

# THE DAILY tribune



Beyonce's Netflix deal worth a \$60 million?

14 CELEBS

WORLD 6

Explosion, gunfire rock downtown Kabul

## Queen Elizabeth II congratulated

Manama

His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, sent a cable of congratulations to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Head of the Commonwealth, on her birthday anniversary.

They wished HM Queen Elizabeth II abundant health and happiness, and the friendly British people further progress and prosperity.

## 3m arrested

Riyadh

Nearly three million violators of residency, work and border security systems have been arrested in a year-long roundup, according to an official report.

Since the campaign began in November 2017, there have been 2,987,317 offenders, including 2,328,031 for violating residency regulations, 458,591 for labor violations and 200,695 for border violations, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

The report said that 50,388 people were arrested while trying to cross the border into the Kingdom, 50pc of whom were Yemeni citizens, 47pc were Ethiopians and 3pc were of other nationalities.

Over 2,000 people were arrested for trying to cross the border into neighbouring countries and 3,697 were arrested for involvement in transporting and harbouring those violators.



03 Shura Council mulls plan to ban sale of energy drinks to children

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## Burning anger



French yellow vest protesters set fires yesterday along a march through Paris to drive home their message to a government they believe is ignoring the poor: that rebuilding the fire-ravaged Notre-Dame Cathedral isn't the only problem France needs to solve. Like the high-visibility vests the protesters wear, the scattered small fires in Paris appeared to be a collective plea to French President Emmanuel Macron's government to "look at me - I need help too!" Police fired water cannon and sprayed tear gas to try to control radical elements rampaging on the margins of the largely peaceful march, one of several actions around Paris and other French cities. The protests marked the 23rd straight weekend of yellow vest actions against Mr Macron's centrist government, which they see as favouring the wealthy and big business.

## Algeria court summons former premier Ouyahia

Algiers

An Algerian court summoned former Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia and current Finance Minister Mohamed Loukal yesterday, two associates of former President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, in a probe looking into the wasting of public money.

The pair are being investigated over "dissipation of public money" and "illegal privilege," state TV said.

No more details were immediately available.

The move comes after army chief, Lieutenant General Gaid Salah, said last week he expected to see members of the ruling elite in the major oil and natural gas-producing country



Ahmed Ouyahia

prosecuted for corruption.

Bouteflika stepped down after 20 years in power two weeks ago, bowing to pressure from the army and weeks of demonstrations mainly by young people seeking change in the country.

# Setback for Houthis

Arab coalition jets target Houthi drone sites in Yemen's capital

● The Houthi militia uses military camps near residential neighbourhoods and civilian facilities as military zones.

● Yemen is mired in a grinding conflict between the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels and its legitimate government.

Jeddah

Saudi-led Arab coalition jets targeted Houthi drone sites in Yemen's capital, Sanaa, on Saturday morning, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

Coalition spokesperson, Col Turki Al Maliki, said that at



A man inspect the wreckage of a drone aircraft that Houthis say they shot down near the northwestern city of Saada.

12:40 am (GMT) the Arab coalition carried out the military operation to destroy Houthi drone stores.

The targeted area was in a former Republican Guard camp in the vicinity of the presidential palace that was seized by the Houthi militia in 2014.

Col Al Maliki confirmed that

10 million people are on the brink of famine in Yemen, according to UN.

the operation was consistent with international humanitarian law.

He stated that the leadership of the joint forces of the coalition have taken measures to protect civilians and spare them from collateral damage outside the perimeter of the camp.

The Houthi militia uses military camps near residential neighbourhoods and civilian facilities as military zones for manufacturing workshops, which include installation of

ballistic missiles and drone workshops.

This strategy is an attempt at using civilians as human shields, which is a clear and explicit violation of international humanitarian law, the coalition spokesperson said.

Col Al Maliki said that the operation was an extension of the previous military operations that were carried out on Jan 19, Jan 31, Feb 9, March 23 and April 10, to destroy the Iran-backed Houthi militia's military capabilities.

Earlier this month, five people were injured, including a woman and a child, when two Houthi drones targeting civilian areas in Saudi Arabia were intercepted and destroyed.

While in early March, Saudi Arabia's Royal Air Defence Force again shot down a Houthi drone that was flying towards the Kingdom.

## A LAND OF TOLERANCE

### Hindu temple foundation stone laid

Abu Dhabi

The foundation stone for the first traditional Hindu Temple was laid in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

The 'Shilanyas Vidhi' ceremony was presided over by Mahant Swami Maharaj, the spiritual leader of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha - the religious and social organisation building the temple.

The ceremony started with rituals led by Pujya Ishwaracharan Swami. Sanskrit verses filled the air as priests described to devotees how each ritual had to be conducted. Community leaders and devotees followed the directions from their respective seated areas which had a tray placed in front of them containing a brick, rice, flowers, nuts etc.

Once the ceremonies were completed, the founda-



Hindu priests perform rituals in the presence of top UAE officials and dignitaries.

tion stone was laid by priests and BAPS Hindu Mandir committee head and community leader B R Shetty.

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Under the patronage of Deputy Inspector-General Major-General Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science has held a ceremony for obtaining the ISO certificate 9001:2015 at the Public Security Officers Club. The Deputy Inspector-General distributed certificates among the honourees of the department and the quality assurance team. He congratulated the General Directorate for the achievement that promotes excellence and the best utilisation of technology. He asserted that the Interior Ministry would continue to improve human resources through the adaptation of the best international development strategies.



Indian Ambassador to the Kingdom Alok Kumar Sinha attended Baisakhi celebrations at Budaiya Gurudwara. Baisakhi is a historical and religious festival in Sikhism, celebrated in the month of April. Hundreds attended the celebrations at Budaiya Gurudwara.



On behalf of the Chief of Public Security, Major-General Tariq Al Hassan, the Director-General of Anti-corruption and Economic and Electronic Security attended a seminar on cyber crimes and information security by the Security Research Centre of the Royal Academy of Police. The event also attended by officers from various Interior Ministry directorates. The lecture highlighted cyber security, communication and information technology and the protection of data. The Director-General highlighted the importance to hold such events to enhance the skills and knowledge of employees in different fields.



Winners of the Walking Challenge were honoured during a ceremony, which was held at the Gulf Hotel Awal Ballroom. Bahrain Diabetes Society (BDS) hosted the event under the patronage of Supreme Council for Health (SCH) President Lieutenant-General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa. Addressing the ceremony, he warned against the alarming increase in the incidence of chronic disease, which affects all social age categories.



With an aim of providing social and psychological support to cancer-stricken children and their families, Future Society for Youth, organised a special event at the Sports Training Complex on Saar Avenue. Various games were organised for children, who were later awarded with gifts.



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## May Day event set

TDT | Manama

**B**harathi Association, a registered organisation, functioning under the guidelines of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, will celebrate the International Labour Day on May 1, at the Indian Club premises.

The vibrant celebration will be in a grand scale under the noble patronage of Jameel Humaidan, the Minister of Labour and Social Development, ac-

ording to the association members.

“Mr Humaidan has given his valuable consent to grace the occasion as Chief Guest to honour the workers for their priceless contribution to the growth of this Kingdom.”

Alok Kumar Sinha, the Indian Ambassador will be our Guest of Honour, they added.

A mammoth stage is being set and preparations are in full swing to entertain the workers



Mr Humaidan

with Light Music Concert supported by live orchestra.

Popular singers will be rendering cine music both classical old hit songs as well as foot tap-

ping fast numbers.

Exciting colourful cultural extravaganza, both classical and filmy dances will be performed by talented artistes.

“Dinner, snacks and beverage will be served to the workers. More than 2,000 workers are expected to attend the event from nook and corner of the island. Transportation is being arranged from the labour camps. Apart from family crowd, Community leaders will be attending the event.

# Shura Council mulls plan to ban sale of energy drinks to children

If approved, only those aged above 18 will be allowed to buy energy drinks

● The law would also prevent the free distribution of energy drinks as well as their advertisements.

● The move comes in light of latest research findings that excessive consumption of energy drinks can lead to severe health problems in children.

TDT | Manama  
Mohammed Zafran

A ban on the sale of energy drinks to those under 18 years would be implemented if a proposal by legislators is approved.

The Shura Council may recommend a restriction on children consuming energy drinks after its Youth Affairs Committee placed a proposal to introduce a ban.

Experts define energy drink as any beverage that contains high levels of stimulating ingredient, usually caffeine, as well as sugar and often supplements, such as vitamins or carnitine, and that is promoted as a product capable of enhancing mental alertness and physical performance.

According to the proposed law, those who sell energy drinks to



The council is expected to hold further discussions on the proposal today.

children would be fined up to BD2,000.

If the law is passed, the commercial markets would be required to make it clear that energy drinks are not for sale to those under 18 years.

The law would also prevent the free distribution of energy drinks as well as their advertisements.

Social media was rife with rumours yesterday that the Shura Council was moving towards a total ban on energy drinks.

However, the committee clarified that the proposal is not intended to enforce a total ban on consumption of energy drinks,

## 2,000

Bahraini dinars is the proposed fine to be imposed on those who sell energy drinks to children.

rather is intended to restrict and limit the consumption to those aged above 18.

The committee stated that due to the unhealthy nature of energy



Excessive consumption of energy drinks can lead to severe health problems in children.

drinks, it aims to reduce its consumption in the country.

The move comes in light of latest research findings that excessive consumption of energy drinks can lead to severe health problems in children.

The UK is also implementing a law to ban energy drinks sale to children.

Commenting on the ban, Prime Minister Theresa May said: "Childhood obesity is one of the greatest health challenges this country faces, and that's why we are taking significant action to reduce the amounts of sugar consumed by young people and to help families make healthier choices.

"With thousands of young people regularly consuming energy drinks, often because they are sold at cheaper prices than soft drinks, we will consult on banning the sale of energy drinks to children.

"It is vital that we do all we can to make sure children have the best start in life and I encourage everyone to put forward their views," she said.

Anxiety, insomnia, gastronomic upset, headaches, and hyperactivity are some of the side effects of high level of consumption of energy drinks.

More serious long term effects such as diabetes and heart disease have also been associated with energy drink consumption.

The council is expected to hold further discussions on the proposal today.

## Bahraini youth's media strides stressed



Many young talents were honoured at the event.

● The Information Minister asserted that the young national competencies are the cornerstone of media development in Bahrain.

Manama

Information Minister Ali Al Romaihi lauded creativity of the Bahraini youth in media production, stressing the need to support it with all possible means to ensure sustainability of the national media growth in the prosperous era of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

He was speaking as he patronised the Cinema of Literature function, which was organised by the University of Bahrain (UoB)'s College of Literature Society, in the presence of UoB President Dr Riyadh Yusef



Mr Al Romaihi along with Dr Hamza, Dr Bahar and other dignitaries.

Hamza, Information Ministry Undersecretary Dr Abdulrahman Mohammed Bahar and members of UoB's academic and administrative staff.

The Information Minister asserted that the young national competencies are the corner-

stone of media development in Bahrain so as to preserve national achievements and keep abreast of advancements in the media and telecommunications sector.

He praised the tremendous efforts of UoB to prepare a generation equipped with knowledge

and skills to contribute effectively in the labour market and national development process.

He expressed appreciation of the films he watched which shed light on national accomplishments and discussed social issues in an innovated and artistic way.

## Royal directives on alternative punishment hailed

Manama

The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) has praised His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's directives to the Government to reinforce its capabilities for the effective application of the provisions of the penal code and alternative punishment, in addition to the provision of rehabilitation measures and programmes according to the personal circumstances of the convict in order to be reintegrated into society.

In this regard, the Deputy President of the SJC and President of the Court of Cassation, Chancellor Abdulla bin Hassan Al Buainain, stressed the importance of consolidating rehabilitation programmes and expand the fields of their application to establish them as a basic practice in the criminal justice system.

This would achieve the expected goals through reforming the convicts and re-integrating them socially to be positive members, as well as support ways to combat criminality, and develop the



The directive would achieve the expected goals by reforming the convicts and re-integrating them socially to be positive members.

CHANCELLOR AL BUAINAIN

spirit of responsibility and commitment to laws, he said.

The Deputy SJC President highlighted the role of law enforcement authorities in applying alternative punishment measures, which the modern experiences have proved their success and effective role in reforming criminals, reducing the recurrence of crimes and ensuring the achievement of the requirements of preserving the right of society to help and enable convicts to develop themselves and become positive members in their communities.

# BAC plans '90 per cent Bahrainisation by 2021'

80pc of BAC staff, as of now, are Bahrainis

● The minister added that BAC continues its approach to Bahrainisation through strategic initiatives that have helped create an attractive work environment across the company's departments.

TDT | Manama

The Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications and Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) Chairman, Kamal Ahmed, has revealed plans to increase BAC's Bahrainisation rate to more than 90 per cent by 2021.

The BAC has put in place further training and development plans at the beginning of this year to steadily increase the number of Bahrainis within its ranks until the company reaches this target, it is learnt.



“Around half a million Bahraini dinars have been invested in training programmes and certifications, allowing more than 800 training spots.”

MR AHMED

The recruitment of Bahraini professionals and their training and development have been essential parts of BAC's growth strategy since 2010, allowing it to achieve an impressive 80 per cent Bahrainisation rate to date.

The minister said: “Undertaken in cooperation with the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications (MTT), the Airport Modernisation Programme is a massive construction and technical challenge for BAC, especially while having to

operate the existing airport at the same time.

“Implementing the new Passenger Terminal Building's advanced technologies, including its state-of-the-art IT and baggage handling systems, requires expertise not presently available in the local market.

“As such, we have enlisted the help of specialists with advanced skill-sets to temporarily fill the required positions for the duration of the rollout, which is expected to be completed in 2020.

“A strategic plan has been put in place to prepare Bahrainis for these specialised roles and provide them with the skills and knowledge they need to eventually take them over.”

