

Nadal in the pink as Sharapova hits all-time low at Australian Open

Top seed Rafael Nadal turned on the style as he launched his bid for a record-equalling 20th Major title at the Australian Open on Tuesday, but falling star Maria Sharapova hit a career low. **P16**

THE DAILY **tribune**



Kendall Jenner spotted out again with ex Ben Simmons 14 CELEBS

WORLD 5 **Eight Indian tourists die in Nepal after lighting gas heater in hotel**

Governor chairs co-ordination meeting
 Manama

Southern Governor Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa has chaired the first co-ordination meeting for 2020, in the presence of officials representing concerned parties.

He stressed the importance of assessing citizens needs and meeting their aspirations. He commended dedicated efforts being exerted to carry out development projects in the Southern Governorate.

He discussed latest developments of work on development, service, health, educational projects in the region of Riffa, stressing the importance of completing the schemes.

He was updated on the progress of work on development Um Ghuwafa spring, stressing the crucial importance of conserving historical sites which are linked to Bahrain's long-standing heritage.

Deadly storm batters Spain
 Madrid

Powerful storm Gloria has battered much of eastern Spain, with officials linking at least four deaths to it.

The Balearic Islands and the region around Valencia were the worst-hit on Monday, with heavy flooding and strong winds causing havoc.

More than 30 provinces in Spain were put on high alert. The storm later moved into southern France.



02 Bahrain, Morocco charity foundations sign MoU

03 Telecom firm's new logo 'almost identical' to US firm's

04 'Nearly 300 fishermen' arrested for illegal shrimping since 2018

210 fils (includes VAT)



Amnesty slams new Qatari law restricting freedom of expression

London

Amnesty International yesterday expressed concern over a vague new law that threatens to "significantly restrict freedom of expression in Qatar."

The law, issued by Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, authorises the imprisonment of "anyone who broadcasts, publishes, or republishes false or biased rumours, state-

ments, or news, or inflammatory propaganda, domestically or abroad, with the intent to harm national interests, stir up public opinion, or infringe on the social system or the public system of the state."

The law comes just two years after Qatar acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, a UN agreement that guarantees individuals the right to seek, receive and impart information



Qatar already has a host of repressive laws, but this new legislation deals another bitter blow to freedom of expression in the country and is a blatant breach of international human rights law.

LYNN MAALOUF

and ideas.

Lynn Maalouf, Amnesty International's research director for the Middle East, said: "Qatar already has a host of repressive laws, but this new legislation deals another bitter blow to freedom of expression in the country and is a blatant breach of international human rights law."

She called it "deeply troubling that the Qatari Emir is passing legislation that can be

used to silence peaceful critics," adding: "Qatar's authorities should be repealing such laws, not adding more of them."

Under the new law, "biased" broadcasting or publishing can be punished with a fine of over \$25,000 or up to five years in prison.

The new legislation joins laws introduced in 1979 and 2014 that Amnesty International says arbitrarily restrict freedom of expression.

'IS resurgence' alert

Al Azhar warns of ISIS efforts to regain its status in Iraq

● **US troops are involved in active operations against ISIS remnants, but most are engaged in training the Iraqi army.**

● **While experts are concerned about the return of IS, they also say that a US withdrawal will not mean that IS will have a strong reprisal.**

Baghdad

One of the highest Sunni authorities in the region warned yesterday that ISIS is using Iraq's current political and military crisis to gain ground.

Al Azhar University's Obser-



Iraqi soldiers being trained with members of the Third Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, at Camp Taji, Iraq.

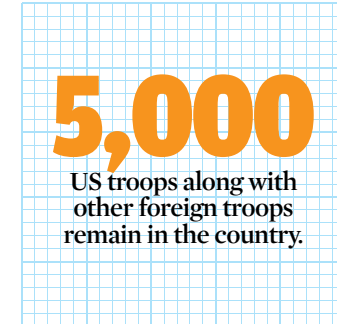
vatory, which has been closely monitoring IS, said the group is attempting to reform and improve its status in Iraq.

"The group is using technology and digital platforms to spread their messages and ideology to recruit young individ-

uals to regain its grounds," the observatory said.

It called on the international community to unite in the face of terrorism to halt the group's resurgence.

The warning comes as tensions between Washington



and Tehran escalated in Iraq prompting fears that ISIS could make a comeback amid the upheaval.

It follows the US killing of Iranian General Qassem Suleimani and top Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi Al Muhandis near Baghdad airport earlier this month.

Tehran retaliated with rocket attacks carried out by militias against US personnel stationed in Iraq.

The tit-for-tat strikes pushed the Iraqi parliament to issue a

non-binding call for the estimated 5,000 US troops and other foreign forces to leave the country.

The decision was mostly driven by pro-Iranian factions in parliament.

But US President Donald Trump's administration said it is determined to keep troops in Iraq.

US troops are involved in active operations against ISIS remnants, but most are engaged in training the Iraqi army.

The presence of US troops in Iraq is part of a request for assistance to combat ISIS that was sent in 2014 when the group seized large areas of Iraq and Syria.

Although the US and Iran have not had any diplomatic relation since 1980, the two found common ground in their battle against the insurgents.

General Suleimani played an important role in the fight against ISIS in Iraq.

Fatal accident



The Ministry of Interior yesterday said that an Asian man aged 39 died in an accident on Shaikh Jaber Al Sabah Street near the intersection of Nabih Saleh signal towards Riffa. He was allegedly hit by a motorist. The ministry has launched a probe into the accident. Above, the damaged car being removed from the accident scene.

CORONAVIRUS

US reports first case of infection

New York

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention have announced America's first reported case of the Wuhan coronavirus.

The infected man is a resident of Snohomish County, Washington state, who had symptoms after returning from a trip to the region around Wuhan, China, where the outbreak was first reported.

He was not identified further by local officials and is said to be quite ill. He was admitted to hospital with pneumonia last week and the coronavirus infection was confirmed on Monday.

The virus, which was first identified last month in a

seafood and poultry market in Wuhan, has spread from there to Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen. It has also spread to Taiwan, Japan, Thailand and South Korea.

It has caused alarm because of its connection to severe acute respiratory syndrome, or Sars, and has killed six people, infecting more than 300 others.

Last week, the health authority began screening travellers from China at three US airports.

Wuhan has a population of more than 11 million and Chinese officials confirmed on Monday that the virus is contagious between humans.

The World Health Organisation will hold an emergency committee this week to discuss the infection.

Bahrain, Morocco charity foundations sign MoU

Rabat

Royal Charity Organisation and Mohammed VI Foundation for the Promotion of Social Works in Education and Training have signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

The signing ceremony was attended by His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Representative of HM the King for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Charity Organisation.

The memorandum seeks to fulfil the wish of the two institutions to collaborate and communicate in order to consolidate cooperation and exchange experiences in the fields of social, humanitarian and solidarity work.

This positive step also falls within the framework of strengthening fraternal relations, and embodies in its essence a consensus of visions between the two institutions in the fields of social and humanitarian work.

It affirms the strength of the fraternal relations between Bahrain and Morocco, under the



Mr Al Sayyed, Mr Al Bagali sign the MoU in the presence of HH Shaikh Nasser.

leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Majesty King Mohammed VI.

The MoU was signed by Al Baqali, the president of Mohammed VI Foundation for the Promotion of Social Works in Education and Training.

Works Ministry launches service development projects

Manama

Following directives from His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, the Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Ministry has launched a series of service development projects, in co-operation and co-ordination with the Council of Representatives.

The projects aim to improve the quality of municipal services across the Kingdom, which will contribute to achieving the goals of the comprehensive development march spearheaded by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

In this regard, Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Minister, Essam Khalaf, paid an inspection visit

to the Block 360 roads development project in Zinj, along with MP Ahmed Al Salloum.

The minister said that the project includes the rehabilitation of roads 6023, 6025, 6026, 6013 and 6015, in addition to Avenue 66, noting that a rain-water drainage network will be set up there.

It also includes paving the 6021, 6017 and 6018 roads, in addition to providing low sidewalks and installing road signs to ensure traffic safety, he said.

The minister added that the project had been put out to tender by the Tender Board at a cost of BD 707,196, and that procedures are being taken to award the project in preparation for the start of the implementation process.

Meanwhile the Avenue 66 development project and the addition of parking lots in the available spaces are still under study, he said.



Mr Khalaf along with Mr Al Salloum inspect the project.



Minister of Finance and National Economy, Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, has affirmed the strength of the existing Bahraini-Kuwaiti partnership and co-operation across various fields, which has contributed to boosting bilateral economic and financial relations. This is the fruitful outcome of the deep-rooted fraternal relations between the two countries and their peoples, as well as the constant interest and keenness of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and Kuwaiti Amir, His Highness Shaikh Sabah Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah, the minister said. The minister made the statements while receiving the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bahrain, Shaikh Thamer Al Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah yesterday. Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa highlighted the importance of further strengthening bilateral relations in various economic sectors, and opening up new horizons of joint partnership to benefit the two countries and their brotherly peoples.



Minister of Finance and National Economy, Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, has stressed the need to further develop co-operation between Bahrain and India in the economic and investment fields for the best interests of the two countries and their friendly peoples. The minister made the statements while receiving here today the Indian Ambassador to Bahrain, Alok Kumar Sinha. The two sides discussed aspects of the distinguished economic co-operation and partnership between the two countries, which, they said, reflects the on-going joint fruitful business co-operation that has contributed to creating more promising investment opportunities. They also discussed the latest global economic developments.



Bahrain Polytechnic has become the third higher institution in Bahrain to offer a course in Korean language. The step comes following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the introduction of a Korean language course. It follows a co-operation agreement signed in July last year on the operation of a community course "Discover Korea" in Bahrain Polytechnic for Korean language. The success led to placing the Korean language course as an elective course in the curriculum of Bahrain Polytechnic. The MoU was signed by by Hyunmo Koo, the Korean Ambassador to Bahrain and Dr Jeff Zabudsky, the CEO of Bahrain Polytechnic.



The Director-General of Culture and Arts at the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA), Shaikha Hala bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, has received the Egyptian Ambassador to Bahrain, Yasser Mohammed Ahmed Shaaban. Shaikha Hala stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation between BACA and the Egyptian Embassy here, praising the joint cultural projects implemented over the past years thanks to such co-operation. She also updated the Ambassador about the latest BACA's programmes and activities, noting that BACA's 2020 programme is themed "Dilmun Density Citadel". The two sides discussed ways to enhance co-operation between Bahrain and Egypt regarding cultural, artistic and heritage work to boost bilateral cultural tourism. The ambassador lauded BACA's efforts to develop cultural ties with Arab countries.



Pakistan School celebrated its Second Graduation Ceremony and Annual Prize Distribution for the session 2018-2019 at the school premises. Parliamentarians Basem Abdullah Almujaferi, Ebrahim Al Nefaei, Ali Isa Bufarsan, Bader Salah Abdul Aziz Al Tamimi, Colonel Omer Altaf and Sawsan Kamal attended the event. The Principal Attiq-ur-Rehman extended a warm welcome to the guests, Chairman and members, Board of Management, parents and students. He expressed his pleasure for being a part of the school and its achievements. The Chairman BOM Qari Sami-ur-Rehman thanked the guests for attending the ceremony.

HRH Premier's adviser participates in WEF in Davos

Bern

Adviser to HRH Premier, Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, has participated in the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting held in Davos, Switzerland.

Shaikh Salman highlighted the importance of WEF, being a plat-

form to elaborate global efforts aimed at supporting countries' economies and unifying their development efforts.

He pointed out that Bahrain is always keen on taking part in formulating global strategies that serve countries' development goals.



Shaikh Salman

HRH Premier's adviser asserted that Bahrain has achieved major economic successes, adding that the kingdom's initiatives, which proved to be success stories, have become a role model to be emulated.

Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa indicated that the world is going

through tensions and conflicts that have created enormous challenges for economic development, which, he said, requires finding ways to achieve security and stability to reach the development goals that meet the aspirations of peoples.

HRH Premier's Adviser held

talks with the participants in WEF on the main topics featuring on the agenda of the global forum, stressing the importance of paying more attention to the region's security, as the best means to create good conditions for more economic development and meet the aspirations of the peoples of the region.

Telecom firm's new logo 'almost identical' to US firm's



The logo of US tech company CTS, which allegedly looks quite similar to that of the telecom firm.

TDT | Manama

Social media users have pointed out that the logo of a newly-relaunched telecom firm looks identical to that of a US tech company CTS.

Consumers had initially praised the company's new sleek look and generous offers, but that was short-lived for "the Middle East's most valuable brand", according to Arab News.

One Twitter user, Ahmed Amin, tweeted a link to the CTS main website and said: "Is it luck or bad luck? ... Same mirrored logo."

An advertising expert, who did not wish to be named, was quoted by Arab News: "It's just that the basic idea of the design, which is the deconstructed 'T', is the same. The designer just changed the colour."

"Then again, I see a lot of rip-offs in our business from television ad ideas to design, and even ideas and plots

of drama series and music notes."

Speaking at a launch event, the company's chief executive had said: "Our new brand identity marks a new journey in digital services we are embarking on to enrich the lives of our customers and employees."

He stressed that the new brand was in line with the company's progress in the digital transformation of payments, media, and entertainment, in order to keep up with the digital revolution and rapid changes in the communications and information technology sector.

Mark Daou, media studies lecturer at the American University of Beirut, was as well quoted by Arab News: "Although the treatment of the letter 'T' is similar, the variation of the font, colours, and use of a single colour on the boxes on top of the 'T' can be considered enough variation to avoid the accusation of theft."

Authority to investigate into 'hospital rejecting critical patient' incident

Expressing anger, many have sought strict action against the hospital on social media

TDT | Manama

The National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA) yesterday said that it has launched a probe into the case, in which a critical patient was allegedly turned away by a private hospital in Sanad.

NHRA Chief Executive Officer Dr Mariam Al Jalahma said the authority is closely following up on the case after going through the news report.

"The authority will take action in accordance with the regulations both against the medical institution as well as professionals involved," Dr Al Jalahma said.

An Asian expatriate, who suffered a cardiac arrest, died after being reportedly turned away from a private hospital in Sanad, on Sunday.

The man, in his early forties, died on way to Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC), according to friends and relatives.

"We rushed him to the private hospital immediately after he suffered severe chest pain. But the hospital did not admit him, directing us to take the patient to SMC or BDF Hospital," a close relative of the deceased, said.

"The doctors at SMC could not do much as he died on way to SMC."

Many discussed the mat-



The authority will take action in accordance with the regulations both against the medical institution as well as professionals involved.

DR AL JALAHMA

ter on social media, demanding strict action against the private hospital, which refused to admit a patient in a critical stage.

"Hospitals are meant to serve human beings. Here is a hospital, which does inhuman service," a friend of the deceased, opined.

The deceased, who hailed from the Indian state of Kerala, was working with a private firm in the Kingdom. His body was flown home on Monday.

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Man gets 10 years for possessing marijuana seeds, selling hashish

TDT | Manama

The First High Criminal Court yesterday sentenced a male defendant who possessed marijuana seeds, to ten years imprisonment and fined him BD5,000.

According to court files, the case dates back to the year 2018 when the defendant was caught possessing the seeds, hashish and narcotics (Alprazolam).

The details of the case show that the Anti-Narcotics Department in Interior Ministry received a tip-off on the defendant's suspicious activities.

