

Fighting with My Family: a genuine, feel-good feature - even if you aren't a WWE fan

Fighting with My Family is a 2019 biographical sports comedy film based on the 2012 documentary The Wrestlers: Fighting with My Family | P13

THE DAILY **tribune**



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BDB adopts AWS cloud technologies



Khalid Al Rumaihi
TDT | Manama

Bahrain Development Bank (BDB) yesterday said it has successfully migrated its website (bdb-bh.com) to Amazon Web Services (AWS) using a fully Serverless model.

AWS Professional Services, along with AWS Consulting Partner Infonas WLL, are supporting the migration efforts to the AWS Cloud.

Khalid Al Rumaihi, Chairman, Bahrain Development Bank, said, "The Kingdom's Cloud First policy and the Central Bank of Bahrain's progressive banking regulations are providing the local financial sector with the opportunity to fully leverage new technologies in order to innovate for their customers."

Ali Khalil, Chief Information Officer at Infonas said, "The serverless model enables businesses to build modern websites and applications with increased agility and lower total cost of ownership."

Pakistan bans groups linked to Mumbai attack suspects

Islamabad, Pakistan

Pakistan yesterday banned two groups believed to be fronts for the group blamed for the 2008 Mumbai terror attack, amid heightened pressure on Islamabad to act against militants. Jamaat-ud-Dawa and Fa-

lah-e-Insaniat Foundation were designated "proscribed organisations", the interior ministry said in a statement, adding that Prime Minister Imran Khan had ordered officials to accelerate action against banned groups. The statement did not provide further details.

JuD and FIF are considered by the UN to be fronts for Lashkar-e-Taiba, a group accused by Washington and New Delhi of carrying out the Mumbai attack, which killed 166 people and brought India and Pakistan to the brink of war. The latest move against JuD

and FIF comes amid heightened tensions in South Asia.

The US placed a \$10-million bounty on JuD leader Hafiz Saeed. He has denied involvement in the Mumbai attacks.

Islamabad began seizing the group's assets last year after the

Financial Action Task Force (FATF) -- a global anti-money laundering watchdog -- listed Pakistan on a watchlist of countries not doing enough to combat terror financing.

The FATF is expected to announce its latest set of recommendations on Friday.

Focus on energy, tech

Saudi Crown Prince arrives in Beijing for a two-day visit

AFP | Beijing, China

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman arrived in Beijing yesterday as the kingdom aims to seal partnerships on a high-profile Asia tour.

The Crown Prince is expected to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping on his two-day trip to the Chinese capital following visits to Pakistan and India.

The Chinese foreign ministry said Beijing's ambitious Belt and Road global trade infrastructure initiative will be on the agenda, as the two countries look to improve their economic ties.

"Saudi Arabia has a lot of capital that needs to find profitable places to be deployed," Saudi energy and industry minister Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih told China's official Xinhua news agency.

"China is a great place to invest with a huge market and an improving environment," he said.

The two countries will sign agreements and memorandums of understanding in the energy, investment, transport and technology fields, said the Saudi ambassador to China Turki bin Mohammed Al-Madi, according to the official Saudi Press Agency.

In Pakistan, the Crown Prince signed a raft of investment deals worth up to \$20 billion.

On Wednesday, he met Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose country counts Saudi Arabia as one of its key crude suppliers.

Crack down on terrorism

After his meeting with Modi, Prince Mohammed said the kingdom saw investment opportunities in "various fields to exceed \$100 billion".



The national flags of Saudi Arabia (R) and China are displayed from a road lamp at Tiananmen square in Beijing - AFP

The Crown Prince also vowed to crack down on terrorism with Modi.

Earlier yesterday, Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir in Beijing.

Hailing the rapid development of cooperation in various fields, Wang said that the ties between China and Saudi Arabia feature mutual respect, mutual understanding and mutual support.

Wang also said that both Chi-



Saudi Arabia has a lot of capital that needs to find profitable places to be deployed

SAUDI ENERGY AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

na and Saudi Arabia face the threats of terrorism and extremism, and the two sides should strengthen cooperation to jointly safeguard the security and stability of the two countries and the region.

Describing bilateral ties as "very stable and solid" with rapid development in recent years, Adel al-Jubeir said the Saudi side regards China as a long-term strategic partner and looks forward to closer ties in politics, economy, security and other areas.

ART OF SPORT

Breakdancing proposed as new sport by 2024 Olympics

Paris, France

Breakdancing is set to make its debut as an Olympic sport at Paris 2024, the head of the local organising committee said yesterday.

Skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing, which have already been added to the programme for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, have been invited to return in Paris four years later.

Tony Estanguet, the head of the Paris 2024 organising committee and a former Olympic gold medallist in canoeing, said the inclusion of the four sports responded to a need to make the Olympics "more urban" and



A member of Prodigy crew from Austria performs during the first part of the "Battle of the Year", an international competition of breakdance (Boty), at the Arena event hall in Montpellier. (file)



Number of competitors at Paris 2024 would be restricted to 10,500

"more artistic".

"This is a major step forward in our ambition to organise a unique Olympic Games," Estanguet said.

"Right from the beginning,

our aim was to offer Games that would have an impact and the element of surprise.

"This is why we have chosen to present the IOC with four sports that are as creative as spectacular, geared towards youth and completely in line with our vision.

"They reflect perfectly Paris 2024's identity."

The choice of the four sports still needs to be rubberstamped by the International Olympic Committee.

Breakdancing, known as breaking, appeared at the 2018 Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires, in the form of head-to-head "battles".