The minister added that BAC continues its approach to Bahrainisation through strategic initiatives that have helped create an attractive work environment across the company's departments, and which have resulted in the recruitment of 137 Bahraini men and women over the last several years.

“The most important of these was the Tahleeq programme, launched in association with Tamkeen and MTT, which has seen 80 Bahrainis, specialised in a range of disciplines, working on the AMP under the supervision of a group of senior experts, technicians, engineers, and architects.

“Other initiatives include the establishment of a new Baggage Handling Services department and an increase in the number of Bahrainis working in IT func-



tions, both of which have had a significant impact on the recruitment of locals.

“At the same time, a range of aviation-related international training programmes have been brought to the country, helping to further refine the expertise and skills of Bahrainis and prepare them for leadership positions.

“With the support of Tamkeen, around half a million Bahraini dinars has been invested in these training programmes and certifications, allowing more than 800 training spots,” he added.

**Derasat to hold intellectual symposium**  
Manama

Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat) will hold tomorrow an event where the book “Two Prosperous Decades” will be read out to the audience.

The book was launched by the centre last February to highlight the achievements brought about in the era of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

A host of Bahraini political and intellectual personalities will take part in the event, including Jordanian Former Prime Minister and Vice President of the Senate Samir Al Rifa'i, Egyptian Al Azhar University President Dr Mohammed Al Harsawi, Saudi Shura Council member Dr Hedi Al Yami, Bahraini Representatives Council Speaker Fawzia Zainal and Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW) Hala Al Ansari.

Derasat Board of Trustees Chairman Dr Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa said the symposium will shed light on the content of the book, which highlights HM the King's wise and farsighted vision and his pioneering efforts to achieve comprehensive development in Bahrain over the past two decades.

## Cyber security centre launched

TDT | Manama  
Mohammed Zafran

A 24/7 intelligence-driven security operation centre to tackle cyber threats have been launched in the Kingdom.

The new NGN security operation centre (SOC) powered by Group-IB enables the local government, private companies and financial organisations to get expert assistance in proactive monitoring, detection and prevention of any cyberattacks at

early stages for better defence of their internal networks.

A launch event was held with the participation of government officials, C-level executives from Bahraini leading banks, and journalists.

“We are delighted to bring the first intelligence-driven 24/7 NGN SOC powered by Group-IB, based on Group-IB's cybersecurity solutions to Bahraini government and private companies,” stated CEO of NGN International, Yaqoob Al Awadhi.

“Banks and government organisations are the driving force of Kingdom's economic successes, and the backbones of its national stability. Its cyber vigilance is vital with the accelerating pace of Bahrain's digital transformation.

“The opening of NGN SOC

“Banks and government organisations are the driving force of Kingdom's economic successes, and the backbones of its national stability. Hence, cyber vigilance is vital.”

MR AL AWADHI

powered by Group-IB comes at a time when we are witnessing an increased threat actors' activity in the region and frequent data leaks and compromise of personal financial information,” he added.

While traditional SOCs use signature-based detection meth-

ods, which allow to only deal with known threats, the new intelligence-driven NGN SOC powered by Group-IB allows to know what to expect and makes it possible to prepare for attacks in advance thanks to actionable threat intelligence.

The new SOC ensures the safety and security of customers' sensitive information – it is organised in such a way that the information is stored securely and processed on the territory of Bahrain.

“At the heart of any well protected organisation is both technology and people. This is often found in a security operations centre, monitoring and responding to risks and keeping the organisation safe from threat actors.

“For many organisations this

is expensive. Not only expensive, nearly impossible to do well. Not because of the cost, but because of the shortage of cyber security talent. A shortage of talent and the speed of which they are required to hunt for advanced threats is one of the primary reason we are bringing both people and technology in partnership with NGN to Bahrain,” said Nicholas Palmer, Vice President of International Business at Group-IB.

The opening of the first 24/7 intelligence-driven NGN SOC powered by Group-IB tailored to the Kingdom's government institutions, banks and private companies is another step towards achieving a long-term goal of increasing cybersecurity awareness in Bahrain, officials said.



### Notice to Cancel the License of ACE Arabia Insurance Company B.S.C. (closed)

Pursuant to Article (49) of the Central Bank of Bahrain and Financial Institutions Law No. (64) of 2006 and its amendments, and based on the Extra Ordinary General Meeting resolution of the ACE Arabia Insurance B.S.C. (closed) dated 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018. The Central Bank of Bahrain hereby gives notice of the Cancellation of the license of ACE Arabia Insurance Company (B.S.C.) (c) registered under Commercial Registration No. 21046 - 1 issued on 22/5/1989.

The CBB decision was published in the Official Gazette No. 3394 on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018.

**Note: ACE Arabia Insurance B.S.C. (closed) does not underwrite any insurance business in the Kingdom of Bahrain.**

## Iraq hosts Saudi, Iran at parliamentary conference

Baghdad

Iraq hosted senior parliamentary officials from Saudi Arabia and Iran yesterday as Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi seeks to bolster his country's nascent role as a mediator in the region.

Delegations including the heads of parliament from Turkey, Kuwait, Syria and Jordan are also attending the one-day conference in the Iraqi capital to discuss regional security, diplomacy and economic issues, Arab News reported.

The speaker of Iraq's parliament Mohammed Al Halbousi, who is chairing the gathering in Baghdad, said that his country's relations with neighbour-



The speaker of Iraq's parliament Mohammed Al Halbousi walks with the speaker of the Saudi Shura Council Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al Sheikh at Baghdad International Airport.

ing states are strong and that Iraq intends to develop them.

Visiting officials pledged support for reconstruction and development efforts in Iraq and

for the country's continued stability following its victory over Daesh, after three years of war, Al Halbousi said in a statement. Al Halbousi also stat-

ed that Iraq continues to fight terror with regional and international assistance, and thanked all countries that have supported this fight.

## world

# Pakistan says killer gunmen based in Iran

AFP | Islamabad, Pakistan

The gunmen who killed 14 members of Pakistan's security forces in the country's southwest earlier this week came from Iran to carry out the attack, officials said Saturday.

Some 20 people wearing uniforms from the paramilitary Frontier Corps stopped buses in Balochistan province, which were travelling along the coast to megacity Karachi, before gunning down the security officials.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said Pakistan had evidence the "terrorist outfits" that carried out the attack have "training and logistic camps inside Iranian areas bordering Pakistan".

Those killed included ten serving with the navy, 3 with the air force and one with the coastguard.

"We have shared this actionable evidence with Iran after due authentication and identified (the) location of the camps," Qureshi said.

Pakistan has created a new southern Frontier Corps with its headquarters in the southwest-



**Pakistan had evidence the terrorist outfits that carried out the attack have training and logistic camps inside Iranian areas bordering Pakistan**

FOREIGN MINISTER  
SHAH MEHMOOD QURESHI



Pakistani soldiers cordon off a residential building during a raid on a militant hideout in Peshawar

along the border has already begun, he added.

Balochistan, which borders Afghanistan and Iran, is Pakistan's poorest province and the largest by landmass, with Islamabad as well as ethnic Baloch separatists active there.

"We have clearly told Iranian authorities about the elements involved in the attack".

"Pakistan hopes they will take a swift action against the Baloch terrorist outfits," Qureshi said, referring to his telephone conversation with Iranian foreign

minister Javad Zarif.

"We also hope that our Afghan brethren will... take necessary action because these Baloch terrorist outfits also have links in Afghanistan," he added.

"Zarif also assured me that his government would help Pakistan

bring them to justice".

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will make an official visit to Tehran from Sunday, with topics of discussion to include ways to prevent recurrence of such incidents in future.

Qureshi said the two countries would set up joint border controls with "mutual consultations to ensure peace".

Pakistani security forces have been targeting insurgents in Balochistan since 2004, and have also been repeatedly accused by international rights groups of abuses there. The military denies the allegations.

Balochistan is also host to a number of major projects under the multi-billion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The massive infrastructure project seeks to connect the western Chinese province of Xinjiang with the Arabian Sea port of Gwadar in Balochistan.

But it has also drawn its share of criticism, particularly by separatists who have long complained that residents do not receive a fair share of profits from the province's resources.

## NATIONAL HOTELS COMPANY B.S.C

### INTERIM CONDENSED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 31 MARCH 2019 (REVIEWED)

INTERIM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION At 31 March 2019 (Reviewed)			INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS For the three months ended 31 March 2019 (Reviewed)			INTERIM STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS For the three months ended 31 March 2019 (Reviewed)		
	31 March 2019 Reviewed BD	31 December 2018 Audited BD		Three months ended 31 March 2019 Reviewed BD	2018 Reviewed BD		Three months ended 31 March 2019 Reviewed BD	2018 Reviewed BD
<b>ASSETS</b>			<b>Revenue from contracts with customers</b>	1,553,574	1,182,626	<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Non-current assets			Rental income	299,418	275,062	Profit for the period	603,782	230,860
Property, plant and equipment	35,423,019	35,900,777	<b>Revenue</b>	1,852,992	1,457,688	Adjustments for:		
Investment properties	37,235,458	37,380,956	Gross operating costs	(1,121,961)	(1,100,827)	Depreciation	684,152	508,312
Investment in an associate	7,107,196	7,758,073	<b>GROSS OPERATING PROFIT</b>	731,031	356,861	Share of profit of an associate	(517,975)	(369,595)
Non-current investments	2,802,608	2,693,435	Net investment income:			Fair value gain on investments at fair value through profit or loss - net	(5,545)	(558)
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>82,568,281</b>	<b>83,733,241</b>	Share of profit of an associate	517,975	369,595	Dividend income	(111,094)	(108,371)
Current assets			Interest income	111,094	108,371	Interest income	(25,034)	(32,172)
Inventories	71,318	76,994	Fair value gain on investments at fair value through profit or loss - net	5,545	558	Interest expense	2,846	9,105
Current investments	2,055,015	2,049,470	Miscellaneous income	81,128	82,525	Provision for ECLs	5,308	36,512
Trade and other receivables	620,845	459,838	Depreciation	(684,152)	(508,312)	Provision for employees' end of service benefits	19,048	37,914
Bank balances and cash	1,235,972	175,108	General and administration expenses	(180,427)	(201,144)	Operating profit before working capital changes	655,488	312,007
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>3,983,150</b>	<b>2,761,410</b>	Financial charges	(3,446)	(9,766)	Working capital changes:		
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>86,551,431</b>	<b>86,494,651</b>	<b>PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD</b>	<b>603,782</b>	<b>230,860</b>	Inventories	5,676	13,106
<b>EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>			<b>BASIC AND DILUTED EARNINGS PER SHARE (in file)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	Trade and other receivables	(263,001)	(93,995)
<b>Equity</b>						Trade and other payables	(22,592)	(415,581)
Share capital	11,025,000	11,025,000				Cash flows from (used in) operations	375,571	(184,463)
Share capital under registration	1,102,500	-				Employees' end of service benefits paid	(34,469)	(162,662)
Treasury shares	(94,726)	(94,726)				Directors' remuneration paid	(33,500)	(35,000)
Statutory reserve	5,512,500	5,512,500				Net cash flows from (used in) operating activities	307,602	(382,125)
General reserve	1,087,579	1,087,579				<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Revaluation reserve	13,391,305	13,391,305				Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(66,125)	(1,371,643)
Investment revaluation reserve	2,170,031	2,060,858				Dividends received from an associate	1,200,000	1,100,000
Share of reserves of associate	133,434	102,286				Other dividends received	111,094	108,371
Retained earnings	49,870,583	49,266,801				Interest received	121,720	54,422
Proposed bonus shares	-	1,102,500				Interest paid	(2,846)	(15,807)
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>84,198,206</b>	<b>83,454,103</b>				Net cash flows from (used in) investing activities	1,363,843	(124,657)
Non-current liability						<b>FINANCING ACTIVITY</b>		
Employees' end of service benefits	316,361	331,782				Repayments of term loan	-	(621,609)
<b>Total non-current liability</b>	<b>316,361</b>	<b>331,782</b>				and cash flow used in financing activity	-	-
<b>Current liabilities</b>						<b>INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>1,671,445</b>	<b>(1,128,391)</b>
Trade and other payables	2,036,864	2,098,185				Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	(541,368)	2,955,006
Bank overdraft	-	610,581				<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT 31 MARCH</b>	<b>1,130,077</b>	<b>1,826,615</b>
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>2,036,864</b>	<b>2,708,766</b>						
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>2,353,225</b>	<b>3,040,548</b>						
<b>TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>	<b>86,551,431</b>	<b>86,494,651</b>						

### INTERIM STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY For the three months ended 31 March 2019 (Reviewed)

	Share capital BD	Share capital under registration BD	Treasury shares BD	Statutory reserve BD	General reserve BD	Revaluation reserve BD	Investment revaluation reserve BD	Share of reserves of associate BD	Retained earnings BD	Proposed bonus shares BD	Total BD		Share capital BD	Treasury shares BD	Statutory reserve BD	General reserve BD	Revaluation reserve BD	Investment revaluation reserve BD	Share of reserves of associate BD	Retained earnings BD	Proposed dividend BD	Total BD	
As at 1 January 2019	11,025,000	-	(94,726)	5,512,500	1,087,579	13,391,305	2,060,858	102,286	49,266,801	1,102,500	83,454,103	As at 1 January 2018	11,025,000	(94,726)	5,512,500	2,190,079	13,391,305	1,825,735	22,548	48,183,786	1,091,747	83,147,974	
Effect of adoption of IFRS 16 by an associate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,675)	-	-	(1,675)	Transfer to retained earnings on adoption of IFRS 9 by an associate	-	-	-	-	-	42,843	(42,843)	-	-	-	
As at 1 January 2019 (restated)	11,025,000	-	(94,726)	5,512,500	1,087,579	13,391,305	2,060,858	100,611	49,266,801	1,102,500	83,452,428	As at 1 January 2018 (restated)	11,025,000	(94,726)	5,512,500	2,190,079	13,391,305	1,825,735	65,391	48,140,943	1,091,747	83,147,974	
Profit for the period	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	603,782	-	603,782	Profit for the period	-	-	-	-	-	-	230,860	-	-	230,860	
Other comprehensive income for the period	-	-	-	-	-	-	109,173	32,823	-	-	141,996	Other comprehensive (loss) income for the period	-	-	-	-	(30,679)	15,754	-	-	-	(14,925)	
Total comprehensive income for the period	-	-	-	-	-	-	109,173	32,823	603,782	-	745,778	Total comprehensive (loss) income for the period	-	-	-	-	(30,679)	15,754	230,860	-	-	215,935	
Issue of bonus shares	-	1,102,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,102,500)	-	Dividend declared	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,091,747)	(1,091,747)	
As at 31 March 2019 (reviewed)	11,025,000	1,102,500	(94,726)	5,512,500	1,087,579	13,391,305	2,170,031	133,434	49,870,583	-	84,198,206	As at 31 March 2018 (reviewed)	11,025,000	(94,726)	5,512,500	2,190,079	13,391,305	1,795,056	81,145	48,371,803	-	-	82,272,162

# Explosion, gunfire rock downtown Kabul

● No one claimed immediate responsibility for the assault

● Ministry of Information said three suicide bombers had attacked a post office building at the communications ministry

● The explosion comes a week after the Taliban announced their annual spring offensive

AFP | Kabul, Afghanistan

Suicide bombers and gunmen launched an attack near a government ministry in central Kabul on Saturday, officials said, in an ongoing assault that destroyed weeks of relative calm in the capital.