The department allocated an informer who contacted the defendant and agreed to purchase

The department allocated an informer who contacted the defendant and agreed to purchase BD100 worth hashish from him.

PROSECUTORS

BD100 worth of hashish from him, according to Prosecutors.

Both parties agreed to meet in Malkiya village near Hamad Town in the Northern Governorate. There, an undercover policeman who accompanied the informer arrested the de-

fendant, who was intoxicated.

After searching him, the policeman found the previously scanned BD100 that was given to the defendant by the informer in return for hashish, as well as to two pieces of hashish.

After obtaining a search warrant from the Public Prosecution, a force from the department searched the defendant's residence, where four pieces of hashish, marijuana seeds and amounts of money collected from selling drugs were found.

Further investigation showed that the defendant possessed the drugs with the intention of selling it. However, the defendant denied that he was selling drugs.

'Nearly 300 fishermen' arrested for illegal shrimping since 2018

Asian fishermen accused of mainly carrying out illegal shrimping

● **Bahrain's fish stock has declined almost 90 per cent when compared to that of a little over a decade ago, a study said last year.**

TDT | Manama

Close to 300 fishermen were caught for illegal shrimping since the ban came in place in 2018, it is learnt.

The statistics revealed by Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Minister Essam Khalaf, during the parliament session yesterday, showed that 297 illegal shrimpers have been arrested since the implementation of ban.

Lawmakers urged strong action against those who are engaged in this illegal activity.

They also shared complaints of Bahraini fishermen, who claim many Asian fishermen have been found engaging in this illegal activity.

A video was screened before the session, showing Asian fishermen flouting rules and illegally catching shrimp.

Bahrain's fish stock has declined almost 90 per cent when compared to that of a little over a decade ago, a study said last year.

The study has warned that the remaining 10pc will as well soon decline if urgent steps are not



Stocks seized from illegal shrimpers.

taken to preserve the marine resources.

The study conducted by the Marine Resources Directorate within the Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Ministry, has attributed the sharp decline in fisheries wealth to a number of factors.

Among them the prominent one is the Karaaf method, which is heavy fishing near the seabed, especially to catch shrimp.

The process kills many other marine species and small fish. According to the study, the second reason is overfishing.

"More than 6,400 expatriate

6,400

expatriate fishermen work under 1,700 professional fishing licences obtained by the Bahraini fishermen.

fishermen work under 1,700 professional fishing licences obtained by the Bahraini fishermen.

"This excessive fishing is dangerously affecting the Kingdom's fish stocks."

The experts have predicted many varieties of fish will soon vanish from Bahraini waters and the existing fish stocks will no longer be able to fulfil the consumption requirements of the market.

The study revealed that the number of fish species seen in Bahraini waters has declined from 80 to four in the past few decades.

"The Karaaf fishing method destroys the marine environment as it catches all species at once, not allowing the smaller ones to grow and reproduce.

"If this method isn't stopped, the four species of fish that are marked safe will be reduced and Bahrain will become an importer of fish from its existing status of an exporter," the study warned.

The study recommended the

Government to encourage fish farms while implementing the regulatory procedures mentioned in Law Decree 20 of 2002 to protect marine resources. "What required is a strict regulation while implementing law and inspections to enforce it. The delay in taking these procedures means that the tackling this issue will be more difficult and costly in the future," the experts said.

The Marine Resources Directorate warned that fishing using the Karaaf method endangers the growth of small fish that are caught during heavy fishing near the seabed.

The directorate said that 60-70 per cent of Karaaf catch is small fish, which are usually disposed of by the fishermen.

It also revealed that more than 46,000 metric tonnes of shrimp were caught using the Karaaf method in the last ten years.

The latest official statistics showed that there are around 1,400 non-Bahraini fishermen working under 276 licences meant for shrimping alone.

It means 22 per cent of total expatriate fishermen working in Bahrain are employed in shrimping.

The Kingdom has been implementing a ban on shrimping during the breeding time during the past few years.

Strict punishments for violating the ban include imprisonment, fines and seizure of boats.

Registration plan for bicycles

TDT | Manama

Bicycles should be registered with a 'registration number' just like cars and bikes, according to a recent proposal.

The proposal by Head of the Northern Municipal Council, Ahmed Al Kooheji states that due to the large number of accidents involving bicycles, registration numbers must be made compulsory for bicycles.

He said that there have been many bicycle related accidents, which has led to fatalities, which persuaded him to submit the proposal.

Mr Al Kooheji said that an annual fee of BD5 should also be enforced on bicycles.

He pointed out that two bicycle riders died recently in two separate accidents in Budaiya last month.

However, the proposal received a lot of negative feedback and criticism on social media.

"The proposal is impractical, there is no need for registration records for bicycles. This is something that the General Directorate of Traffic should be studying instead of the municipal council," a netizen commented.

Last month, a 13-year-old Bahraini cyclist died after being hit by a vehicle driven by a 19-year-old motorist.

Another fatal accident took place last month as a 32-year-old Bangladeshi cyclist Sapon Nurujjaman was hit by a car.

Testimonies of defence witnesses in bribery case to be heard today

TDT | Manama

Defence witnesses are scheduled to stand before the High Criminal Court today (Wednesday) to testify in a case involving one public servant and four employees in the private sector accused of bribery.

The defendants are accused of forming a cell among them to

expose clients' personal information.

According to court files, the employees of the bank signed a contract with the public servant to provide them with personal information about the clients who approach the bank for loans.

It's said that they were paying him BD300 for his services.

While investigating the case,



The bank's employees were charged with bribing a public employee while the latter was accused of violating his authorities.

PROSECUTORS

police officers found a list of the clients who applied for personal loans and the public employee provided their personal information to the bank's employees, which include a woman and three men.

As per the court files, the woman was the one who proposed the idea of dealing with the public sector employee to her team-

mates who agreed on it.

The public sector employee allegedly demanded to be paid BD10,000 at a later stage for leaking the personal information.

The bank's employees were charged with bribing a public employee while the latter was accused of violating his authorities, according to Prosecutors.

Car theft suspect arrested

TDT | Manama

The Director-General of the Capital Governorate Police Directorate stated that within 24 hours of committing the crime, the directorate's police managed to arrest a 29-year-old Bahraini who is suspected of stealing a car and dumping it in sea.

He explained that, after receiving a report in this regard, the directorate undertook search and investigation operations that resulted in identifying and arresting the suspect.

"He stole the car from a car showroom in Sitra and intentionally dumping it at sea in Karzakan region," the Director-General said.

The official confirmed that necessary legal measures are being taken to refer the arrested person to the Public Prosecution.

Bahrain's biggest shopping event returns

TDT | Manama

Starting tomorrow until January 31, 2020, the halls of the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre will be filled with exciting products from around the world as the Autumn Fair returns for its 31st year.

Held under the patronage of the Bahrain Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, this nine-day retail paradise features over 650

stalls from 16 countries, thousands of potential bargains, and a returning Street Food Market to refresh hungry visitors.

A huge variety of goods will go on sale at this 15,400 square metre extravaganza, including specialty food, fashion, beauty, home décor, technology, toys, textiles and much more.

The outdoor Street Food Market will offer shoppers a selection of culinary delights from some of Bah-

rain's finest traders.

Vendors confirmed for the launch include favourites such as Fourteen Lights Restaurant, Al Shami Al Aseel, Lamaa Foods, McDonald & #39;s, Take Away, New York 973 Burgers and many more.

"With a wide range of products and excellent dining options, the Autumn Fair is the perfect opportunity for friends and family to meet in the new year. Visitors can look forward to discovering bargains,

new-to-market products and old customer favourites from local and international traders in a friendly, festive atmosphere," said Informa Markets project manager Yaqoob Ali.

Entry to the Autumn Fair 2020 remains at BD 1 despite the implementation of VAT in the country. Tickets can be purchased during show opening hours from kiosks at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre.

Children under the age of 12 years will be admitted free of charge. The exhibition will open from 12 pm-10 pm on 23 rd and 24 th January, 10am-2pm and 4pm-10pm from Saturday 25 th to Wednesday 29 th January, 10am-10pm on Thursday 30 th and Friday 31 st January. On 26 th and 27 th January from 10 am-2 pm the exhibition will open to ladies only. For further information visit www.theautumnfair.com or call 17 550033.

Saudi backs UN Conference on Disarmament

Geneva

Saudi Arabia has reiterated its support to the UN Conference on Disarmament backing its constructive efforts to adopt a comprehensive and balanced work programme.

Addressing the Conference on Disar-

mament 2020, Saudi Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva Dr Abdulaziz Al Wasil wished all success of this session in restoring the effective role of the conference to play its role in negotiating the international treaties and agreements in the field of

disarmament.

He stressed the importance of consolidating and supporting all UN multilateral mechanisms, including the Conference on Disarmament to prevent all types of weapons of mass destruction and their proliferation.

He underlined the need to review the factors which caused the conference to falter and, express goodwill and avoid unilateral situations that undermine the chances of achieving collective security.

He urged all countries to show the

necessary flexibility and political will required to re-launch the conference and activate its role, in order to remedy the situation and change the existing situation so that the conference can carry out its responsibilities to enhance international security.

world

Eight Indian tourists die in Nepal after lighting gas heater in hotel

- The tourists were found unconscious in the room of their resort
- They were pronounced brought dead on arrival by hospital
- The police say the tourists could have died due to suffocation

Agencies | Kathmandu



The victims were identified as Ranjith Kumar Adatholath Punathil, Indu Lakshmi Peethambaran Ragalatha, Vyshnav Ranjith, Praveen Krishnan Nair, Saranya Sasi, Sreebhadra Praveen, Aarcha Praveen and Abhinav Saranya Nair. (Courtesy of mathrubhumi)

Eight Indian tourists including four children died of suspected suffocation in a hotel in Nepal on Tuesday, police said, after trying to keep warm by using a gas heater during the night.

The victims were staying in Daman, a hill resort south of Kathmandu which is known for its panoramic views of the Himalayas.

"They had lit a gas heater to keep the room warm and probably suffocated," police official Hobindra Bogati said. Seven other tourists in the group were unharmed.

The tourists were found unconscious in the room of their resort and were airlifted to HAMS Hospital in Kathmandu where they were pronounced brought dead on arrival.

Foreign minister S Jaishankar said that he is deeply distressed by tragic news. "Our embassy in Nepal has been closely following the situation. Embassy officials are stationed at the hospital and providing necessary assistance. Our thoughts are with bereaved families," he said yesterday.

The police say the tourists could have died due to suffo-



This undated image shows the cottages of Everest Panorama Resort in Daman, Thaha Municipality, Makawanpur District. Photo courtesy: hotels.com | Himalayan Times

cation. "They were using gas heater in the room, suffocation might have caused their death," Superintendent of Police Sushil Singh Rathore said.

According to news agency PTI, the group of tourists was coming back from Pokhara and stayed at Everest Panorama Resort in Makwanpur district on Monday night.

The resort manager said that the guests stayed in a room and turned on a gas heater to keep

themselves warm, according to PTI. Although they had booked four rooms, eight of them stayed in a room and remaining others in another room, the manager said, adding that all the windows and the door of the room were bolted from inside.

PTI identified the victims as Praveen Krishnan Nair, Saranya Sasi, Sreebhadra Praveen, Aarcha Praveen, Abhinav Saranya Nair, Ranjith Kumar Adatholath Punathil, Indu Lakshmi Peeth-



Hospital staff observe as the bodies of eight Indian tourists who died due to suspected suffocation are carried inside an ambulance while being taken for postmortem in Kathmandu, Nepal



The body of a child who is among the victims is being carried inside an ambulance

ambaran Ragalatha and Vyshnav Ranjith.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan condoled the death of Malayali tourists in Nepal.

On the directions of the chief minister, officials have taken steps to expedite procedures for the repatriation of the mortal remains of the victims, his office said.

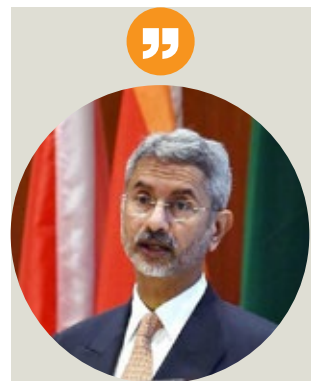
Tourism is a major source of revenue for Nepal's economy, providing hundreds of thousands of jobs. Last year just

over 1 million tourists visited the country, of which the biggest contingent - around a tenth - came from India.

Two Chinese and two Italian tourists were found dead in two separate incidents in Nepal in 2013.

Several people die during winter in Kathmandu due to carbon monoxide poisoning, which is caused by poor ventilation and lack of oxygen, according to Buddha Basnyat, a doctor writing in the *Nepali Times*.

They had lit a gas heater to keep the room warm and probably suffocated
POLICE OFFICIAL HOBINDRA BOGATI



Deeply distressed by the tragic news of the passing away of eight Indian tourists in Nepal. Our Embassy has been closely following the situation. Embassy officials are stationed at the hospital and are providing necessary assistance. Our thoughts are with the bereaved families

INDIAN MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan condoled the death of Malayali tourists in Nepal



Iran MP offers \$3 mn 'to anyone who kills Trump'

Tehran

An Iranian lawmaker yesterday offered a \$3-million reward to "anyone who kills" US President Donald Trump to avenge the assassination of a top general, semi-official news agency ISNA reported.

Ahmad Hamzeh, a little-known member of the Majlis, made the offer on behalf of the people of Kerman, the hometown and final resting place of storied commander Major General Qasem Soleimani.

"We will give \$3 million to anyone who kills Trump," Hamzeh, who represents Kahanouj county near the southeastern city of Kerman, was quoted as saying by ISNA.

He did not say who would pay



Public opposition to Washington already ran high in Iran even before a US drone strike killed storied Revolutionary Guards commander Major General Qasem Soleimani in Baghdad earlier this month

the bounty offer, which comes a month ahead of a parliamentary election.

Soleimani, one of the most

popular public figures in Iran, was killed on January 3 in US drone strike outside Baghdad airport.

China's former Interpol chief sentenced to 13 years in prison

Beijing

Former Interpol chief Meng Hongwei, who was detained on a visit to China in 2018, was sentenced Tuesday to more than 13 years in prison for bribery in a case that shook the international police organisation.

Meng -- a former vice minister of public security -- is among a growing group of Communist Party cadres caught in President Xi Jinping's anti-graft campaign, which critics say has also served as a way to remove the leader's political enemies.

He vanished during a visit to China from France, where Interpol is based, and was later accused of accepting bribes and expelled from the Communist Party.

His wife was granted political asylum in France last year,



Former Interpol chief Meng Hongwei

after saying she was afraid she and her two children would be the targets of kidnapping attempts.

The 66-year-old was sentenced to 13 years and six months in prison and fined two million yuan RMB (\$290,000), said the Tianjin First Intermediate People's Court on Tuesday.

At his trial last June, Meng pleaded guilty to accepting \$2.1 million in bribes, after the court said he used his status and positions to "seek improper benefit", illegally acquire property and accumulate bribes.

Greta says planting not enough after Trump backs trillion tree plan

Reuters | Davos, Switzerland

Greta Thunberg said planting trees was not enough to address climate change on Tuesday, in an apparent rebuke to a planting pledge in Davos by US President Donald Trump.

