Ram Nath Kovind (C) shakes hands with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (L) as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi looks on during ceremonial reception at Presidential palace in New Delhi

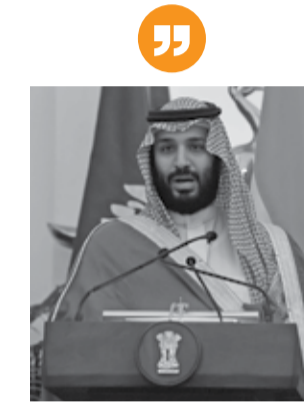
predicted "good things" will come out of talks with Indian leaders as he started a landmark visit to the world's largest democracy Wednesday.

"Today we want to be sure this relationship is maintained and improved for the sake of both countries," the crown prince

said in comments to reporters after full ceremonial welcome in Delhi.

"I am sure we can create good things for Saudi Arabia and India," he added after inspecting a guard of honour at the presidential palace.

The crown prince said the two



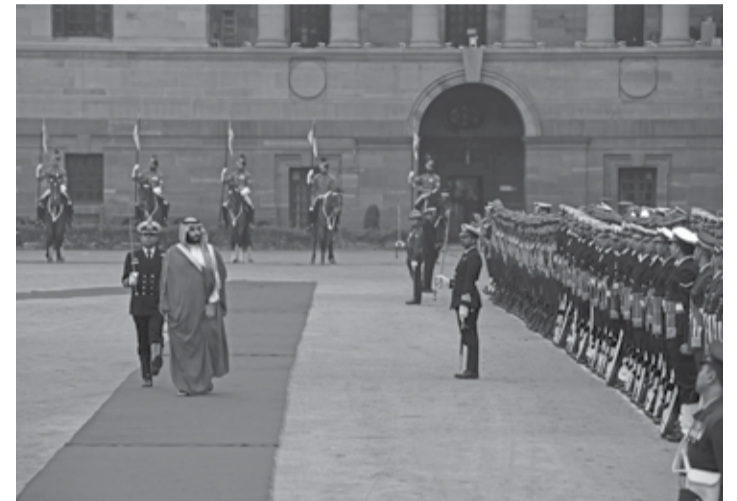
On the issue of extremism and terrorism, which is a common concern, we want to tell India that we will cooperate in every way, including intelligence sharing

CROWN PRINCE

\$100bn
will be earmarked by Saudi for investment in India over a period of next two years

countries were in each other's "DNA", highlighting the importance of Indian labour and experts in Saudi Arabia over the past 70 years as well as a longstanding Saudi presence in India.

Saudi officials have offered to help "de-escalate tensions"



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (2nd L) inspects a guard of honour during a ceremonial reception at the presidential palace in New Delhi



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (R) during a meeting with Indian Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj

between the nuclear-armed neighbours.

Saudi minister of state for foreign affairs Adel al-Jubeir said in Islamabad on Monday that the delegation would "see if there is a path forward to resolving those differences peacefully".

Saudi Arabia currently supplies about 20 per cent of India's

crude oil and wants to definitively push aside arch-rival Iran as a source.

In Pakistan, the Saudi prince announced \$20 billion of investment for the Muslim country.

Prince Mohammed was expected to go on to China later Wednesday.

Saudi prince sees "useful returns" from \$100 billion investment

● **Saudi Arabia, India signed agreements on investment in infrastructure, housing sector and tourism**

● **Saudi Aramco said it was in talks with India's Reliance Industries Ltd**

Reuters | New Delhi

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said yesterday he saw investment opportunities of more than \$100 billion in India over the next two years as he began his first official visit.

"Today we expect the opportunities we are targeting in India in various fields to exceed \$100 billion in the coming two years... we want to work with you, Mr



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (R) speaks as Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman looks on during a joint press briefing at Hyderabad House in New Delhi

Prime Minister, to ensure these investments are made and to ensure useful returns for both countries."

The Crown Prince said in a joint press appearance after talks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Giant petroleum and natural gas company Saudi Aramco said it was in talks with India's Reliance Industries Ltd for possible investments and was seeking other opportunities.

During the press briefing, Modi said he had agreed with the prince to strengthen cooperation on counter-terrorism and naval and cyber security.

The two countries signed agreements on investment in infrastructure, housing sector and tourism.

Modi has sought to use India's fast-growing economy to attract more investment from Saudi Arabia and other Islamic nations since he took office.



Crown Prince is greeted by Modi as President Ram Nath Kovind watches

Putin warns new missiles could target 'decision-making centres'

Moscow, Russia

President Vladimir Putin yesterday said Russia would have to deploy missiles targeting "decision-making centres" if Washington sends missiles to Europe.

The announcement comes after the US said it would withdraw from a key Cold War-era arms treaty over what it said were Russian violations, prompting a mirror move from Moscow.

"Russia does not intend to be the first to deploy such missiles in Europe," Putin said during an annual state of the nation address.



Russian President Vladimir Putin delivers his annual state of the nation address in Moscow



I'm saying this clearly and openly, Russia will be forced to deploy weapons that can be used... against the decision-making centres that are behind the missiles systems which threaten us

VLADIMIR PUTIN

"If (the US) develops and deploys them in Europe... this will dramatically exacerbate the international security situation, creating serious threats to Russia," he said.

"I'm saying this clearly and openly, Russia will be forced to deploy weapons that can be used... against the decision-making centres that are behind the missiles systems which threaten us."

He earlier accused Washington of using "far-fetched accusations" to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) agreement.

Putin said he understood con-

cerns about the bilateral deal, namely that other countries could continue to develop weapons that are banned for the US and Russia.

"The current state of affairs of course raises questions," he told the audience of lawmakers and celebrities.

"Our American partners should have been honest... and not use far-fetched accusations against Russia to justify their unilateral withdrawal from the treaty," he added.

The United States has repeatedly accused Russia of violating the INF by developing banned weapons and this month Presi-

dent Donald Trump said Washington was starting a process to withdraw from the treaty.

In a tit-for-tat move, Putin said Moscow was also leaving the treaty and beginning work on new types of weapons that would breach the agreement.

Many analysts say abandoning the treaty effectively signalled the start of a new arms race.

The INF deal was signed in 1987 by then US president Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and resolved a crisis over Soviet nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles targeting Western capitals.

Indian court orders tycoon to pay debt or go to jail

New Delhi, India

India's top court told billionaire tycoon Anil Ambani yesterday he must pay his debts to Sweden's Ericsson or go to jail, the latest twist in a saga that forced his telecom company to file for bankruptcy.

Ambani's debt-laden Reliance Communications is some \$4 billion dollars in debt after a brutal telecom price war that pitched him against his brother Mukesh -- India's richest man -- and gripped the country's business community.

Judges found Anil Ambani, 59, had refused to pay telecom giant Ericsson 5.5 billion rupees (\$77 million) as previously ordered by the Supreme Court.

They ruled the billionaire will be jailed for three months if 4.5 billion rupees are not stumped up within four weeks.

Ambani's firm said it will comply with the ruling and pay the debt. Some 1.0 billion rupees have already been deposited with the court, which



Anil Ambani

said the sum will be handed to Ericsson.

Earlier this year, Reliance Communications said it had decided to start insolvency proceedings after failing to sell assets to pay back lenders.

The dispute started when Ericsson sought to recoup 16 billion rupees from Reliance Communications. They reached a settlement last May, but the Indian company failed to meet the payment deadlines.

Trump signs 'Space Force' directive

Washington, United States

President Donald Trump signed an order Tuesday outlining his vision for a new "Space Force" that could one day become a separate military branch on an equal footing to the Army and Navy.

Trump wants to create a space force to protect satellites, tackle vulnerabilities in space and assert US dominance in orbit.

"We have to be prepared," Trump told reporters after signing the directive.

"My administration has made the creation of a space force a national security issue."

Space Force would be the sixth branch of the military alongside the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard.

The order calls for Congress to draft legislation that would establish Space Force as a branch that falls under the Air Force, similar to how the Navy oversees the Marine Corps.

Defense Department spokesman Charlie Summers said the



US President Donald Trump shows his signature on the Space Policy Directive-4 (SPD-4) at the White House in Washington, DC.

Pentagon would submit its legislative proposal within the coming weeks.

With the new directive, "Trump is posturing the United States to compete, deter, and win in a complex multi-domain environment characterized by

great power competition," Summers said in a statement.

The Air Force said a space force would work "to ensure unfettered access to, and freedom to operate in space, and to provide vital capabilities to joint and coalition forces."

But the creation of Space Force is by no means a done deal, as it must be vetted and approved by Congress.

Lawmakers and defense officials have reacted with skepticism, wary of the cost and added bureaucracy.

Nice Carnival



Statues depicting US President Donald Trump and Russia's Vladimir Putin as evil clowns parade on the first day of the 135th Nice Carnival which runs until March 2 with the theme "King of Cinema," in Nice, French Riviera. Nice is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Victorine Studios, the Mecca of the film industry on the Côte d'Azur, which since 1919 has welcomed many French and foreign renowned directors. The Nice Carnival is 6 carnival parades, by day or by night, made up of 17 floats and more than 1000 dancers and musicians from all over the world.

Statue of US sailor kissing nurse vandalized with '#MeToo'

Washington, United State

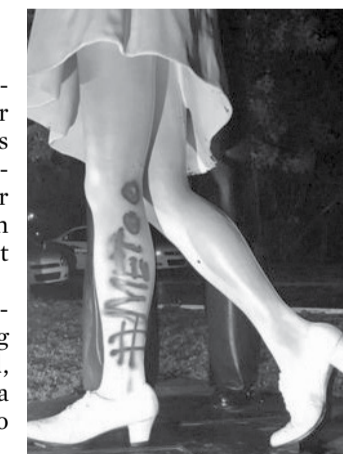
A statue depicting the famous scene of a sailor kissing a woman in New York's Times Square as people celebrate the end of World War II has been vandalized with red spray paint spelling out #MeToo.

The graffiti covers the ankle-to-knee area of the left leg of the woman being kissed, said police in Sarasota, Florida where the statue is on loan to the city.

The vandalism is believed to have been committed Monday, a day after the death of the sailor in the iconic photo, George Mendonsa, at the age of 95.

In that image, taken by photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt for Life magazine, Mendonsa is seen ecstatically bending over and kissing a woman in a white nurse's uniform.