The attack near the communications ministry occurred one day after planned talks between the Taliban and Afghan representatives were cancelled.

No one claimed immediate responsibility for the assault, which left people stranded in the tall building. Six people were injured, according to a health ministry spokesman.

Initial reports were confused, with officials from different agencies saying three or four attackers were involved. It was not clear how many were suicide bombers and how many were



A general view of the Afghan communication ministry as an attack between Afghan forces and attackers is still going on in central Kabul



Please pray for us as the enemy has reached very close to us. Suicide attack on communication ministry

A MAN NAMED SYED JAILLANI JALLAN SAID ON FACEBOOK

gunmen involved in a follow-up assault.

Journalists heard one big blast at around 11:40 am (0710 GMT), followed by sporadic gunfire for

more than an hour afterward.

"The information that we have is four attackers have placed themselves near the communication ministry and are engaged

in gun battles with the Afghan security forces," Amanduddin Shariati, a security official in Kabul told AFP.

On Twitter, the Ministry of Information said three suicide bombers had attacked a post office building at the communications ministry.

General Sayed Mohammad Roshan Dil, the Kabul police chief, said four attackers had been wearing police uniforms and had targeted a shrine near the ministry. One of the attackers was killed, he told Tolo.

Local television footage

showed a small plume of smoke near the ministry, and people climbing out windows on a lower level.

On Facebook, a man named Syed Jaillani Jallan said he was trapped inside the ministry.

"Please pray for us as the enemy has reached very close to us. Suicide attack on communication ministry," he wrote. AFP could not immediately verify the comment.

## Spring offensive

The communication ministry is located in downtown Ka-

bul, about two kilometres (1.25 miles) from the green zone, a heavily fortified foreign compound. It is the city's main commercial area and is home to a large hotel.

The ministry itself is an 18-storey building, thought to be the tallest in Kabul.

The explosion comes a week after the Taliban announced their annual spring offensive and amid ongoing fighting across Afghanistan.

The Afghan branch of the Islamic State group has also previously carried out multiple deadly attacks in Kabul.

Aside from a grenade attack on a military vehicle last week, the capital has in recent weeks enjoyed a period of relative calm, after a horrific year last year that saw a string of attacks including a massive bomb that was concealed in an ambulance and killed more than 100 people.

This week in the Qatari capital Doha, a summit planned between the Taliban and officials from across Afghanistan was scrapped at the last minute due to bickering over who should attend the conference.

The collapse comes at a critical time and amid continued bloodshed in Afghanistan, where the Taliban now control or influence about half of Afghanistan and 3,804 civilians were killed there last year, according to a UN tally.

Taliban officials are separately negotiating with the United States, which wants to forge a peace deal with the militants.

## Thai Navy to remove bitcoin-rich couple's sea home



Chad Elwartowski and his Thai girlfriend Supranee Thepdet, known as "Bitcoin Girl Thailand"

● The US Embassy is "providing all appropriate assistance" to Elwartowski, who has engaged an attorney, an embassy official said

Bangkok, Thailand

The Thai Navy will begin removing a "seasteed" home built by an American bitcoin investor and his partner off the coast of Thailand, an official said yesterday, as the couple remain in hiding from charges accusing them of violating the country's sovereignty.

Chad Elwartowski and his Thai girlfriend Supranee Thepdet, known as "Bitcoin Girl Thailand", are facing charges of threatening the kingdom's independence after authorities found their ocean-based home about 12 nautical miles from Phuket's shore.

But Elwartowski said the

home was 13 nautical miles out and therefore past Thailand's territorial waters.

The Thai Navy, which filed a complaint last week to Phuket's police, said the couple did not seek permission to construct their floating platform and a patrol ship was sent out on Saturday to dismantle it.

"We will do it today if we can," a senior Navy official said, adding that it might prove difficult given the depth of the waters where the home is located.

After the seasteed is removed, it would be used as evidence against the couple, said a Royal Thai Navy statement, which denied sending "any forces to chase or threaten the couple".

The American's visa has been revoked and if charged and found guilty, the maximum punishment Elwartowski, a software engineer who worked for the US military, and Supranee could be sentenced to is the death penalty.

The bitcoin-rich couple --



A "seasteed" home, about 12 nautical miles from Phuket's shore.

who are still in hiding -- are part of Ocean Builders, a community of entrepreneurs who aim to build permanent homes in waters outside of government territory.

Elwartowski blogged regularly on Ocean Builders about

erecting their ocean-dwelling home, a six-meter wide octagonal-shaped platform which included a kitchen, bathroom, eating area and bedroom.

The top of the platform served as a deck, which was covered with solar panels, and the whole

thing was mounted on a 2-metre-long floating steel "spar" which is anchored to the ocean's floor.

They had recently called for 20 interested investors for new seasteeds -- costing about \$150,000 each -- to be built around their maiden platform, and the money would have initially been raised by bitcoin, Elwartowski said.

So far, five orders have been "lined up", he said.

They were an underwater restaurant, three "SeaBnBs" for vacationers, and a tuna-farming venture -- the latter which they had planned to get permission from the Thai government, he said.

Elwartowski has also said Ocean Builders was "apolitical in the goal" and the couple simply wanted to be free.

The seasteading community consists of "tens of thousands" of supporters worldwide, said Joe Quirk, president of the Seasteading Institute -- a think tank co-founded in 2008 by famed tech entrepreneur Peter Thiel advocating for the "Next New World".

The institute believes seasteading is a solution to modern governments that don't function efficiently under "obsolete political systems", and oceans could be "humanity's next frontier".

"Seasteaders and bitcoin enthusiasts have always been fans of each other, because both communities understand that these innovations will...solve some of the deepest problems humanity faces," Quirk said.

## Venezuela's Guaido calls for 'biggest demo in history'

Caracas, Venezuela

Venezuela's opposition leader Juan Guaido called Friday for the "biggest demonstration in history" to put pressure on President Nicolas Maduro to step down.

The National Assembly head launched a challenge to Maduro's authority in January, declaring himself acting president.

Despite the support of more than 50 countries, including the United States, Guaido has been unable to dislodge Maduro, who retains the backing of the country's powerful military.

"We call on all the people of Venezuela to take part in the biggest demonstration in this country's history on May 1 to demand the usurpation ends definitively," said Guaido, addressing several hundred supporters at a rally in Caracas.

Guaido, 35, and the National Assembly have branded Maduro a "usurper" over his controversial re-election last year in polls widely viewed as rigged.

"Miraflores! Miraflores!" chanted supporters in reference to the presidential palace where Maduro lives.

The march will take place on Labor Day when the socialist government holds its own major street event.

# Egyptians vote to “Do the right”

● Sisi has argued that he needs longer to complete the job

● Sisi himself was among the first to vote when polls opened

AFP | Cairo, Egypt

Egyptians voted yesterday in a referendum that aims to cement the rule of President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

Voters were being asked to back amendments to the constitution to allow Sisi, 64, to run for another six-year term while boosting his control over the judiciary and giving the military even greater influence in political life.

Sisi himself was among the first to vote when polls opened, casting his ballot in the upmarket Cairo suburb of Heliopolis.

In Shubra, a working-class neighbourhood of the capital, dozens of voters, mostly women carrying their children, queued outside a polling station in the local high school.

In Cairo, troops and police were deployed in numbers although the interior ministry denied to give any nationwide figures.

Egypt is still battling a jihadist insurgency based in the Sinai Peninsula that has seen attacks in Cairo and other cities.

Sisi has argued that he needs longer to complete the job of restoring security and stability after the turmoil that followed the overthrow of veteran autocrat Hosni Mubarak in the Arab



An elderly Egyptian man casts his ballot in a box while voting at a polling station in a referendum on constitutional amendments, at a school in the capital Cairo's northern neighbourhood of Shubra,

Spring of 2011.

Out on the streets, his supporters waved flags bearing their campaign motto: “Do the Right,” as they pressed passers-by to turn out and vote ‘Yes’.

At a polling station in Manyal, a Cairo suburb overlooking the Nile, Mohamed Abdel Salam, 45, said he was voting enthusiastically in support of the changes.

“I don't care about the presi-

dential terms,” he said.

“Sisi could stay forever as long as he's doing his job... and he has already done a lot”.

Sisi won his first term as president in 2014, a year after he led the army in overthrowing elected Islamist president Mohamed Morsi following mass protests against his single turbulent in power.

Standing virtually unopposed

after the disqualification or withdrawal of all realistic challengers, he was re-elected in March 2018 with more than 97 percent.

For the past few weeks, Egypt's streets have been awash with banners and billboards urging citizens to “Do the right thing” and vote “Yes”, while popular folk singers have exhorted voters to go to the polls.



Earlier in the week, parliament overwhelmingly endorsed the constitutional changes, which also include the creation of a second parliamentary chamber and a quota ensuring at least 25 per cent of lawmakers are women

A DJ blared loud patriotic songs extolling the virtues of Egypt under Sisi's leadership, including a new song called “I adore Egypt” by iconic Lebanese diva Nancy Ajram.

But not everyone is upbeat about the changes.

Sporting casual attire, a mid-thirties voter at another polling station in the capital said: “We are all staff in the same company and we were instructed by management to go vote.

“I want to say ‘No’... on extending the presidential terms and the amendments related to the judiciary,” he said declining to give his name for fear of repercussions.

He pointed to his bosses nearby who were making sure employees were voting.

“Even if I say ‘No’, they (the authorities) are still going to do what they want in the end,” he added despondently.

## US authorities arrest man linked to N.Korea embassy raid

Washington, United States

US authorities have arrested a former marine in connection with a mysterious February raid on North Korea's embassy in Spain during which masked assailants roughed-up staff and stole computers, the *Washington Post* reported yesterday.

Citing two sources familiar with the case, the *Post* said federal authorities arrested Christopher Ahn, a former US Marine and member of a group dedicated to the overthrow of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

A dissident organisation known as the Cheollima Civil Defense (CCD) said it had orchestrated the February 22 embassy raid to highlight illicit activities rampant in North Korea's foreign missions.

The *Post* said federal agents had also searched the apartment of Adrian Hong Chang, a Mexican national who Spanish authorities said last month had led the embassy raid.

An FBI spokesman referred questions on the case to the Justice Department, who declined to comment.

The CCD, a dissident group believed to include high-profile North Korean defectors, said after the raid it had “shared certain information of enormous potential value with the FBI in the United States”.

# Bangladeshis protest after sexually assaulted girl burned to death

● Rafi died in hospital on April 10 after suffering 80 percent burns

● Eighteen people, including the head teacher, have been arrested

● One of those accused of the attack told a closed court earlier this week that the principal ordered the killing

AFP | Dhaka, Bangladesh

Demonstrations were held across the Bangladesh capital Saturday for the tenth consecutive day after a teenager who accused a head teacher of sexually harassing her was burned to death.

The killing of 19-year-old Nusrat Jahan Rafi has sparked outrage across the South Asian nation and put police action in the case under the spotlight.

Protesters in Dhaka chanted slogans demanding the death sentence for the killers of the girl, who police say was lured to the rooftop of the Islamic seminary she attended in Feni, south of the capital.

Police said the attackers then ordered her to withdraw police complaint against the head of



Bangladeshi woman holds a placard with a photograph of schoolgirl Nusrat Jahan Rafi at a protest in Dhaka, following her murder by being set on fire after she had reported a sexual assault

the school. When she refused, she was doused in kerosene and set on fire.

Rafi died in hospital on April 10 after suffering 80 per cent burns.

Eighteen people, including the head teacher, have been arrested.

Her death has set off demonstrations in several cities across the Muslim-majority country of 165 million.

Many believe the murder has exposed a “culture of impunity” surrounding sex crimes against women and children, while those who complain often feel

a backlash.

“Rapes and sexual assaults have risen alarmingly in the country,” protester M. Rahman Apu said. “Nusrat Rafi's murder proves that the even the bravest of girls do not get justice.

“Instead she was murdered for daring to lodge a complaint

“ she was murdered for daring to lodge a complaint against the perpetrator. Had police and the administration worked properly, she could have been protected

PROTESTER M. RAHMAN APU

against the perpetrator. Had police and the administration worked properly, she could have been protected,” Apu said.