"Our house is still on fire," Thunberg said, repeating her remarks at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum a year ago. "Your inaction is fuelling the flames," the teenage activist added, in the latest to-and-fro with the 73-year-old president.

Earlier, Thunberg called on world leaders to listen to young activists, who have followed her to Davos this year.

Prince Harry starts new life with Meghan in Canada

- Harry and Meghan have pledged to uphold 93-year-old Queen Elizabeth's values in any commercial arrangements
- Making money without seemingly cashing in on royal connections has proved tricky for others

Vancouver

Prince Harry was spending the first full day of his new life in Canada yesterday after jetting in from Britain to join his wife Meghan following their shock exit from their royal roles.

Harry, 35, landed at Vancouver International Airport on a British Airways flight from London Heathrow shortly after 7:00 pm on Monday (0300 GMT Tuesday).

He then took a connecting flight to Victoria on Vancouver Island, where he and Meghan have temporarily set up a home from home, having spent six weeks on the Pacific west coast over Christmas with their baby son Archie.

British newspapers published pictures of Harry, escorted by security, descending from the plane wearing a beanie hat and jeans with a bag slung over his shoulder.

Meghan, 38, was earlier spotted with Archie taking their dogs for a walk in the neighborhood.

According to local reports, the couple are looking to buy a beachside house in Vancouver, or possibly in Toronto, where US former television actress



Prince Harry attended his last duties in London on Monday

Meghan spent several years while acting in the legal drama series "Suits".

'No other option'

Harry and Meghan are bowing out entirely from representing the monarchy, in a crisis that has shaken the centuries-old institution.

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex openly said they have struggled in the spotlight since their wedding in May 2018, and were seeking to step back as frontline royals.

Harry said Sunday that they did not want to quit their royal duties but reluctantly accepted there was "no other option" if they wanted to cut loose from public funding and seek their own income in pursuit of a more independent life.

On Monday, Harry, who is sixth in line to the throne, attended the UK-Africa Investment Summit in London.

He seemed in good spirits as he met the presidents of Malawi and Mozambique, and the Moroccan prime minister.

20-minute private meeting with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who hosted the event -- which might be one of the prince's final engagements as a working royal.

Price of freedom

Under their new arrangement, the Sussexes are free to earn their own commercial income -- but can no longer represent Queen Elizabeth or be referred to as their royal highnesses, and must repay taxpayers' money spent on their UK home.

They will no longer receive public money -- though 95 percent of their annual funding comes from his father Prince Charles' hereditary estate for the heir to the throne.

To what extent that will continue, and who will cover their security bill -- currently met by the British police -- remains to be seen.

The couple intend to raise their own income streams. They have launched their new Sussex Royal website and trademarked the name.

However, Queen Elizabeth's



Meghan Markle visited a charity called Justice for Girls in Vancouver last week



Tall trees shield the view of Meghan and Harry's temporary estate in Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada

senior advisor on heraldry suggested they should not be allowed to use the royal moniker, having relinquished their public duties.

"I don't think it's satisfactory. One cannot be two things at once. You either are (royal) or you're not," Thomas Woodcock, the Garter King of Arms, told The Times newspaper.

Woodcock said the final decision would rest with the sover-

ign but he was giving his personal opinion.

In a role that dates back to the 15th century, he is involved in making sure that royal symbols are not used illegitimately for commercial purposes.

"It is such unusual times that it is a matter of waiting and seeing how things develop," he said.

Meanwhile Britain's Justice Secretary Robert Buckland said there must be a "line of delineation" over who foots their security costs.



Like Britain, Canada is a Commonwealth realm, meaning Harry's grandmother Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state

Asked whether British taxpayers should fund the Sussexes while they are in Canada, he told Sky News television: "I don't have an easy answer to that."

Milking it

Harry and Meghan have pledged to uphold 93-year-old Queen Elizabeth's values in any commercial arrangements they strike.

Making money without seemingly cashing in on royal connections has proved tricky for others who have sought a life outside the Windsor family business.

The Daily Mail newspaper said Tuesday that Peter Phillips was using his connections to sell milk on Chinese television, holding up a glass in front of a stately home.

The sports and entertainment agency director is the Queen's eldest grandchild and son of her only daughter, Princess Anne.

Harry's first cousin, 42, is 15th in line to the throne but has never held a royal title or carried out public duties for the royal family.

"It may be lucrative, but it's undignified," the Daily Mail said. "Harry and Meghan should take note."

China says virus spreading between humans as WHO set to meet

Reuters, AFP | Beijing

The death toll from a mysterious flu-like virus in China climbed to six on Tuesday as new cases surged beyond 300 and authorities fretted about the added risk from millions of Chinese traveling for the Lunar New Year holiday.

Round the world, airports tightened screening of travelers from China as officials confirmed the coronavirus strain is contagious between humans.

The World Health Organization (WHO) called a meeting for Wednesday to consider declaring a global health emergency.

The outbreak, which began in the central city of Wuhan, also sent shivers through financial markets as investors recalled the fallout from China's Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2002/2003 that it initially covered up.

The SARS coronavirus killed nearly 800 people then.

"We'll stay at home during the holiday. I'm scared as I remember SARS very well," said Zhang Xinyuan, who had been bound from Beijing for the Thai resort of Phuket before she and her husband decided to cancel their air tickets.

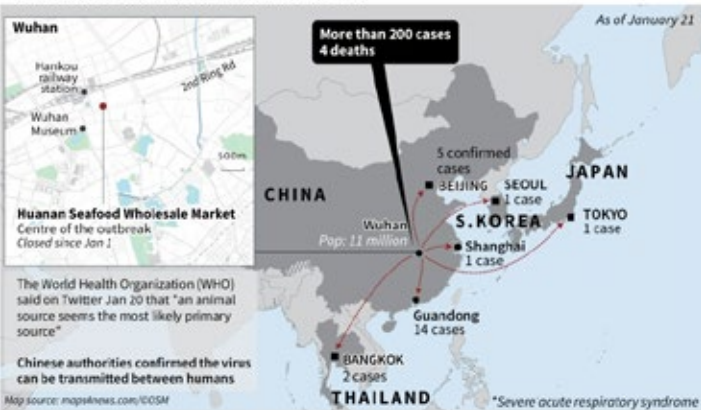
Authorities have confirmed more than 300 cases in China, mostly in Wuhan, a provincial capital and transportation hub, where the virus may have originated at a sea food market.



A seafood market in Wuhan has been identified as the centre of the outbreak

China SARS-like virus

Novel SARS-like coronavirus confirmed in four countries



The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Twitter Jan 20 that "an animal source seems the most likely primary source"

Chinese authorities confirmed the virus can be transmitted between humans

however, including five cases in the national capital Beijing. Fifteen medical personnel are among those infected.

Abroad, Thailand has reported two cases and South Korea one, all involving Chinese travelers

from Wuhan. Japan and Taiwan also confirmed one case each, both nationals who had been to Wuhan.

"Information about newly reported infections suggest there may now be sustained human-to-human transmission," said WHO's regional director for the western Pacific, Takeshi Kasai.

Taiwan, the self-ruled island that China claims as its own, on Monday set up an epidemic response command center. More than 1,000 beds were prepared in isolation wards in case the virus spreads further.

Outbreak linked to a market

Though the origin of the virus was yet to be identified, WHO said the primary source was probably animal. Chinese officials have linked the outbreak to

Rush for masks

Airports in the United States, Australia and across Asia have begun screening passengers from Wuhan.

In the city itself, officials have been using infrared thermometers to screen passengers at airports, railway stations and other passenger terminals since Jan. 14.

The Lunar New Year is a major holiday for Chinese, many of whom travel to join family or have a foreign holiday.

Images of long lines of people queuing to buy face masks were circulating widely on Chinese social media.

Some online vendors were limiting sales of masks and hand sanitizers as demand surged.

Shanghai city's market reg-

ulator warned it would punish speculators hoarding masks or other products used for preventing diseases, according to the Shanghai Observer, a web publication backed by a Communist Party newspaper.

But Zhong Nanshan, head of the National Health Commission's team investigating the outbreak, sought to ease alarm, saying in footage shown by state television there was no danger of a repeat of the SARS epidemic so long as precautions were taken.

Chinese travel booking platforms from Trip.com (TCOM.O) to Alibaba Group's (BABA.N) Fliggy said they would offer free cancellations on bookings made for Wuhan.

China's National Health Commission will also give an update at a press briefing at 10 a.m. (0200 GMT) on Wednesday.

More than 2,300 flights planned from January 20-27

Domestic flights (2,130) International (200)

Wuhan's seafood market.

The virus can cause pneumonia, with symptoms including fever and difficulty in breathing. As those symptoms are similar to many other respiratory diseases,

People wearing masks are pictured on the subway in Beijing, China



People wearing masks are pictured on the subway in Beijing, China

Too many show for Sri Lanka twins record bid



A Sri Lankan attempt to set a world record for the largest gathering of twins may have failed Monday after an unexpectedly large turnout overwhelmed organisers who vowed to try again.

No joke: Denmark to cut kids off from laughing gas

Copenhagen

Denmark plans to ban sales of laughing gas to minors to prevent them from using the substance -- which is used for making whipped cream or filling balloons -- to get high, officials said Tuesday.

"We're going to end too-easy access to laughing gas and prevent the abuse of gas cartridges by young people," Industry Minister Simon Kollerup said in a statement.

With nearly universal support among lawmakers, the parliament is expected to pass the legislation that would see sales restricted from May, with adults also to be limited to purchasing two cartridges at a time to discourage abuse.

Nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, was once widely used as an anaesthetic to reduce pain, but its euphoric effects have also long made it popular as a recreational drug.

Health officials worry that regular use of nitrous oxide



Canisters of nitrous oxide, commonly known as laughing gas

can cause nervous system and heart rhythm problems and a loss of memory.

A survey found nearly one in six Danish boys aged 15-25 had tried laughing gas, and nearly one in 10 girls. Three deaths linked to inhalation of nitrous oxide have been recorded in the country since 2016.

Nitrous oxide is widely used as a propellant for aerosols, in particular for whipped cream and cooking oils.

Denmark would become the first European Union country to restrict sales of nitrous oxide to youths if the legislation is adopted as expected.

2.229 billion years

Scientists date world's oldest meteor crater

Tokyo

A crater in western Australia was formed by a meteor strike more than 2.2 billion years ago and is the world's oldest known impact site, new research published Wednesday shows.

The study marks the first time that the Yarrabubba crater has been precisely dated, at 2.229 billion years old, and means it is 200 million years older than any similar site known on Earth.

The revelation also raises the intriguing possibility that the massive impact could have significantly altered the Earth's climate, helping end a period of global "deep freeze".

Scientists had long suspected that Yarrabubba, in a remote part of the outback, dated back several billion years.

But dating ancient craters is not easy: the sites tend to be poorly preserved because erosion and tectonic events such as earthquakes have "progressively erased into the geologic past", the researchers wrote in their paper, published in the journal *Nature Communications* on Wednesday.

And even where craters are still present, determining their age is complex.

To date Yarrabubba precisely, the team hunted for evidence of "shock recrystallisation" in minerals at the site -- essentially where the massive impact of the meteor had altered the structure of materials including zircon and monazite.

- 'SHRIMP dating' -

But finding that record in the



Meteor craters, such as this one in Arizona are difficult to age precisely because the sites tend to be poorly preserved because erosion and tectonic events such as earthquakes erase the geologic past

minerals involved searching for microscopic grains, using a high-tech scanning process known as Sensitive High Resolution Ion Micro Probe or SHRIMP dating.

Once identified, uranium in the grains helped the scientists determine a precise date, which they found coincided with a period when the planet emerged from a global deep freeze known as "Snowball Earth".

"Glacial deposits are absent from the rock record for around 400 million years after the Yarrabubba impact," Chris Kirkland, a professor at Curtin University's School of Earth and Planetary Sciences who was involved in the study, told AFP.

"The impact fits within the context of Earth moving out of frigid conditions."

The researchers theorise that when the meteor hit Yarrabubba, the site was covered with ice, like much of the rest of the Earth at the time.

The massive strike, which created a crater around 70 kilometres (45 miles) in diameter, may have sent up to half a trillion tons of vaporised ice into the atmosphere, according to models run by the team.

"If the impact occurred into an ice sheet then it would release lots of water vapour, which is an even more efficient greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide," lead author Timmons Erickson, of NASA's Johnson Space Center and Curtin's School of Earth and Planetary Sciences, told AFP.

"That, in turn, may result in warming of the planet."

WWII bomb made safe in Germany city of Cologne



Stefan Höreth of the bomb disposal unit next to the WWII bomb.

Frankfurt am Main

German experts defused a World War II bomb in Cologne yesterday that had forced the evacuation of thousands of office workers and disrupted rail and ship traffic.

The 500-kilogramme (1,100-pound) US bomb -- dropped during a heavy bombardment of the western German city -- "no longer poses a danger", the city said in a statement shortly before midday (1100 GMT).

Construction workers found the bomb on the right bank of the Rhine river on Monday evening, prompting the evacuation of nearby offices including those of broadcaster RTL and the Cologne Opera.

Very few people live in the area, which is primarily a business district.

"The roughly 10,000 employees of the affected companies and the 15 residents may return to their buildings," said the city's statement.

After the bomb was deactivated in an operation that took less than an hour, German rail operator Deutsche Bahn announced that the bridge had reopened, as had Cologne's smaller Messe/Deutz station.

Dutch farm dad 'beat bad spirits out of kids'

● One child was tied up by his hands and feet as punishment, while another child was forced to spend an entire summer in a doghouse at the farm

The Hague

A Dutchman isolated six of his children in a remote farmhouse from birth and beat them to drive out "bad spirits," prosecutors told a court yesterday.

Gerrit Jan van D., 67, subjected the youngsters who were found on the farm in the village of Ruinerwold in October to "very serious physical punishment" when he thought they had been made "unclean".

One child was tied up by his hands and feet as punishment, while another child was forced to spend an entire summer in a doghouse at the farm in northern Drenthe province.

"The children all speak of very serious physical punishment if their father thought there was a 'bad spirit' in them. That happened from a very young age, four or five years," prosecutors said during a procedural hearing in the case.

Prosecutors said the youngest six of the man's nine children "lived in seclusion from birth,



An image taken from a drone on 30 October 2019 shows Dutch judges visiting the farmhouse in Ruinerwold where a family was allegedly held captive.

were kept indoors and had to be quiet so that no one would notice that they existed."

They were not registered with Dutch authorities and had never been to school, they said.

The family was first discovered in October when the oldest son still living on the farm walked into a local bar in a confused state and raised concern about the welfare of his other siblings.

Police raided the farm and arrested Van D. and an Austrian man identified as Joseph B., 58,

'Unclean'

Van D. was absent for medical reasons from Tuesday's hearing in the town of Assen.

He is charged with depriving the children of their liberty from 2007 to 2019 and "punching, kicking and denying food and drink" to the six children. He is also charged with sexually abusing two of the older three children.

Joseph B. is also charged with depriving the children of their liberty and was in court.

"I feel like this is a witch hunt," Joseph B. told the court. "I have a clear conscience... I have not robbed anyone of his freedom."

Prosecutors said the three oldest children were not allowed to talk about the existence of their brothers and sisters.

Citing diaries kept by the children, prosecutors said they had all spoken of their "conviction that contact with the outside world makes you 'unclean' and about 'bad spirits' that come into bodies. The father determined when a child had a 'bad spirit'.