03 Decoding the crypto future

04 Garden show attracts crowd, praise

05 Largest IS mass grave



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PM pledges to continue development drive

TDT | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister, yesterday pledged full support to all measures that would serve citizens' interest and development drive.

Addressing government officials as the pivot of development plans, HRH the Premier stressed that it is "our duty and the core of our national responsibility to achieve the citizens' aspirations in education, housing, health-care and jobs."

This came as His Royal Highness the Prime Minister received yesterday Members of Parliament (MPs) led by First Deputy Speaker Abdulnabi Salman at Riffa Palace.

The Premier told MPs that the Executive and the Legislative



HRH the Premier with Parliamentarians during a session at Riffa Palace, yesterday

bodies share the same national goals and objectives to achieve the best interests of all citizens. To address the issues concern-

ing citizens, HRH the Premier told MPs, the government is keen on bolstering the Executive-Legislative cooperation.

His Royal Highness stressed that the cooperation between the executive and legislative authorities constitutes the key

essential pillar to accelerate the momentum of Bahrain's progress in the various fields. The lawmakers expressed

their gratitude to the PM for his continuous keenness in supporting governmental-parliamentary cooperation.

Cosmetic market poised to reach BD70 million this year

TDT | Manama

Thamer Tayfor

Bahrain's cosmetic sector, one the vital contributors to Bahrain's GDP, is poised to touch a volume of BD 70 million by end 2019. The sector was valued at BD 60 million in 2017.

According to Dr Mohammed Al Shaikh, who signed an agreement with the Swiss cosmetics company MAVALA Switzerland, said the sector contributes greatly in providing job opportunities for Bahraini women.

The sector, Dr Al Shaikh said,



Officials during the launch

plays a major role in boosting GDP and has all the growth potential to make Bahrain the

beauty capital of the Gulf. He, however, pointed out that the competition varies from one

product to another.

"Women in Bahrain are looking for high-quality cosmetics, which are often imported, but there is a preference for reasonable price cosmetics and that's what we're working on," he said.

The sector is highly competitive in the Kingdom, Dr Al Shaikh said pointing out the tremendous development happening in the Bahraini society.

The business-friendly legislation and infrastructural facilities offered here are attracting foreign investments, thanks to the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and the support of His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister.

Speaking about the activities of MAVALA Switzerland, International sales Manager Sabine Granger told Tribune that the company, which is a cosmetic and body care maker, has agents in 120 countries and is in the market for more than 70 years.

"We manufacture cosmetics in Geneva, Switzerland and employees around 100 people to make sure that our products are excellent for health," Sabine said.

MAVALA Switzerland's range include products for make-up, hands, feet, nails, skin cosmetics. "All of our products are extracted from roses and plants in the Swiss Alps."

"This is a rapidly growing sector. Today, we are in Bahrain and the UAE in the Gulf region, and are optimistic about the Bahraini market," Sabine said adding: We have customers and fame here, and now we are professionally available."

Veggius for general trading company is the exclusive distributor for MAVALA Switzerland in Bahrain.

The general manager of Veggius for general trading company Dr Taher Salem said he is expecting MAVALA Switzerland products to make a huge leap in the field of body care and cosmetics in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The deal was signed in the presence of CEO Dr Mohamed Khairy.



Deputy Premier and President of the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training, HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, chaired yesterday a meeting of the Council in its third session. The session reviewed the education and training strategy for the coming period and discussed a proposal to discuss educational development programmes within the third edition of the unified framework of government

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BIG STORY

big story

Decoding the crypto future

Bahrain will be introducing cryptocurrency regulation in the near future

● Cryptocurrency companies including SprinkleXchange are working in the Kingdom for a trial period

● Rain is the first digital currency exchange to be admitted to the Sandbox

TDI | Manama

Global trading volume of cryptocurrency as per latest report has rocketed above its 300-day trading high, with its value touching a massive \$33.85 billion.

The trading activity data points to the fact that the cryptocurrency market is growing. In fact, it is now growing faster than earlier with a renewed investor interest in the market, even though the sector remains largely unlicensed and unregulated in major financial hubs.

As coin desk reported, Bitcoin (BTC) and tether (USDT) recorded 24-hour trade volumes above \$9 billion, each accounting for roughly 27 per cent of the 24-hour total, which is also among the 10 largest cryptos by market cap.

That said, it might be interesting to see where the investors and the governments stand in the race to conquer the crypto dream in the Gulf Cooperation Council region.

According to reports, only a few markets in the region has formally indicated a desire to regulate cryptocurrency trading, with Bahrain being a front-runner by issuing draft regulations on digital assets in December last year.

The draft rules issued for consultation for crypto asset platform operations, according to CBB provides regulations for "the licensing and supervision of Crypto asset services."

The move according to Bahrain Economic Development Board CEO, Khalid Al Rumaihi, opens a "huge opportunity for Bahrain."

Khalid Hamad, Executive Director of Banking Supervision, said: "This regulatory framework will address the demand from the market for these services and the need to also recognise this innovation in financial services. The CBB's experience with the participants within the Regulatory Sandbox was insightful in shaping these rules."

Apart from Bahrain, Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM) has issued its desire to regulate cryptocurrency trading, with it also launching a Crypto Asset Regulatory Framework to provide a set of rules



Dalal Buhejji, business manager of Bahrain's Economic Development Board (Courtesy of siliconAngle)

The Bahraini central bank allows companies to test their solution on a limited number of users, with a limited number of transactions. The program's purpose is for companies to find a quick way to enter the market

DALAL BUHEJJI
BUSINESS MANAGER OF BAHRAIN'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD, TOLD BLOOMBERG

sweep the global financial industry.