### Party chief held

Garment union leader Kamrun Nahar, who had also joined the protests, said Rafi's murder has awakened the nation's conscience.

“We won't stop protests until the killers of Nusrat, and other perpetrators, are brought to book,” Nahar said.

“We don't want any more of these grisly murders.”

Rafi went to police in late March to report the case. A leaked video shows the local police station chief registering her complaint but dismissing it as “not a big deal”

The 18 arrested include the seminary headmaster. One of those accused of the attack told a closed court earlier this week that the principal ordered the killing.

The local head of the ruling Awami League party has been detained for allegedly helping the killers.

Rafi went to police in late March to report the case. A leaked video shows the local police station chief registering her complaint but dismissing it as “not a big deal”.

Police said at least five of those under arrest, including three of Rafi's classmates, tied her with a scarf before setting her on fire. They had planned to pass off the death as a suicide.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has vowed that all those involved will face action and police say they are investigating why more was not done to protect Rafi.

The Manusher Jonno Foundation, a non-government group, says there have been at least 39 cases of children under 18 being raped since April 2.

Another eight have been subjected to sexual harassment, the groups says.

“Our system has failed,” said Shipa Hafiza, executive director of Bangladesh rights group Ain O Salish Kendra

“Often we see that when there are rapes or sexual abuse of women or children, all the powerful people become a group to protect the perpetrators,” she said.

# Is this the end of the line for nationalism in Australia?

*If this political moment lasts, the country's conservative movement could be transformed*



WALEED ALY

Just two months ago, Australia seemed destined for what the country's commentariat calls a "Tampa" election. That's local shorthand for a campaign characterised by race baiting and scare tactics about refugees — a term derived from the 2001 election a few months after the government of Prime Minister John Howard ordered special forces to board a Norwegian freight ship called the MV Tampa, carrying more than 400 rescued refugees, to prevent it from reaching Australia.

A new law that allows refugees on Nauru and Manus Island to come to Australia for necessary medical treatment promised to put refugees front and centre in the upcoming general election, scheduled for May 18.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his coalition government saw this legislation passed against their will. They had railed against it, warning that the law would allow "rapists" and "pedophiles" into Australia. An opinion poll around that time showed a significant bounce for the government.

How long ago that seems. In the wake of the Christchurch, New Zealand, terrorist attack on Muslims last month, the Morrison government now finds itself under pressure over issues that recently appeared to give it an advantage.

For the moment, this takes the form of relentless questioning about where the government plans to place the far-right, nationalist One Nation party on its "how to vote" cards in the election. Those cards,

which are a consequence of Australia's preferential voting system in which voters list all candidates on the ballot in order of preference, are often a matter of political gaming, designed to maximise a party's likelihood of success. Normally, they're of interest only to political buffs.

But every now and again, they come to be read as a declaration of ideological affinity and become a mainstream issue. This is the case following the horror in New Zealand, given One Nation's history of racist politics, recently expressed in its leader's declaration that "Islam is a disease; we need to vaccinate ourselves against that."

Will the government pledge to put One Nation last on its voting card?

The question has dogged the government — becoming a staple of news conferences and interviews with parliamentarians — because the government hasn't provided a straightforward answer. After some hemming and hawing, there is still disagreement within the government about what to do.

The whole question has arisen for the governing coalition because it flirts with these kinds of politics.

Indeed, such was the hostility of numerous parliamentarians' rhetoric toward Islam that the head of Australia's top intelligence organisation advised them to moderate their language.

Perhaps the government's most committed member on this score is the Home Affairs minister, Peter Dutton, who recently asserted that people in Melbourne were "scared" to go to restaurants at night because of an epidemic of African gang violence — a supposed epidemic that even the state of Victoria, where Melbourne is located, says is overblown "hysteria."

By contrast, Dutton has argued that Australia should give "special



Protesters rallying against Islam

attention" to white South farmers, whom he regards as specially persecuted. He would "abide by our laws, and into our society, work hard for a life on welfare." He is not a politician expressing these views.

In October, senators voted in favour of a One Nation motion incorporating the white supremacist slogan "It's OK to be white." The government later blamed the administrative error for the vote, having initially trumpeted it as evidence of its oppositionism of any kind.

The kindest interpretation of this is that the coalition is sloppy and inattentive to t

## Maybe we'll be better off with a clown

*Ukraine's absurd election may turn out well for its*



ALISA SOPOVA

"No Promises, No Excuses!" Such is the only political message of the comedian who could soon lead one of Europe's largest countries. That outcome may seem absurd. Yet it could be an opportunity.

Volodymyr Zelensky scored a spectacular victory in the first round of Ukraine's presidential election on March 31, winning some 30 per cent of the votes, compared with about 16pc for the incumbent, Petro O Poroshenko.

It was an astonishing result not only because the actor's only political experience to date consists of playing the part of a president on TV, but also because he presented no platform, no policy proposal.

Branding himself "Ze," he campaigned mostly via social media postings and by touring the country with his comedy shows. Instead of substantive messages, he offered banter and mockery. When he was accused of being a clown instead of a serious can-

didate, Zelensky proudly agreed, posting a video selfie on Instagram with a round red nose superimposed on his face.

His defiance has proved triumphant, and it may well make him president after the runoff vote on April 21. Better to keep silent than to say anything in today's Ukraine — the country with the least trust in its government, according to a recent Gallup survey.

Since the Orange Revolution in 2004, politicians of all stripes have promised to defeat corruption and pull Ukraine out of the mire of its transition from communism. After so many lies, failures and disappointments, such promises have turned into cruel clichés.

The government's continuing war against the Russia-backed insurgency in eastern Ukraine has also created a toxic public discourse. Journalists have been called traitors simply for seeking accreditation from the separatist authorities of the Donbass region. Using the word "conflict" instead of "war" or "Russia" instead of "aggressor state" can destroy a reputation. Say something, almost anything, and you expose yourself to being called too pro-Russian, too pro-Western, too nationalistic or not patriotic enough.

In this climate, Zelensky's blank slate is an asset for him — as well as a canvas onto which people can paint whatever they want. And what do the people want right now? Apparently to punish Poroshenko for forgetting his own slogan to "live in a new way" from the 2014 election, and for returning instead to the comfort of the old, familiar Ukraine of corruption, poverty, inequality and dirty politics. Back then, a popular revolt had just toppled President Viktor F Yanukovich, who fled the country in disgrace. The rejection of Poroshenko today is less thrilling but no less momentous.

Just a few weeks ago, before the first round of voting, he was presenting himself as the only possible head of state, the nation's saviour. His political message had become markedly conservative. "Army. Language. Faith." Those three ingredients, the president repeatedly emphasised, were the keys to the "unique national identity" of Ukraine — even though the country is bilingual and secular.

At a rally in Cherkasy, central Ukraine, earlier this year, a local activist asked the president if he was going to fight corruption. Poroshenko answered, "I have a request for you: Light a candle — because you are a nonbeliever —

and God will calm you." He called the man, who had spoken in Russian, a "Moscow provocateur." A video of the exchange went viral. Poroshenko's arrogance was then punished in the voting booths.

After that he began to lose his nerve. In the opening move of the campaigning for the April 21 runoff, Poroshenko's team posted billboards that portrayed him facing off with President Vladimir V Putin of Russia. The move was widely ridiculed: Poroshenko, having nothing left to offer, appeared to be grasping at nationalist straws and trying to instill fear in a boogeyman. His staff promptly took down the ads.

In a poll taken April 9-14, 17pc of respondents said they intended to vote for Poroshenko and more than 48pc for Zelensky. And while Poroshenko has misstepped since the first round of voting, Zelensky, true to form, has done little except mock his competitor. After challenging the incumbent to a debate, Zelensky stood him up on April 14. (The two men disagreed about when to hold the event.) Another debate is scheduled for April 19.

Zelensky's supporters are often accused of confusing the TV comedy series in which he plays the president, "Servant of the People," with real life. The charge is para-

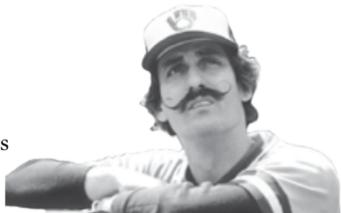


Zelensky's blank slate is an asset for him.

doxical because the show is ruthless towards everyday Ukrainians: this fiction will become reality as they are endorsing a wretched portrayal of t

1982

**Baseball: Rollie Fingers** of the Milwaukee Brewers becomes the first pitcher to record 300 saves.



1985

The compound of the militant group The Covenant, The Sword, and the Arm of the Lord surrenders to federal authorities in **Arkansas** after a two-day government siege.

1987

**The Tamil Tigers** are blamed for a car bomb that detonates in the Sri Lankan capital city of Colombo, killing 106 people.

1989

**Tiananmen Square protests of 1989:** In Beijing, around 100,000 students gather in Tiananmen Square to commemorate Chinese reform leader Hu Yaobang.



phobia and white racism in Melbourne.

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Since at least the 1990s, Australian conservatism has offered a highly successful, if philosophically incongruent mix of free-market liberalism and increasingly strident cultural nationalism.

Turnbull, who would frequently celebrate Australia's success as a multicultural country, and contend that those peddling Islamophobia were helping the Islamic State.

A more likely interpretation is that several of the coalition's members are prepared to play the politics of race, either cynically or as a matter of conviction, and that the rising prominence of One Nation has emboldened them. And given that the government's natural areas of political strength are around the issue of border protection (especially asylum-seeker policy) and national security, there is every reason to suspect that the coalition profits when politics skirts xenophobic themes. But the visceral reality of

lem of extremism, even under the previous prime minister, Malcolm

# own as president

people



Periodic uprisings that replace one figurehead with another, hopefully better, figurehead have not been enough. This abnormal election may announce a new model for societal change.

abuse their neighbours but worship ministers' parking spaces, and about housewives pressuring husbands to accept bribes so they can buy a fur coat.

The series, in a word, is about how the corruption of ordinary citizens translates into the corruption of the political class. And if that is the closest thing Zelensky has to a political manifesto, then his central message is this: We are all to blame for what we have.

When during the campaign, he was asked to share his plans for the presidency, "Ze" simply said that he would ask the people what they want through popular ref-

Christchurch has recast much of our politics in new light: not as straight-talking honesty about the threat of Islamism, but as contributing to a more polarised, extremist environment.

Polling in the aftermath of Christchurch found that a remarkable 63 per cent of Australians agreed that "white extremism is every bit as dangerous as Muslim fundamentalism," while 42 per cent agreed that politicians "have deliberately stirred up anti-Islamic sentiment as a way of getting votes."

What was once a benefit has become a liability. What was once populist is eroding the government's political capital. It is perhaps for this reason that we've seen the government pivot to an economic message, based mostly on the virtues of tax cuts. The Tampa route to retaining power seems to be shut off.

There's no guarantee this political moment will last. But if it does, it could be a truly transformative one for Australian conservative politics.

Since at least the 1990s, Australian conservatism has offered a highly successful, if philosophically incongruent mix of free-market liberalism and increasingly strident cultural nationalism. But slowly these pillars have begun to erode.

As in much of the world, economic liberalism is losing some of its lustre in Australia. But perhaps more so than elsewhere, nationalist anti-immigrant politics is running aground, too. The times would seem to demand a renewed Australian conservatism, attentive to economic and social inequality, and comfortable enough with cultural diversity to search for political capital elsewhere.

(Waleed Aly is a columnist and broadcaster and a politics lecturer at Monash University in Melbourne.)

erendums and ideas crowdsourcing. Whether he meant this or not, such statements alone restore agency to common people and signal that this election may be an occasion for Ukrainians to push for more transparent governance and greater public participation.

Periodic uprisings that replace one figurehead with another, hopefully better, figurehead have not been enough. This abnormal election may announce a new model for societal change – from the ground up, through daily civic effort and personal responsibility. Put differently: What a Zelensky presidency will look like will depend primarily on ordinary Ukrainians.

They have sustained democracy by keeping a check on presidential power. Now, they will need to keep a check on the new president himself. Zelensky is inexperienced, politically amorphous and thought to have ties to the oligarch Ihor V Kolomoisky. Clearly, he is no saviour. But if Ukrainians can capitalise on this fact, plain as it is, the comedian's election to the presidency could be a historic opportunity for them to help themselves.

(Alisa Sopova is an independent journalist from Ukraine.)



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Despite the fact that the Mueller Report should not have been authorized in the first place & was written as nastily as possible by 13 (18) Angry Democrats who were true Trump Haters, including highly conflicted Bob Mueller himself, the end result is No Collusion, No Obstruction!

@realDonaldTrump

02



Corporate and political elites consolidate more and more wealth while the middle class shrinks, then spend millions to elect right-wing politicians and pass policies that will protect their power and slash their taxes. That is what we're up against and why we fight for justice.

@BernieSanders

03



As people become more unhappy and disturbed in spite of affluence and the new technology, the Vedic teachings of the unity of Consciousness and the healing powers of Yoga and Ayurveda become more relevant to everyone.

@davidfrawleyved

04



Privileged, honoured to be at historic event, of stone laying ceremony of Swami Narayan Temple at Abu Dhabi just now. This one single step is giant leap forward for entire civilisation. Abu Dhabi has honoured Hindustan

@sikka\_harinder

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

## In defence of the media-messenger



CAPT. MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

The world watched in horror last Monday as flames destroyed the famous eighth century historic Parisian landmark, the Notre Dame.

Curiously, at almost the same time, halfway around the world, a small fire broke out at Jerusalem's 2,000-plus year old Al Aqsa Mosque, one of the most revered shrines of the Islamic world. While the larger Notre Dame fire destroyed its iconic spire and the wooden beams of its attic and caused significant smoke and water damage to the church and its art works, the fire at Al Aqsa was thankfully much smaller and quickly contained, damaging only a single security booth in the compound.