Eisenstaedt has described watching the sailor running



Picture courtesy of BBC

along the street and grabbing any girl in sight.

The #MeToo arose to defend victims of sexual assault, harassment and abuse.

Sarasota police said there is no surveillance video from the area of the vandalism and or known witnesses. They estimated damage as costing \$1,000 to fix.

Trump nominates successor to head of Russia probe

Washington, United States

The Trump administration announced Tuesday it was nominating a successor to deputy attorney general Rod Rosenstein, a move that confirms the departure of the Justice Department official who until recently oversaw the Russia probe. Rosenstein will be replaced by Jeffrey Rosen, the current deputy secretary of the Department of Transportation, President Donald Trump's spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said. The decision is subject to confirmation in the Senate.

US media had previously reported Rosenstein planned to resign mid-March. His departure was widely expected following the confirmation of new Attorney General Bill Barr last week.

Super Moon



An airplane silhouettes against the Super Moon in Nuremberg, southern Germany. Supermoons occur when the Moon's orbit brings it to the closest point to Earth while the Moon is full. The Moon is 221,734 miles from Earth during the super snow moon, according to EarthSky, its closest full moon to Earth in 2019. The average distance between Earth and the Moon is 238,855 miles.

Britain to strip IS teen of citizenship



A video grab taken from CCTV, received from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) on February 23, 2015, shows shows (L-R) British teenagers Amira Abase, Kadiza Sultana and Shamima Begum at Gatwick Airport, south of London (file)

London, United Kingdom

Britain will strip citizenship from a UK teenager who joined the Islamic State group in Syria but now wants to return home with her newborn baby, a lawyer for her family said Tuesday.

Shamima Begum's fate has stirred controversy since she and two friends fled London to join the terror network four years ago when she was aged just 15.

The case points to a dilemma facing many European countries, divided over whether to allow jihadists and IS sympathisers home to face prosecution or barring them over security concerns as the so-called "caliphate" crumbles.

A lawyer for her family, Tasnime Akunjee, said on Twitter that they were "very disappointed with the Home Office's intention to have an order made depriving Shamima of her citizenship," and that they were considering "all legal avenues".

ITV News reported that the Home Office has sent a letter to Begum's mother, received Tuesday, notifying the family of the decision which it said the teen had the right to appeal. Britain's Home Office reportedly believes that Begum, who is of Bangladeshi heritage, is entitled to claim citizenship there.

"In order to protect this

country, (the home secretary) has the power to deprive someone of their British citizenship where it would not render them stateless," the Press Association reported the Home Office as saying, adding it would not comment on individual cases.

Begum is currently in a refugee camp in northeast Syria where she fled to escape fighting in the east of the country along with hundreds of other people with links to IS.

At the weekend she gave birth to her third child, and appealed to British authorities to show "compassion" by allowing her to raise the baby in Britain -- while expressing no regret over having joined IS.

She has previously given birth to two other children after marrying in Syria. Both children have died, apparently from illness and malnutrition.

"I'm afraid he might even die in this camp," Begum said of her newborn. "I feel a lot of people should have sympathy for me, for everything I've been through," she told Sky News, adding that "I didn't know what I was getting into when I left".

However, in an interview with the BBC on Monday, she compared the Manchester Arena bombing to military strikes on IS strongholds, calling the terror attack "retaliation".

Venezuela on alert

Suspends links with Curacao to block aid

Caracas, Venezuela

Venezuela's military said Tuesday it was on alert at its frontiers following threats by US President Donald Trump and suspended air and sea links with the island of Curacao ahead of a planned aid shipment.

Opposition leader and self-declared interim president Juan Guaido has vowed to bring aid in from various points Saturday "one way or another" despite military efforts to block it.

But commanders doubled down on their allegiance to President Nicolas Maduro after Trump urged them to abandon him.

"The armed forces will remain deployed and on alert along the borders... to avoid any violations of territorial integrity," said Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino.

Regional commander Vladimir Quintero later confirmed media reports that Venezuela had ordered the suspension of air and sea links with Curacao and the nearby Netherlands Antilles islands of Aruba and Bonaire.

Aid is being stored in Colombia near the Venezuelan border and Guaido aims also to bring in consignments via Brazil and Curacao, which is off the coast of Venezuela.

A Brazilian presidential spokesman said the country was cooperating with the United States to supply aid to Venezuela but would leave it to Venezuelans to take the goods over the border.

Maduro says the aid plan is a smokescreen for a US invasion. He blames US sanctions and "economic war" for Venezuela's crisis.

'No safe harbor'

Guaido, the 35-year-old leader of the Venezuelan legislature, has appealed to military leaders to switch allegiance to him and let the aid through.

He has offered military commanders an amnesty if they



Venezuelan Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino (R) gestures surrounded by military men as he delivers a speech in Caracas



Shipments of food and medicine for Venezuelans suffering in the country's economic crisis have become a focus of the power struggle between Maduro and Guaido.

abandon Maduro.

But the military high command has so far maintained its public backing for Maduro -- seen as key to keeping him in power.

"We reiterate unrestrictedly our obedience, subordination and loyalty" to Maduro, Padrino said.

Guaido posted a series of tweets calling by name on senior

military leaders commanding border posts to abandon Maduro.

He has branded Maduro illegitimate, saying the elections that returned the socialist leader to power last year were fixed. The United States and some 50 other countries back Guaido as interim president.

Trump has refused to rule out US military action in Venezuela. He raised the pressure on Monday, issuing a warning to the Venezuelan military.

He told them that if they continue to support Maduro, "you will find no safe harbor, no easy exit and no way out. You will lose everything."

Padrino rejected Trump's threat, branding the US president "arrogant."

If foreign powers try to help install a new government by force, they will have to do so "over our dead bodies," Padrino said.

Venezuela's deputy military attache at the UN announced Tuesday he was siding with Guaido.

"I declare myself to be in total and absolute disobedience to

the illegally constituted government of Mr. Nicolas Maduro," Colonel Pedro Jose Chirinos said in a video posted on social media.

Since Guaido declared himself interim president on January 23, he has received the support of an army colonel and an air force general, neither of whom actually have any troops under their command, a retired air force major general and a number of lower-level officers.

'Pack of lies'

Despite sitting on the world's biggest oil reserves, Venezuela is gripped by an economic and humanitarian crisis, with acute shortages of food and medicine.

It has suffered four years of recession marked by hyperinflation that the International Monetary Fund says will reach a mind-boggling 10 million percent this year.

An estimated 2.3 million Venezuelans have left the country since 2015.

Guaido says 300,000 people face death without the aid but Maduro denies there is a humanitarian crisis.

Storm warning



This handout photo from Rainbow Beach Towing shows a vehicle at Rainbow Beach swamped by waves in a large swell created by Cyclone Oma. Cyclone Oma intensified to a damaging category three storm, Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said on February 20, warning that it could bring severe weather to the continent after hitting the Pacific Islands.

How to make peace in Afghanistan? Moscow has some lessons

Thirty years ago, the Soviets withdrew, but peace didn't follow. Let's hope the world can get it right this time



ARTEMY KALINOVSKY

On Feb 15, 1989, a column of Soviet armoured vehicles crossed the Friendship Bridge from Afghanistan into the Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan. In a theatrical gesture, Lt Gen Boris Gromov, who was overseeing the withdrawal, dismounted and walked the final few feet to Soviet soil. There was not a single Soviet soldier left in Afghanistan, General Gromov told waiting journalists.

Since the first troops crossed into Afghanistan in December 1979, the Soviet Union had tried to help the socialist government in Kabul fight off a constellation of insurgents, the most impressive of whom received aid from the United States, working through Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence. Even China provided aid. By 1989, the Soviet Union was finally done fighting in Afghanistan.

Thirty years later, it's the United States that now seems desperate to withdraw from the country after a bruising war. And Moscow is once again getting involved in Afghanistan, though this time it wants to play peacemaker: In November, Russia organised talks between the Taliban, the High Peace Council and representatives of regional powers. On Feb 4, it hosted representatives of the Taliban and other groups opposed to the government of President Ashraf Ghani for further talks. The United States, and Ghani, view Moscow's efforts with suspicion. But thinking back to the Soviet experience can help make sense of what Moscow is up to — and also what the options are for the United States and its allies if they are serious about peace in Afghanistan.

Mikhail Gorbachev, who came to power in 1985, had hoped that he could end the war by getting the United States and its allies to stop supporting the resistance (or mujahedeen, as they were known) in exchange for the withdrawal



A convoy of Soviet armoured personal vehicles crossed a bridge in Termez, during the withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan in 1988.

of Soviet troops. But the Reagan administration would agree to end support only if the Soviets ceased all military aid to Kabul. And Washington saw the resignation of the socialist government as a precondition for any settlement.

Gorbachev understood that the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan was unable to stay in power on its own, but he hoped that the socialists could form the core of a new coalition government. In the end, he announced a withdrawal without waiting for a deal, hoping that Washington, Islamabad and the mujahedeen would recognise the seriousness of Soviet intentions and do what was best for Afghanistan.

It didn't work out that way. By the time the Soviet Union ceased to exist at the end of 1991, the internal war in Afghanistan was no closer to a resolution than it had been in 1989.

Nor did Kabul's fall to opposition forces in April 1992 lead to peace. Instead, opposition forces turned on each other, heralding a new phase of what became vir-

tually 40 years of uninterrupted civil war.

Gorbachev's strategy might seem naïve in retrospect: Would the Americans have really allowed a socialist to remain in power? Could the key opposition figures be persuaded to join a government still led by their sworn enemy? Yet considering what followed the Soviet withdrawal — the rise of the Taliban, the role of Osama bin Laden, the new round of civil war after the United States-led intervention in 2001 — it is hard not to see 1989 as a missed opportunity.

Gorbachev did not expect miracles, just that the United States would apply enough pressure on its allies and clients to get them to the table, which would in turn make it easier for him to pressure his allies in Kabul to compromise.

That experience is worth considering as the United States plans to withdraw from Afghanistan. Talk of making Afghanistan a liberal democracy has long faded at this point, just as any serious consideration of building socialism had for the Soviets by 1989.

Critics of both the Soviet and American-led wars often say that the people of Afghanistan should decide their own fate without the interference of outsiders.

But there is perhaps still some hope to end the cycle of killing.

In the past few years, Russia has taken a more proactive role in Afghanistan. Its involvement has been met with no shortage of skepticism from Washington, which worries that by treating the Taliban as legitimate, Moscow is undermining Ghani's government.