Bloomberg quoting Dalal Buhejji, business manager of Bahrain's Economic Development Board, said the Bahraini Central Bank now allows companies "to test their solution on a limited number of users, with a limited number of transactions."

The programme, as Buhejji said, is for allowing companies to find a quick way to enter Kingdom's market.

28 companies in sandbox

As per the report, a total of 28 companies have received CBB's approval to work under its regulatory sandbox, which allows enabling firms to test and develop their products in a virtual space.

Currently being evaluated in the sandbox is SprinkleXchange, an initial public offering platform built using blockchain. The companies will now operate in the virtual space, under temporary regulations, for the next nine months. As they run, CBB will choose the regulations which are best to regulate the arena of digital assets.

According to Bloomberg, SprinkleXchange, run by New York-based Sprinkle Group SA, will go live this month -- with an initial cap of 10 listings.

The exchange, the report quoting Chief Executive Officer Alexander Wallin said, aims to float the first company by May.

Rain to hit GCC

Another in the fray is Rain, which started in November 2017 as part of the FinTech sandbox trial. The company now has plans to exit the trail for a full-fledged launch this year.

Co-founded by Abdullah Almoaiqel (blockchain consultant), Yehia Badawy (business and technology) along with se-

What is a Cryptocurrency

A digital or virtual currency that uses cryptography for security. A cryptocurrency is difficult to counterfeit because of this security feature. Many cryptocurrencies are decentralized systems based on blockchain technology, a distributed ledger enforced by a disparate network of computers.

The first blockchain-based cryptocurrency was Bitcoin, which still remains the most



popular and most valuable.

Today, there are thousands of alternate cryptocurrencies with various functions or specifications.

Cryptocurrencies hold the promise of making it easier to transfer funds directly between two parties in a transaction, without the need for a trusted third party such as a bank or credit card company.

How does Rain work?

According to AJ Nelson of Rain, at first a buyer would send a wire transfer to Rain's bank, and then use their updated online balance to buy Bitcoins, upon which their Bitcoin (BTC) balance is updated.

"A seller may al-



ready have a BTC balance with Rain or could send Bitcoin to Rain through an external source.

"Once they have sold their Bitcoins they then receive the equivalent amount in their local fiat currency via bank transfer."

talk to Zawya, said: "(As for scaling in the GCC, the biggest one is Saudi.... So for us... We are looking to cover Saudi Arabia, go to Egypt and then Turkey and Pakistan."

In August 2018, the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority made it illegal to trade bitcoin in the kingdom. Governments in the region including those of Egypt and Morocco have officially banned cryptocurrencies, urging residents not to invest in them. The hesitance may perhaps be stemming from reports of negative associations between cryptocurrencies and criminal activity or between blockchain technology and borderless information sharing, as experts

put in.

If successful, Rain will become the first crypto exchange in the Gulf to be regulated by a central bank.

The race is on

So the race is on. And Bahrain is not alone in this run to secure the digital future.

As Rain Financial stated in the report: "The biggest issue in this industry is that of trust. We want our customers to feel safe when they are using our product and have taken measures to ensure this, including establishing two stable bank partnerships and incorporating banking grade security checks and verification into our product."

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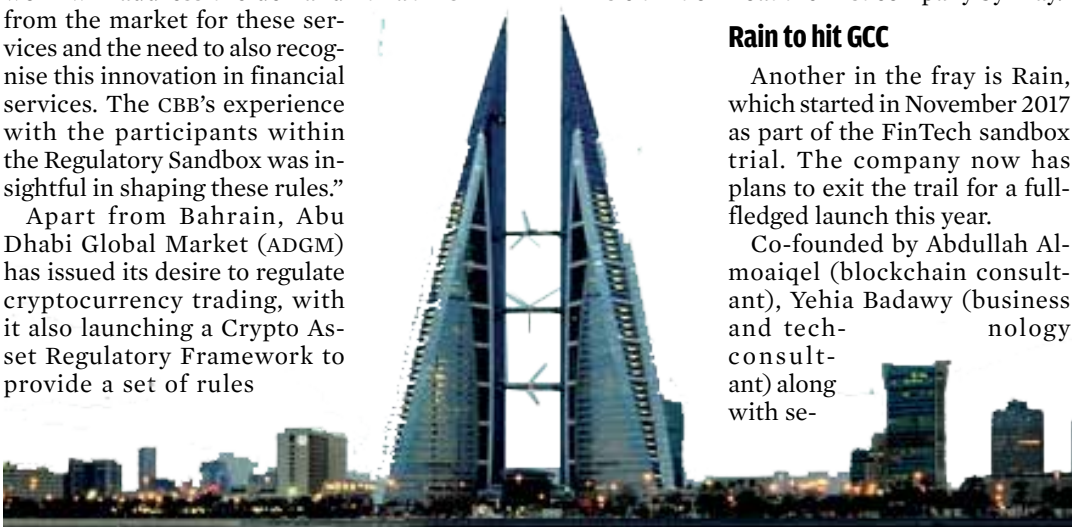
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Garden show attracts crowd, praise

AlQaed: iGA is keen on implementing initiatives that increase green areas in Bahrain

TDT | Manama

The Information & eGovernment Authority (iGA) Chief Executive Mohamed Ali AlQaed yesterday praised the efforts exerted by the Kingdom to develop its agriculture sector and the continuous organising of the Bahrain International Garden Show 2019.

The show, held under the patronage of HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa with the support of HRH Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, the Wife of HM the King and President of the National Initiative for Agricultural Development, was inaugurated by HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Chairman of Isa bin Salman Educational Fund.