I am going into these details to build up for my point here: immediately after the Notre Dame news went viral, many people complained about the media bias that did not highlight the Al Aqsa fire. Now this is absurd. Given the huge scale of the Notre Dame tragedy, it was obvious that this was the bigger news. There was no prejudice here.

**As a rule, we need to follow a simple guideline on social media: never write or say anything on your Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or any other account that you would not be able to prove.**

News-gathering and presentation is a cruel and often, dispassionate thing. You must have heard of the phrase 'as stale as yesterday's news'. The media is guided by the attention of its audience. Yet, when assaulted by social media cries of bias, we are quick to (mis)judge the media. Indeed, it has become fashionable to shoot the messenger – which is the media! – instead of listening to the message and

acting upon it.

Most people these days are quick to believe the first version of news that they hear and most often, this comes from their social media. That is why, Bahrain has now enacted stricter measures to protect its citizens and the Kingdom's reputation from hate-mongering and false rumours, especially over social media.

As a rule, we need to follow a simple guideline on social media: never write or say anything on your Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or any other account that you would not be able to prove, not be able to say face-to-face to the person or authority whom you are addressing and do have a suggestion for a constructive solution. Think before you type and post – remember, your online reputation is as important as your real-life one and can get you into even more trouble!

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)

# business

## Wonder News launches regional HQ in Bahrain

Chinese technology group to invest US\$50 Million and create 500 jobs



WonderNews CEO, Ou Zhenxing name, in the presence of HH Shaikh Hisham bin Abdul Rahman Al Khalifa, Governor of Capital Governorate, and John Kilmartin - Executive Director ICT of the Economic Development Board announced the opening. Above, a cake cutting held on the occasion

TDT | Manama

Chinese technology group Wonder News yesterday announced launching its regional headquarters in Bahrain, which will offer services to GCC in the e-commerce and FinTech sectors.

The group said it will invest US\$50 million and offer 500 employment opportunities in the Kingdom over the next three years.

The move was announced during a press conference attended by WonderNews CEO, Ou Zhenxing name, in the pres-

ence of HH Shaikh Hisham bin Abdul Rahman Al Khalifa, Governor of Capital Governorate, and John Kilmartin - Executive Director ICT of the Economic Development Board.

Wonder News was established in 2015 by Fujian Wangle Technology Co., Ltd., a Chinese company that creates value-added solutions and applications on content platforms, with an emphasis on e-commerce and games.

The company, with over 100 million users globally, is headquartered in Fuzhou, China and has offices in the UAE, Morocco, Egypt and Saudi Arabia among

others.

Capital Governor said: "The launch of Wonder News, with its headquarters in Manama, is one of the major results of the memorandum of understanding that was signed between the Capital Governorate and the Shenzhen City in China in September 2016."

"We are excited to welcome WonderNews into the Kingdom and we do value their investment which will create a new cluster within the economy of the Kingdom," added Shaikh Hisham Al Khalifa.

Wonder News CEO, Ou Zhenxing, stated that the com-

pany has over 10 years of experience in providing internet products in the Middle East. "We have a highly-qualified research and development team which, working with advanced technology, has successfully developed and introduced numerous applications to over 100 million users," he said.

John Kilmartin, the Executive Director of ICT at the EDB said, "Wonder News' decision to establish its regional HQ in Bahrain is a testament to Bahrain's increasingly sophisticated tech ecosystem and growing status as an innovation hub."



MIKE ORLOV

## Workplace Happiness

There is constant pressure to innovate and position products and services more creatively than ever before. Innovation and creativity are more likely to happen when employees are happy. Employees will not be happy if they have heightened states of on-going daily anxiety where they expect something awful to happen at any moment. Worse is when employees sense debilitating stressful incidents. And if they exist in a fearful state, concerned about a public telling off or fear about losing their jobs, employees will turn into inert-inepts.

In order to inspire happiness at work, leaders should focus on creating safe, positive, and nurturing environments rather than a threatening, bullying, fear-engendering hell. If we can create appropriate safe-places where individuals trust each other and bond with other team members, and bridge gaps between teams, then we are more likely to build sustainable success.

When our employees sense they are understood, and welcomed, they naturally feel happy at work. To feel happy at work, or at home, individuals have to feel like they belong. Happy workplaces contagiously inspire people to greater levels of initiative, to be innovative, to achieve higher productivity and to perform more effectively. Workplace happiness is real and is attainable but does not happen by accident. Leaders need to set themselves a goal with specific objectives to ensure a happy workplace.

**In order to inspire happiness at work, leaders should focus on creating safe, positive, and nurturing environments rather than a threatening, bullying, fear-engendering hell**

Encouraging employees to feel a part of the enterprise rather than treating them as carbon units-of-production, enriching work lives through effective job design and enlightening individuals through communicating purpose, vision, values and mission will aid in this creation of appropriate safe-places. Energising people through recognition of a job well done, appreciating them for their positive efforts and praising them publicly will enable a happier work-space.

Delegation through agreeing specific objectives and indicators to be achieved on the journey to achieving these objectives will empower people. They will feel much more in control of their activities and sense the organisation's processes need them, rather than feeling they are just a part of the processes.

If initiative-taking, innovative and industrious implementers are part of your vision for your employees, help them by creating a happy workplace. Then you will have individuals working with you who share a sense of imagining a positive future for the enterprise as well as for themselves, built on sustainable success and collegiate collaboration and coordination.

A happy workplace is one anchored in a feeling of community with shared and normalised purpose where individuals are given a secure-space and are made to feel welcome. Opening the door to workplace happiness for employees, where they feel they are understood, respected, comfortable and cared for will ensure they feel at home. They will then give more to the future success of the enterprise.

Happy workplaces value relationships, personal growth, positive reinforcement, and brainstorming, a place where everyone's ideas matter. Employees initially seek to further their own personal interests when they join an enterprise, to secure: income; achievement; status. They then strive for recognition and greater responsibility. If they are happy, they will then want to contribute much more as they realise their employer's values do not contravene their own.

Happy employees will then wish to use their knowledge, experience and skills they bring with them. They will also gladly and willingly want to develop more capabilities for the benefit of themselves as well as the company.

Employees are looking for an equitable effort-reward bargain which is not only acceptable but delights and excites. Are you ready to start your movement to build an organisation focusing on workplace happiness, where parity of esteem and unity in diversity underpin development of people and a happy workplace?

*(Mike Orlov is a Partner at Stepping Stone Global, a Bahrain-based boutique strategic management consultancy. He is also a Fellow of the Institute of Leadership and Management. Email: info@steppingstoneglobal.com)*

## Faith capital invests in Bahraini start-up

Kuwait City

Faith Capital said it has participated in the seed round of the Bahraini start-up Inagrab.

Inagrab's core product 'Dalooni', helps businesses by connecting them to a sales force that promotes products for a commission.

Faith Capital along with Bahrain Development Bank, 500 startups and Fla6labs will be an integral factor in the scaling and growth of Inagrab.

Since its inception in 2017, Inagrab has been a platform that helps retail businesses scale their operations with the help of A.I and data.

"We embarked on a journey to bridge a very obvious gap and offer a solution that will both be beneficial for the Business owner and the individual (specifically the many in need of



Officials during a photocall

another source of income). That was proven by our quick growth since the inception of Dalooni, and we believe it's time to grow outside the current borders into

neighbouring countries," says Hussain Haji, the Founder and CEO of Inagrab.

"Faith Capital continues to focus its efforts on backing MENA

founders in the GCC region by making its first investment in Bahrain," states Mohammed Jaffar, Deputy Chairman and CEO of Faith Capital.

## NBB names monthly cash prize winners

TDT | Manama

National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) announced the first four winners of its "AlWatani Savings Scheme" for March 2019 at a ceremony held in the new Seef Mall Branch.

The winners for US\$25,000 each are Batool Ebrahim Abdullah Alhaddad, S.Adnan Saeed Baqer Ali, Nujoom Mohsin Abdullah Al Hakam and Omran Abbas Hasan Abbas.

The 2019 AlWatani Savings scheme produces four US\$25,000 monthly winners and two Semi-Annual Cash Prizes of US\$250,000 each. In addition, a grand midyear prize



"AlWatani Savings Scheme" March winners with bank officials during a photocall

of US\$1,000,000 plus a five-year monthly salary of US\$5,000 will be awarded to one winner. "Dream Prize" is yet to be announced. The December 2019 year-end

## IMF approves \$118.2 mn rapid credit for Mozambique

Washington, United States

The International Monetary Fund board on Friday approved an \$118.2 million credit that will be rushed out for cyclone-devastated Mozambique to help with the recovery efforts.

The zero-interest, 10-year loan will help shore up the country's budget amid the reconstruction efforts after the massive damage caused last month by Cyclone Idai.

The storm cut a path of destruction through Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe on the night of March 14-15, caus-

ing damage worth \$2 billion, according to the World Bank.

In Mozambique alone, more than 600 people died among the 1.85 million affected while over 340 died in Zimbabwe.

"Emergency assistance and reconstruction costs are estimated to be enormous, making this storm the worst and costliest natural disaster to ever strike the country," said Tao Zhang, deputy managing director of the Washington-based lender. In addition to the loss of life, he said the country suffered "substantial damage to physical infrastructure and productive capacity."

## BDFEX to explore opportunities in hydrocarbon industry

TDT | Manama

International and regional corporations, SMEs, investors and entrepreneurs will explore new business opportunities during the first Business Development Forum and Expo (BDFEX) to be held at The Diplomat Radisson Blu Hotel Manama, Bahrain on April 24 and 25.

The expo, which will see the participation of downstream hydrocarbon industry from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, will focus on increasing the local content of manufacturing and services in the hydrocarbon downstream industry, creating new sustainable jobs, and attracting investments.

The two-day event is jointly organised by PROACT International Consultancy, Bahrain and United Gulf Industrial Consortia for In-



Musaed Al Qarni

vestment Management and Consultation, Jubail, Saudi Arabia.

Member of the Organising Committee, Musaed Al Qarni, explained that corporations participating in BDFEX Forum and Expo will get the opportunity to find new partners, find new technologies, expand their network of suppliers and buyers, and promote their local programmes."

## BDB, CrediMax announce 'Point of Sale Assignment'



BDB and CrediMax officials during the deal signing

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Development Bank (BDB) yesterday announced the launch of Point of Sales Assignment in collaboration with CrediMax.

The move, BDB said, would provide credit mitigation and facilitate the provision of financing to SMEs who are unable to

provide other forms of security.

BDB said the collaboration with CrediMax will allow "POS Assignment on card receivables."

The Point of Sale Assignment can be used by retailers and service providers that accept debit and credit cards as a mode of payment, to enhance the security package. The sales collected through a company's debit

and credit card machine will be deposited in the company's account with BDB for the tenor of the finance.

BDB's Group CEO, Sanjeev Paul, stated: "Through the launch of the Point of Sale Assignment, all parties involved in the transaction win. The customer receives the required funding, BDB supports the start-up and SME industry,

and CrediMax increases their client base."

CrediMax Chief Executive Yousif Ali Mirza commented, "We are very excited to announce our partnership with BDB in the launch of Point of Sale Assignment, which comes in line with CrediMax's strategy to develop innovative financial tools for its clients while providing superior customer service."

## China releases new rules on game approvals

Reuters | Shanghai

China's press and publication regulator has issued new rules on applications for publishing online games in China, signalling a possible acceleration in the handing out of formal approvals.

The State Administration of

Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television released the new rules late on Friday.

Under the guidelines, games will undergo content vetting and the number of games allowed on to the market will be controlled. China stopped granting licences to monetize online games in March 2018



Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Dr Abdulhussain Mirza with the fifth batch of contractors and consultants who have been approved for the installation of solar systems. A total of 42 out of 55 consultants and contractors passed the training programme, which was held over a week from April 7 to 11 and organized by the Center for Sustainable Energy in cooperation with the Electricity and Water Authority and the United Nations Development Programme. The minister said 198 of the total of 250 who took part have passed the examination.

# Tackling gender investment gap

Women are significantly less likely to invest in the market than men: based on studies from 2016 and 2017, the micro-investing app Acorns found 57 percent of women don't invest at all, versus 44 percent of men



the "Fearless Girl" statue stands facing the "Charging Bull" as tourists take pictures in New York.

## Washington, United States

As a professional woman in her late 30s, Kate Packard was keen to start investing. Like many novices, her enthusiasm took a knock when she hit a wall of impenetrable jargon -- and was all but killed off by "mansplaining" from the men around her.

"They'll be like, 'Money is green! And it's paper!'" said the strategic communications manager from Sterling, Virginia. "Yes, thanks, I can get there on my own."

To do so, the 38-year-old turned to one of a growing number of groups run by women, for women -- to help bridge the gender gap when it comes to investment.

Women are significantly less likely to invest in the market than men: based on studies from 2016 and 2017, the micro-investing app Acorns found 57 percent of women don't invest at all, versus 44 percent of men.

Over a lifetime, that can translate into hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost income -- and can hit particularly hard in countries like the United States, where wise investment can make the difference between hardship and comfort in retirement.

Confidence is key: 61 per cent of women in the Acorns study



**Confidence is key: 61 per cent of women in the Acorns study felt they had a low level of understanding when it came to investing, compared to 43 per cent of men.**

felt they had a low level of understanding when it came to investing, compared to 43 per cent of men.

"For the novice, it's really intimidating," said Pamela Sams, a financial advisor in Herndon, Virginia, who hosts regular group meetings for women like Packard who want to better manage their finances and investments.

### 'Women need a safe space'

Packard's account backs that up.

"I'll see a word I don't know, so I look it up. But then there's another word I don't understand. Suddenly I'm four definitions deep, and I'm tired and discouraged," she said. "I wanted to be among women."

Sams started the group in October 2018, including an online forum where members can post questions.

"Women need a safe space to really find out about these things," she said.

Her experience has taught her many women aren't comfortable handling longer-term investments, even if they feel fine managing daily finances.