Yet Moscow's thinking on Afghanistan today appears to mirror its approach 30 years ago. Back

then, the Soviet leadership did not expect that the government in Kabul would last without foreign troops and was hoping to build some kind of coalition government with its allies at the core. This time around, Russia is not a party to the fighting, but the thinking is similar: As Russian officials say openly, they do not believe that the United States and its allies will be able to stabilise Afghanistan. The government of Ghani will not last without foreign troops. Much more worrying from Moscow's point of view (and indeed, Washington's) is the presence of the Islamic State or al Qaida. Moscow may not like the Taliban, but Russian officials see the group's participation in a future government as the only realistic possibility for a durable peace. And since the Taliban is unlikely to be going anywhere, it makes sense for Russia to secure some good will with the movement.

What Moscow's strategy supposes, however, is that the Taliban can be persuaded to become

one of the parties to a settlement, rather than the absolute master of the country. As recent talks in Doha, showed, Washington is not opposed to such an outcome.

Getting to an agreement will be difficult. On the one hand, the Taliban's stated position is much like that of the mujahedeen in the 1980s: They want all foreign forces removed and refuse to recognise the government in Kabul as legitimate.

On the other hand, the idea of the Taliban returning to power in Kabul is obviously hard to stomach for many in the West, as it is for many Afghans. Not only have the Taliban themselves wrought much destruction in their own country, but thousands of lives and billions of dollars have been spent fighting them.

Critics of both the Soviet and American-led wars often say that the people of Afghanistan should decide their own fate without the interference of outsiders. That would be just, but it is unlikely: The regional and global powers that have intervened in Afghanistan's civil wars since the late 1970s will not let that happen, if only because they fear their own loss will be someone else's gain.

But the reality is that the losses suffered by the Soviets in the 1980s and by the United States and its allies since 2001 are a fraction of what the people of Afghanistan have suffered over the past 40 years. Russia and the United States — and China, Iran, Pakistan and India — are all hoping to shape Afghanistan's future. Back in 1989, getting Afghanistan's warring parties to agree to a peace deal was difficult enough. Then the rivalries, ambitions and lingering mistrust among outside powers destroyed whatever prospects for peace had been created by the Soviet withdrawal. This time, other countries should take every opportunity to secure peace for Afghanistan.

(Artemy Kalinovsky is senior lecturer in East European Studies at the University of Amsterdam and the author, most recently, of "Laboratory of Socialist Development: Cold War Politics and Decolonisation in Soviet Tajikistan.")

CIVILIAN'S TRIBUNE

Let people have final say

All public services in the UK including the NHS are in a total mess after the Brexit referendum.

Universities across the country have also been hammered by the impact of Brexit, with 20,000 plus EU nationals leaving the Kingdom, since 2016. Among the worst affected were Glasgow and Cambridge where the number of leavers ballooned by a quarter — threatening their position

at the top of world rankings.

And who can blame those staff in all sectors who are leaving? With years of uncertainty and a hostile environment, we no longer seem the welcoming nation they came to be part of.

Even here in Scotland, despite our efforts to help our EU friends feel welcome, the cold facts of the UK Government's Brexit policies and bureaucracy have been sending a different message



Teresa May speaks in the House of Commons.

that people affected can't ignore.

We need these EU citizens staffing our public services if we want to protect the NHS and deliver a first-class education system for our children.

We need the public to have the final say on the Brexit deal, to check if Theresa May's botched Brexit Deal is still the will of the people.

Robert

1879

World premiere of **Henrik Ibsen's** *A Doll's House* at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, Denmark.



1883

The Royal Canadian Dragoons and The Royal Canadian Regiment, the first Permanent Force cavalry and infantry regiments of the Canadian Army, are formed.

1907

The **Chilean** Army commits a massacre of at least 2,000 striking saltpeterminers in Iquique, Chile.

1910

An underground explosion at the Hulton Bank Colliery No. 3 Pit in Over Hulton, Westthornton, England, kills 344 miners.

Will El Chapo's trial change organised crime forever?

The code of Omertà has been broken



ROBERTO SAVIANO

In opening arguments at the trial of Joaquín Guzmán, known as El Chapo, Assistant United States Attorney Adam Fels told the jury that the shipments seized from Guzmán's cartel by American authorities amounted to "more than a line of cocaine for every single person in the United States" — an image that conveys the power of this \$14 billion drug boss.

The prosecutors were hoping for a long sentence for Guzmán, one of the most powerful organised-crime figures in the world. On Feb 12, they got it: He was found guilty on 10 charges. He is likely to spend the rest of his life in prison.

The evidence introduced by the prosecution and the testimony of the 56 witnesses during the three-month trial brought to light a range of details about the life and crimes of the accused: the salacious, such as the cell-phone spyware Guzmán used to control his men and, especially, his lovers; the macabre, such as the man from a rival cartel whom he had buried alive; the politically compromising, such as the \$100 million bribe his former right-hand man (turned informant) said was paid to Enrique Peña Nieto, then Mexico's president-elect, to allow Guzmán to remain in hiding undisturbed.

But it is neither the trial's revelations nor its central figure's stature that makes it a turning point in the history of drug trafficking and organised crime. What this trial has, in my view, revolutionised forever is the relationship between criminal groups and what we call in Italian pentiti — "penitent ones," or cooperating witnesses.

I have been reporting on organised crime in Italy and around the world, including Mexico, for decades. In my time, I have observed some clear rules. One of those is that cooperating witnesses have been seen by criminal organisations as unforgivable traitors.

In every mafia, from Naples to Sinaloa, omertà, the code of silence, has been essential to keeping the organisation's business and structure intact. It is also the standard by which an associate's reliability and honour are measured. No one ever imagined gaining criminal respect by snitching. Betrayal has always been punishable by death — of the informant, of the informant's family. Salvatore (Totò) Riina, head of the Cosa Nostra in Sicily, famously ordered the killing of all pentiti and their descendants unto the seventh generation. One of the Cosa Nos-



Joaquín Guzmán (El Chapo), the notorious drug trafficker, after his recapture in Mexico in 2016.

tra's most barbarous acts was the 1996 murder of Giuseppe Di Matteo: kidnapped when he was 12, held prisoner for 18 months, then strangled and dissolved in acid, because his father had become a state's witness and was revealing information about the assassination of a judge.

Killing an informant's family has the dual function of punishing the traitor and warning his associates what will happen if they follow his example. This practice was also popular in Mexican drug cartels. One example among many: In 2008, twin brothers Margarito and Pedro Flores, major distributors for the Sinaloa cartel in the United States, began co-operating with American authorities. The next year, their father was kidnapped in Mexico. His body was never found, but a message at the site of the abduction confirmed that he had been taken because his children were snitches.

By the same token, if any relative of a boss — even an in-law or a distant cousin — becomes an informant, it has typically left an indelible stain on the boss's criminal reputation, enough to end his career and heap shame on his family.

But Guzmán's trial signals a momentous change: Members of the organisation can now collaborate with law enforcement without provoking punishments or consequences for their family members.

Two of the trial's key witnesses were Jesús Zambada García and Vicente Zambada Niebla, the brother and the son of Guzmán's longtime partner, Ismael Zambada García, better known as El Mayo. The Sinaloa cartel was effectively a diarchy ruled by Ismael Zambada and Guzmán until the latter's arrest; now Ismael Zambada is in charge.

Mexican drug lords have realised that the co-operation of their own people with American law enforcement can be considered a legitimate choice, not only for the personal benefits it can bring.

Even as his brother and his son cooperate with American authorities, revealing details of traffic and income and law enforcement corruption, Ismael Zambada continues to run the cartel. Neither he nor his family has suffered reprisals.

How is this possible? Simple: Mexican drug lords have realised that the cooperation of their own people with American law enforcement can be considered a legitimate choice, not only for the personal benefits it can bring — such as sentence reductions or family protections — but also because if handled well, it won't destroy the organisation. Indeed, in some cases, cooperating with the authorities can help to protect the cartel's assets and even give an advantage to one boss or another.

This strategy seems to be behind the collaboration of Ismael Zambada's relatives with the American authorities. In particular, the testimony of Vicente Zambada, which many saw as a betrayal of his father, could instead be an act of extreme loyalty to him.

My reporting on the recent history of Mexican drug trafficking has led me to believe that

Ismael Zambada may have had a hand in Guzmán's capture. According to this theory, Ismael Zambada, accustomed to acting in the shadows and tired of the spotlight on his partner, which could eventually have brought ruin to the cartel, betrayed Guzmán and facilitated his arrest. (Guzmán's lawyers tried to exploit this theory during the trial, portraying their client as a scapegoat.) In this light, even the younger Zambada's testimony during the trial can be seen as part of a plan secretly orchestrated by his father.

Vicente Zambada's testimony, which was crucial in the case against Guzmán, may simply be the price the elder Zambada must pay to ensure that Guzmán is locked away in an American prison, thousands of miles from Sinaloa. The information provided by Vicente Zambada will not destroy the cartel's business, and it may well contribute to a change at the top that benefits his father. Cooperating witnesses are vital tools in the fight against cartels, but the danger now is that drug lords have learned how, while revealing some truths, to maintain their organisations' power.

This new tactic is unlikely to be limited to Guzmán's trial. It touches on one of the fundamental rules of mafias the world over, that of omertà, to which occasional exceptions are not allowed. You can't allow one snitch to go unpunished and then return to normal enforcement. Either snitches are always punished or, if they are not, the rules have been changed. If the world's largest drug cartel were to begin tolerating snitching, it would lose all credibility in the eyes of associates and rivals — it would be chaos. That the son of a Sinaloa cartel boss has turned

state's witness, leaving both his father's power and the cartel's strength intact, means that a new rule has been born.

In my experience reporting on organised crime, I've learned that changes to basic rules are never made by a single boss. They must be made jointly by the leaders of his own and other organisations.

Had Ismael Zambada, the cartel's new boss, made this decision independently, other clans — or even his own associates — would have been ready to use his son's cooperation to remove him from power. Such things have happened in the past, in Italy: Carmelo Novella, one of the heads of the northern Italian branch of the 'Ndrangheta (the Calabrian mafia), was killed in 2008 for planning to operate more independently without seeking, as the 'Ndrangheta code required, the permission of other organisation bosses. Ismael Zambada has gone unpunished for violating the rules. I won't be surprised if other cartels follow his example.