The iGA Chief Executive was speaking during the Authority's participation at the Bahrain International Garden Show 2019.

Besides serving as a platform for annual gathering, the show, AlQaed said has become a top destination for visitors and lovers of agriculture from both inside and outside the Kingdom.

The show which began yesterday will continue until Sunday at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Conventions Centre.

This year's exhibition, under the slogan 'Agriculture: A Promising Career Choice', goes in line with the government's effort in the implementation of sustainable agricultural practices.

AlQaed stressed iGA's support to execute a series of projects and systems that contribute to encouraging more green areas and increasing attention on the Kingdom's agricultural sector.

The Chief Executive thanked exhibition organisers and Shaikha Maram bint Isa Al Khalifa, the Secretary-General of the National Initiative for Agricultural Development for making the



HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Chairman of the Isa bin Salman Educational Fund, while launching iGA projects with Authority's Chief Executive Mohamed Ali AlQaed

exhibition a success.

The Authority showcased, at its pavilion, a Soil Mapping project which aims at gathering, analyzing and distributing geographical data related to Bahrain's soil. The project provides current geographical maps and more detailed ones in the future by analysing satellite images and relying on remote sensing techniques & field surveys.

Shaikh Isa launched the authority's 'Soil Mapping Project', along with a report on the 'Monitoring Progress to-

wards the Implementation of Targets & Indicators of the 6th Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Kingdom of Bahrain'.

The authority also showcased the importance of issuing the SDGs report that is considered as the first-of-its-kind in the region. The report comes in line with Bahrain's full commitment to the international agenda and directives of the Sustainable Development 2030 while also linking it to the Government Action Plan.

Alba supports Garden Show

Manama

Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), soon to become the largest smelter in the world, is one of the exhibitors at the acclaimed Bahrain International Garden Show (BIGS) being held at the Bahrain International Convention & Exhibition Centre.

Patronised by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and supported by Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty the King and president of the consultative council for the National Initiative for Agricultural Development (NIAD), BIGS is one of the much-awaited events in Bahrain's yearly calendar focussing on agricultural services, technologies and sustainable development initiatives in the Kingdom.

Speaking about Alba's participation at BIGS 2019, Alba's Deputy Chief Executive Officer Ali Al Baqali

said: "Alba is pleased to be part of the Bahrain International Garden Show, which plays an important role in creating and spreading awareness about Agriculture and Farming in the Kingdom.

"As a Bahraini company with a global footprint, Alba has adopted best international safety, health and environment practices in all its operations. We remain committed to carry-out substantial projects that will make a difference to the sustainable development initiatives of the Kingdom."

Alba's Deputy Chief Executive Officer Ali Al Baqali, Chief Administration Officer Waleed Tamimi, Director Safety, Health and Environment Mohamed Khalil, Sr. Manager Human Resources Hamad Al Shaibeh along with other Management members represented Alba during the opening ceremony, which was held on 20 February 2019.



Dr Mohamed Mubarak Bin Daina, Chief Executive of Bahrain Supreme Council for Environment with Alba's Deputy Chief Executive Officer Ali Al Baqali and Chief Administration Officer Waleed Tamimi at the Bahrain International Garden Show (BIGS)

Third MEA FinTech forum launched

TDT | Manama

Harpreet Kaur

Central Bank of Bahrain Governor Rasheed Al Maraj yesterday called for developing a practical approach to finding the right balance between enabling innovation and protecting the financial system.

Speaking during the third Middle East and Africa FinTech Forum, Al Maraj warned: "We cannot sit idle and not provide the leadership and innovative thinking that this industry needs to grow."

He was addressing officials from the Central Banks of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Oman, Jordan, Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, in addition to senior representatives from the banking, finance, telecom and tech industries in the MENA region.

Held under the patronage of CBB, the forum focused on financial industry's key issues such as financial inclusion across the Middle East and Africa, open banking, artificial intelligence, and the impact of fast-developing technology on banking and societies.

Hosted by Bank ABC and Arab Financial Services (AFS), the Forum moderated by Aaron Heslehurst, host of BBC World News programme Talking Business, started with an address from Sophia, the world's most famous robot, who spoke of the potential for FinTech and AI to contribute to the development



Sophia at the fintech forum

of humanity.

Sael Al Waary, Chairman of Arab Financial Services (AFS) and Deputy Group CEO of Bank ABC, told *Tribune*, "FinTech can be summarised in four key areas which are innovation, integration, inclusion, and imagination."

"Moreover, there are several of these areas had seen significant developments like the way Central Bank of Bahrain, has introduced significant regulatory changes in the last year that mandate adoption of open banking by the Kingdom's financial institutions."

"Traditional banks would continue to lose market share to challenger banks and mobile wallet products, pointing to the

newcomers' more innovative approach to customer experience as the main driving factor."

"AI would take an ever more prominent role in how banks service their customers and also in how they operate internally. Today's innovation is tomorrow's tradition," he added.

Outside the main conference hall, an exhibition hosted a range of stalls that showcased innovative financial technology products, giving visitors the opportunity to see the latest in wearable payment tech, mobile applications, and other developments.

The most exciting part of the exhibition was the public debut of 'Fatema', who is the region's first ever emotionally intelligent 'digital employee'. Built by New Zealand-based Soul Machines for Bank ABC, 'Fatema' appears as an on-screen employee and uses cutting-edge digital neurology and artificial intelligence to emotionally engage with customers. She is capable of engaging in natural conversation with customers, measuring emotions and expressing emotions of her own in return.