Take the case of meeting attendee Shari True, a senior manager for a non-profit in Reston, Virginia.

True, 53, worked in a bank when she and her husband first started dating, and she handles their daily budget.

"It made sense that I would handle that," she explained. Her husband does their taxes and manages their investments, since those were his before the marriage.

True and her husband have discussed their investments, but she never thought of taking them over.

"I never even considered studying finance or business in school, since it always seemed like such a male-dominated

field," she said. "It's very intimidating."

Packard echoed that message. "When you read articles, they're interviewing men, and they're written by men, and on the websites, you only see male leaders," she said.

"You don't see women in the industry, so you develop an unconscious bias of 'I'm excluded here.'"

### 'Statistically better investors'

True and Packard are far from alone: only 27 percent of women feel their education prepared them to manage their own finances (versus 35 percent of men), according to the Acorns study.

Sheila Handler, a data and policy analyst in Washington, started looking into opening a market-linked retirement account in March -- and found herself ill-equipped.

"My parents have tried to instill good money sense in me, such as saving aggressively, but the next step is never something we've talked about," said the 24-year-old.

"Not that there's any real chance of loss, but it's such a large quantity of money!" she said. "So I feel overly cautious."

A succession of studies has shown women to be more risk-averse than their male counterparts.

While this attitude can actually make them better investors -- women outperformed men by 0.4 percentage points, in a Fidelity client data analysis for instance -- it can also be what holds them back.

### 'Somebody you can relate to'

While Handler is starting relatively early, a reluctance to invest can have heavy costs.

The women's investment advising company Ellevest estimates that over a 35-year period, lower investment can cost anywhere from about \$270,000 to more than \$1 million, according to projections based on average salaries and standard asset allocation strategies.

But there are growing signs of companies tackling the issue -- to get more women investing, and to chip away at the male-dominated culture that keeps them away in the first place.

Fidelity, for instance, hosts webinars aimed at teaching financial literacy to women. And there are non-profit organizations that recruit women into finance and asset management, aiming to create more diverse teams.

"It's important you have somebody across the table you can relate to," summed up Janet Cowell, CEO of Girls Who Invest, one such non-profit.

## London climate protest arrests top 700

London, United Kingdom

The Extinction Rebellion environmental protests in London rumbled on into a sixth day yesterday as the total number of arrests hit 718.

Demonstrators were continuing to block Waterloo Bridge in the city and the central Oxford Circus junction despite the removal by police of the pink sailing boat which had acted as a natural focal point for the movement.

Some 28 people have been charged in relation to the protests, which have caused disruption for commuters in the British capital.

The protests are organised by the campaign group Extinction Rebellion, which was established last year in Britain by academics and has become one of the world's fastest-growing environmental movements.

Campaigners want governments to declare a climate and ecological emergency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2025, halt biodiversity loss and be led by new "citizens' assemblies on climate and ecological justice".

## China invites North Korea to Belt and Road summit

Beijing, China

China said Friday leaders from 37 nations and North Korean representatives will attend a summit for its Belt and Road Initiative next week as it hit back at criticism of the massive trade infrastructure project.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's pet project is a \$1 trillion programme that includes maritime, rail and road projects in Asia, Africa and Europe.

The Belt and Road Initiative has divided Europe, and Washington has called it a "vanity project", but a growing number of nations are signing up despite warnings about debt and opaque deals that favour Chinese firms.

Italy became the first G7 member to join the scheme this month and will be among the 37 nations represented at the leader level at the April 25-27 summit in Beijing, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi said at a press briefing.

Most other nations on the list have traditionally warm ties with Beijing, including most of Southeast Asia and eastern European countries that were former members of the Soviet bloc.

The United States has said it will not be sending a high-level delegation.

Wang said that "China's neighbour North Korea" will be sending a delegation.

"This is very normal because it is an economic cooperation initiative... but (no countries) have the right to prevent others from participating," he said.

# Huawei funded by Chinese state security: report

## Reuters

US intelligence has accused Huawei Technologies of being funded by Chinese state security, *The Times* said yesterday, adding to the list of allegations faced by the Chinese technology company in the West.

The CIA accused Huawei of receiving funding from China's National Security Commission, the People's Liberation Army and a third branch of the Chinese state intelligence network, the British newspaper reported, citing a source.

Earlier this year, US intelli-

gence shared its claims with other members of the Five Eyes intelligence-sharing group, which includes Britain, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, according to the report.

Huawei dismissed the allegations in a statement cited by the newspaper.

"Huawei does not comment on unsubstantiated allegations backed up by zero evidence from anonymous sources," a Huawei representative told *The Times*.

The company, the CIA and China's Foreign Ministry did not respond immediately to requests



Meng Wanzhou, Huawei's chief financial officer

for comment.

The accusation comes at a time of trade tensions between Washington and Beijing and amid concerns in the United States that Huawei's equipment could be used for espionage. The company has said the concerns are unfounded.

Authorities in the United States are probing Huawei for alleged sanctions violations.

Meng Wanzhou, Huawei's chief financial officer and daughter of its founder, Ren Zhengfei, was arrested in Canada in December at the request of

the United States on charges of bank and wire fraud in violation of U.S. sanctions against Iran.

She denies wrongdoing and her father has previously said the arrest was "politically motivated".

Amid such charges, top educational institutions in the West have recently severed ties with Huawei to avoid losing federal funding.

Another Chinese technology company, ZTE Corp has also been at the center of similar controversies in the United States.

## show

## OASIS JUFFAIR

- 1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW**  
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.30 + 4.45 + 8.00 + 11.15 PM  
 DAILY AT (VIP): 2.15 + 7.45 PM
- 2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW**  
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 4.15 + 6.30 + 12.00 MN  
 DAILY AT (VIP): 12.00 + 5.30 + 11.00 PM
- 3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW**  
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS  
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 PM  
 DAILY AT (3D): 12.15 + 5.00 + 9.45 PM
- 4-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)**  
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL  
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 6.00 + 11.15 PM  
 DAILY AT (3D): 2.15 + 7.00 + 11.45 PM
- 5-DUMBO (PG) (ADVENTURE/DRAMA/FAMILY)**  
 COLIN FARRELL, MICHAEL KEATON, DANNY DEVITO  
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 8.30 + 10.45 PM
- 6-HELLBOY (18+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY)**  
 DAVID HARBOUR, MILLA JOVOVICH, AND IAN MCSHANE  
 DAILY AT: 3.30 + 8.45 PM
- 7-LUCIFER (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)**  
 MOHANLAL, MANJU WARRIER, VIVEK OBEROI, TOVINO THOMAS  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.15 + 4.30 + 7.45 + 11.00 PM
- 8-MADHURA RAJA (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)**  
 MAMMOOTTY, JAI, ANUSREE, SALIM KUMAR, RAMESH PISHARODY  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
- 9-MERA NAAM SHAJI (PG-15) (MALAYALAM) NEW**  
 ASIF ALI, BIJU MENON, BAIJU  
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 5.30 + 11.15 PM
- 10-JERSEY ( ) (TELUGU) NEW**  
 NANI, SHARDAH, SREENATH, SATHYARAJ  
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH  
 DAILY AT: 2.30 + 8.15 PM
- 11-VELLAI POOKKAL ( ) (TAMIL) NEW**  
 VIVEKH, CHARLE, POOJA DEVARIYA  
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.00 + 5.30 PM
- 12-KANCHANA-3 (15+) NEW**  
 RAGHAVA, LAWRENCE, VEDHIKA, OVIYA  
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH (TAMIL)  
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 8.45 PM

## CITYCENTRE

- 1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW**  
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.45 + 5.00 + 8.15 + 11.30 PM + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
- 2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW**  
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 + 12.00 MN + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)  
 DAILY AT: DAILY AT (VIP I): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM  
 DAILY AT (IMAX 2D): 3.00 + 8.00 + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

- 3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW**  
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 + 8.30 + 10.30 PM
- 4-TRIPLE THREAT (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW**  
 TONY JAA, IKO UWAIIS, SCOTT ADKINS  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 3.30 + 7.45 + 12.00 MN
- 5-STOCKHOLM (PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME/DRAMA) NEW**  
 ETHAN HAWKE, NOOMI RAPACE, MARK STRONG  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 5.15 + 9.45 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
- 6-THE HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW**  
 JESSE EISENBERG, ALEXANDER SKARSG'RD, SALMA HAYEK  
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 5.30 + 9.45 PM
- 7-MISSION OF HONOR (HURRICANE) (PG-15) (ACTION/DRAMA/WAR) NEW**  
 IWAN RHEON, MILO GIBSON, STEFANIE MARTINI  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 3.15 + 7.30 + 11.45 PM
- 8-KURSK (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW**  
 LÉA SEYDOUX, COLIN FIRTH, AUGUST DIEHL  
 DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM
- 9-TEEN SPIRIT (PG-15) (DRAMA/MUSICAL) NEW**  
 ELLE FANNING, REBECCA HALL, ZLATKO BURIC  
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 5.30 + 9.45 PM
- 10-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)**  
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)  
 DAILY AT (VIP II): 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM  
 DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 12.15 + 5.15 + 10.15 PM
- 11-DUMBO (PG) (ADVENTURE/DRAMA/FAMILY)**  
 COLIN FARRELL, MICHAEL KEATON, DANNY DEVITO  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.15 + 3.30 + 5.45 + 8.00 + 10.15 PM
- 12-HELLBOY (18+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY)**  
 DAVID HARBOUR, MILLA JOVOVICH, AND IAN MCSHANE  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 + 12.00 MN
- 13-LITTLE (PG-15) (COMEDY)**  
 REGINA HALL, ISSA RAE, MARSAL MARTIN  
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
- 14-DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE (18+) (CRIME/THRILLER/DRAMA)**  
 BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.45 + 9.00 PM
- 15-CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
- 16-US (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER)**  
 LUPITA NYONG'O, ELISABETH MOSS, ANNA DIOP  
 DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.45 + 12.00 MN
- 17-ESCAPE ROOM (PG-15) (THRILLER)**  
 TAYLOR RUSSELL, LOGAN MILLER, DEBORAH ANN WOLL  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM
- 18-WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)**  
 BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIFER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL  
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.00 + 9.00 PM  
 DAILY AT (ARABIC DUBBED): 11.00 AM + 3.00 + 7.00 + 11.00 PM
- 19-PET SEMATARY (18+) (HORROR/THRILLER)**

- 20-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)**  
 LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.30 + 8.30 PM
- 21-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY)**  
 KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 2.45 + 7.00 + 11.15 PM
- 22-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER)**  
 JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 6.00 + 11.00 PM
- 23-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)**  
 KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN  
 DAILY AT: 2.15 + 6.45 + 11.15 PM
- 24-JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (PG) (COMEDY/ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 ROWAN ATKINSON, OLGA KURYLENKO, EMMA THOMPSON  
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 5.00 + 9.15 PM

## SEEF (II)

- 1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW**  
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT  
 DAILY AT: (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
- 2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW**  
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
- 3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW**  
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 + 8.30 + 10.30 PM
- 4-TRIPLE THREAT (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW**  
 TONY JAA, IKO UWAIIS, SCOTT ADKINS  
 DAILY AT: 5.15 + 7.15 + 9.15 + 11.15 PM
- 5-STOCKHOLM (PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME/DRAMA) NEW**  
 ETHAN HAWKE, NOOMI RAPACE, MARK STRONG  
 DAILY AT: 5.30 + 7.30 + 9.30 + 11.30 PM
- 6-THE HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW**  
 JESSE EISENBERG, ALEXANDER SKARSG'RD, SALMA HAYEK  
 DAILY AT: 2.30 + 7.15 + 12.00 MN
- 7-MISSION OF HONOR (HURRICANE) (PG-15) (ACTION/DRAMA/WAR) NEW**  
 IWAN RHEON, MILO GIBSON, STEFANIE MARTINI  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 6.00 + 11.30 PM
- 8-KURSK (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW**  
 LÉA SEYDOUX, COLIN FIRTH, AUGUST DIEHL  
 DAILY AT: 2.30 + 7.00 + 11.30 PM
- 9-TEEN SPIRIT (PG-15) (DRAMA/MUSICAL) NEW**  
 ELLE FANNING, REBECCA HALL, ZLATKO BURIC  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM
- 10-MISSION IN 7 DAYS (PG) (KUWAITI/COMEDY/THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW**  
 ABDULLAH AL-TARARWAH MOHAMED SAFAR  
 DAILY AT: 6.45 + 11.15 PM
- 11-DUMBO (PG) (ADVENTURE/DRAMA/FAMILY)**  
 COLIN FARRELL, MICHAEL KEATON, DANNY DEVITO  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 + 6.00 + 8.15 + 10.30 PM
- 12-HELLBOY (18+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY)**

- DAVID HARBOUR, MILLA JOVOVICH, AND IAN MCSHANE**  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 3.45 + 8.30 PM
- 13-LITTLE (PG-15) (COMEDY)**  
 REGINA HALL, ISSA RAE, MARSAL MARTIN  
 DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.15 + 11.00 PM
- 14-CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)**  
 BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 8.45 PM
- 15-WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)**  
 BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIFER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.30 + 3.30 PM
- 16-MASHA AND THE BEAR THE NEW ADVENTURES (G) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)**  
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 1.45 + 3.30 PM
- 17-BADLA (PG-15) (HINDI/THRILLER/CRIME)**  
 AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE  
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 4.45 + 9.30 PM
- 18-LUCIFER (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)**  
 MOHANLAL, MANJU WARRIER, VIVEK OBEROI, TOVINO THOMAS  
 DAILY AT: 2.45 + 8.15 PM