Gerrit Jan van D

”
The children all speak of very serious physical punishment if their father thought there was a 'bad spirit' in them. That happened from a very young age, four or five years

PROSECUTORS SAID DURING A PROCEDURAL HEARING IN THE CASE

"This child was isolated, had to pray and the other family members were not allowed to have contact with this child,

sometimes not even for months."

One of the children was separated from the rest of the family at the age of 12 and made to stay in a caravan on another part of the farm, prosecutors said, adding that "after that he spent a whole summer in a doghouse in a shed."

The three oldest of the nine children were allowed to go to school and the "exterior doors were not locked all those years", prosecutors said.

But they said that there was still "unlawful deprivation of liberty for all these years -- classically locked up at times, but in a less classic way at other times."

Prosecutors said the abuse was a "figurative lock on the door", adding that "no physical lock is required on the door as evidence of unlawful deprivation of liberty or hostage-taking."

When it comes to peace, is the EU really a great power?

A look at Europe's track record in peacemaking suggests the continent may be less than the sum of its parts

RASHMEE ROSHAN LALL

Even before he became the European Union's new foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell suggested that Europe should speak the "language of power". And German foreign minister Heiko Maas called for a "strong and sovereign Europe", which could be a bigger player on the world stage through a proposed European Security Council.

It is fitting, then, that Europe has spent time in the opening weeks of the new decade talking about war and peace. This past Sunday, the continent hosted a grand summit in Berlin on the Libyan conflict. On Monday, EU foreign ministers discussed Luxembourg's push for European recognition of a Palestinian state.

The EU is good at talking. Asle Toje, a Norwegian foreign policy analyst and member of the Nobel Committee, once made the following claim: "The European Union was born out of an understanding that 'the great decisions of our day will be made by speeches and majority decisions, not by blood and iron', to reverse Bismarck's quip".

Indeed, speeches and majority decisions could be the essence of the European project and the reason it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012. By joining 28 countries in a grand union of values, the EU has brought peace to a once-turbulent continent. But what of its role beyond its own borders? How successful has Europe been as a peacemaker? Has it even tried, and having tried, succeeded?

Its record is mixed. From the Balkan wars of the 1990s, through the US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq and the Darfur crisis, as well as ongoing con-

flicts in Syria, Libya and Yemen, Europe has suffered from its lack of cohesiveness. EU "actor-ness" – to use the choice phrase of European scholars – has been hamstrung by its semi-supranational, semi-intergovernmental character. It could be argued that the bloc has not lived up to expectations that it would act as a great power.

When the EU has notched up limited foreign policy successes in the last decade, such as co-ordination of sanctions on Russia after the annexation of Crimea and putting together the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, they were premised on support from the Obama administration. The exception is the so-called Belgrade–Pristina dialogue, facilitated between the governments of Serbia and Kosovo. The talks began three years after the latter's declaration of independence from the former in 2008. Within two years, the EU managed to broker a limited normalisation of bilateral relations. Though the deal was seen at the time as ground-breaking, it failed to achieve the broader objective of resolving Kosovo's status. That failure is all the more biting given that the EU's leverage with both parties was their aspirations to join the bloc as independent states. For Kosovo, recognition from certain EU member states – one example being Spain, Mr Borrell's home country – continues to seem a distant prospect, adding further insult to injury.

Further afield, the prospects for EU-led peacemaking have hardly been more encouraging. On Syria, there has been little European coherence – or effort – beyond robust expressions of support for the UN-led intra-Syrian dialogue in Geneva.



High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell

When Donald Trump pulled back American troops from north-eastern Syria in October, effectively green-lighting the Turkish invasion of Syrian Kurdish-controlled territory, the EU cried foul, but not with one voice. And there was little take-up of German defence minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer's suggestion that an international force, with a substantial German military contribution, be deployed to establish a security zone on the ground.

In Iraq and Lebanon, both rocked by popular protest, the EU has limited itself to calling for peace. There are European boots

In Libya, the EU's positioning has been weakened by divisions between the north African nation's former colonial powers, Italy and France, but it has been scrambling lately to regain the diplomatic initiative from Ankara and Moscow.

on the ground in Iraq – roughly 3,000 soldiers from 19 EU states

Being happy at work is not impossible and comp

Justin Thomas

Disfunctional thinking and unhealthy mental patterns are more common than we realise. They affect our relationships with our families, friends and colleagues. When these patterns remain unchecked, they can morph into disorders, manifest in how people behave and relate to one another. So for example, the frequent breakdown of relationships is a red flag, a first sign that "it's not them, it's you" and this can be a bitter pill to swallow.

Often, workplaces are a part of the problem. In nations such as the UK and the US, the leading cause of workplace absenteeism is depression.

If we apply the idea of personality disorders to the office, it becomes clear that some employers consistently relate to their staff in potentially damaging ways, resulting in high rates of relationship breakdown. In the world of work, of course, we choose to call it employee turnover.

Many of the best and the brightest employees quickly move on from toxic workplaces. Those who remain can become disillusioned or embittered. People even fall ill when they have to go onto a toxic workplace day after

day. It does not take a degree in economics to figure out that none of this is good for organisations. A toxic culture affects productivity, hits their bottom line, and keeps companies from attaining their objectives.

Conversely, employers who relate to their employees in a consistently compassionate style reap the rewards. Such organisations are likely to be concerned with the well-being of their employees. They put in place initiatives to promote contentment, along with fostering a strong sense of purpose and belonging.

When such workplaces properly carry out these moves, the outcomes are invariably positive, with higher levels of employee loyalty, and lower rates of sickness and absence. Furthermore, such working environments tend to be characterised by higher levels of creativity and innovation, good corporate-citizenship and pan-organisational camaraderie. In short, they are better, more pleasant places to work. Once word spreads, these organisations get the first pick of the best talent, and they keep them.

The idea that organisations benefit from promoting employee well-being is gaining global traction and the UAE has been quick to act on this. In 2016, this



A warehouse-style open plan office.

country took the bold and innovative step of appointing a Minister of State for Happiness. By 2017, organisations across the UAE, private and public sector, created special roles to this end. Some

even appointed chief happiness and positivity officers. All these measures made it evident how committed the country was to the cause and to the UAE's National Programme for Happiness and

Well-being. At least nine workplaces in the UAE have completed or are pursuing a standard set by the International WELL Building Institute (IWBI), which says that

The UAE has been quick to act on the idea that offices are better places when they prioritise employee well-being

1890

The **United Mine Workers of America** is founded in Columbus, Ohio.

1901

Edward VII is proclaimed King after the death of his mother, Queen Victoria.



1905

Bloody Sunday in Saint Petersburg, beginning of the 1905 revolution.

1906

ss Valencia runs aground on rocks on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, killing more than 130.



ell speaks during a press conference.

anyahu's government has exploited a lack of European consensus to act decisively on the issue. "We Europeans have been suffering internal divisions, and we have not been united enough," Mr Borrell recently lamented.

EU peacemaking is a distinct quantity compared to some of its constituent parts. Norway, perhaps the biggest peacemaker of the bloc, facilitated the Oslo Accords and Colombia's peace agreement. It has sought to involve itself in many other intractable conflicts, including Haiti, Cyprus, the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. France has traditionally tried to lead Europe on Middle East matters, including peace initiatives. From 1958, Ireland has been the only country to have a continuous presence on UN peacekeeping missions.

So, why is the EU not anywhere near the sum total of its member states' weight in foreign affairs? One explanation, by Christopher Hill, a British expert on European politics, is that Europe suffers a "capability-expectations gap". His eponymous 1993 paper identified the gap's three causes – the inability to agree, allocate resources, or to use instruments at the EU's disposal. For the gap to be closed, the professor argued, European foreign policy must be grounded in demonstrated behaviour, which would require the EU to take decisions quickly, mobilise institutions and command resources. The alternative, he said, is to simply lower expectations.

That would mean recognising the EU is, in the words of a recent Swedish Institute of International Affairs paper, an "unidentified political object" – not quite a state yet more than an international organisation.

plus another 200 under Nato command – but the EU has been wary of doing much more than criticising the heavy-handedness of Iraqi security forces.

In Libya, the EU's positioning has been weakened by divisions between the north African nation's former colonial powers, Italy and France, but it has been scrambling lately to regain the diplomatic initiative from Ankara and Moscow. This largely explains the holding of the Berlin conference, and Mr Borrell's bullish cheerleading for a more determined European role.

As for Venezuela, the EU, US and dozens of other nations recognise opposition leader Juan

Guaido, rather than its president Nicolas Maduro, as the rightful head of state. On Monday, Mr Borrell said he would meet Mr Guaido in Brussels and there are whispers that the Dutch, among others, are seeking a harder EU stance against the Maduro regime. But Mr Maduro has already dismissed the threat of European sanctions and travel bans, saying: "I don't care even a little bit about what Europe does".

Israel shares a similar disregard to the EU, particularly in discussions on Palestinian statehood. In 2014, the European Parliament adopted a resolution to recognise Palestinian statehood in principle. But Benjamin Net-

panies can make it happen



People even fall ill when they have to go onto a toxic workplace day after day. It does not take a degree in economics to figure out that none of this is good for organisations. A toxic culture affects productivity, hits their bottom line, and keeps companies from attaining their objectives.

areas of building design, including the air and light.

Healthy workplaces are a critical national priority and the UAE has recently announced the Business for Wellbeing Council. This is to encourage well-being in the offices whether through initiatives such as flexible working, access to counselling services or mindfulness sessions.

Headed by the Minister of State for Happiness, Ohood Al Roumi, the council comprises eight of the UAE's largest employers (Majid Al Futtaim Group, Landmark Group, Emirates NBD, Etihad Airways, Aldar Properties, Emirates Airlines, Unilever and Cisco). These companies, between them, employ around a quarter of a million

people, which represents a massive opportunity for social good in the country.

On a personal level, I have been involved in workplace well-being initiatives over the past five years. I have delivered courses on mindfulness-based stress reduction to groups of employees from several organisations. When leading these sessions, it always strikes me how valuable many of the participants find these sessions. I frequently hear reports from the groups about improved sleep, better relationships and an enhanced ability to deal with the psychological rough and tumble of the office.

A workplace well-being agenda that goes beyond balloons and cupcakes can have a substantial and lasting impact on peoples' lives. However, in addition to helping people cope with stress, we should aim to reduce the sources of stress. For example, unrealistic deadlines, job insecurity, lack of autonomy, bullying, or managers with poor interpersonal skills, to list a few.

For sure, promoting employee well-being is good for the bottom line. But this should not be the key driver. We should promote well-being because it is the right thing to do and because humans care about other humans.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Hillary Clinton is not committing to endorsing and campaigning for Sen. Bernie Sanders if he's the Democratic 2020 presidential nominee, saying "nobody likes him" and labeling him a career politician in an explosive new interview in The Hollywood Reporter @CNN

02



Friendship depends on trust and trust depends on having a strong sense of concern for the welfare of others. Be honest, truthful and warm-hearted. Make compassion the basis of your determination. Think of what the future can be, not what happened in the past. @DalaiLama

03



President Trump is the best. This man is down to earth, normal, fun & real. I'm a guy that grew up in foster care. Lived in a children shelters, been in so many homes and now look at me with The Greatest President of the United States of America. The American Dream is real. @w_terrence

04



One year from today, the next president will begin her first full day of work. She'll inherit a government in crisis, infected by corruption, and will need the expertise and drive to rebuild it and ensure it works for the people. I've got a plan for that. @ewarren

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

Bahrain must conserve and enrich its precious topsoil



KOTA SRIRAJ

The agricultural sector in Bahrain is facing daunting challenges mainly due to oppressive weather conditions which requires the farmers to tend to their farms even when the temperatures touch 45 degree Celsius. The falling water levels and increasing costs of farming is making the going even tougher for the farmers leading to a rise in loan liabilities and inability to spend on key farming equipment such as the sunshade nets that provide the much-required shade to the crops. These conditions are increasingly contributing to two situations, firstly the farmer is reaching the end of the road as far as agriculture is concerned and selling his land to real estate developers, this in turn is causing the rise of urbanization. Secondly, the farmer himself is moving to the cities after disposing the land causing migration related problems, as the cities struggle with meagre resources in supporting the influx of migratory population.

These conditions are triggered mainly because the state of affairs on the agricultural front are steadily declining as the farmers battle critical conditions arising due to anthropogenic and climate change related reasons leading difficult economic conditions. The changing climate, rising pollution levels and falling viability in agriculture is forcing the farming community world-wide to urgently look for alternative means of livelihood. This is also causing the food security conditions of various nations to be in trouble as the main food producers – farmers are going out of business. This trend needs to be arrested before the cumulative global food scarcity crisis gets out of control and puts the human existence in risk. There are many factor's contributing to the difficulties of the Agri-sector, but the main challenges are in the form of falling water levels and deterioration of the soil quality. These issues alone are sufficient to bring the sector to its knees. Bahrain too has been a witness to these problems plaguing the farmers as the topsoil in the kingdom has rapidly worsened in its quality due to pollution, urbanization and salinization.

The falling water levels and increasing costs of farming is making the going even tougher for the farmers leading to a rise in loan liabilities and inability to spend on key farming equipment such as the sunshade nets that provide the much-required shade to the crops.

The water related woes of the farmers are still manageable as in todays technologically advanced times it is possible to ensure research and development on crops that have high nutrition and fiber content and that can ensure high crop yield with less water commitment. But soil conditions cannot be negotiated or "managed". An acceptably good quality of soil is a non-negotiable requirement or to be more specific, a fertile topsoil is a must if the crops were to even survive. This requirement becomes even more essential in an arid geographic location such as that of Bahrain. Topsoil contains all the required nutrients that plants need to survive and be productive and in order to protect this natural asset, the leaching of the salt is critical. This can be possible only with an effective drainage mechanism.

Additionally, the region wise tabulation and indexing of land quality is crucial as this can not only create a baseline data but also help in keeping a tab on the improving or deteriorating quality of the land. There is also an urgent need to declare the topsoil as a protected natural resource and hence must have stringent laws governing its conservation, this will dissuade the erosion of this asset. The authorities can also engage the farming community and general population on the importance of the topsoil and create awareness, this can aid immensely in conserving the same. These measures can script a turnaround for the Agri-sector and ensure that the difficulties of the farming community and conservation of the topsoil are both attended to in one go.

The topsoil is the essence of agriculture and backbone to food security. In fact, the formation of an inch of topsoil requires nearly 500 years as topsoil mainly derives from rock that needs to be broken into small fragments through a long process of chemical weathering which eventually enables the plants to get a hold in the rock fissures and start growing and add organic matter. Given the unique value of this natural resource every effort must be made to protect the same, moreover in these challenging economic times that are witnessing fluctuating oil prices, investing on the well-being of agriculture and its constituent elements will be in the best interests of Bahrain as a robust Agri-sector will not only reduce the import bill for food items which will not only have a cascading effect in increasing public confidence and improving food security, but will also help in developing agriculture as a much needed alternative to an oil based economy.

business

Ebrahim K. Kanoo, NIIT join hands

To train Bahraini job seekers in technical programme for auto detailers

TDT | Manama

Ebrahim K. Kanoo announced signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NIIT for the development of Bahraini youth by helping them realise their potential through academic and internship opportunities

The MoU outlines the company's assurance to train Bahraini job seekers in a three-month technical programme for auto detailers, accredited by the Institute of Motor Industry (IMI).