Visitors to the exhibition were able to speak with her and ask her questions on specific Bank ABC products and services. In future when she is more widely available online, however, she will be able to respond to a wider range of queries about Bank ABC and its services.

Court rejects appeal of drug peddlers

TDT | Manama

Two Asian women, convicted in a drug-peddling and prostitution case, have had their appeal rejected by the High Appeals Court.

Police arrested the pair after raiding their flat in Juffair fol-

lowing a tip-off received.

Several types of drugs, digital scales as well as currencies were seized during the raid.

During interrogation, the suspects told prosecutors that they were selling drugs to a Thai woman in Bahrain and

was consuming too.

The High Criminal Court earlier gave the first woman a three-year jail term and a fine of BD3000. The second woman received a lighter sentence for a jail term of 6 months and a fine of BD100.

Court employee arrested for accepting bribe

TDT | Manama

A court official and his sister were arrested while accepting a bribe of BD50,000 for facilitating a convict's release.

Confirming the arrest, Interior Ministry, in a statement, said, "A Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments employee and his lawyer sister were arrested red-handed."

Anti-corruption and Economic & Electronic Security Director General confirmed that the arrest followed a tip-off received.

"The department subsequently carried out an investigation which led to the arrest of the duo while accepting an advance," the official said.

The case will be referred to the Public Prosecution, after completing legal procedures.

According to a source at the ministry, the employee was recently promoted to the post of an acting supervisor at the Civilian Court.

An official at the Criminal



Representative picture

Court, who reportedly approached the official for assistance, is suspected to have tipped off the Anti-corruption Directorate.

The suspect, the source said, was seen entering the official's office and stayed there for a long time before returning.

On the next day, the day of the arrest, the suspect's car was seen parked in the ministry's parking lots.

Other sources in the ministry confirmed that the amount of the bribe is believed to be BD50,000.

They also confirmed that the

official in the Criminal Court, who the suspect had a long meeting a day prior to the arrest, has been summoned to give his testimony.

As for the sister, who works as a lawyer, several lawyers said that she is an unknown name in the field. Lawyers also expressed their surprise about the incident affirming that releasing a detained convict in a fraud case is "impossible".

Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments Ministry didn't comment on the matter until the time this report was written.

WORLD

Largest IS mass grave yet found outside Syria's Raqa

AFP | Raqa, Syria

Two feet deep, below a plot of farmland outside the Syrian city of Raqa, lies a large and deadly legacy of the Islamic State group: a mass grave holding an estimated 3,500 people.

First responders learned of the burial site in the al-Fukheikha agricultural suburb last month, more than a year after US-backed forces captured Raqa from IS and as they closed in on the group's final redoubt of Baghouz further south.

The belated discovery is the biggest example yet of how the violence IS sowed during the reign of its "caliphate" will be harvested for years to come, diggers and activists said.

Several dozen mounds of dirt line one side of the al-Fukheikha plot, marking the more than 120 bodies already dug up by the Rapid Response Division of Raqa's civil defence service.

"These are individual graves, but behind us, by the trees, are the mass graves of those executed by Daesh (IS)," said Asaad Mohammad, the 56-year-old forensic assistant at the site.

"There are some 2,500-3,000 bodies estimated there, plus between 900 and 1,100 bodies in the individual graves, so at least 3,500 total," he said.

Eight other mass graves have already been identified around the northern Syrian city, including one nicknamed "Panorama," from which more than 900 bodies had been exhumed.

"Al-Fukheikha is the largest grave since IS came to Raqa" in



These mass graves hold the answers to the fate of people who had been executed by IS fighters, who died in coalition air strikes, or who have been missing," said Sara Kayyali of Human Rights Watch

SARA KAYYALI OF HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

tarpaulin body bag onto which Mohammad scrawled the date, location, and a word he has become accustomed to writing: "Unidentified."

By noon, his team of 10 had dug up eight bodies. Some had been dead so long there was little left of them, and the diggers had to weigh down the body bags with rocks to keep them from flying away in the wind.

They logged any identifying details into a ledger and loaded the bodies into a white pickup to be re-buried about 10 kilometres (six miles) away at a proper cemetery. It has become a macabre routine, said Mohammad -- one he was sure will eventually be played out again in Baghouz, the last speck of IS territory further south.

Missing foreigners

Since the Raqa division began its work in January 2018, it has exhumed more than 3,800 bodies, said the force's supervisor Turki al-Ali.

"We've heard accounts from residents of al-Fukheikha that they would see people gathering with someone in an orange suit," said Ali, referring to the garb in which IS would typically dress its executed captives.

US journalist James Foley was wearing such a suit when he was killed, and analysts believe footage of his death indicates he may have been killed around Raqa.

Another American captive, Kayla Mueller, is thought to have died near Raqa as well. Their bodies have never been recovered.



The Rapid Response Division of the Raqa civil defence excavate the site of a mass grave near the northern Syrian city of Raqa

2014, said Mohammad.

'Unidentified'

Earlier this week, diggers in flimsy medical masks excavated a small bundle wrapped in greying, damp cloth.

They peeled away the fabric to reveal a decomposing body with a detached blackened jawbone, which Mohammad examined.

"Estimated 35 years. Third-degree burns," he said.

Apart from his stoic partial-autopsy, the only sounds to be heard were the grating of hand shovels against the dirt, and the rustle of the wind through the nearby fir trees.

His colleagues carefully placed the bundle in a white

Friendly neighbourhood elephant!