## SEEF (I)

- 1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW**  
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 2.00 + 5.15 + 8.30 + 11.45 PM
- 2-MERA NAAM SHAJI (PG-15) (MALAYALAM) NEW**  
 ASIF ALI, BIJU MENON, BAIJU  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN
- 3-JERSEY ( ) (TELUGU) NEW**  
 NANI, SHARDAH, SREENATH, SATHYARAJ  
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH  
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 6.15 + 11.45 PM
- 4-VELLAI POOKKAL ( ) (TAMIL) NEW**  
 VIVEKH, CHARLE, POOJA DEVARIYA  
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH  
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 6.15 + 11.45 PM
- 5-KANCHANA-3 (15+) NEW**  
 RAGHAVA, LAWRENCE, VEDHIKA, OVIYA  
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH (TAMIL)  
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 8.15 PM  
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH (TELUGU)  
 DAILY AT: 2.00 PM
- 6-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)**  
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL  
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM
- 7-SHERDIL (PG-15) (URDU/ACTION/DRAMA)**  
 MIKAAL ZULFIQAR, ARMEENA RANA KHAN, BELAL SHAHID  
 DAILY AT: 5.15 + 11.30 PM
- 8-MADHURA RAJA (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)**  
 MAMMOOTTY, JAI, ANUSREE, SALIM KUMAR, RAMESH PISHARODY  
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

## SAAR

- 1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW**  
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.30 + 4.45 + 8.00 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)

- 2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW**  
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.00 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)
- 3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW**  
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 PM
- 4-STOCKHOLM (PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME/DRAMA) NEW**  
 ETHAN HAWKE, NOOMI RAPACE, MARK STRONG  
 DAILY AT: 9.30 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)
- 5-KURSK (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW**  
 LÉA SEYDOUX, COLIN FIRTH, AUGUST DIEHL  
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 5.45 + (11.00 PM THURS/FRI)
- 6-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)**  
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL  
 DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.15 PM

## AL HAMRA

- 1-LUCIFER (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)**  
 MOHANLAL, MANJU WARRIER, VIVEK OBEROI, TOVINO THOMAS  
 DAILY AT: 5.45 + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)
- 2-MADHURA RAJA (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)**  
 MAMMOOTTY, JAI, ANUSREE, SALIM KUMAR, RAMESH PISHARODY  
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 9.00 PM

## WADI AL SAIL

- 1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW**  
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT  
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.15 + 4.30 + 7.45 + 11.00 PM
- 2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW**  
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ  
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
- 3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW**  
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 PM
- 4-TRIPLE THREAT (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW**  
 TONY JAA, IKO UWAIIS, SCOTT ADKINS  
 DAILY AT: 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 + 12.00 MN
- 5-STOCKHOLM (PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME/DRAMA) NEW**  
 ETHAN HAWKE, NOOMI RAPACE, MARK STRONG  
 DAILY AT: 11.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 11.45 PM
- 6-THE HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW**  
 JESSE EISENBERG, ALEXANDER SKARSG'RD, SALMA HAYEK  
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.15 + 9.30 PM
- 7-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)**  
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL  
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM
- 8-DUMBO (PG) (ADVENTURE/DRAMA/FAMILY)**  
 COLIN FARRELL, MICHAEL KEATON, DANNY DEVITO  
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 PM
- 9-HELLBOY (18+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY)**  
 DAVID HARBOUR, MILLA JOVOVICH, AND IAN MCSHANE  
 DAILY AT: 9.00 + 11.30 PM

## MOVIE REVIEW

## Stockholm is a darkly comedic take on a heist film

● 'Stockholm' is a comic take on a 1973 bank robbery in Sweden involving two idiot crooks who held two female bank employees hostage for six days

● It is an unconscious survival strategy where hostages become empathetic towards their captors

Stockholm is the film adaptation of the 1973 Swedish bank robbery that coined the psychological term, Stockholm Syndrome.

It is an unconscious survival strategy where hostages become empathetic towards their captors. Canadian filmmaker Robert Budreau based the plot on a New Yorker article written in the



A scene from 'Stockholm'

aftermath of the incident.

A talented cast sells the premise, but the film is told with a rote delivery.

Stockholm has good character development, but never grabs you as a crime drama.



Ethan Hawke plays a bank robber and Noomi Rapace a hostage in this film about the incident that inspired the coinage 'Stockholm syndrome'

or the real-life events it dramatizes, but a light touch and well-chosen cast keep the end results consistently entertaining."

Stockholm loses focus when it incorporates the situations outside the bank robbery. The police and political response seem scattershot. Robert Budreau constantly reminds us of the unexpected nature of the event. Sweden had never experienced anything like this. News media intercutes the action with updates. Crowds gather as the cat and mouse games raise the stakes. Stockholm should be rippling with anticipation at this juncture. The intensity inside the bank is never matched by law enforcement.

They are so humdrum in their approach. If we're to believe the basic tenets of the plot, the police side should have been riveting. They would have been facing an unheard of crime in their society. The police in the film, even with their period costume design, are completely forgettable.

On the review aggregation website Rotten Tomatoes, the film has an approval rating of 69%, based on 32 reviews, with an average rating of 6.16/10. The website's consensus reads, "Stockholm can't quite do justice to its themes



Henry Golding

Emilia Clarke, Henry Golding's 'Last Christmas' release preponed

Emilia Clarke



Los Angeles

“Last Christmas”, starring Emilia Clarke and Henry Golding, is now set to release on November, Universal has announced.

The studio had earlier dated the romantic comedy to hit the theatres on November 15, Deadline reported

Friday.

The film will now face off against Warner Bros’ “Doctor Sleep”, Lionsgate’s WWII movie “Midway” and Paramount’s “Sonic the Hedgehog” at the box office.

“Last Christmas”, a holiday rom-com, is directed by Paul Feig, best known for helming movies such as

“Bridesmaids”, “Spy” and “Ghostbusters”.

The screenplay is penned by Oscar winner Emma Thompson along with Bryony Kimmings.

Feig and Thompson will also produce the comedy alongside Jessie Henderson and David Livingstone.

Hudson shares first photo of her kids together



Kate Hudson with kids  
Los Angeles

Actress Kate Hudson shared a photograph of all her children together for the first time to celebrate her 40th birthday.

On her milestone birthday on Friday, Hudson shared a selfie of all her children together - for the first time, reports people.com.

“My wishes came true,” Hudson wrote.

“Thank you for all the love today #ThisIs40.”

In the image, Hudson can be seen with her six-month-old daughter Rani Rose lying on her chest as her sons Ryder Robinson, 15, and Bingham Hawn Bellamy, 7, cuddled up next to her.

Hudson and boyfriend Danny Fujikawa welcomed Rani in October. The actress has two sons from previous relationships, Ryder (with her former husband, singer Chris Robinson) and Bingham (with Muse frontman Matt Bellamy).

Reese Witherspoon prefers her 40s

Los Angeles

Hollywood actress Reese Witherspoon does not mind ageing as she prefers her 40s over her 20s.

“I have a point of view because I’ve been on this planet for 43 years, and I didn’t feel that same way when I was 25. I didn’t have the same things to say,” Witherspoon told Allure magazine, reported femalefirst.co.uk

She added: “I’m 43 and I’ve had a whole bunch of experiences, and I can speak with a thoughtfulness about the changes I’d like to see in the world... I just feel like I earned that grey hair and my fine lines. I like them. I so prefer 43 to 25.”

Witherspoon said she feels like she “grew up” with her daughter Ava, who is now 19.

She finds it “so weird” that her daughter is an adult now.



Reese Witherspoon

Adele separates from husband Simon Konecki

Los Angeles

Singer Adele has parted ways with her husband, Simon Konecki, according to a statement from her representative Benny Tarantini.

“Adele and her partner have separated,” the statement said, reports cnn.com.

“They are committed to raising their son together lovingly. As always they ask for privacy. There will be no further comment.”

Adele and Konecki share a son together, Angelo, who was born in 2012.

Konecki is co-founder of Life Water and its charity Drop4drop, which promotes global access to clean water.



Adele and Simon Konecki

Beyonce's Netflix deal worth a \$60 million?

Los Angeles

Netflix has landed a three-project deal, reportedly worth a whopping \$60 million, with singer Beyonce Knowles.

The first of the three specials is “Homecoming”, the behind-the-scenes documentary chronicling her 2018 Coachella performance - a massive spectacle of dance, visuals and music that reaffirmed Beyonce’s moniker of Queen Bey - which premiered on April 17.

The price tag on this installment, for which Beyonce is credited as executive producer, writer and director, hovers around \$20 million, sources told variety.com.

However, a source at the company disputed the financial terms of the deal.

According to Vulture, HBO was also interested in the project, having had a long relationship with Beyonce (the cable network aired her 2016 “Lemonade” film as well as her 2014 “On the Run Tour” concert special with husband Jay-Z and 2013 documentary “Life Is But a Dream”), but backed out when Netflix came in with a better offer.



Beyonce Knowles

Michelle Williams, husband Phil Elverum split

Los Angeles

Actress Michelle Williams and her husband Phil Elverum, an indie musician, have reportedly separated after less than a year of marriage.

Williams, 38, and Elverum, 40, quietly married and moved in together last summer. The news comes after Williams was seen without a wedding band during her last

two public outings.

“Michelle and Phil separated at the beginning of the year. It was an amicable split and they remain friends,” a source told people.com.

The “Fosse/Verdon” actress first revealed their romance in a cover story for Vanity Fair last July, when she confirmed her marriage to Elverum for the first time.

Williams and Elverum got married in a small ceremony in the Adirondacks with a few friends and their daughters present.

Williams is mother to 12-year-old Matilda with the late Heath Ledger; Elverum has a three-year-old daughter from his first marriage.



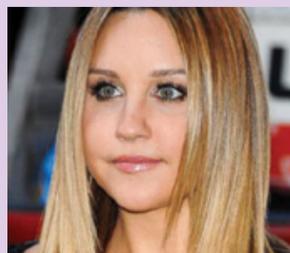
Michelle Williams and Phil Elverum

Bynes is 'doing great' since checking into rehab

Los Angeles

Actress Amanda Bynes is “doing great” and focusing on herself as she continues to seek treatment after checking into a rehabilitation facility in January.

“Amanda is doing great, working on herself, and taking some well-deserved time



Amanda Bynes

off to focus on her well-being after graduating from FIDM (Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising) in December,” Tamar Arminak, her family’s attorney, told people.com.

“She’s spending time reading and exercising, sketching for her new line and mostly making sure this time around

she puts her needs first,” the attorney added.

The actress checked into a rehabilitation facility earlier this year after a “relapse” and is getting help and treatment from mental health professionals and addiction counsellors for drug addiction and mental health issues, a source previously said.

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SPORTS  
sports

# Nadal crashes out to Fognini

● Rafael Nadal stunned on clay as Fabio Fognini produces one of his best ever performances to book spot in Monte Carlo final

● Nadal was beaten 6-4, 6-2 by Fognini in the semi-final match

● Fognini will face Dusan Lajovic in the final

Daily Mail | Monte Carlo

Rafael Nadal had no answers against Fabio Fognini as the Italian produced one of the best performances of his career to reach the Rolex Monte Carlo Masters final.

After Novak Djokovic was eliminated in the quarter-finals against Russia's Daniil Medvedev, Nadal looked even more likely to leave Monte Carlo with the title.

But world No 18 Fognini is a fine player on clay and looked close to producing a first bagel



Italy's Fabio Fognini hits a return to Spain's Rafael Nadal

set on clay against Nadal before eventually getting over the line with a 6-4, 6-2 win.

Victory for Fognini ended Nadal's 18-match winning run in Monte Carlo and ensures the final includes two players making their debuts at that stage.

It represents a bitter disap-

pointment for Nadal as he continues his preparations for the upcoming French Open and defeat will likely raise further questions as to his physical condition.

Nadal has won the ATP Masters 1000 event in Monte Carlo 11 times but never looked likely



Spain's Rafael Nadal reacts after being defeated by Italy's Fabio Fognini

to make it 12 as Fognini put in a ruthless showing, edging a first set before totally dominating in the second.

The Spaniard was determined not to be embarrassed in the second set and was able to rescue three match points before taking the next two games to provide brief hope of a sensational turnaround.

Fognini was backed by good support - the tournament is relatively close to the Italian border - and while the win sent Fognini to his first ATP Masters 1000 final, the win also saw him become the first Italian to go the distance in Monte Carlo since Corrado Barazzutti in 1977.

It all started as expected, Na-

dal in control, as the Spaniard raced into an early 3-1 lead in the first set.

But Fognini, who went into the tournament with a five-match losing streak on clay, was determined to make a game of it and he claimed 11 of the next 14 games to reverse the momentum.

The odds have been against Fognini for much of the Masters event; he has taken scalps against both Alexander Zverev and Bornha Coric before producing one of the biggest surprises of the season so far by beating Nadal in straight sets.

He now faces Dusan Lajovic who will fancy his chances given he is yet to drop a set in Monte Carlo after a stunning campaign.

Many tennis fans were expecting Medvedev to get the better of Lajovic having beaten his Serbian counterpart Djokovic, only to be beaten 7-5, 6-1.

Lajovic's resilience was highlighted when he managed to come from 1-5 down in the first set to win 7-5 after a shock collapse from the highly-rated Medvedev.

## Neymar could be back today, says PSG coach

Reuters | Paris

Brazil striker Neymar could return to playing today when Paris St Germain take on Monaco in Ligue 1, coach Thomas Tuchel said yesterday.

"He has been working hard, with a good mindset. We could get him back as soon as tomorrow," Tuchel told a news conference.

Neymar, who has scored 13 goals from 13 league appearances this season, has been out of action since picking up a foot injury in January. PSG will clinch their eighth Ligue 1 title if they beat Monaco at the Parc des Princes.

With Neymar missing from action, PSG were knocked out of the Champions League last 16 after losing the return leg 3-1 at home to Manchester United. They beat the Premier League club 2-0 in the first leg at Old Trafford.