Vicente Zambada's sentencing is expected in a few weeks. Because of his cooperation, he will get a reduced term and a guarantee of protection for his family. His father will gain full control of the cartel without having to worry about Guzmán, who will be locked away for life in an American prison cell, to the delight of the United States prosecutors. After all, their goal in this trial was to ensure that the drug trafficker Joaquín Guzmán was brought to justice. The irony is that the most powerful Sinaloa drug lords who are not in prison shared that goal.

(Roberto Saviano is the author of "Gomorra," a book about the Neapolitan mafia, and "ZeroZeroZero," about the global cocaine trade.)



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



"We're investing in new space capabilities to project military power and safeguard our Nation's interests, especially when it comes to safety and defense."

@WhiteHouse

02



Prime Minister Narendra Modi: "I welcome #SaudiArabia's participation in #India's growth and rising infrastructure. You have a great vision for 2030... The time has come to make this region among those leading across the world. #Vision2030 #CrownPrinceinIndia"

@CICSaudi

03



After today's #AtakalPongala, @gwr will have to issue a revised certificate. Estimates I've heard range from 3.5 million to nearly 4 million worshippers today (in a city whose normal population is 1 million). Congratulations Thiruvananthapuram on handling the influx so well!

@ShashiTharoor

04



By coordinating our diplomatic efforts, France and India show once again unity against terrorism

@FranceinIndia

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

business

US airlines to offer non-binary gender options



Representative picture

New York, United States

US carriers will soon offer passengers additional options besides “male” and “female” when they buy tickets, an airlines trade association said Tuesday.

The shift comes as a handful of US states permit citizens to identify by non-binary genders and as a minority of countries within the European Union permit citizens to self-identify by their gender preference.

Beginning June 1, members of Airlines for America, a trade group that represents most leading US carriers, will allow consumers to pick “unspecified” and “undisclosed” in addition to the traditional two options.

“US airlines value a culture of diversity and inclusion, both in the workplace and for our passengers and we work hard each day to accommodate the needs of all travelers, while delivering a safe, secure and

enjoyable flight experience,” the group said.

Implementation of the shift will be up to members of the group, which is also known as A4A. Members of the association include American Airlines and Southwest Airlines.

United Airlines, another member, said on Twitter, that “In the coming weeks, customers will be able to select the gender with which they most closely identify during the booking process.”

Delta Air Lines, which is not in A4A, also plans non-binary gender options during the booking process, a spokeswoman said.

Seven states in the US and the District of Columbia allow citizens to define as “X” gender, in addition to male and female, said Gillian Branstetter, media relations manager at the National Center of Transgender Equality.

The group applauded the airline announcement.

Palladium tops \$1,500

London, United Kingdom

Precious metal palladium yesterday reached above \$1,500 per ounce for the first time in trading thanks to supply deficit worries, according to analysts.

Palladium hit \$1,504.52 per ounce from \$1,480.15 late on Tuesday.

It later yesterday dipped back to \$1,500.27 per ounce.

“Palladium exceeded, albeit briefly, the \$1,500...mark,” Commerzbank analysts said in a note to clients.

But they added: “We see no justification for this high price, which is being attributed to supply shortages. As we see



it, speculative financial investors have been jumping on the bandwagon for some time now, boosting the price rise.”

Worth more than gold which is trading at about \$1,350 per ounce -- palladium is used to make both jewellery and catalytic converters in vehicles.

Germany to halve food waste by 2030

Berlin, Germany

Germany launched a drive yesterday to halve food waste by 2030 as research shows every consumer on average throws away 55 kilograms (120 pounds) of edibles a year.

The new strategy would target households, producers, retailers and the restaurant industry to get them to cut down the 11 mil-

lion tons of food wasted a year.

The new push would aim to help Germany meet UN and EU targets and reduce its climate footprint, said Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Minister Julia Klöckner.

New research will look to develop “intelligent packaging” that could use a colour gradient to indicate whether food is still edible or past its use-by date.

ABG reports profit of US \$129 million

TDT | Manama

Al Baraka Banking Group (ABG) reported increases in income, with a 4 per cent increase in net operating income, a 5pc rise in total net income, as net income attributable of shareholders remained unchanged compared to the year 2017.

The group said fluctuations of local currencies against the US dollar in a number of Arab and Middle East countries where ABG units operate continued. This affected both income and balance sheet items in terms of US dollar.

Al Baraka said, however, it was able to achieve good profit results held by prudent policies in selecting high-quality assets, increasing spending efficiency, and continuing expansion in businesses and branches.

Net operating income increased by 4pc to US\$ 447 million in 2018 compared to US\$ 430m during 2017 after deducting all operating expenses. This was achieved despite the drop of 1pc in total operating income that reached US\$ 988m compared to US\$ 999m during 2017.

Total net income achieved a growth of 5pc to reach US\$ 217m in 2018 compared to US\$ 207 during 2017, despite the increase in prudential provisions in order to improve the quality of assets.

Net income attributable to the Group's shareholders remained unchanged at US\$ 129m compared to the year 2017.

Basic and diluted earning per share for the year 2018 reached US Cents 7.93 compared to US Cents 9.19 for the year 2017.

Most of the Group's banking units, spreading over 17 countries, contributed to these results.

The growth rates of assets were also affected by the decline in the value of local currencies of some countries where the

“The results of the Group for the year 2018 are considered good, taking into account the financial conditions many of our banking units underwent, besides the unstable regional and international geopolitical environment

SHEIKH SALEH ABDULLAH KAMEL
CHAIRMAN OF AL BARAKA BANKING GROUP

The Group is planning to enter new markets in the Indonesian market, East Asia, as well as studying the expansion in Africa through several countries, notably Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda

Group's units operate against the US dollar, the currency of reporting the Group's consolidated statements. Therefore, the consolidated balance sheet items of Al Baraka Banking Group reached at US\$ 23.8 billion at the end of December 2018, a decrease of 6pc compared to its level of US\$ 25.5bn as at the end of December 2017.

Customer accounts and due to banks as at the end of December 2018 reached US\$19.6bn, a decrease of 5pc compared to US\$ 20.7bn as of end December 2017, and represents 82pc of total assets.

For the fourth quarter, total operating income reached US\$

“We were able to not only maintain our good profits and operational positions, but also enhance our precautionary measures in the context of sound policies and strategies developed by the Group and implemented by our units.

ADNAN AHMED YOUSIF
MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF AL BARAKA BANKING GROUP

180m compared to US\$ 264m, a reduction of 32pc. Net operating income reached US\$ 47m compared to US\$ 112m for the same period last year, showing a reduction of 58pc.

Total net income remained unchanged at US\$ 53m compared to the same period last year. Net income attributable to shareholders decreased by 5pc to US\$ 31m in the fourth quarter compared to US\$ 32m for the same period last year.

Basic and diluted earnings per share reached US Cents 1.23 for the 3 months ended 31 December 2018 comparing to US\$ Cents 1.36 for the same period last year.

Looking ahead, Adnan Ahmed Yousif, President & Chief Executive of Al Baraka Banking Group said: “The Group's units have resumed their careful and well-planned expansion programmes, where the number of new branches opened by these units has reached 23 branches during 2018, bringing the total number of branches to 698 at the end of December 2018.”

Ford pulls out of S. America truck business, closes Brazil plant

Sao Paulo, Brazil

US automaker Ford said Tuesday it was pulling out of the commercial heavy truck business in South America, closing a plant in Brazil employing 2,800 workers that has been operating for half a century.

The decision was made “as part of a comprehensive redesign of its global business,” and after it decided that other options, such as partnerships, would not be viable, Ford said in a statement.

The affected factory, in Sao Bernardo do Campo south of the megacity Sao Paulo, makes Cargo-model heavy trucks, F-4000 and F-350 pickup trucks and Ford Fiesta small cars.

Ford has been operating the plant since October 1967.

German supervisor blocks cryptocurrency launch

Frankfurt am Main, Germany

German financial markets supervisor BaFin in late 2018 blocked a firm from raising cash by issuing a new cryptocurrency, a source familiar with the matter confirmed yesterday.

First reported by business daily Handelsblatt, the decision affected German start-up Rise, which wanted to raise \$120 million from investors to fund its AI-managed stock market trading scheme.

In exchange, the funders would have received digital tokens as part of a so-called “initial coin offering” (ICO) -- a term playing on the more traditional label for a stock market flotation of “initial public offering” (IPO).



BAC Jet Fuel Company (BJFCO) officials and employees during a celebration to mark the milestone achievement of reaching more than a million safe man-hours without lost time injuries at the upcoming Fuel Farm Complex. BJFCO Chairman, Abdul Majeed Al Qassab presented Amana Pipeline Construction Project Director, Maher Al Dik with a certificate of appreciation. Also in attendance were representatives from the project's subcontractor, Mesmak and consultant, Mott MacDonald.

Gulf gains on global rally

● Dubai enjoys best day since June 2017

● All property firms rise in Dubai

● 10 of 11 Saudi banks rise

Reuters

Dubai's main stock index closed at a two-and-half-month high yesterday after strong fourth-quarter earnings from real estate companies last week triggered six days of gains.

All major Gulf bourses were driven higher by a wider stocks rally on hopes of progress in trade talks between the United States and China.

Dubai's index ended 2.6 per cent higher at 2,632 points, its highest since December 2018, led by Emaar Properties, Emaar Malls and Emaar Development, which have risen in recent sessions.

The emirate's biggest listed developer surged 6.2pc in its heaviest trading volume since Dec. 2017. Emaar Malls jumped 6.1pc and Emaar Development rose 3.1pc.

Other property stocks such as DAMAC Properties and Arabtec gained 4.8pc and 5pc respectively.



Traders on the floor of Bahrain Bourse (file)

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▲ 0.6 pc	8,567 pts
DUBAI	▲ 2.6 pc	2,632 pts
ABU DHABI	▲ 0.5 pc	5,061 pts
Qatar	▲ 1 pc	10,078 pts
EGYPT	▲ 0.4 pc	15,214 pts
KUWAIT	▲ 0.4 pc	5,481 pts
BAHRAIN	▲ 0.9 pc	1,405 pts
OMAN	■	4,054 pts

The Dubai index fell more than 25pc in 2018 to become the world's worst-performing major stock market in local currency terms, led by declining real estate stocks as Dubai property prices fell from their mid-2014

peak.