Commuters interact with an elephant as he rests in a public road ahead of the annual Perahera festival of the historic Gangaramaya Temple in Colombo. Some 50 elephants, most of them from the central area of Kandy along with thousands of traditional drummers, dancers, and monks have gathered in the Sri Lankan capital to participate in the city's biggest two-day annual Buddhist Navam procession

BAHRAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY (BATELCO) B.S.C.



Recommendation

At their meeting on Thursday, February 21st 2019, the Board of Directors of Bahrain Telecommunications Company (Batelco) B.S.C approved to recommend to the AGM, which will be held on the 27th of March 2019, for the distribution of cash dividend to the shareholders at a rate of 27.5% of the paid - up capital, 27.5 fils per share (including the interim dividend of 10 fils per share which was distributed in the third quarter of 2018), to eligible shareholders who are listed in the share register on the day of the AGM and after the approval of the regulatory authorities.

Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa
Chairman

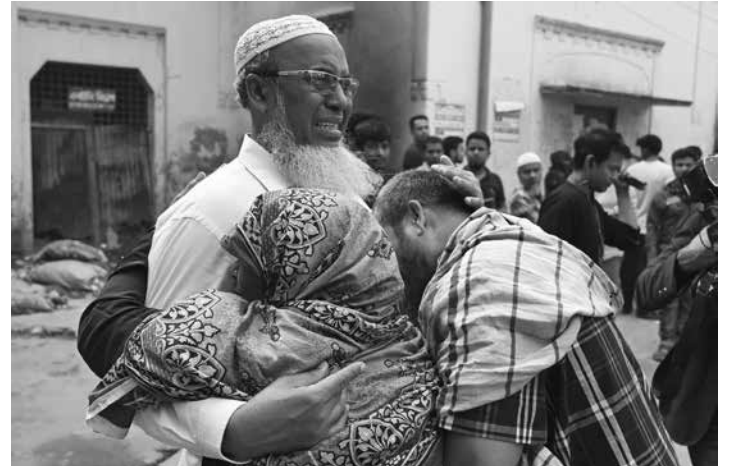
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A relative of victims who were killed in a fire mourns



Rescue personnel carry the body of a victim after a fire broke out in Dhaka



Relatives of victims who were killed in a fire mourn in Dhaka

Inferno kills at least 70 in Dhaka

● Fire started in a building where chemicals for deodorants and other household uses were illegally stored

● Fire trucks had struggled in the narrow streets to reach the scene

● Members of a bridal party in a nearby community centre were also caught in the fire

● At least 55 people were injured, including 10 in a critical condition

AFP | Dhaka, Bangladesh

At least 70 people were killed when fire tore through crumbling apartment blocks in a historic part of Dhaka, setting off a chain of explosions and a wall of flames down nearby streets, officials said yesterday.

It started in one building where chemicals for deodorants and other household uses were illegally stored and spread at lightning speed to four nearby buildings, the fire service said.

People became trapped by the flames at a nearby bridal party and a restaurant. TV images showed the gates to one building were chained up so residents were unable to escape.

Traffic jams in the clogged narrow streets held up the rescue operation.

Bangladesh fire chief Ali Ahmed said at least 70 people were killed but that the toll would likely rise.

"The number of bodies may increase. The search is still going on," he told AFP.

Doctors said at least 10 of the



Firefighters are seen at the scene of a fire in Dhaka

scores of injured were in critical condition.

Firefighters who took almost 12 hours to bring the fire under control, went through the blackened floors of the building, littered with spray cans, looking for bodies.

The fire started at about 10.40pm (1640 GMT) on Wednesday at Chawkbazar in the old Mughal part of the capital.

Ahmed said it may have been started by a gas cylinder and quickly spread through the building where chemicals were stored in rooms alongside the apartments.

Chemicals used for household products were also stored in the nearby buildings. They exploded as the fire spread, witnesses said.

"There was a traffic jam when the fire broke out. It spread so quickly that people could not escape," the fire chief said.

Another fire official told reporters the blaze was under control but was not extinguished despite the efforts of more than 200 firefighters.

"It will take time. This is not like any other fire," he said, adding that the inferno had been made more devastating by the "highly combustible" chemicals.

Fire trucks had struggled in the narrow streets to reach the scene and there was also a lack of water for the battle, officials said.

The main gate of one five-storey building was chained up,

trapping residents inside, according to images shown on Bangladesh television.

'Flames were everywhere'

Members of a bridal party in a nearby community centre were also caught in the fire and many were injured. Others were caught in small restaurants.

Dhaka deputy police commissioner Ibrahim Khan said at least two cars and 10 cycle rickshaws were burned in the fire.

"The victims included passersby, some people who were eating food at a restaurant and some members of the bridal party," he told AFP.

"I saw the charred body of a woman who was holding her daughter in her lap as their rick-

shaw was caught in the fire," said one witness.

Haji Abdul Kader, whose shop was destroyed, said he only survived the blaze as he had left to go to a pharmacy.

"When I was at the pharmacy, I heard a big bang. I turned back and saw the whole street, which was jam packed with cars and rickshaws, in flames. Flames were everywhere," he told AFP.

"I got burned and rushed to hospital," he said.

Doctors at Dhaka Medical College Hospital said at least 55 people were injured, including 10 in a critical condition.

Hundreds of people rushed to the hospital looking for missing relatives.

However, most of the bodies

of the dead were charred beyond recognition.

Sohag Hossain, one of the injured, told the Daily Star that he and two friends were working at a plastic factory in one of the buildings at the time of the fire.

They heard an explosion and could not escape the flames.

A similar blaze in 2010 in an old Dhaka building, which was also used as a chemical warehouse, killed more than 120 people in one of the worst fire disasters in the city of 20 million people.