Neymar

# Barty beats partner Azarenka in Fed Cup

AFP | Brisbane, Australia

Australia and Belarus shared the spoils on day one of their Fed Cup semi-final in Brisbane Saturday with Ashleigh Barty sweeping past Victoria Azarenka while Aryna Sabalenka ground down Samantha Stosur.

With the tie evenly poised at 1-1, the reverse singles on Sunday will be critical, with world number nine Barty first up against 10th ranked Sabalenka



Victoria Azarenka of Belarus hits a return to Ashleigh Barty of Australia

before the veteran pair of Stosur and Azarenka face off.

While Belarus are bidding to reach the final for the second time in three attempts, after being beaten by the United States in 2017, Australia are targeting their first decider in 26 years.

It's been an even longer wait between titles, with the last of Australia's seven victories coming in 1974.

France or Romania await this weekend's winner.

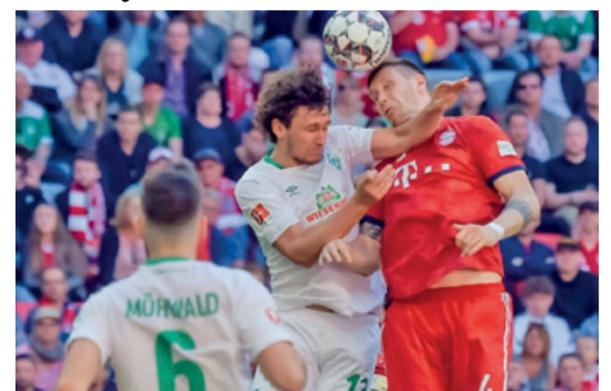
"I'm so proud of the level of

tennis the girls put on today," said Australia captain Alicia Molik.

"It's a great position we're in and we are prepared for a fifth rubber if necessary. We have a quality doubles pairing."

An ice cool Barty, who has rocketed through the ranks, breaking into the top 10 with her win at the Miami Open this month, proved too much for four doubles partner Azarenka at Pat Rafter Arena, winning 7-6 (7/2), 6-3.

# Bayern grind out Bremen win to stay ahead of Dortmund



Bremen's Serbian defender Milos Veljkovic (L) fouls Bayern Munich's German defender Niklas Sule

AFP | Berlin

Niklas Sule's late goal saw Bayern Munich break a brave resistance from ten-man Werder Bremen to snatch a crucial 1-0 win and stay ahead of Borussia Dortmund in the Bundesliga title race.

Bayern toiled in the searing Bavarian sun against Bremen, eventually grinding out the victory to go four points clear at the top of the table overnight.

The win puts pressure on title rivals Dortmund, who need to win a tough away game in Freiburg on Sunday if they are to remain within a point of Bayern.

Bremen held Bayern at bay for much of the game, but suffered a lethal blow just before the hour mark, when Milos Veljkovic was sent off for a second yellow card.

Chances came and went for Bayern as the clock ticked down, until Sule finally broke through with a deflected shot

from the edge of the area 15 minutes from time.

At the other end of the table, Stuttgart look doomed to a bottom-three finish after they suffered a humiliating 6-0 defeat to fellow strugglers Augsburg.

Augsburg obliterated their relegation rivals with a delightful display of attacking football. Goals from Rani Khedira, Andre Hahn and Philipp Max saw them establish a 3-0 lead before the half-hour mark.

Max added another in the second half, and a Marco Richter double completed a disastrous display for Stuttgart.

Augsburg's win lifts them ten points clear of the relegation play-off place, and also confirms survival for Mainz, who beat local rivals Fortuna Dusseldorf 3-1.

Jean-Philippe Mateta put Mainz into the lead after just 36 seconds, but Dodi Lukebakio levelled the scores with his second goal in two games.

# Bassil Al Dosseri defends showjumping title

TDI | Manama

Bahraini showjumper Bassil Al Dosseri has successfully defended his Grand Prix title in Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa Showjumping Championship which was held on Friday.

Al Dosseri completed the race which included 130-140 cm obstacles in 89.55 seconds without committing any fault.

Saber Salman came second in 90.14 seconds with five faults, while Al Dosseri himself took third riding on a different horse.

Organised under the patronage of HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports and sponsored by Ithmar Development and Dilmunia, the event featured seven competitions, including the Grand Prix which was won in style by Al Dosseri



Action from the showjumping championship

amid broad participation at the Military Sports arena.

The top three winners in the Grand Prix and in the other contests were crowned by Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of the Showjumping Committee in Bahrain

Equestrian and Endurance Federation (BREEF) in the presence of his deputy Shaikh Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Khalifa.

This wasn't the end for Al Dosseri who also emerged victorious in the seventh competition which took place after

the Grand Prix. Commenting after the event, Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammed expressed his utmost thanks and gratitude to HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa for sponsoring this event and to HH Shaikh Faisal bin Rashid Al Khalifa, President of BREEF and Vice President of the Supreme Council for Environment for his constant support to the showjumping competitions. He hailed the performances showcased by the participants in the championship.

In the other competitions, Mayoof Al Rumaihi won the first competition which was for the junior participants, while Ali Alwani triumphed in the second one. Al Rumaihi stole the limelight again by winning the third and fourth contests. In the fifth competition, veteran showjumper Sami Ghazwan topped the podium following an impressive performance.

# Man City gain Spurs revenge

● **Phil Foden heads Manchester City top of the Premier League again**

● **The victory comes three days after Spurs eliminated City from the Champions League**

AFP | Manchester

Manchester City exacted some measure of revenge on Tottenham for their Champions League exit as Phil Foden's first Premier League goal earned a 1-0 win to move them back top of the table yesterday.

Pep Guardiola's men edge one point ahead of Liverpool once more with four games of a titanic title race left for both sides.

For all their Champions League heroics to get to the semi-finals this season, Tottenham still have much to do to qualify for the competition next season as they could easily end the Easter weekend outside the top four should Arsenal and Chelsea beat Crystal Palace and Burnley at home respectively.

City's quest for an unprecedented quadruple of trophies was ended by defeat on away goals to Spurs on Wednesday, despite winning a thrilling quarter-final, second leg 4-3.

However, they remain on course for a first ever treble of domestic trophies in England as they survived a nervy finale thanks to another blistering start.

City have made a habit of firing out of the blocks this season and just like in midweek to kick-start a kamikaze encounter, they struck within five minutes.



Phil Foden heads home the only goal of the game for Manchester City

Foden was making just his second Premier League start and immediately justified Guardiola's faith in the 19-year-old by heading home Sergio Aguero's nodded pass across goal from Bernardo Silva's cross.

However, history could easily have repeated itself as after four goals were shared in the opening 11 minutes on Wednesday, Spurs had numerous chances to strike back.

Son Heung-min had already forced Ederson in a smart save from a narrow angle before City scored and the Brazilian goalkeeper had to rush from his goal once more to deny Christian Eriksen an equaliser on 15 minutes.

Two minutes later the Dane played provider with a glorious ball to free Son in behind the City defence.

However, the South Korean, who scored twice in midweek to end City's European dreams for another season, was caught up just in time by Aymeric Laporte,



**Manchester City's quest for an unprecedented quadruple of trophies was ended by defeat on away goals to Spurs on Wednesday, despite winning a thrilling quarter-final, second leg 4-3**

who made a perfectly timed last-ditch tackle.

Despite Tottenham's chances on the break, it was the hosts who were still dominating territory and possession with Bernardo Silva a constant threat.

The Portuguese's outstand-

ing season was rewarded as he was named alongside teammates Aguero and Raheem Sterling in the six-man shortlist for the PFA Player of the Year award and Jan Vertonghen was fortunate to escape without conceding a penalty when he appeared to trip Silva inside the area.

Spurs were without captain Hugo Lloris through injury and his understudy Paulo Gazzaniga looked nervous early on, but the Argentine goalkeeper got down to save Silva's next effort.

Guardiola's decision to leave Kevin de Bruyne out for the first leg of the Champions League quarter-final between the sides was doubly questioned after the Belgian bagged a brilliant hat-trick of assists in midweek.

However, Guardiola's reasoning for being cautious with his playmaker after an injury-plagued season was understandable as De Bruyne limped off again just before the break and may well now miss the rest of the campaign.

## English Premier League

Manchester City	1	0	Tottenham Hotspur
Bournemouth	0	1	Fulham
Huddersfield Town	1	2	Watford
West Ham United	2	2	Leicester City
Wolverhampton	0	0	Brighton

## Italian Serie A

Parma	1	1	Milan
Bologna	3	0	Sampdoria
Cagliari	1	0	Frosinone
Empoli	2	4	SPAL
Genoa	0	1	Torino
Lazio	1	2	Chievo
Udinese	1	1	Sassuolo
Juventus	2	1	Fiorentina

## German Bundesliga

1. FSV Mainz 05	3	1	Fortuna Düsseldorf
Bayer 04 Leverkusen	2	0	1. FC Nürnberg
FC Augsburg	6	0	VfB Stuttgart
Bayern Munich	1	0	SV Werder Bremen

## Spanish La Liga

Celta de Vigo	2	1	Girona
Eibar	0	1	Atletico Madrid

## French Ligue 1

Guingamp	1	3	Marseille
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\*Scores as of closing

Both sides suffered from their midweek exertions and the blazing sun as the second-half meandered along at a much more subdued pace.

Spurs had a big penalty appeal of their own turned down when Kyle Walker handled inside the area against his former club.

Sterling briefly thought he had completed a hat-trick in stoppage time on Wednesday with the goal that would have sent City through to the Champions League last four until VAR ruled

the goal out for offside.

And the England international could not believe his misfortune once more when Gazzaniga stuck out an outstretched leg to prevent Sterling sealing a vital three points from Leroy Sané's cut-back.

Instead, City had to suffer through the closing stages knowing one mistake could cost them the title.

But they held on as Spurs suffered an eighth straight away defeat to English opposition.

## Bahrain conquers world of MMA with Brave title win

TDT | Manama

Brave Combat Federation's new Super Lightweight champion Eldar Eldarov flew the flag of Bahrain to the highest place, last Friday (19), as he took a unanimous decision victory over Mounir Lazzez in the co-main event of Brave 23: Pride and Honour, held in Amman, Jordan.

Eldarov made history for Bahrain, by becoming the first-ever world champion from the Kingdom, and he also wrote his name in one of MMA's most iconic moments. As he had the

belt wrapped around his waist by Brave CF president Mohammed Shahid, Eldar became the first-ever world champion at the newly-formed Super Lightweight division.

The new weight class was approved by several commissions around the world, but Brave has been the only truly global promotion to install the weight class, providing fighters with more options to fight at their optimal body weight.

"We made history together. Since I was a little kid, training and grinding away, I've envisioned this moment. I've



Eldar Eldarov celebrates his victory over Mounir Lazzez

## Brave 23: Pride and Honour results:

### Main card

Welterweight: Abdoul Abdouraguimov defeated Jarrah Al-Selawe by split decision  
 Super Lightweight: Eldar Eldarov def. Mounir Lazzez by unanimous decision  
 Lightweight: Luan Santiago def. Abdul-Kareem Al-Selwady by Knockout - Round 1  
 Catchweight: Hashem Arkhagha def. Jeremy Smith by Knockout - Round 1  
 Welterweight: Khamzat Chimaev def. Ikram Aliskerov by Knockout - Round 1  
 Flyweight: Jose Torres def. Amir Albazi by unanimous decision

### Preliminary card

Bantamweight: Aidan James def. Jalal Al Daaja by TKO - Round 3  
 Lightweight: Anas Siraj Mounir vs Alex Martinez ends in No Contest (accidental low blow by Martinez on Mounir)  
 Bantamweight: Ali Qaisi def. Georges Bardawil by unanimous decision  
 Featherweight: Akhmed Magomedov def. Steven Gonçalves by unanimous decision  
 Lightweight: Ahmed Amir and Sam Patterson fought to a split draw  
 Featherweight: Hassan Talal def. Mohammad Aly by TKO - Round 2

always wanted to be a martial arts world champion. I was very close to achieve that in combat sambo but I lost in the finals. Now, I fulfil that vision. Thank you to His Highness Sheikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa for this honour", said Eldarov after the fight.

Aside from the Bahrain representative, two other new world champions were crowned in the biggest night in Brave CF history. Abdoul Abdouraguimov survived a late rally from previous titleholder Jarrah Al-Selawe to maintain his undefeated record

and become the new Welterweight world champion, while Luan Santiago knocked out Abdul-Kareem Al-Selwady in the first round to claim Lightweight gold.

In other important fights, two incredible knockouts for Hashem Arkhagha and Khamzat Chimaev, who put the lights out on Jeremy Smith and Ikram Aliskerov, respectively. Flyweight superstar Jose Torres had a winning Brave debut taking home a unanimous decision over a game Amir Albazi.

## Parma draw stalls AC Milan's Champions League push

AFP | Milan

Bruno Alves grabbed a point for Parma to pile the pressure on AC Milan's Champions League ambitions with a 1-1 draw in Emilia-Romagna yesterday.

Samu Castillejo nodded Milan ahead after 69 minutes but Alves pulled the sides level with a curling free-kick three minutes from time.

AC Milan remain fourth on 56 points but Roma were two points behind in fifth before they played third-

placed Inter Milan at the San Siro later yesterday.

Atalanta, sixth, can pull level with Milan on points when they travel to second-placed Napoli on Monday.

Lazio were also lurking four points behind ahead of their game against relegated Chievo yesterday with Torino seven points adrift of the Champions League places before travelling to Genoa.

Castillejo came off the bench after 66 minutes and had an immediate impact when he headed in a Suso cross three minutes later.

Patrick Cutrone had a goal ruled out for offside minutes later but Alves snatched a point for promoted Parma with a free kick that left returning Milan goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma helpless.

Parma move up to 13th place, seven points above the relegation zone with five games left.

"It wasn't a great performance," said Milan coach Gennaro Gattuso.



AC Milan's Samu Castillejo