Upon successful completion of the IMI Auto Detailer Apprenticeship Programme, the candidates will be offered permanent positions within Ebrahim K. Kanoo's aftersales department.

Ebrahim K. Kanoo Chief Ex-



Officials during a deal signing to train Bahraini job seekers in a three-month technical programme for auto detailers, accredited by the Institute of Motor Industry

ecutive Officer, Mike Brightmore welcomed the MoU stating: "Our partnership with NIIT is a long-standing one and we are always happy to expand the areas of co-operation by sharing

knowledge and industry best practice. This latest programme is also supported by Tamkeen and the Ministry of Labour, which we are also proud to continue working with."

"We will continue to invest in Bahrainis from the grassroots level and sincerely appreciate the support of the government and all academic institutions in Bahrain," stated Brightmore.

Najibi named vice-head of joint Saudi-Bahrain joint Business Council



Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) Sameer Nass presided over the meeting

TDT | Manama

Bahraini-Saudi Joint Business Council meeting scheduled for 26 January 2020.

The Bahraini side of the Bahraini-Saudi Joint Business Council yesterday named BCCI's first vice-chairman Khalid Najibi as vice-head of the joint council.

The meeting convened at Bait Al Tijjar yesterday also probed preparations for the

Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) Sameer Nass presided over the meeting hailed the historic ties and stressed the importance of stepping up business and fostering economic consolidation.

Egypt extends losses in subdued Gulf markets

All but five of Egypt's 30 stocks retreat

Saudi Aramco dips 0.1pc to 34.6 riyals

Masraf Al Rayan gains on profit rise

First Abu Dhabi Bank the biggest drag on index

Reuters



Kuwaiti traders follow the stock market at the Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) in Kuwait City on October 14

new cases.

The National Health Commission (NHC) put the number of confirmed cases at 291 by the end of Monday, but further information from individual provinces on Tuesday showed

a widening geographic spread.

Egypt's blue-chip index fell for a second day, retreating 1 per cent, with 25 of 30 stocks easing on the index.

The country's largest lender, Commercial International Bank,

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▼ 0.3pc to 8,445 pts
ABU DHABI	▼ 0.6pc to 5,185 pts
DUBAI	▲ 0.1pc to 2,855 pts
QATAR	■ at 10,694 pts
EGYPT	▼ 1pc to 13,636 pts
BAHRAIN	▲ 0.1pc to 1,644 pts
OMAN	▼ 0.4pc to 4,060 pts
KUWAIT	▼ 0.2pc at 7,107 pts

eased by 0.2pc and tobacco monopoly Eastern Company lost 1.3pc.

Exchange data showed Egyptian investors were net sellers of the stocks.

The Saudi benchmark index dropped 0.3pc, with Al Rajhi Bank down 0.5pc and Saudi Basic Industries retreating by 1pc.

The International Monetary Fund trimmed its forecast for Saudi Arabia's economic growth to 1.9pc this year because of oil

output cuts agreed with oil exporters, having previously forecast gross domestic product growth of 2.2pc.

Riyadh led an agreement last month that committed the OPEC+ group of oil producers to some of the deepest output cuts in a decade to avert oversupply and support prices.

Elsewhere, state-owned oil giant Saudi Aramco slipped 0.1pc to 34.6 riyals (\$9.22).

The Abu Dhabi index lost 0.6pc, driven down by a 1.4pc fall in the country's largest lender, First Abu Dhabi Bank, and a 0.2pc decrease in telecoms company Etisalat.

Qatar's index traded flat as Masraf Al Rayan gained 1.5pc after posting a higher annual profit while Qatar Insurance declined by 1.2pc.

The Dubai index edged up 0.1pc, with its largest lender, Emirates NBD, adding 0.4pc and logistic company Aramex gaining 1.4pc.

Facebook to boost site safety with 1,000 more UK staff

London

Facebook yesterday said it plans to create 1,000 more London-based jobs this year to improve safety on the social network with the aid of artificial intelligence.

The new roles will increase the number of staff at the company's largest engineering hub outside the United States to more than 4,000.

"The UK is a world leader in both innovation and creativity. That's why I'm excited that we plan to hire an additional 1,000 people in London this year alone," said Facebook's chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson welcomed the move.

Al Salam Bank, Seychelles for greater ties

TDT | Manama

Al Salam Bank-Bahrain (ASBB) is committed to the growth of Al Salam Bank-Seychelles to become a leading financial institution in the Indian Ocean Rim region and a conduit to the MENA region, Group CEO said.

Rafik Nayed was holding a meeting with the President of the Republic of Seychelles, Danny Faure, who is on his first state visit to Bahrain. Al Salam Bank-Seychelles (ASBS) is a joint venture between ASBB and the Seychelles Pension Fund (SPF).

"While Seychelles is renowned as a leading tourist destination, its financial sector provides a range of untapped growth opportunities for on-shore and offshore banking services. Our presence in Seychelles



Group CEO meeting with President of Seychelles Danny Faure

forms an integral part of our banking network," Nayed told Faure.

Rafik Nayed, Lekha Nair - ASBS Vice-Chairperson and Seychelles Pension Fund CEO,

and members of ASBB's Executive Management also welcomed Seychelles Minister of Finance,



Group CEO ASBB Rafik Nayed welcomes Maurice Ministry of Finance Seychelles

Trade, Investment & Economic Planning, Maurice Loustau-Lalanne at the Bank's headquarters

in Manama where they explored various initiatives and opportunities for cooperation.

Nearly half billion people lack decent jobs: UN

● 285 million people worldwide are considered underemployed

● Number of people registered as unemployed is expected to rise to 190.5 million

● More than 60 per cent of the global workforce currently work in the informal economy

AFP | Geneva



Some 285 million people worldwide are considered underemployed, meaning they either work less than they want to, have given up searching for work or otherwise lack access to the labour market

More than 470 million people worldwide are currently unemployed or underemployed, the UN said on Monday, warning that a lack of access to decent jobs was contributing to social unrest.

The global unemployment rate has remained relatively stable over much of the past decade, according to the UN's International Labour Organization.

But while the rate -- which stood at 5.4 percent last year -- is not expected to change much, overall jobless numbers are likely to inch up as slowing

economies reduce the number of jobs available to a growing population.

This year, the number of people registered as unemployed is expected to rise to 190.5 million up from 188 million in 2019, ILO said in its annual World Employment and Social Outlook report.

At the same time, the UN body stressed that some 285 million people worldwide are considered underemployed, meaning they either work less than they want to, have given up searching for work or otherwise lack access to the labour market.

That amounts to nearly half

a billion people and represents a full 13 percent of the global labour force, the ILO pointed out.

'Extremely worrying'

"For millions of working people, it is becoming increasingly difficult I think to build better lives through work," ILO chief Guy Ryder told reporters in Geneva.

He warned that "persisting and substantial work-related inequalities and exclusion" were preventing many from finding decent work and thereby also creating better futures.

"I think that this is an ex-

remely worrying finding," he said, adding that lacking access to decent work appeared to be part of what was spurring growing protest movements and unrest around the world.

"Labour market conditions are contributing to... this erosion of social cohesion in many of our societies," he said, referring to mass demonstrations in places like Lebanon and Chile.

According to the ILO's "social unrest index", measuring the frequency of things like demonstrations and strikes, there was an increase both at the global level and in seven out of 11 sub-regions between 2009 and 2019.

The ILO report highlighted that more than 60 per cent of the global workforce currently work in the informal economy, often toiling for substandard wages and lacking basic social protections.

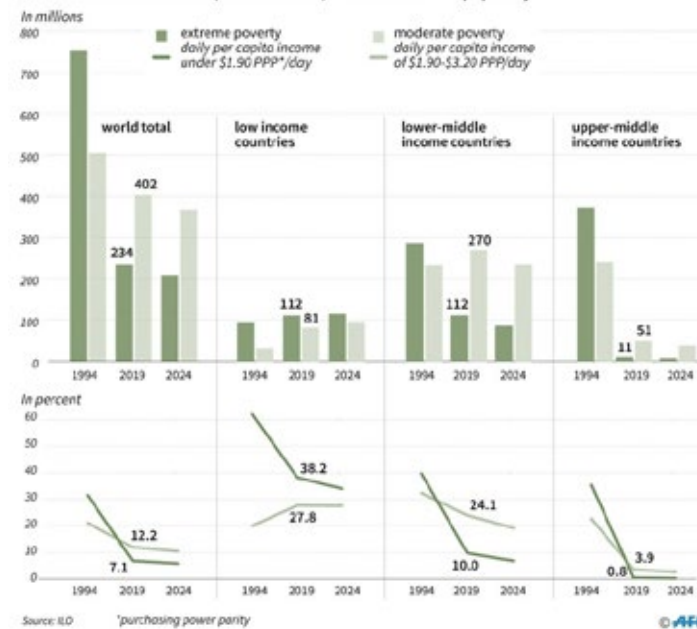
And in 2019, more than 630 million people -- a fifth of the global working population -- lived in so-called working poverty, meaning they made less than \$3.20 per day in purchasing power.

At the same time, the ILO report warned of significant income and job access inequality, driven by things like gender, age and geographic location.

In particular, it warned that

Working poverty

More than 630 million workers (1 in 5 worldwide) earn too little to escape poverty



a staggering 267 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are not in employment, education or training, while many more in this group endure substandard working conditions.

The study showed that the average share of national income going to pay wages and other labour costs shrank from 54 percent to 51 percent between 2004 and 2017.

And within the waged population, the gap between the highest earners and those at the bottom is "extremely unequal", Ryder said.

The ILO report found that it took 11 years for the bottom 20 percent of wage earners to make the same amount as the top 20 percent make in a year.

"The situation is worse than we previously thought," Ryder said.

Central banks join forces to look at future digital currencies

Reuters | London/Frankfurt

Major central banks are looking at the case for issuing their own digital currencies, the Bank of England and European Central Bank said yesterday, amid a growing debate over the future of money and who controls it.

The central banks of Britain, the euro zone, Japan, Sweden and Switzerland will share experiences in a new group headed by former European Central Bank official Benoit Coeure and assisted by the Bank of International Settlements, they said.



Representative picture

Central banks across the world have quickened the pace with which they are looking at

issuing their own digital currencies in the wake of Facebook's push to launch Libra.

Of major central banks, China's has emerged as the front-runner in the drive to create its own digitised money, though details of the project are still scarce.

"The group will assess ... economic, functional and technical design choices, including cross-border interoperability; and the sharing of knowledge on emerging technologies," the central banks said in a statement.

CBDCs are traditional money, but in digital form, issued and governed by a country's central bank. By contrast, cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin are produced by solving complex maths puzzles, and governed by disparate online communities instead of a centralised body.

The common denominator is that cryptocurrencies and CBDCs, to a varying degree, are based on blockchain technology, a digital ledger that allows transactions to be recorded and accessed in real time by multiple parties.

Macron and Trump declare truce in digital tax dispute

Reuters | Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Monday he had a "great discussion" with US President Donald Trump over a digital tax planned by Paris and said the two countries would work together to avoid a rise in tariffs.

The two leaders agreed to the truce after Paris offered to suspend down payments for this year's digital tax and Washington promised to keep negotiating toward a solution

rather than acting on a tariff threat, French sources said.

Specifically, Macron and Trump agreed to hold off on a potential tariff war until the end of 2020, a French diplomatic source said, and to push ahead with broader negotiations at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to rewrite the rules of international taxation during that period.

"They agreed to give a chance to negotiations until the end of the year," the source said.

Egypt village turns a profit on used tyres

Mit El Harun | Egypt

Residents of the Egyptian village of Mit al-Harun have for decades eked out a living by recycling old tyres into baskets, landscaping materials and alternative fuels.

From early morning, workers covered in soot and dust can be seen sharpening their knives to cut huge tyres stockpiled on the village's roadsides.

"The entire village works on recycling damaged tyres," said 35-year-old Abdelwahab Mohamed outside of his workshop.

"We inherited it from our fathers and grandfathers." The small Nile Delta village, some 70 kilometres (43 miles) north of Cairo, has gained a reputation as Egypt's top rubber recycling hub.

Dealers collect used tyres from across the country, delivering them to Mit al-Harun in huge trucks. Mohamed said prices per tyre go up to

around 70 Egyptian pounds (four dollars). "We cut the tyres here and pull out material including wire rings, which are collected by steel and iron factories to be recycled," he said. "Tyre rubber is of-

ten chopped into small pieces to be used by cement factories as an energy source" -- an alternative to low-grade mazut fuel oil.

Other parts are recycled into mulch for playgrounds, he added.

Mohamed said his work has grown unstable over the years, especially since the 2011 uprising that unseated longtime dictator Hosni Mubara and triggered years of political and economic turmoil.

"There are days with plenty



Dealers bring tyres from across Egypt for processing in Mit al-Harun



Some of the tyres are turned into baskets, while others are cut up for fuel or playground mulch

of work and others with little to none," he said.

At another workshop, 43-year-old Mostafa Azab fashions baskets out of tyres from trucks, tractors and industrial vehicles.

"We cut the tyre in half, then we split its inner layers using a winch, before shaping them into baskets and hammering nails around the edges to make them hold," said Azab.

The heavy-duty baskets are often used by farmers, gardeners

and labourers, he said.

Azab's workshop, with a handful of workers, processes up to 10 tyres per day, producing between 80-120 baskets.

Azab's brother, Haitham, said the job was "exhausting".

"It requires physical strength to carry around the heavy tyres," he said.

"If we had the option of a more stable occupation, we would have quit this one. But this is our only source of income."

Trump calls for more overseas investment in US



Donald Trump

Reuters | Davos, Switzerland

Thousands of miles from this Washington impeachment trial, President Donald Trump took center stage at Davos to tout the success of the US economy, while criticizing the US Federal Reserve yesterday.

Trump, marking his second meeting of global political and business leaders at the World Economic Forum (WEF), also told a packed auditorium that trade deals struck this month with China and Mexico represented a model for the 21st Century.

"The Fed raised rates too quickly and has lowered them too slowly," Trump said of the Federal Reserve, taking aim at the central bank's policy decisions.

In a wide-ranging address pitched to appeal to the Davos crowd, touting the achievements of his administration despite his unorthodox approach, Trump picked up on some of the themes he voiced when he first addressed the WEF two years ago.

He thanked overseas companies for investing in the United States and said the US was on far better economic standing than he had imagined when he took office three years ago.

"The time for septicism is over," Trump said as he invited more foreign money.

"To every business looking for a place to succeed... there is no better place than the US," he added.

Uber sells Eats biz in India to Zomato

● The unit in India made a loss of \$61 million for the three months

● Zomato's orders per month should rise by 10 million

● Uber earlier held talks with Swiggy for a similar deal

Reuters | Bengaluru

Uber has sold its loss-making online food-ordering business in India to local rival Zomato in exchange for a 9.99 per cent stake in the startup backed by China's Ant Financial. Zomato, valued at around \$3 billion after raising money from Ant this month, will take over Uber Eats' operations from Tuesday.

Since launching in India in 2017, Uber Eats has struggled to gain market share and is a distant third to Tencent Hold-



UberEats has struggled in India to keep up with competitor Zomato, one of the largest online food-delivery players

ings-backed Swiggy and Zomato.