Dhaka authorities launched a crackdown on chemical warehouses in residential areas following the blaze, but efforts to rein in the practice have waned.

Singapore Airlines denies snooping with seatback cameras

Singapore, Singapore

Singapore Airlines insisted yesterday that cameras on its planes' entertainment systems had been disabled after an outcry online from worried passengers who spotted the tiny lenses peering at them.

Travellers took to Twitter and other social media to raise the alarm over the cameras at the bottom of seatback screens on a number of the Singapore flag carrier's newer aircraft.

"Just found this interesting

sensor looking at me from the seat back on board of Singapore Airlines. Any expert opinion of whether is a camera?" passenger Vitaly Kamluk tweeted.

His tweet was accompanied by photos of the monitor with the embedded camera.

Another passenger urged the airline in a tweet to "notify all your passengers and get their consent, particularly EU residents, that you are doing this, why, what are you doing with the data and how long you keep it".



Picture courtesy of @vkamluk

The airline confirmed that some of its latest inflight entertainment systems did have fixed cameras -- but assured passengers that they had been disabled.

"These cameras have been intended by the manufacturers for future developments. These cameras have been permanently disabled on our aircraft and cannot be activated on board," the airline said in a statement.

"We have no plans to enable or develop any features using the cameras."

Taiwan unveils long-awaited gay marriage bill

Taipei, Taiwan

Taiwan's ruling party unveiled its latest attempt to create Asia's first gay marriage law yesterday, a bill offering same-sex couples "permanent unions" as well as limited adoption rights, despite stiff opposition. In November, conservatives won a referendum against revising the island's Civil Code to allow gay marriage.

US officer arrested for mass murder plot

● Hasson is being held on drug charges and for unlawfully possessing firearms and ammunition

Washington, United States

A US Coast Guard officer who espoused white supremacist views and drafted a target list of Democratic politicians and prominent media figures has been arrested on firearms and drug charges.

Christopher Paul Hasson, an admirer of Norwegian mass murderer Anders Breivik, was arrested last week and a powerful arsenal seized from his home, according to court documents unsealed on Wednesday.

"The defendant intends to murder innocent civilians on a scale rarely seen in this country," US District Attorney Robert Hur said in a motion seeking that Hasson be detained until



This undated image released by the US Attorney's Office shows weapons seized at the Silver Spring, Maryland, home of US Coast Guard officer Christopher Paul Hasson.

trial.

"The defendant is a domestic terrorist, bent on committing acts dangerous to human life that are intended to affect governmental conduct," Hur said.

Hasson is being held on drug charges and for unlawfully possessing firearms and ammunition.

The US Attorney's office

said 15 firearms and over 1,000 rounds of ammunition were recovered from Hasson's apartment in Silver Spring, Maryland, along with illegal drugs.

In documents seized by the authorities, Hasson "identified himself as a White Nationalist for over 30 years and advocated for 'focused violence' in order to establish a white homeland," the

US Attorney's office said.

Hasson routinely perused portions of the "Breivik manifesto" on amassing firearms and compiling a list of targets, it said.

Among those listed as targets were Democratic House speaker Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer and other Democrats in the House and Senate.

Media personalities included CNN's Don Lemon and Chris Cuomo.

Hasson, a lieutenant in the US Coast Guard working at US Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, is a former US Marine who also spent two years in the US Army National Guard.

Hasson was remanded in custody and is to appear in court before a court in Greenbelt, Maryland.

Breivik is serving a 21-year sentence for the July 2011 massacre of 77 people, most of them teenagers who were attending a youth camp.

Trump bars US-born woman who joined IS from returning



Hoda Muthana, a 24-year-old woman from Alabama with her son. (Courtesy of Guardian)

Washington, United States

President Donald Trump said Wednesday he is barring a US-born former Islamic State propagandist from returning home, making the highly unusual case that she is not a US citizen.

Trump's refusal to admit 24-year-old Hoda Muthana comes just as he is pressing Europeans to repatriate their own Islamic State fighters and will likely face legal challenges, with US citizenship extremely difficult to lose.

Trump said on Twitter he has "instructed" Secretary of State Mike Pompeo "not to allow Hoda Muthana back into the country" -- a break with usual US protocol not to comment on individuals' immigration issues.

"Ms. Hoda Muthana is not a US citizen and will not be admitted into the United States," Pompeo said in a terse statement.

"She does not have any legal basis, no valid US passport, no right to a passport, nor any visa to travel to the United States," he added.

The US generally grants citizenship to everyone born on its soil and the Alabama-raised Muthana is believed to have traveled to Syria on a US passport.

But a US official said a later investigation showed that she had not been entitled to her passport, adding: "Ms. Muthana's citizenship has not been revoked because she was never a citizen."

Officials declined further comment but in a loophole that could boost the government case, Muthana's father had been a diplomat from Yemen -- and children of diplomats are not automatically given citizenship.

Muthana's lawyer, Hassan Shilby, showed a birth certificate that demonstrated she was born in New Jersey in 1994 and said her father had ceased being a diplomat "months and months" before her birth.

"She is a US citizen. She had a valid passport. She may have broken the law and, if she has, she's willing to pay the price," Shilby told AFP at his office in Tampa.

He said Muthana wanted due process and was willing to go to prison if convicted.

"We cannot get to a point where we simply strip citizen-

ship from those who break the law. That's not what America is about. We have one of the greatest legal systems in the world, and we have to abide by it."

US-born and radicalized

Muthana, raised in a strict household in Hoover, Alabama, said she was brainwashed by social media messages and headed to Syria without her parents' knowledge in 2014.