Nishit Lakhotia, head of research at SICO Bank, said the rises were possibly driven by short covering, especially on stocks that have dragged on the index such as Emaar Malls and DAMAC Properties.

"We believe there is a certain level of risk appetite getting built into fund managers to buy the high beta names with strong yield but have been over sold," Lakhotia said, adding that the UAE market was the only one within the GCC offering high yield, value and also earnings growth.

Saudi Arabia's index was up 0.6pc. Banks, which were hard hit in the last three sessions, led the gains with 10 of the market's

11 banks rising.

Samba Financial Group added 3.2pc and Riyadh Bank gained 2.3pc.

The Qatari index rose 1pc after a recent spate of selling.

The Abu Dhabi index was also up 0.5pc with Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank surging 5.9pc.

Egypt's blue-chip index gained 0.4pc with Orascom Investment Holding closing 5pc higher.

The stock has risen recently after its chairman, Egyptian billionaire businessman Naguib Sawiris, said he saw possible investment opportunities in North Korea if a summit between its leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump later this month was successful.

Saudi Aramco to decide in H1 on financing SABIC buy: CEO

Reuters | New Delhi

Saudi Aramco said yesterday it expects to decide by mid-2019 how to finance the acquisition of Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corp (SABIC).

"The decision on financing the SABIC acquisition is expected to be taken in the first half," said Amin Nasser, chief executive of Aramco.

"We have internal resources, then of course there are banks and the bond market, which we are evaluating at the moment," he added.



Saudi Aramco CEO Amin Nasser speaks during the Saudi-India Forum in New Delhi

Deal with Kuwait to resume oil output from Neutral Zone in 2019

Reuters | New Delhi

Saudi Arabia's energy minister Khalid al-Falih said yesterday the country expected to reach an agreement this year to resume oil output from the Neutral Zone it shares with Kuwait.

"We hope in 2019 it will be resolved," he said, when asked when Saudi Arabia and Kuwait could reach an agreement.

"I am confident," al-Falih said, referring to possibility of a resolution in 2019.

The energy minister met with the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, on Tuesday.

Resuming production from the Neutral Zone's oilfields



Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih speaks during a news conference in Riyadh

could add up to 500,000 barrels per day each to the oil output of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The Saudi-Kuwaiti Neutral Zone, or Divided Zone, is an area of 5,770 square km between the borders of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Oil falls after record US shale output forecast

Reuters | London

Oil fell yesterday after the US government said shale output would rise to a record next month, denting a rally that sent prices to their highest this year.

Brent futures eased by 53 cents to trade at \$65.92 a barrel by 1312 GMT, still within sight of Monday's high for the year of \$66.83. US futures were at \$55.77 a barrel, down 31 cents, having touched a 2019 peak of \$56.39 earlier.

The US Energy Information Administration said in a monthly report on Tuesday shale production alone will hit a record 8.4 million barrels per day next month, suggesting little chance of a near-term



slowdown in overall US crude output.

The oil price has risen by more than 20 percent so far this year, supported largely by an agreed 1.2 million bpd production cut by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and several other major exporters such as Russia.



Khamis Al Muqila, President of the IAA Bahrain Chapter and IAA Worldwide Board Member, attended the IAA Board Meeting on 19th February in Kochi, Kerala, a day before the start of the 44th IAA World Congress taking place from 20 to 22 February. The meetings discussed topics related to the global advertising and marketing communications industry including the Vice Presidents' reports on the development of individual and corporate memberships, education programmes, training, conferences and awards. Above, from left, Khamis Al Muqila, President, IAA Bahrain Chapter, Sasan Saeidi, VP/Area Director M.E & Africa, Faris Abu Hamad, past IAA World President and Walid Kanafani, President, IAA Kuwait Chapter. The picture on left, Srinivasan Swamy, IAA Chairman and World President and Khamis Al Muqila



Dubai's ENOC partners with IOC to expand abroad

Reuters | Dubai

United Arab Emirates' National Oil Company (ENOC) Group said yesterday it had formed an alliance with state-run Indian Oil Company (IOC) as part of the Dubai-based firm's global expansion strategy.

The partnership will expand ENOC's "presence to over 180 ports in 28 countries to provide its customers with high-end marine lubricants and technical services," the company said in a statement.

ENOC is wholly owned by the government of Dubai, an emirate in the UAE.



A worker fills a car with diesel at a fuel station in Jammu



Sponsored by SICO, a leading regional asset manager, broker and investment bank, the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF) held a specialised trading simulation course entitled 'Bank Management Simulation' for 12 students from the University of Bahrain (UoB) and Bahrain Polytechnic. The course aims to provide students with the necessary knowledge, skill set and practical tools needed to pursue a career in banking. Above, participants during a photocall

Oil market will balance by April: Saudi Minister



Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih arrives to attend the Saudi-India Forum in New Delhi

Reuters | New Delhi

Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said yesterday he hoped the oil market would be balanced by April and that there would be no gap in supplies due to US sanctions on OPEC members Iran and Venezuela.

"We hope by April the market will be in balance," Falih told reporters in New Delhi, adding that the commitment to a global supply-cutting deal was "unquestionable".

Falih is part of the entourage travelling with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is in India for a one-day visit.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries,

Russia and other non-OPEC producers - an alliance known as OPEC+ - agreed to reduce oil supply by 1.2 million barrels per day from Jan. 1 this year.

OPEC+ will meet in April in Vienna to decide on its supply policy and whether to extend the output agreement beyond June.

"April will be an important line post of the journey for market stability in keeping supply and demand closely aligned and getting inventories to where we want them to be, which is around the five-year average," he said.

Falih said Saudi Arabia would consult and calibrate a supply plan for the second half of the year at the April meeting.

US economy to see another strong year, recession unlikely



Kevin Hassett, chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers

Washington, United States

The US economy should continue growing this year at the same pace seen in 2018, and there is only a very slim chance of recession, the chief White House economist said Tuesday.

US companies last year used the tax cuts passed at the end of 2017 to boost investment, which should translate in higher output in 2019, Kevin Hassett, chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, told CNBC. "We're sticking with our guns and we're going to say we're going to have another three percent year," he said of expectations for growth in the world's largest economy.

That upbeat assessment contrasts with widespread expectations the US economy

will cool as the bump from tax cuts and fiscal stimulus last year dissipates.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office last month forecast growth of 2.3 percent this year, down from 3.1 percent in 2018, while the International Monetary Fund expects a slightly stronger 2.5 percent growth in 2019, slowing to 1.8 percent next year.

As of last month, the New York Federal Reserve Bank put the odds of a recession with a year at nearly 24 percent -- the highest since the Great Recession more than 10 years ago. But Hassett said given the likely boost to factory output as a result of higher capital investments, the odds of a sustained decline in the economy in 2019 are very low "maybe like one percent or two percent or something like that."

Luxury living attaining newer heights in India



The Camellias by DLF

TDT | Manama

The Indian real estate sector has witnessed an upscale in both quality and quantity. Mid-segment housing projects are adding to the number while select luxury projects are adding to quality. Luxury Living has attained a new meaning today, it isn't anymore just about a bungalow in a posh locality, even plush high rise apartments are passé. Super Luxury condominiums today boast of private lobbies with independent elevators, concierge services, club & golf facilities and environmentally friendly systems. The Delhi-NCR market is among the best realty destination in India. Out of these cities, Gurugram has emerged as the favourite of developers and buyers alike for luxury and super luxury homes. Gurugram among others is home to DLF- the largest listed real estate giant in India.

Surpassing every possibility of advanced and exemplary infrastructure DLF has been creating a distinct niche in the real estate sector. With the developers' awe-inspiring desire to tap the unattainable in every project, it has successfully come up with the best-in-class luxury developments. Gurugram, India any day stands tall as the pinnacle of global cosmopolitan living. Starting right from the iconic residences profused with lush greenery to housing the leading multinational corporations, and from having exciting recreational avenues to an infrastructure that has remarkably redefined international benchmarks for excellence, the place is experiencing it all. Acknowledging the contribution in the cities growth and development, DLF has been one of the main power players in shaping the future of the city with infrastructural advancements. DLF has provided a rare opportunity for people to become a part of a closely knit community and celebrate life together.

DLF being the globally renowned and acclaimed real estate czar, introduced the luxury high rise with DLF5 in Gurugram back in 2003 and pioneered the concept of bare shell in their applause-worthy projects The Aralias and The Magnolias, back

in 2003. Every apartment in the project has been designed on a unique sense of the expression, providing something new to each of its residents.

Mentioning about the path-breaking accomplishments, ultra luxury residences by DLF started with The Aralias completely transformed how condominium living was perceived. They are super luxury condominiums leading their way from the Golf Drive in DLF5 along the DLF Golf Course, having the picturesque Aravallis at the back. The Magnolias followed the Aralias but the development touched skies in constructing super-luxury spaces, pioneering new benchmarks in offering unparalleled amenities, breathtaking views and truly personalized services.

Next-gen homes

Unleashing the next gen of superfluous luxury homes, The Camellias is the latest residential offering in DLF5's acclaimed portfolio of super-luxury residences. The Camellias is merely a by-product of DLF's tireless pursuit to cater to the next end luxury to its residents.

"We at DLF5 are all set to take luxury living to a different level altogether with our latest offering The Camellias. Taking the super luxury residences to now what we can call as one of the world's best - The Camellias is getting ready with its clubhouse and is poised to cross all the benchmarks this country would ever have. The Camellias assimilates stunning architecture, breathtaking landscape design and the learning from DLF's best developments across India to deliver a living experience far superior to anything experienced to date. With 16 towers containing 429 units with one unit per floor, the sizes of residences at The Camellias range from 684sqm (7,350 sq.ft) to 1513sqm (16,290 sq. ft) approx." says Aakash Ohri, Senior Executive Director, DLF Home Developers Limited.

The Clubhouse

The Clubhouse of The Camellias has been designed by the internationally acclaimed SWA group- Los Angeles, US and New York-based Rockwell group has spearheaded the interior design of the clubhouse and lobbies.



With a grand foreground of the untrammelled beauty of the Gary Player course, The Camellias builds on the lifestyle of iconic Golf Drive communities- The Aralias and The Magnolias and is designed to further elevate the super luxury living experience

AAKASH OHRI
SENIOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DLF HOME DEVELOPERS LIMITED

With so much to offer, The Camellias is surely a destination for the people accustomed to the taste of luxury living.