All three have spent heavily on deals and discounts to attract customers in a highly competitive market.

Uber chief financial officer Nelson Chai said the move was another demonstration, following its decision to exit Uber Eats South Korea in October 2019, "of our commitment to take a hard look at Eats markets where we

do not have a path to leadership".

The San Francisco-based firm, which has promised to be profitable at an operational level by the end of 2021, has been trying to sell the India Eats business for a year, three sources familiar with the talks said.

It earlier held talks with Swiggy for a similar deal, but those fell through due to valuation and regulatory issues, two of them

said. Uber and Swiggy did not respond to requests for comment.

Uber Eats' India operations contributed just 3 per cent of gross bookings for the business globally in the first nine months of last year, while accounting for a quarter of its adjusted operating losses, the company said.

The unit in India made a loss of \$61 million for the three months to Sept. 30 on revenue of \$20 m, the company said in a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Zomato reported a loss of \$294 m for the year to March 2019, while Swiggy made a loss of \$330 m.

The sale will allow Uber to cut its losses and yet keep a stake in a market expected to be worth \$15 billion by 2023.

Independent brand consultant Harish Bijoor said the deal would also allow Uber to focus on its strengths. "It should stick to what its competence is, in terms of being an aggregator of cabs," he said.

Zomato's orders per month

Zomato reported a loss of \$294 million for the year to March 2019, while Swiggy made a loss of \$330m

should rise by 10 m from the 38 m to 40 m it was clocking before the deal, a source familiar with the deal said. Swiggy too receives around 40 m in monthly orders.

The acquisition does not guarantee that all Uber Eats customers will switch to Zomato. Online food delivery customers tend to favour companies offering the best deals, market research shows.

Consultancy Frost and Sullivan said that even after the acquisition, Swiggy remains arguably the country's leading market player.

"Swiggy's diversification into a variety of last-mile delivery services, including store, package and home meal deliveries, is expected to offset any potential losses due to Zomato's acquisition of Uber Eats," it said in a note.

Virus fears infect global stock markets

London

Global stock markets slumped yesterday as a SARS-like virus taking hold in China spooked investors, while sentiment suffered a knock also from a credit-ratings downgrade to major financial hub Hong Kong, analysts said.

London's benchmark FTSE 100 index was down 0.7 per cent in afternoon trading, after Hong Kong had slumped 2.8 pc by the close and Shanghai ended with a loss of 1.4 pc.

Moody's has lowered its credit rating on Hong Kong, that has likely fallen into recession owing to the unrest as well as the China-US trade war.

Meanwhile, nervousness on trading floors saw investors also shift out of higher-yielding, risk-

Key figures around 1430 GMT

London - FTSE 100:	▼ 0.7 pc at 7,600.97 points
Frankfurt - DAX 30:	▲ at 13,549.12
Paris - CAC 40:	▼ 0.7 pc at 6,039.32
EURO STOXX 50:	▼ 0.4 pc at 3,783.03
New York -	▼ 0.2 pc at 29,286.85
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▼ 0. pc at 23,8 (close)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng:	▼ 2. pc at 27,9 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▼ 1. pc at 3,0 (close)
Euro/dollar:	▲ at \$1.1113 from \$1.1095 at 2200 GMT
Pound/dollar:	▲ at \$1.3061 from \$1.3010
Euro/pound:	▼ at 85.08 pence from 85.28 pence
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 110.11 yen from 110.18 yen
Brent Crude:	▼ 0.9 pc at \$64.63 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▼ 1.7 pc at \$58.16 per barrel

ier currencies with the dollar up against the South Korean won, the Australian dollar and the Indonesian rupiah, among others.

But the greenback retreated against the haven currency yen, while gold, another go-to asset in times of uncertainty, gained.

The pound climbed against the dollar and euro as official data showed British unemployment is unchanged at 3.8 pc, reducing the likelihood of the Bank of England cutting rates next week according to analysts.

The number of people in China infected by a new SARS-like virus jumped to 291 on Tuesday, according to authorities.

The new coronavirus strain has caused alarm because of its connection to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed nearly 650 people across mainland China and Hong Kong in 2002-2003.

Tourism-linked shares

plunged in Hong Kong, with Cathay Pacific losing more than four pc and casino operator Wynn Macau down 4.8 pc.

But in London, shares in EasyJet jumped around five pc after the British no-frills airline said it expected to reduce losses in its first half after revenues grew following the collapse of tourism group Thomas Cook in late 2019.

"Low levels of competitor capacity have been a boon, while the unfortunate demise of Thomas Cook has also provided opportunities," said Richard Hunter, head of markets at Interactive Investor.

US stock markets reopened after a three-day holiday weekend, with the blue-chip Dow Jones Industrial Average dipping 0.2 pc in opening trading.

Global resource consumption tops 100 bn tonnes for first time

● The resources fuelling the world economy increased more than eight percent in just two years from 93 billion tonnes in 2015 to 100.6 billion in 2017

Paris

The world is using up more than 100 billion tonnes of natural resources per year for the first time ever while global recycling of raw materials has fallen, according to a report released Tuesday.

The share of minerals, fossil fuels, metals and biomass feeding into the global economy that is reused declined in two years from an already paltry 9.1 per cent to 8.6 today, the Circularity Gap Report 2020 found.

"No country is meeting the basic needs of its citizens while also operating within the physical boundaries of our planet,"



Wealthy nations, the authors note, consume 10 times more resources per person than in the developing world, and produce far more waste

said Marc de Wit, a director at the non-profit Circle Economy and lead author of the report.

The resources fuelling the world economy increased more than eight percent in just two years from 93 billion tonnes in

2015 to 100.6 billion in 2017, the last year for which data is available.

Since 1970, the human population has doubled, the global economy has grown fourfold, and trade has expanded ten-

fold, a trajectory that -- in the absence of widespread recycling -- relentlessly pushes up the demand for energy and resources.

Global use of materials is projected to balloon to 170-184 billion tonnes by mid-century, the

“No country is meeting the basic needs of its citizens while also operating within the physical boundaries of our planet”

MARC DE WIT, A DIRECTOR AT THE NON-PROFIT CIRCLE ECONOMY AND LEAD AUTHOR OF THE REPORT

report said.

Exporting waste

"Our current economic and financial systems are driving unsustainable consumption, and degrading the natural environment," said Cristianne Close, head of WWF Markets Practice.

To improve living standards -- especially in low-income countries -- while also protecting ecosystems that provide clear water, air and soil, the world must vastly boost the share of recycled natural resources, the

authors said.

Wealthy nations, the authors note, consume 10 times more resources per person than in the developing world, and produce far more waste.

Rich countries must "take responsibility for the impact of their imports and exports," the report said. Much of what they consume comes from less developed nations, while much of their waste is exported, it noted.

China -- which recently banned most solid waste imports, forcing the United States, Britain and Japan in particular to scramble for other disposal solutions -- has become a leader among middle-income nations in industrial-scale recycling.

"China, for instance, has pioneered eco-industrial parks where the waste of one business becomes the feedstock for another," the report notes.

In countries, such as India, "recycling rates are high as waste can provide a valuable source of revenue for informal workers."

SHOW



BAD BOYS FOR LIFE (PG-15)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
 OASIS JUFFAIR (VIP): 1.30 + 6.15 + 11.00 PM
 CITY CENTRE (IMAX 2D): 12.45 + 5.45 + 10.45 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 2.00 + 4.45 + 7.30 + 10.15 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
 CITY CENTRE (ATMOS): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN
 CITY CENTRE (VIP I): 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (I): 10.45 AM + 12.30 + 1.30 + 3.15 + 4.15 + 6.00 + 7.00 + 8.45 + 9.45 + 11.30 PM + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM
 WILL SMITH, MARTIN LAWRENCE, VANESSA HUDGENS

DOLITTLE (PG)(ADVENTURE/COMEDY/FAMILY)

OASIS JUFFAIR (KIDS CINEMA): 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 11.30 PM
 OASIS JUFFAIR (VIP): 11.15 AM + 4.00 + 8.45 PM
 CITY CENTRE (IMAX 2D): 10.30 AM + 3.30 + 8.30 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.00 AM + 12.30 + 1.15 + 2.45 + 3.30 + 5.00 + 5.45 + 7.15 + 8.00 + 9.30 + 10.15 + 11.45 PM + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
 CITY CENTRE (VIP II): 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (II): 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
 ROBERT DOWNEY JR., ANTONIO BANDERAS, MICHAEL SHEEN

JAI MUMMY DI (15+)(HINDI/COMEDY/ROMANTIC)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 11.15 AM + 4.15 + 9.15 PM
 SEEF (II): 10.30 AM + 3.00 + 7.30 + 12.00 MN
 SUNNY SINGH NIJJAR, SONNALLI SEYGALL, SUPRIYA PATHAK

YOM WLEILA (15+)(ARABIC/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (II): 2.00 + 6.45 + 11.30 PM
 YIHYA FAKHRI, KHALID AL-NABAWI, AHMAD AL-FESHAWI

PARASITE (15+)(KOREAN)

SEEF (II): 11.30 AM + 4.15 + 9.00 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 1.30 + 6.30 + 11.30 PM
 SONG KANG HO, LEE SUN KYUN, CHO YEO JEONG
 A HIDDEN LIFE (PG-13)(DRAMA)
 SEEF (II): 7.30 PM + 10.45 PM
 AUGUST DIEHL, VALERIE PACHNER, MARIA SIMON

FOODIVERSE (G)(ANIMATION)

SEEF (II): 11.30 AM + 1.30 + 3.30 + 5.30 PM
 SITONG LIU, BO SUN, XU WU
 JUMANJI THE NEXT LEVEL (PG-15)
 CITY CENTRE: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
 SEEF (II): 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.45 + 6.00 + 11.15 PM
 DWAYNE JOHNSON, JACK BLACK, KEVIN HART

1917 (PG-15)(WAR/ACTION/DRAMA)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 3.00 + 8.45 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 + 12.00 MN + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
 SEEF (I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
 GEORGE MACKAY, DEAN-CHARLES CHAPMAN, MARK STRONG

AL FELOUS (THE MONEY) (PG-15)(ARABIC/COMEDY/CRIME)

CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
 SEEF (II): 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 10.30 AM + 3.30 + 8.45 PM
 TAMER HOSNY, ZEINA, KHALID EL-SAWI



UNDERWATER (PG-15)(THRILLER/HORROR/DRAMA/)

CITY CENTRE: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 + 12.00 MN
 SEEF (II): 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
 KRISTEN STEWART, T.J. MILLER, JESSICA HENWICK

SPIES IN DISGUISE (PG)(ANIMATION/ACTION/)

CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 + 6.00 + 8.15 + 10.30 PM
 SEEF (II): 11.00 AM + 1.15 + 3.30 + 5.45 + 8.00 + 10.15 PM
 WILL SMITH, TOM HOLLAND, KAREN GILLAN



FROZEN 2 (PG)(ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

CITY CENTRE: 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM
 SEEF (II): 12.45 + 5.15 + 9.45 PM
 KRISTEN BELL, IDINA MENZEL, JOSH GAD

21 BRIDGES (PG-15)(CRIME/ACTION/THRILLER) 21

CITY CENTRE: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
 CHADWICK BOSEMAN, SIENNA MILLER, STEPHAN JAMES

MASAMEER: THE MOVIE (PG)(ANIMATION/COMEDY)

CITY CENTRE: 12.15 + 2.45 + 5.15 + 7.45 + 10.15 PM
 ABDULAZIZ AL-MUZAINI, ABDULAZIZ AL-SHEHRI, MAZROA AL-MAZROA

TANHAJI: THE UNSUNG WARRIOR (PG-15)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 1.30 + 6.30 + 11.30 PM
 AJAY DEVGN, SAIF ALI KHAN, KAJOL

CHHAPAAK (PG-15)(HINDI/DRAMA)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 3.15 + 8.45 PM
 SEEF (I): 12.15 + 5.45 + 11.15 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 11.00 AM + 4.00 + 9.00 PM
 DEEPIKA PADUKONE, VIKRANT MASSEY, MADHURJEET SARGHI

THE GRUDGE (15+)(HORROR/THRILLER/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE: 1.45 + 6.45 + 11.45 PM
 ANDREA RISEBOROUGH, DEMIAN BICHR, JOHN CHO

MALEFICENT 2: MISTRESS OF EVIL (PG)

CITY CENTRE: 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM
 ANGELINA JOLIE, TERESA MAHONEY, MICHELLE PFEIFFER

LIKE A BOSS (18+)(COMEDY)

CITY CENTRE: 10.30 AM + 3.00 + 7.30 + 12.00 MN
 TIFFANY HADDISH, ROSE BYRNE, SALMA HAYEK

JOKER (15+)(THRILLER/CRIME/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE: 11.00 AM + 4.00 + 9.00 PM
 JOAQUIN PHOENIX, ZAZIE BEETZ, ROBERT DE NIRO

DARBAR (PG-15)(ACTION)

OASIS JUFFAIR (TAMIL): 12.15 + 5.45 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (I): (TAMIL): 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM
 RAJINIKANTH, SUNIL SHETTY, NAYANTHARA

SARILERU NEEKVARU (PG-15)(TELUGU)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 11.45 AM + 5.30 + 11.15 PM
 MAHESH BABU, VIJAYASHANTI, RASHMIKA MANDANA, PRAKASH RAJ

BIG BROTHER (PG-15)(MALAYALAM)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM
 SEEF (II): 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 11.00 AM + 5.00 + 11.00 PM
 AL HAMRA: 12.00 + 9.00 PM
 MOHANLAL, ARBAAZ KHAN, ANOOP MENON, SARJANO KHALID, HONEY ROSE, SIDDIQUE



ENTHA MANCHIVAADAVURAA (PG-15)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 10.45 AM + 4.45 PM
 SEEF (I): 2.45 + 8.15 PM
 KALYAN RAM, MEHREEN PIRZADA, SUHASINI

ALA VAIKUNTHAPURRAMLLO (PG-15)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 1.45 + 7.45 + 10.45 PM
 SEEF (II): 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
 AL HAMRA: 3.00 PM
 ALLU ARAVIND S. RADHA KRISHNA, ALLU ARJUN, POOJA HEGDE, TABU, NIVETHA PETHURAJ

PATTAS (PG-13)(TAMIL)

OASIS JUFFAIR: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (I): 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 2.00 + 8.00 PM
 AL HAMRA: 6.00 + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)
 DHANUSH, SNEHA, MEHREEN PIRZADA

MOVIE REVIEW

'Color Out of Space' is a dark and slimy descent into madness

The film walks the line between arthouse film and B movie

The works of H.P. Lovecraft are often looked to for inspiration when crafting horror tales, with their fusion of horror and science fiction bringing terror from man's incomprehensible fear of the cosmic unknown, but rarely are they directly and faithfully adapted to the screen. This is what Richard Stanley aims to do with his trippy slice of cerebral horror, *Color Out of Space*, a tale of meteorites and madness, featuring Nicolas Cage as his typical crazy self.