Luxury so to speak cannot be fostered in a concrete jungle rather an ecosystem that supports the infrastructural development around it in the best possible way. The golf course at DLF5 is an ecosystem that supports the infrastructural development around it in the best possible way. The atmosphere created by its over 1,000 acres green lung is the basis for a healthy environment which is indispensable when it comes to the construction of super luxury

condominiums. Strategically situated on the Golf Course Road, the area enjoys seamless connectivity from the capital city New Delhi and Indira Gandhi International Airport. The golf course is a stone throw away from business powerhouses and entertainment hubs like Cyber Hub, Horizon Centre and South Point Mall.

Elaborating further Ohri said "With a grand foreground of the untrammelled beauty of the Gary Player course, The Camellias builds on the lifestyle of iconic Golf Drive communities- The Aralias and The Magnolias and is designed to further elevate the super luxury living experience."

Realty to touch \$25.7 billion

The Camellias is a result of DLF's continuous pursuit to build upon what has already been accomplished in the super luxury residences space."

According to a recent study 'Indian Brands Going Global' 2018 by KPMG in India the overall NRI investment into the Indian real estate market was estimated to be approximately \$11.5 billion in 2017 and is expected to grow to approximately \$25.7 billion by 2022. Approximately 20 per cent of these investments are made by NRIs in the UAE. With such luxurious residential avenues, the Indian real-estate market sure seems to be a far-fetching property destination for many. High net worth segment and NRI's can expect an enjoyable luxurious living in these well-facilitated and exceptionally well-designed ultra luxurious residences. Basing on the strong demand for upscale residential developments in the city, DLF continues to record significant interest from international investors every year.

Keen interest from Bahrain

People from developed countries like Bahrain, the UK, UAE and the USA have shown a keen interest in realty investment in the country. Today, Indians number at an estimated 400,000 people out of Bahrain's total population of 1.3 million, making them the largest expatriate group in the country. With more such projects coming in the country surely has a larger market to offer to its international customers.

SHOW

OASIS JUFFAIR

1-FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM

DAILY AT (VIP): 10.45 AM + 3.30 + 8.15 PM

2-TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW

Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR

FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN

3-THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN

DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM

4-KIKORIKI. DEJAVU (G) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

Ⓢ DENIS CHERNOV, JEFFREY HYLTON

DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 10.45 AM + 2.45 PM

5-JUNE (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW

Ⓢ JOJU GEORGE, RAJISHA VIJAYAN, SARJANO KHALID, ARJUN ASOKAN

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM

6-KODATHI SMAKSHAM BALAN VAKEEL (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW

Ⓢ DILEEP, MAMTA MOHANDAS, PRIYA ANAND

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 2.15 + 5.15 + 8.15 + 11.15 PM

7-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)

Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 6.30 + 11.45 PM

DAILY AT (VIP): 1.00 + 5.45 + 10.30 PM

8-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)

Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

9-THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

Ⓢ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT

DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 12.30 + 4.30 + 9.00 PM

10-SPIDER MAN INTO THE SPIDER VERSE (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ HAILEE STEINFELD, NICOLAS CAGE, MAHERSHALA ALI

DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 6.45 + 11.15 PM

11-URI: THE SURGICAL STRIKE (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA)

Ⓢ VICKY KAUSHAL, KIRTI KULHARI, PARESH RAWAL

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.45 + 9.00 PM

12-KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM)

Ⓢ FAHADH FAASIL, SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR

DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM

13-9 (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)

Ⓢ PRITHVIRAJ SUKUMARAN, PRAKASH RAJ, MAMTA MOHANDAS

DAILY AT: 2.00 + 8.00 PM

14-PERANBU (PG-15) (TAMIL)

Ⓢ MAMMOOTTY, SADHANA, ANJALI

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 5.00 + 11.00 PM

CITYCENTRE

1-FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 PM + 12.00 MN + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

DAILY AT (VIP II): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM

2-TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW

Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR

FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN

3-DUMPLIN (15+) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW

Ⓢ DANIELLE MACDONALD, JENNIFER ANISTON, LUKE BENWARD

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM

4-UPGRADE (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW

Ⓢ LOGAN MARSHALL-GREEN, RICHARD ANASTASIOS, ROSCO CAMPBELL

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

5-THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

6-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)

Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY

DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 2.15 + 7.00 + 11.45 PM

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.45 + 5.15 + 7.45 + 10.15 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

7-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)

Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

8-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)

Ⓢ LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

DAILY AT (VIP I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM

9-HAPPY DEATH DAY 2U (PG-15) (THRILLER/COMEDY/CRIME)

Ⓢ JESSICA ROTHE, RUBY MODINE, PHI VU

DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.45 + 4.45 + 6.45 + 8.45 + 10.45 PM

10-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)

Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM

11-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER)

Ⓢ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM

12-THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

Ⓢ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 PM

DAILY AT (IMAX 2D): 12.00 + 4.45 + 9.30 PM

13-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY)

Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM

14-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM

15-JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (PG) (COMEDY/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ ROWAN ATKINSON, OLGA KURYLENKO, EMMA THOMPSON

DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 3.00 + 7.15 + 11.30 PM

16-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER

DAILY AT: 2.15 + 6.30 + 10.45 PM

17-RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

Ⓢ JOHN C. REILLY, SARAH SILVERMAN, GAL GADOT

DAILY AT: 12.45 + 5.00 + 9.15 PM

18-THE PRODIGY (18+) (THRILLER/HORROR)

Ⓢ TAYLOR SCHILLING, JACKSON ROBERT SCOTT, PETER MOONEY

DAILY AT: 9.45 + 11.45 PM

19-SPIDER MAN INTO THE SPIDER VERSE (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ HAILEE STEINFELD, NICOLAS CAGE, MAHERSHALA ALI

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 4.15 + 8.30 PM

SEEF (I)

1 FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN

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

2-TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW

Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR

FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS

DAILY AT: (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)

3-DUMPLIN (15+) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW

Ⓢ DANIELLE MACDONALD, JENNIFER ANISTON, LUKE BENWARD

DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.15 + 9.30 PM

4-UPGRADE (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW

Ⓢ LOGAN MARSHALL-GREEN, RICHARD ANASTASIOS, ROSCO CAMPBELL

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 PM + 12.00 MN

5-THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN

DAILY AT: (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

6-WHAT THEY HAD (PG-15) (DRAMA) NEW

Ⓢ HILARY SWANK, MICHAEL SHANNEN, ROBERT FORSTER

DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.00 + 9.00 PM

7-THEN CAME YOU (PG-15) (COMEDY/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW

Ⓢ NINA DOBREV, MAISIE WILLIAMS, ASA BUTTERFIELD

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 3.15 + 7.30 + 11.45 PM

8-KIKORIKI. DEJAVU (G) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

Ⓢ DENIS CHERNOV, JEFFREY HYLTON

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.00 + 2.45 + 4.30 PM

9-TIME OUT (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY/ROMANTIC) NEW

Ⓢ MAGUY BOU GHOSN, YORGO CHALHOUB, WISSAM SABBAGH

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 3.00 + 7.00 + 11.00 PM

10-ALONE / TOGETHER (PG-15) (FILIPINO/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW

Ⓢ LIZA SOBERANO, ENRIQUE GIL, JASMINE CURTIS

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM

11-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)

Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN

12-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)

Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 3.00 + 6.00 + 9.00 PM + 12.00 MN

13-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)

Ⓢ LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM

14-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)

Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM

15-THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

Ⓢ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT

DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 4.00 + 8.15 PM

16-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER

DAILY AT: 2.00 + 6.15 + 10.30 PM

SEEF (I)

1-TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW

Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR

FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM

2-THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM

3-KODATHI SMAKSHAM BALAN VAKEEL (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW

Ⓢ DILEEP, MAMTA MOHANDAS, PRIYA ANAND

DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM

4-JUNE (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW

Ⓢ JOJU GEORGE, RAJISHA VIJAYAN, SARJANO KHALID, ARJUN ASOKAN

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM

5-KANNE KALAIMAANE (PG-13) (TAMIL) NEW

Ⓢ UDHAYANIDHI STALIN, TAMANNAH

FROM FRIDAY 22ND

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 4.00 + 9.00 PM

6-L.K.G (PG-13) (TAMIL) NEW

Ⓢ RJ BALAJI, PRIYA ANAND

FROM FRIDAY 22ND

DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.30 + 11.30 PM

7-KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM)

Ⓢ FAHADH FAASIL, SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM

SAAR

1-FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)

2-TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW

Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR

FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)

3-THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN

DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.00 + 6.15 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)

4-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)

Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY

DAILY AT: 6.00 + 8.30 + (11.00 PM THURS/FRI)

5-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)

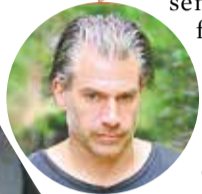


Lady Gaga

Lady Gaga ends her engagement to Christian Carino

Los Angeles

Singer-actress Lady Gaga has called off her engagement to fiancé Christian Carino.



Christian Carino

Gaga's representative confirmed the news to people.com saying their relationship ended "a bit ago".

"It just didn't work out. Relationships sometimes end. There's no long dramatic story," the publication quoted a source as saying.

The "A Star Is Born" star announced her engagement to Carino in October.

Gaga was also engaged to actor Taylor Kinney before they split in July 2016.



Khloe Kardashian

Khloe breaks up with Tristan

Los Angeles

American reality star Khloe Kardashian has called it quits with NBA player Tristan Thompson, just 10 months after the two welcomed their daughter.

E! News confirmed recently that the couple has split up. This comes right around the same time that rumours began doing the rounds of another case of alleged infidelity involving the NBA player. He was reportedly spotted at a party getting cozy with Kylie Jenner's best friend Jordyn Woods.



Tristan Thompson

While, Khloe has not yet made a public statement regarding the split, she did comment on an Instagram

post about their breakup with a slew of yelling emojis. Her close friend Larsa Pippen added, "Amen!!" and Malika Haqq commented, "STRONG FACTS!"

However, before this happened, Tristan posted a tweet about the allegations, calling it "FAKE NEWS" but deleted it a few moments later.

Tristan was involved in a cheating scandal in April, last year as well, right before Khloe gave birth to their daughter True Thompson. Khloe and her family were "heartbroken" about the cheating reports and it became a focal point during a few episodes of 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians'.

Since then, their relationship has gone through its ups and downs, but many sources have told E! News that Khloe's first priority is being a mother to True.



Jordyn Woods and Kylie Jenner

SNIPPETS

Ryan Adams' guitarist urges musician to get help

Los Angeles

Grammy-nominated musician Ryan Adams' guitarist Todd Wisenbaker has urged Adams to get help after the musician was accused of emotional abuse and sexual misconduct by several women.

A report in the New York Times outlined a pattern of manipulative behaviour, including accusations of psychological abuse from his former wife and actress Mandy Moore.

In a post on Instagram, Wisenbaker suggested that he had previously known about Adams's alleged behaviour, reports rollingstone.com.



Ryan Adams

No prepared Oscar speech for Richard E. Grant

Los Angeles

Actor Richard E. Grant says he doesn't have an Oscar speech prepared.

The 61-year-old actor landed his first Academy Award nomination for his portrayal of Jack Hock, the loyal accomplice of author-turned-literary forger Lee Israel (Melissa McCarthy) in the biopic "Can You Ever Forgive Me?"

Asked if he has rituals before awards shows, he said: "No, because I'm not superstitious at all."

"It happens every year that I've been observing awards shows, there's usually an actor that has a surefire through run," variety.com quoted Grant as saying.

He added: "Last year, it was Gary Oldman and Frances McDormand. Usually, there's one actor that's like roadrunner and just burns the way through everything. I happen to be in a category this year and Mahershala Ali has won absolutely every big award."



Gwyneth Paltrow

Weinstein issues 'strange' denial to Gwyneth Paltrow's story

Los Angeles

Harvey Weinstein, the disgraced Hollywood mogul arrested on rape charges last May, has responded to a story on actress Gwyneth Paltrow's "Shakespeare in Love" casting story.

The profile centres on Paltrow in the 20 years since winning the Academy Award for best actress for "Shakespeare in Love", produced by Weinstein. In the story, Paltrow talked about Weinstein's bullying ways and how she had to stand up to him. And in 2017, in an interview with the New York Times, Paltrow joined dozens of women who accused Weinstein of sexual misconduct.

Weinstein has not commented on the allegation, and is kept out of spotlight on a \$1 million bail. But he decided to weigh in on an anecdote from Paltrow about the casting of Joseph Fiennes as the lead of "Shakespeare in Love", reports variety.com.



Harvey Weinstein

Munn says Ratner called her before making public apology

Los Angeles

Actress Olivia Munn, who accused director Brett Ratner of sexually harassing her, says he has apologised to her.

During a panel discussion at the pre-Oscars brunch on Tuesday, Munn revealed that Ratner had called her in 2011 after she accused him of harassment, reports variety.com.

"I've never told any of this story publicly, I'm in my hotel room in New York and I get this Caller ID blocked number, and I answer the phone and it's Brett."

"He said, 'I was just joking about that. It's just a joke and it got blown out of proportion'. He said, 'Well look, we did date though, right?' and I said, 'no' And he's like, 'Are you sure we didn't date?' And at this point, I had this feeling that he was recording the conversation," Munn said.

Recalling the conversation, Munn said that Ratner apologised and asked her to tell her Twitter followers that all was well.



Olivia Munn

Kelsey Grammer wants civility after backlash over Trump support

Los Angeles

Actor Kelsey Grammer has urged critics to be reasonable when talking about his political beliefs after his vocal support for US President Donald Trump turned him into a target for ridicule on social media.

The former "Frasier" star known for his conservative beliefs, fears liberals jump to attack him before taking Grammer stock of what he says, reports aceshowbiz.com.

He said: "(The reaction) surprises me but I'm a reasoned, thoughtful guy, so I'm not going to say stuff that doesn't make sense."



Kelsey Grammer

Emma Thompson walks out of 'Luck'

Los Angeles

Actress Emma Thompson has dropped out of new animated movie "Luck" because she didn't want to work with John Lasseter after his sexual harassment scandal.

Lasseter left Pixar Animation Studios because of sexual harassment allegations. And Skydance Animation, which is behind the movie "Luck", defended their decision to hire the animator.



Emma Thompson

MJ: Leaving Neverland 'devastating' first trailer released

Los Angeles

It's a documentary Michael Jackson's estate doesn't want you to see. But despite legal threats, HBO and Channel 4 will air Leaving Neverland next month.

A new trailer offers a first look at the



troubling two-part, four-hour film that premiered at Sundance film festival last month, featuring the testimonies of James Safechuck and Wade Robson.

"He told me if they ever found out what we were doing, he and I would go to jail," says Robson in the trailer.

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SPORTS
sports

Barcelona draw blank in Lyon

● **Lionel Messi and Barcelona were frustrated in a 0-0 draw in Lyon in the first leg of their Champions League last-16 tie**

● **Valverde finds positives as Barcelona failing to take chances and leave tie open**

● **Barcelona thwarted by Lyon's fortitude and their own poor finishing**

AFP | Lyon



Barcelona's Lionel Messi surges past Lyon's defender Ferland Mendy (left), Lucas Tousart (second left), Marcelo (third left) and Housseem Aouar

Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde shrugged off his team's struggles in front of goal after they were held to a 0-0 draw away at Lyon in the first leg of their Champions League last-16 tie on Tuesday.

The Spanish side had most of the chances at the Groupama Stadium, with Luis Suarez firing just wide in the second half, although it was Lyon who came the closest when Martin Terrier hit the bar early on.

Lionel Messi and co. were once again left frustrated on the road at the business end of the competition, and have now gone six away matches without winning in the Champions League knockout rounds, scoring just a single goal in that time. It is a run that goes back three years.

Desperate to end Real Madrid's recent European dominance, Barca must now finish

the job when the teams meet again at the Camp Nou on March 13, but Lyon remain in the tie.

Barcelona's form needs to improve between now and then, though -- they have drawn four of their last five matches in all, and have scored just once, from a penalty, in their last three outings.

"We played good football, but you have to hit the target as well, and we didn't," Valverde said.

"We are on the right road, though, and the tie is still up in the air. We will try to win it in front of our fans."

He added: "I am not happy with the result, but I am happy with the performance and with what we created."

"We didn't score, but that is how it is. It is not easy to win

away from home in the Champions League."

The visitors -- who started with Sergi Roberto in midfield rather than the out-of-form Philippe Coutinho -- had good reason to be wary of their hosts, who have excelled in big games this season.

Lyon still unbeaten in Europe

Bruno Genesio's team had taken four points from a possible six against Manchester City in the group stage and recently won at home to Paris Saint-Germain in Ligue 1.

They are still unbeaten in Europe this season, although this was their sixth consecutive draw.

"It's a satisfying result because it leaves us with a chance

for the second leg, and we didn't concede. If we can score at the Camp Nou we'll have a chance of going through," said Genesio.

He admitted that he had hoped for an even better performance, but Lyon were missing their World Cup-winning captain Nabil Fekir due to suspension here.

It was the 21-year-old Terrier who surprisingly started in his place, and he delivered the most exciting moment of the first half for the crowd of almost 58,000 with a thunderous strike from 20 yards out in the ninth minute that was tipped onto the bar by Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

The same player later shot over at the end of a fantastic move, while Housseem Aouar had earlier been denied by the



Barcelona have drawn four of their last five matches in all championships

goalkeeper, but it was Barcelona who enjoyed the longer spells of possession.

Ousmane Dembele -- one of two Frenchmen in the away line-up -- came closest for them in the first half, although their best chances came after he had been replaced by Coutinho midway through the second period.

Suarez came within inches of breaking the deadlock 20 minutes from time, firing narrowly wide from Jordi Alba's cutback. He has now gone 16 away matches without scoring in the competition.

Coutinho had a powerful shot beaten away by Anthony Lopes, with the Lyon goalkeeper also frustrating Messi and Sergio Busquets as Barcelona dominated but departed without a potentially precious away goal.

"It is a little bit of a disappointment, but there is still the second leg to come and we hope to do better," said defender Clement Lenglet.

At least they extended their unbeaten record against Lyon to seven matches, but there remains hope for the French club ahead of the return.

Taha to manage top coaching programme

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) Olympic Academy director Dr Nabeel Taha has been once again selected by the Coaching Association of Canada to manage the Level 4 National Coaching Programme, organized by the academy.

This was announced as Supreme Council for Youth and Sports assistant secretary general and Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) secretary general Abdulrahman Askar received World renowned coaching educator and applied sport scientist Istvan Balyi at the committee offices in Seef, in presence of Taha and academy executive coordinator Mahmood Yateem.

Askar welcomed the Canadian professor and commended his efforts in coordination with the academy to qualify large number of national coaches. Askar also noted the successes achieved by the programme in developing high-standard coaches in different sports.

During the meeting, Balyi presented Taha with the mandate issued by the Coaching Association of Canada, as the latter will have full authority to run the next edition of the programme in its Level 4.

Balyi also reviewed the importance of the programme and the Bahrain Olympic Committee's efforts in the field of physical literacy and long-term sports planning.



Members of the Lexus GS and Lexus IS fan clubs at the popular Drag & Drift nights at the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC). Members were welcomed with hospitality and challenging competitions as well as the chance to experience their cars on the world renowned drag strip during the event hosted by Ebrahim K. Kanoo. The all new Lexus ES and IS were available for guests to test drive and the sporty F-sport versions of both cars were also on display for closer viewing

Strongest Bahraini Championship to begin today

TDT | Manama

The 2nd Strongest Bahraini Championship, taking place under the slogan #Be_a_Beast, will kick-off today at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC).

Ahmed Al Shaikh, President of the event's High Organising Committee and Manager of HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa Media Office, stressed that the Committee is looking forward to writing a new chapter in successes in the second

edition of the championship which will be held under the patronage of HH Shaikh Khalid, First Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, President of Bahrain Athletics Association and Honourary President of Bahrain Sports Federation for Disabilities.

The event will conclude on Saturday and the proceeds will be donated to support cancer patients as the event is part of HH Shaikh Khalid's humanitarian and sports initiatives.

Al Shaikh's remarks came during the press conference which was held at the BIC's Media Centre to shed lights on the latest organisational development of the Championship. Speaking during the conference were Ahmed Jamsheer, Head of the Arbitration Committee of the Championship and Shareef Al Mahdi, CEO of the BIC, while it was overseen by Fawaz Al Abdullah. The event was attended by many media representatives and participants in the Championship.