Stanley, who left the Hollywood system in the early '90s after being fired from *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (an incident that's extensively covered in the fascinating documentary *Lost Soul: The Doomed Journey of Richard Stanley's Island of Dr. Moreau*), was spending his time crafting documentaries on the occult and strange phenomenon and searching for the Holy Grail. He had been sitting on the script for *Color Out of Space* for years before the good folks at SpectreVision got wind of it, and, after a meeting, greenlit the project,



A scene from the movie

bringing Stanley back into the world of feature filmmaking.

"The Colour Out of Space," a short story originally published in the September 1927 edition of *Amazing Stories*, was previously adapted to film four separate times — *Die, Monster, Die!* (1965), *The Curse* (1987), *Colour from the Dark* (2008) and *The Colour Out of Space* (Die Farbe,

2010).

Set on a remote farm in the fictional town of Arkham, Massachusetts, the film stars Cage as the patriarch of the Gardner family, big-city folks who left the hustle and bustle and are looking forward to some solitude after taking over the family farm. Their little slice of heaven gets uprooted, however, when

a meteorite crashes into their front yard, giving off some sort of pink cosmic fog that gradually begins enveloping everything (and everyone) around it, infecting, mutating and spreading.

Stanley's interpretation of this color, described as something outside the realm of human comprehension — an entirely new color, is a luminous pink,

rapidly spreading its stunning, yet horrific aura over everything on the farm after it enters the ground, tainting the water supply. The Gardner family is not immune from this alien dust either, and their mental state begins to deteriorate after exposure to the meteorite and its cosmic infection.

While things do get progressively more surreal, it's surprising how unremarkably grounded Stanley kept the narrative, shying away from taking things into a truly cerebral state of madness and terror and delivering a somewhat straight-forward

piece of horror that's far less risky than one might expect.

In spite of the feeling that it's playing it a bit too safe, the film remains an entertaining ride, and it's great to see Cage predictably go off the rails, seemingly performing some sort of Trump impression after the full-on crazy kicks in. There's also an extended scene involving him milking an alpaca, so it's got that too.

The cast is rounded out by Joely Richardson, playing the matriarch of the family, and Madeleine Arthur, Julian Hilliard and Brendan Meyer playing the Gardner children, who all deliver solid, memorable performances, even with Cage, unsurprisingly, as a scene stealer.

Color Out of Space is a fun bit of cosmic horror and a welcome return to feature films for Richard Stanley, something I hope is a sign of things to come. Although I found the narrative beats to be a bit lacking, the cool aesthetic and excuse for Nic Cage to once again act like a nut are easily worth the price of admission.



'Color Out of Space' is a disappointing delirium showing why cosmic horror needs to be personal

celebs



Kendall Jenner

Kendall Jenner spotted out again with ex Ben Simmons
Los Angeles

American model and media personality Kendall Jenner was again spotted with ex Ben Simmons, an Australian professional basketball player for the Philadelphia 76ers of the National Basketball Association.

The couple also spent the New Year's Eve together at Attico in downtown Philadelphia.

According to Page Six, the two were out at Little Sister Lounge at the Moxy East Village Saturday night and were also seen hanging out with Canadian rapper Nav after Philadelphia 76ers beat the New York Knicks at Madison Square Garden.

The supermodel and the NBA star also grabbed brunch together at Bobby's in Tribeca the next day.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Gwyneth Paltrow part of Create & Cultivate's 100 List



From left: Gwyneth Paltrow, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Shay Mitchell, Jameela Jamil

Los Angeles

Indian star Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Hollywood actors Gwyneth Paltrow, Shay Mitchell and Jameela Jamil have been recognised by women-led business platform Create & Cultivate for their achievements in entertainment and entrepreneurship.

The platform will celebrate the list-makers on Thursday at Valentine in downtown Los Angeles.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, organising consultant and author Marie Kondo, actor-author Nicole Richie, supermodel Tyra Banks, actors Jamie-Lynn Sigler, Olivia Culpo, Dove Cameron and Julianne Hough, singer Bebe Rexha and pop rock band HAIM and Dove

Cameron are also part of the list.

Priyanka took to Twitter to thank the platform for featuring her in the entertainment category.

"Thank you @createcultivate for featuring me in this year's #CreateCultivate100 list in the entertainment category," she tweeted alongside a link of the feature in which she talks about her experiences.

The fourth annual Create & Cultivate list's fashion category include Minnie Mouse, Hollywood stylist Karla Welch, model Iskra Lawrence, influencer Brittany Xavier and designer Rachel Antonoff.

Jennifer Lopez shows off custom-made Super Bowl 2020 bling cup

Los Angeles

American actor and singer Jennifer Lopez who is headlining the Super Bowl LIV halftime show in Miami on February 2 shared a picture of a custom-made accessory the Super Bowl 2020 sipper bottle.

The 'Hustlers' star posted a selfie of herself with the sparkly bottle on her Instagram account.

The picture featured J. Lo with the bottle which was covered with blue crystals and had the date of the upcoming football game 02.02.20 with red and white crystals on it. (ANI)

"Happy Sunday! week countdown until the Super Bowl = time for a new bling cup!!! Head over to my TikTok to take on the #JLoSuperBowlChallenge, read the caption of the post.

Lopez would be performing halftime along with Shakira at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida, where the Kansas City Chiefs will play the San Francisco 49ers, reported Page Six.



Jennifer Lopez

Madonna cancels another concert due to medical reasons

Los Angeles

American pop star Madonna has called off another concert in Lisbon, Portugal due to medical reasons.

The singer has been suffering from severe pain over the course of her 'Madame X Tour' which eventually resulted in several shows being canceled.

Madonna broke the news through her social media.

"Sorry I had to cancel tonight but I must



Madonna

listen to my body and rest!" the 61-year-old wrote on Twitter the evening of the concert.

A similar post was shared on her Instagram account.

Just a few days back the superstar shared a rehearsal video that featured her wearing knee braces.

Madonna captioned the post, "How an injured Madame warms up for a show.....very carefully! #madamextheatre #lisboa @marlynortiz @danielesibilli @soheyheyhey.

Disha Patani shares poster of upcoming song 'Humraah'

Disha Patani

Mumbai

After creating a buzz with its trailer, songs and poster, the makers of the film *Malang* are set to release another song titled 'Humraah'.

Disha Patani took to Twitter to share a romantic poster of the song on Tuesday.

The 37-year-old actor shared the intriguing poster featuring her and Aditya Roy Kapoor.

"Begin living from one experience to the next... #Humraah, song out on 23rd Jan. #Malang" she posted.

In the poster, Disha is seen sitting close to Aditya as the two-love birds are seen intensely in love with each other. The poster of the song hints to be a stimulating number just like the other two songs from the film 'Chal Ghar Chale' and 'Malang'. 'Humraah', will be out on January 23, 2020.

'Malang' also features Anil Kapoor and Kunal Kemmu in the lead roles. The revenge drama, directed by Mohit Suri, is set for release on February 7.



Sara greets Salman with 'aadaab', Internet is loving it

Mumbai

Sara Ali Khan displayed a whiff of nawabi tehzeeb when she met Salman Khan recently. Unlike most youngsters, who prefer to wish people with a "hi" or

a "hello", Sara was spotted giving Salman the classic "aadaab".

The young actress, along with her "Love Aaj Kal" co-star Kartik Aaryan, was at the Bigg Boss 13 set to promote the upcoming film.

They bumped into Salman outside the studio and, after exchanging smiles, it was the turn to exchange greetings.

Alia Bhatt

Alia Bhatt dispels injury rumours on Instagram

Mumbai

Alia Bhatt recently took to Instagram to make a clarification after numerous reports of her getting injured on the sets of 'Gangubai Kathiawadi' started popping up all over the internet.

In an Instagram story, the actress dismissed the speculations and informed her followers that she is troubled by a previous injury that has resurfaced. She even cautioned the media about publishing unsubstantiated information related to her.

The rumours about Alia's injury began to mushroom after she posted an Instagram story of herself lying in the bed with her pet cat. The caption of the story read: "Selfie time with mommy cause she's hurt her back and has nothing better to do at 2 am."



Salman Khan and Sara Ali Khan

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SUDOKU

	4	9	5					7
3	7							5 9
6					9	1		
4				8	1	3		
			7	3	4			
		2	8					1
7	1							8 5
9					7	2	4	

Yesterday's solution

9	8	3	5	1	6	2	4	7
7	2	1	4	3	9	8	6	5
6	4	5	7	2	8	3	1	9
3	5	9	6	7	2	4	8	1
1	7	8	3	5	4	9	2	6
4	6	2	9	8	1	5	7	3
2	9	7	1	4	5	6	3	8
5	3	4	8	6	7	1	9	2
8	1	6	2	9	3	7	5	4

How to play

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

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1- Disrespectful back talk; 5- Harangue; 9- Cairo cobras; 13- Hawaiian dances; 15- Gothic-type arch; 16- Skater Lipinski; 17- Eat away; 18- Gao!; 19- Molecular component; 20- Fannie...; 21- Fast fliers; 23- Nautical; 25- Fabricate; 26- Canvas shelter; 27- Person who repairs telephone wires; 30- Sean, to John; 31- Overjoy; 32- Lycanthrope; 37- Grape plant; 38- Time instrument; 40- Buck follower; 41- High school memento; 43- Hersey's bell town; 44- Illustrative craft; 45- Walked like a duck; 47- Shores; 50- Christian Science founder; 51- Journey; 52- Winder for holding flexible material; 53- Draft org.; 56- Comic Rudner; 57- Elderly, matured; 59- Decree; 61- Solemn assent; 62- Hawaiian goose; 63- Lure; 64- Like a mix; 65- Sugar substitute; 66- Overdue;

DOWN

1- Noah's eldest son; 2- Distinctive quality; 3- Blackthorn fruit; 4- Blue; 5- Putrid; 6- Turkish titles; 7- New Jersey cager; 8- Cooperative effort; 9- Maker of Pong; 10- Glossy fabric; 11- Fork; 12- Identical; 14- Opening word; 22- Jamaican popular music; 24- Diarist Frank; 25- Unit just above a yard; 26- Wait...; 27- Tax; 28- Rival of Bjorn; 29- "Peter Pan" dog; 32- Stir-fry pan; 33- Australian Aboriginal war club; 34- Like some history; 35- Single; 36- Nourishment; 38- Variety of apple; 39- A great deal; 42- First, second, or third; 43- Confused; 45- Garden device; 46- Summer slaker; 47- Serious wrongdoing; 48- Western; 49-...garde; 51- Pitfall; 52- Actress Sofer; 53- Director Vittorio De...; 54- Nae sayer; 55- Eye sore; 58- "Fancy that!"; 60- Singer Shannon;

Yesterday's solution

A	L	E	E	B	A	N	T	U	S	M	E	W
S	O	A	R	O	M	A	R	R	W	I	D	E
T	A	T	A	A	I	D	A	N	I	N	G	A
A	M	S	T	E	R	D	A	M	O	S	T	E
A	M	S	T	E	R	D	A	M	O	S	T	E
L	E	G	A	S	H	Y	T	E	N	D	O	N
A	R	Y	A	N	I	A	G	O	F	E	E	R
G	A	R	B	A	P	N	E	A	S	I	L	L
E	S	A	U	A	S	K	A	A	S	C	O	T
R	E	L	I	S	H	S	R	A	S	E	N	E
R	E	L	O	S	T	W	R	I	T	E	S	
R	E	A	D	Y	R	E	H	E	A	R	S	A
E	T	U	I	R	I	S	E	N	A	L	O	E
B	O	R	N	A	T	S	E	A	I	O	N	S
S	N	A	G	H	E	E	L	S	T	E	E	S

SPORTS

Title battles set to tighten up as BIC hosts National Race Day on Friday



Cars on track at BIC

TDT | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) hosts the fifth round of National Race Day on Friday as the battle for podium places and championship points continues to tighten up.

The meeting is set to feature action in two of the kingdom's most popular circuit racing series: the BIC 2,000cc Challenge and the Bahrain Motorcycle Racing (BMR) 600.

With only three rounds remaining in the season, competitors are now feeling the pressure to deliver only positive results, making for plenty of heated and closely contested racing.

All the action will be held along BIC's 2.55-kilometre Inner Track. The first session is scheduled to begin at 9.25am and continue all the way until after 3pm. The podium ceremony is set to wrap up the evening's events at approximately 3.30pm.

All are welcome to attend. Tickets are available at the gate at BD2 for adults and half the price for children.

National Race Day has been organised by BIC in cooperation with the Bahrain Motor Federation, Circuit Racing Club and Bahrain Motorcycle Club.

The BIC 2,000cc Challenge

is the longest-running circuit racing series in the region. Established in 2007, it follows simple regulations yet is still extremely fun to watch. The drivers are divided into two classes, including the Pro and the Novice.

Following an eventful fourth round held in wet conditions earlier this month, Shaikh Salman bin Isa bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa (Honda Civic) moved into the lead on the championship standings with an impressive double. He now has 150 points, just eight ahead of previous leader Ahmed Bin Khanen (Honda Civic EG4).

The top two enjoy a significant gap from Mohammed Faqihi (Honda Civic), who is third on 112 points, while Raed Raffii (Honda S2000) is fourth with 108 points and Tareq Al Tajer (Ford Focus) fifth on 105. Nasser Al Alawi (Honda S2000) rounds out the top six with 103 points.

Each of the challenge's top six drivers are competing in the race's Pro category.

In the title battle for Novice participants, Husain Al Ghanem (Honda Civic) is now in first place with 47 points. Andreas Buelow (Honda Civic) follows with 42 points, while Ali Al Bahrani (Honda Civic) is third on 25 points.

BAS Teams take double podium in 12-hour race

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Airport Services (BAS) Motor Sport Team had twice the reason to celebrate over the weekend after claiming a pair of podium places in the gruelling 12-hour third round of the 2019/2020 Bahrain Karting Enduro Championship (BKEC).

The event was held at Bahrain International Karting Circuit (BIKC) in Sakhir and BAS fielded four squads made up mostly of BAS staff members.

The BAS B and C teams were both able to secure a place on the Corporate class podium, having finished the race in second and third place, respectively.

The A team narrowly missed out on the Pro class podium, while stealing the show once again were the BAS F team, composed completely of lady drivers, who illustrated once again that they can hold their own in top-level karting races.

Following the race, BAS Motor Sport Team Manager Tony Smith expressed his delight with his whole team's performance. "We would like to thank our CEO, Mr Salman Al Mahmeed, for supporting the BAS Motor Sport Team in these events and allowing our staff to make BAS proud of their achievements," he said.

"Our teams did fantastically well throughout this very challenging 12-hour endurance race, as the majority of them had never been through such a gruelling challenge. It makes us extremely proud of all of the squad."

The BAS B and C teams excelled in the race's Corporate category. The three-member B squad, comprised of Mahmood Saati, Yusuf Yaqoob and Ziyad Khalifa, completed 543 laps over 12 hours to finish as runners-up



BAS Motor Sport Team members celebrate together on the podium after the awarding

in class; while the six-driver C team were third. They consisted of Saud Alshater, Philip Morais, Don Vinura, Ammar Alghawas, Mohammed Fadhel and Hussain Habib, and they registered a total of 537 laps, which was not far behind the category's winners who finished with 553 laps.

"We are fortunate to be on the podium," said Saati. "It was double the challenge this time, but fortunately, with the support of the company, our CEO, our team manager and everybody around us, we were able to make it a success today."

"We are pleased with our lap

times; they reflect the hard work we put in in practice. But we still have a lot of room for improvement, and hopefully we can continue getting quicker as we train and prepare for the 24-hour final round next month."