Bayern frustrate Liverpool

● **A frustrating night for Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp ended in a 0-0 draw against Bayern Munich in the Champions League**

AFP | Liverpool

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp admitted an underwhelming 0-0 draw against old foes Bayern Munich on Tuesday was not what he "dreamed of", but remained confident of progressing to the quarter-finals of the Champions League.

Sadio Mane wasted the best chance when the Senegalese forward fired wide during an open first 45 minutes, but a cagey second half left it all to be decided when the sides meet again in Munich on March 13.

However, without the talismanic presence of Virgil van Dijk through suspension and the injured Joe Gomez and Dejan Lovren, Liverpool at least did not concede an away goal despite fielding a make-shift central defensive pairing of Brazilian midfielder Fabinho and Joel Matip.

"It's not the result or the game we dreamed of," said Klopp. "It is not a game we will remember in 30 years. It's the result we have and we will work with that."

"It was a clean sheet without the big man (Van Dijk). A lot of people wouldn't have expected that. The defending was good. A lot of things were really good, I'm not over the moon but I'm completely OK with the game."

That unfamiliarity in Liverpool's defence showed in the early stages as the hosts started nervously at the back.

Matip breathed a sigh of relief when he turned Serge Gnabry's driven cross towards his own goal only for the ball to bounce to safety off Alisson Becker's chest.

However, the Brazilian goalkeeper played his side into trouble moments later to put pressure on Matip and when he was dispossessed by Robert Lewandowski, Kingsley Coman fired into the side-netting.

Liverpool were also posing plenty of problems at the other end, although their final ball often lacked precision.



Liverpool's Egyptian midfielder Mohamed Salah (C) controls the ball under pressure from Bayern Munich's German midfielder Joshua Kimmich (L) and Bayern Munich's German defender Niklas Sule (R)

Kvitova, Halep advance

Kerber capitulates as Pliskova, Halep and Kvitova blow into quarters in windy Dubai

● **Petra Kvitova** relieved to win second straight match despite not playing her best tennis

AFP | Dubai

Former winners Petra Kvitova and Simona Halep battled through brisk desert winds to advance into the quarter-finals of the Dubai Championships yesterday.

Second seed Kvitova outlasted American qualifier Jennifer Brady 7-5, 1-6, 6-3.

Crowd favourite and third seed Halep coped with the gusty conditions the Aviation Club as she beat Lesia Tsurenko 6-3, 7-5, breaking seven times.

Ukraine's Tsurenko managed just a single point over the last three games as former number one Halep demonstrated her superiority by taking a 7-0 lead in their head-to-head record.

Fourth-seeded Karolina Pliskova was tested by Alison Riske, with the Czech taking more than two hours to produce a 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/5) victory.

The 2015 finalist won a monster game late in the second set, holding for 5-5 after seven deuces plus two set points for her American opponent.

Pliskova broke a game later but dropped serve herself to force a tie-breaker; the decider ended on a first match point after Riske double-faulted.



Simona Halep of Romania in action against Lesia Tsurenko of Ukraine

Fifth seed Angelique Kerber, a semi-finalist on her last two appearances here, lost to Hsieh Su-Wei 5-7, 6-4, 6-0.

The German former world number one dropped serve seven times in the one-and-three-quarter hour contest.

Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro made quick work of Kristina Mladenovic, surprise conqueror of Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka, sending the Dubai-based Frenchwoman out 7-5, 7-5.

Suarez Navarro started on the back foot but rallied to over-

come a 5-1 deficit in the first set on the way to victory.

But she was not impressed with her own effort.

"I didn't play good today. I started badly," the world number 26 said. "Sometimes is not easy take the confidence back again."

"But, well, point by point, game by game, I just tried to fight, tried to relax a little bit."

"In the second set I felt tired -- I didn't enjoy the match at all."

Meanwhile, Kvitova, who won the Dubai trophy in 2013, had not played on the WTA Tour

since reaching the St Petersburg quarter-finals a fortnight ago.

"When I came here, I didn't really have many days of practice, to be honest," the two-time Wimbledon winner said.

"I had something different to do in my life. I wasn't really that prepared for this tournament."

"But I'm happy I was able to get two wins. It's great when you're not playing your best and you still find a way to win."

Halep delights Romanian fans

Halep, a finalist in Doha last week, was supported even in the



Petra Kvitova reached her fourth successive WTA quarter-final

middle of a workday by scores of chanting, enthusiastic local Romanian fans and her country's ambassador to the UAE as she rolled over Tsurenko in tricky conditions.

"The wind was difficult today. It didn't feel like last week," Halep said. "I know how she's playing, it's not my favourite style because she doesn't give any power (on the ball)."

"I've had many matches with her and won them. I feel confident when I play her."

The Romanian, who is without a coach, was more than pleased with her strong finish to the match.

"My mindset now is just to finish the points as quick as possible. I'm trying to be more aggressive."

"I'm more relaxed. I don't put pressure on myself. Also I have no expectations. I feel that my game is pretty strong."

"I feel close to my highest level."

Federer to play on clay at Madrid Open



Roger Federer hits a return during the Australian Open (file photo)

AFP | Madrid

Roger Federer's comeback on clay will feature a return to the Madrid Open for the first time since 2015, it was confirmed yesterday.

For the last two years, the 37-year-old has chosen to skip the clay-court season completely to preserve energy for tournaments on his preferred surfaces of grass and hard.

But Federer indicated in January that he would play at the French Open this year while the Madrid Open has announced he will be among those competing at the Caja Magica too.

"Federer is one of the best players in history, it's no secret," said Feliciano Lopez, the Madrid Open's tournament director.

"We are happy because his return to Madrid is a gift for the tournament but above all for the fans, because they will be able to see a player that is unique and unparalleled."

Southee, Taylor inspire Black Caps whitewash of Bangladesh

AFP | Dunedin, New Zealand

Tim Southee snared a six-wicket haul and Ross Taylor tore up the record books as New Zealand dominated Bangladesh to seal a 3-0 series whitewash with an 88-run victory in the final one-day international in Dunedin yesterday.

Sabbir Rahman's gallant maiden ODI century saved Bangladesh from total humiliation after they lost three wickets with just two runs on the board chasing New Zealand's imposing target of 331.

The tourists were 242 all out in 47.2 overs after the Black Caps were sent into bat and made 330 for six at University Oval.

It was final New Zealand outing before the Cricket World Cup and players were desperate to impress coach Gary Stead even though the fixture was a dead rubber.

Paceman Tim Southee, overlooked in New Zealand's past six ODIs, took six for 65 to guarantee himself almost certainly a berth at the tournament.

Henry Nicholls looks to have secured an opening batting slot with a sparkling 64, but out-of-form rival Colin Munro was dismissed for eight.

"Henry's shown he's a versatile player for us... he's a key component of our batting line-up," Black Caps coach Gary



New Zealand's Ross Taylor plays a shot

Stead said, adding that Munro might make the trip as injury cover.

Ross Taylor became New Zealand's highest-scoring one-day international batsman as his 69 off 81 balls took him past 8,000 runs in the 50-over format.



Henry's shown he's a versatile player for us... he's a key component of our batting line-up

GARY STEAD
BLACK CAPS COACH

His 47th ODI half-century saw Taylor reach 8,026 runs, overtaking Stephen Fleming's previous record of 8,007.

The 34-year-old, who made his ODI debut in 2006, reached his milestone in 203 innings with a superb average of 48.34.

'Got a few years left'

"I definitely would have taken that when I played my first match donkey's years ago," he said.

"If you play long enough I guess these records come along but it's nice to set the bar for the next guy."

"I'm still enjoying myself and hopefully I've still got a few years in me."

Tom Latham pressed his claim for a World Cup spot with a solid 59 while Colin de Grandhomme and Jimmy Neesham both scored 37 as they seek all-rounder berths.

Bangladesh made a horror start to the run chase when Tim Southee claimed a trio of top-order wickets in his opening two overs to leave the visitors reeling on two for three.

New Zealand	
M. Guptill c Iqbal b Saifuddin	29
C. Munro lbw Mortaza	8
H. Nicholls c Iqbal b Hasan	64
R. Taylor c Mamdullah b Rubel	69
T. Latham c Sarkar b Rahman	59
J. Neesham b Rahman	37
C. de Grandhomme not out	37
M. Santner not out	16
Extras: (lb 3, nb 2, w 6)	11
Total: (for 6 wickets; 50 overs)	330
Bangladesh	
T. Iqbal c Latham b Southee	0
L. Das lbw Southee	1
S. Sarkar b Southee	0
M. Rahim c Munro b Boult	17
Mahmudullah c Munro b de Grandhomme	16
S. Rahman c and b Southee	102
M. Saifuddin c Guptill b Boult	44
M. Mortaza c Boult b Southee	2
M. Hasan c Guptill b Southee	37
R. Hossain run out (Santner/Southee)	3
M. Rahman not out	0
Extras: (lb 2, w 18)	20
Total: (all out; 47.2 overs)	242

Raikkonen pushes Ferrari off the top of test timesheets



Alfa Romeo's Kimi Raikkonen in action during testing

Reuters | Barcelona

Alfa Romeo driver Kimi Raikkonen produced the fastest lap so far in Formula One's pre-season testing to push his previous team, Ferrari, off the top of the lunchtime leaderboard yesterday.

It was the first time since testing started on Monday at the Circuit de Catalunya that Ferrari had not led at the end of a session.

The Finn, returning to the Swiss-based team previously known as Sauber, lapped with a best time of one minute 17.762 seconds on the softest, and fastest, C5 tyre compound.

Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel, his team mate last season, was second fastest in 1:18.350.

Raikkonen's lap was also the first time a team had gone faster in 2019 than they managed in last year's pre-season testing.

Champions Mercedes continued to keep their powder dry, with Finland's Valtteri Bottas the slowest of the nine cars on track but doing more laps than anyone else — 88 to Vettel's 80, both on the same medium C3 tyre.

Renault's Nico Hulkenberg was third fastest in 1:18.800.

McLaren, whose performance has been encouraging over the first two days, missed the first two hours after what they described as "some overnight changes" to the car but managed to get Spaniard Carlos Sainz out for 27 laps before lunch.

Williams continued to be absent from the track but were expected to appear in the afternoon after their much-delayed car reached the track in the early hours after problems finishing building it on time.