Fellow-B team driver Yaqoob was thrilled to be competing with the team for the first time this BKEC season. "I'm a new joiner, but I really love motorsport and I love to race," he said. "I go karting for fun but I take my times seriously."

"I'm really happy I joined and fortunately made it onto Team B. It was a really fun experi-

ence, although very tiring, but the team work we had made it all worth it."

Team C's Vinura described the race to be like "a family challenge". "Everyone knows each other and everyone is very supportive of one another, so it's like a family challenge," he said.

"This was a really big achievement but I can't imagine what the 24-hour race is like. I'm happy for the team and with what we were able to accomplish today."

The BAS A team was spearheaded by young BAS Ambassador Lewis Smith, who shared the driving duties with Gavin Halls and Ahmed Abduljalil. They were sixth overall and fourth in the Pro category – a mere two laps behind the overall and Pro winners with a total of 555 laps over 12 hours.

The A squad had to deal with multiple penalties in the race, which ultimately affected their final classification as they missed out on the Pro class podium by just four seconds.



BAS karters in action during the race

SNCS TransFast rally past Royal Indian

TDT | Manama

SNCS TransFast beat Royal Indian by 55 runs in CBA Division C 25 overs League.

SNCS TransFast won the toss and elected to bat first. Opener Vishanu Pillai scored a quick 93 runs in 58 ball that gave them a good start. Other batsmen capitalized the momentum and put a total of 211 at the end of 25 overs. Faizan took four wickets for Royal Indians. Chasing the big target Royal Indians Faizan (58) and Suresh (39) gave some hope but SNCS TransFast bowler's tidy spells restricted the opponent for 156 runs and won the match by 55 runs, Shahalam took three wickets.

SNCS TransFast 211/10 (Vishnu Pillai 93, Shahalam 21, Faizan 4/33) beat Royal Indians 156/9 (Faizan 58, Suresh 39, Shahalam 3/19) by 55 runs

Titans 178/4 in 23.4 overs

(Kamal 85, Jithin 35, Kailash 3/28) beat Union CC 176/8 (Kailash 61, Mohan 3/26, Ibrar 2/18) by 6 wickets

Global Stars 258/7 (shakeel 126, Aim 48, Vijil 3/44) beat FOG CC 171/8 (Nouhad 50, Javed 36, Azeem 3/24) by 87 runs

Kooheji Contractors 199/6 (Faisal 61, Zahid 25, Dipak 2/35) beat Lantern Lions 177/10 (Vikiki 43, Arfan Gani 3/31) by 22 runs

Karnataka Royals 242/7 (Ashwin 70, Gajendra 32, Numair 33) beat Honda CC 135/10 (Nabeel 34, Aron 3/11, Vasanth 3/24) by 107 runs

Young Stars 279/6 (Chandrabhan 163, Ansari 36) beat Riffa Stars 197/10 (Hadiyat 47, Waqar 34, Atif 2/32) by 82 runs

Pak CC 167/7 (Zubair 60, Rehman 35, Anil 4/38) beat Sachi CC 143/9 (Ganesh 54, Zaraq 3/25) by 24 runs

Awali Gents 161/9 (Sanito 52, Jameel 32, Rahul 3/46) beat

Mumbai Riders 143/10 (Faizan 28, Shabeer 2/21) by 18 runs

Z-XI 146/7 in 21.3 overs (Asif 28, Wasim 25, Irfan 4/22) beat Waqas Pak 145/10 (Ehtisham 40, Asif 5/22) by 3 wickets

NDC Bahrain 243/7 (Balaji 87, Hemanth 54, Viju 3/37) beat Phoenix CC 212/9 (Rajeev 53, Jayakrishnan 46, SHaji 3/39) by 31 runs

Royal Blasters 126/6 in 18 overs (Raj 24, Aqeel 2/26) beat Patrick York 125/10 (Noman 29, Vinod 2/8) by 4 wickets

CBA Division B 25 overs League

Public Security 176/3 in 21.5 overs (Tanveer 58, Rafay 56, Naveed 32) beat Biyas Bahrain Indians 172/8 (Hari 42, Naveed 3/31, Tajamal 3/36) by 7 wickets

Srilankan Club 105/4 in 14.2 overs (Niroshan 50, Adnan 2/6) beat Mudabar 102/10 (Adnan 31, Kasun 4/18, Gamini 3/13) by 6 wickets.

Ultimate Track Experience to offer supreme thrills at BIC on Saturday

TDT | Manama

Motorsport enthusiasts will be able to enjoy one of the most thrilling activities on offer at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) on Saturday in the Ultimate Track Experience.

The event is scheduled to take place from 8am to 4pm along BIC's 2.55-kilometre Inner Track.

Those who take part will be able to choose from a series of drives and passenger rides in some powerful and ultra-quick cars.

On offer in the Ultimate Track Experience are drives in a Clio Cup car and in a Radical SR1 prototype, as well as passenger rides in a Clio and a Radical SR3.

The Clio Cup car is a Renault-manufactured racing



Cars on track at BIC

machine that features a 1.6-litre Turbocharged engine that can generate up to 220bhp and 6,000rpm. The drive can be purchased for BD115.5, while the passenger ride is BD26.5.

The Radical SR1 prototype features a 1,340cc engine which can generate 185bhp. It launch-

es from zero to 100kph in 3.6 seconds. This drive costs BD126, and completing the Clio Cup drive is a prerequisite to taking part in the SR1 experience.

The Radical SR3 passenger ride will be conducted alongside one of BIC's highly qualified driving instructors. It costs BD37.

Bahrain bow to Japan

Bahrain face first defeat in Asian Men's Handball Championship against Japan

TDI | Manama

Bahrain suffered a disheartening 23-25 loss to Japan yesterday in the 2020 Asian Men's Handball Championship being held in Kuwait.

The defeat was their first setback in the competition and their first loss from two games in Group One of the ongoing Main Round.

The result puts their semi-final hopes in jeopardy, as they now must win their final fixture of this stage to have any chance of advancing.

The Japanese inched one step closer to securing their berth in the semi-finals.

The takers of the two available spots will be confirmed tomorrow when Bahrain take on Saudi Arabia and Japan face the UAE.

The Emiratis claimed a 23-20 win over Saudi yesterday in the other divisional fixture to keep their semis hopes alive.

Japan's clash with the UAE is scheduled for 2pm at Shaikh Saad Al Abdullah Sports Hall Complex in Kuwait City, to be followed at the same venue by Bahrain facing Saudi at 4pm, Bahrain time.

Wins for Bahrain and Japan would send them both through, but other results would complicate matters and create ties on points in the group standings.

Any tie-breaks will first be decided by points, then head-to-head points, then head-to-head



Bahrain's Ali Mirza tries to power through his Japanese defender during their match yesterday

Standings Group One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Japan	2	2	0	0	55	45	4
Bahrain	2	1	0	1	52	43	2
UAE	2	1	0	1	41	49	2
Saudi Arabia	2	0	0	2	42	53	0

goal difference, head-to-head number of goals scored and finally by goal difference.

In Bahrain's loss yesterday, the nationals held a slim 11-10 lead at the half but their rivals stepped it up in the final 30-minute period.

The Japanese made the most of their opportunities and managed to stave off the Bahrain attack, enough to claim the narrow two-goal victory.

Bahrain captain Hussain Al Sayyad scored four goals to lead his team in the loss. Ali Mirza,

Ahmed Fadhul, Ahmed Almaqabi and Mahdi Saad all added three goals each, while scoring twice were Ali Eid and Mohammed Mirza. Rounding out the scorers with a goal apiece were Mohammed Abdulredha, Bilal Askani and Mohammed Habib.

For Japan, Yuto Agarie was their leading scorer with eight goals. Tatsuki Yoshino chipped in with six, while Shinnosuke Tokuda had three.

Qualifying for the semi-finals will also earn the team a place at next year's World Men's

Solskjaer rejects Neville criticism as Rashford begins recovery

AFP | London

Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has contradicted former team-mate Gary Neville by saying on Tuesday United are on the "right track".

Outspoken TV pundit Neville had said in a podcast after United's 2-0 defeat at leaders Liverpool on Sunday, which left the Red Devils 30 points behind their rivals in the Premier League, the club was in a mess.

The former United captain pinned much of the blame for the team's current problems on the recruitment undertaken by chief executive Ed Woodward.

But with United still fifth in the league and competing in three cup competitions, Solskjaer believes it is not the right time to start a blame game.

"We've just lost to Liverpool, who you all say are fantastic and we have been in the game until the last kick of the ball," he said at his press conference on the eve of United's Premier League game with Burnley on Wednesday.

"For me, that is strides forward.

"The signs are there that we're on the right track, definitely.

Nadal in the pink as Sharapova hits all-time low at Australian Open

AFP | Melbourne

Top seed Rafael Nadal turned on the style as he launched his bid for a record-equalling 20th Major title at the Australian Open on Tuesday, but falling star Maria Sharapova hit a career low.

Australia's Nick Kyrgios also cantered into the second round, but fourth seed Daniil Medvedev had to fight his way past American Frances Tiafoe in four sets.

Nadal, one shy of Roger Federer's Grand Slam mark, dropped only five games as he swatted aside Bolivia's Hugo Dellien 6-2, 6-3, 6-0 in just over two hours at a sunny Rod Laver Arena.

"It was a positive start," said the reigning Roland Garros and US Open champion, wearing a bright pink singlet and matching trainers.

"What you want in the first round is just to win, and it's better if it's in straight sets."

He joins Federer and defending champion Novak Djokovic in round two as the Big Three look to tighten a stranglehold that has brought them all but one of the last 14 Australian Open titles.

Nadal, the first player to be world number one in three different decades, is still thriving at 33 but it's a different story for five-time Grand Slam winner Sharapova.

The 32-year-old, playing on a wildcard as she wrestles with



Rafael Nadal hits a return

a shoulder injury, lost 6-3, 6-4 to Croatian 19th seed Donna Vekic, making her an opening-round loser at three straight Grand Slams for the first time.

The future looks uncertain for the former world number one, who won Wimbledon when she was just 17 but has not reached a Grand Slam final since she lifted the 2014 French Open trophy.

"I can speak about my struggles and the things that I've gone through with my shoulder, but it's not really in my character to," Sharapova said.

"I was there, I put myself out there (playing). As tough as it was, I finished the match -- it wasn't the way that I wanted."

Britain's Johanna Konta, a two-time Slam semi-finalist, also fell at the first hurdle as she battles to overcome a knee problem, losing 4-6, 2-6 to unseeded Tunisian Ons Jabeur.

On a bumper day of 88 first-

round matches, after rain wiped out half of Monday's schedule, former US Open champion Marin Cilic and Milos Raonic both moved safely through.

Italy's Fabio Fognini, two sets down against America's Reilly Opelka when their match was suspended on Monday, returned to win it in five after a stormy encounter when both players argued furiously with the umpire.

A new star emerged in 18-year-old Italian Jannik Sinner, last year's NextGen champion, who earned his first Grand Slam victory against Australia's Max Purcell.

Australia's Kyrgios, who has spearheaded fundraising efforts for the country's deadly bushfire disaster, kept his notorious temper in check despite being taken to two tie-breaks in a 6-2, 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7-1) win over Lorenzo Sonego of Italy.



Athletes in action during the event

Slovenia debut for BRAVE CF deemed a "massive success"

TDI | Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation, founded in 2016 by His Highness Shaikh Khaled bin Hamad Al Khalifa, has visited last week its 19th country in less than four years of operations. Ljubljana, Slovenia was chosen for BRAVE CF 34, which marked another step towards world domination for the biggest-ever Bahraini brand.

After hosting shows in some of the biggest countries in the world and taking the flag of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the highest of places in the sporting world, BRAVE Combat Federation's first show in the Balkans was deemed a massive success by the local press.

In partnership with WFC, BRAVE CF has been able to empower the local MMA scene by giving the local athletes international exposure as well as bringing top global talent to the country for the first time.

BRAVE CF 34/WFC 24 had athletes from France, Brazil, United States, Russia, Croatia, Bosnia, among others and showed once again the international reach of the fastest-growing MMA promotion in the world, born in the Kingdom of Bahrain and empowering the MMA scene across the globe.

All of these points have been highlighted in Slovenia, where

everyone involved with the sport has appreciated the impact that BRAVE CF has had in the local scene for the country.

BRAVE Combat Federation will continue its world tour as it takes the Kingdom's name to Brazil and Sweden next.

BRAVE CF 34/WFC 24 full results:

Heavyweight (For WFC Championship): Luka Podkrajsek def. Viktor Vasic via split decision (29-28, 28-29, 29-28)

Welterweight: Benoit St. Denis def. Ivica Truscak by submission (kneebar) - Round 1

Light Heavyweight: Jakob Nedoh def. Zarko Sedoglavic via KO (punches) - Round 1

Middleweight: Phil Hawes def. Iuri Fraga via TKO (punches) - Round 1

Flyweight: Zach Makovsky def. Velimurad Alkhasov via split decision (30-27, 27-30, 29-28)

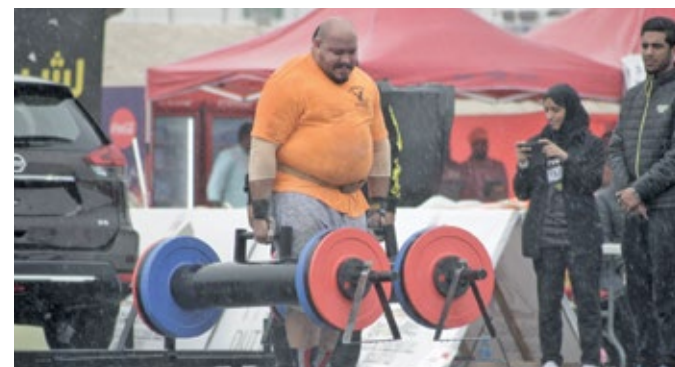
Lightweight: Mochamed Machaev def. Matjaz Vicar via unanimous decision (30-26, 30-25, 30-25)

Catchweight (53 kg): Monika Kucinic def. Jennifer Trioreau by unanimous decision (30-23, 30-27, 30-25)

Welterweight: Bojan Kosednar def. Tonci Perusko via TKO (punches) - Round 1

Light Heavyweight: Marko Drmonjic def. Matej Plavec via TKO (leg-kicks) - Round 2

Shaikh Khalid approves date for Strongest Bahraini Man



A participant in action during the previous edition of the event

TDI | Manama

HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports and President of Bahrain Olympic Committee has approved the official date of the 3rd Strongest Bahraini Man Championship which will take place on February 8, 2020.

To be held under the patronage of HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the event will be organised by HH Media Office under the theme #be_a_beast at the area opposite to the Avenues Mall. The competition is part of HH Shaikh Khalid's sport initiatives and will cover the light, middle and heavy weights. The

contest will stand as the qualifying round for the #strongest_GCC_man which will be organised in April this year at Bahrain International Circuit.

"We have approved the organisation of the third edition of the event as part of our belief in the importance of supporting the Bahraini youth and sports in the Kingdom. We want to discover young and interesting talents as we look forward to forming international teams who are capable of fighting for top honours," HH Shaikh Khalid said.

He further added: "The first and second editions attracted strong participation and earned superb reputation, making both events a huge success."