Shortly afterward, Muthana posted on Twitter a picture of herself and three other women who appeared to torch their Western passports, including an American one.

She went on to post vivid calls on social media to kill Americans, glorifying the ruthless extremist group notorious for its beheadings that for a time ruled vast swathes of Syria and Iraq.

But with the Islamic State group down to its last stretch of land, Muthana said she has renounced extremism and wants to return home with her toddler son, born to one of her three jihadist husbands.

"To say that I regret my past words, any pain that I caused my family and any concerns I would cause my country would be hard for me to really express properly," she said in a handwritten note to

her lawyer.



11 wounded in central China knife attack

Beijing, China

A man with a history of mental illness wounded 11 people with a knife after attacking random pedestrians in central China, local authorities said yesterday.

The suspect, a 33-year-old man named Guo Kaibin, is already in police custody, according to a social media notice posted by police in Ji'an, a city in central Jiangxi province.

Citing Guo's family, local authorities said that the attacker had a history of mental illness.

While none of the injuries were life-threatening, those attacked included auxiliary police and students. Victims were receiving medical treatment and an investigation was underway, said local police.

Earlier this month a man who suspected his wife of committing adultery stabbed eight people to death and injured seven others in a village in the northwest province of Gansu.

Last August six people were killed after a man went on a rampage in southern China,

stabbing his girlfriend and her relatives before ramming a car into pedestrians and attacking passers-by.

And in February a knife-wielding man motivated by personal grievances killed a woman and injured 12 others in a busy Beijing shopping mall -- a rare act of violence in the heavily policed capital.

Attacks have also targeted schoolchildren in the past, forcing authorities to increase security around schools.

In April, a knife-wielding



Representative picture

man killed nine middle school children and injured at least 10 others in northern China.

Lantern festival



People jumping over a bonfire during an event to celebrate the Lantern Festival, which marks the end of Lunar New Year celebrations, in Haikou in China's southern Hainan province.

Chef couple wins many hearts by giving international dishes a Saudi twist

TASTE BUDS

The chef duo started their YouTube channel 'Saa'widha' just five months ago. Their show was warmly received by the Saudi audience, and the two are showered with positive comments under each episode



A dish prepared by Budoor Al-Solami and Waleed Moathen



Waleed Moathen and Budoor Al-Solami during a cooking video

Arab News | Jeddah

Budoor Al-Solami, 26, and Waleed Moathen, 28, started their YouTube channel "Saa'widha" (to turn it Saudi) under the cooking channel Atyab Tabkha just

five months ago.

Atyab Tabkha is sponsored by digital media company Diwane. All the chef couple's episodes have been made at Atyab Tabkha's studio in Dubai.

The couple takes any international dish and give it a Saudi spin. Their creativity and ideas are fun and broad. The couple have recreated many dishes and desserts such as muffins with dates and tahini.

HIGH

Universal artist to uncover

Universal MENA music artist Alexis, who recently released



Alexis

TDT | Manama
Harpreet Kaur

Alexis a Universal MENA Music Artist who recently released a new Arabic-influenced Soul album 'This is Me' is to uncover Kingdom's Music Industry.

With Egyptian roots and UAE family, Alexis embraces her Middle Eastern heritage on her second album 'This Is Me.'

'This Is Me' is a stunning mix of retro Soul, Middle Eastern melodies, heartfelt lyrics and all the high notes.

The second album covers a lot of musical territories, spanning everything from modern R'n'B and Trap influences to the Blues and Middle Eastern melodies, all drenched in a rich retro-Soul sound.

Alexis wrote and produced the bulk of the album alongside several high-profile collaborations. Grammy-award winning duo Carvin & Ivan co-produced one of the album's tracks while Bashiri Johnson, a long-time Michael Jackson collaborator, helped create the dynamic percussion that

drives the album forward.

The songwriting on 'This Is Me' is indebted with a sense of self, an open-hearted awareness and searing honesty that shines through, notably on soaring plaintively over an emotive

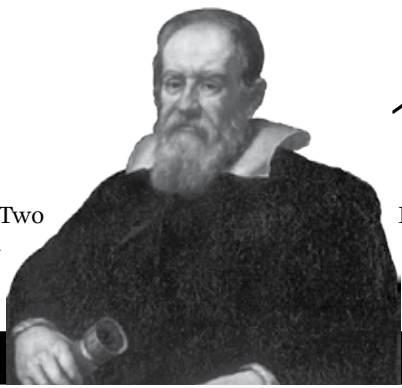


I think that there is a wealth of incredible 'untapped' talent that exists in Bahrain. It's just a matter of the public recognising this and lending support. Local musicians and artists then need to rise to the challenge and bring their very best to their audience

ALEXIS

1632

Galileo's "Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems" is published



1774

British House of Lords rules authors do not have perpetual copyright

1797

The Last Invasion of Britain by the French, begins near Fishguard, Wales

1825

Russia & Britain establish Alaska-Canada boundary

To recreate these international dishes with Saudi flavors, the couple use Saudi spices and agricultural products produced within the country such as dates, local meat and the unique Taif flowers

"Usually, it is the international kitchen that receives all the fame and spotlight, and rarely does the Arab or Saudi kitchen have a media presence," Al-Solami told Arab News. "Which is why we decided to invent something new, merging international kitchens in a Saudi way. Especially because the Saudi kitchen is characterized by its various flavors and high taste," she added.

To recreate these international dishes with Saudi flavors, the couple use Saudi spices and agricultural products "produced by our country such as dates, local meat and the unique Taif flowers," said Moathen.

Al-Solami works at a five-star hotel and Moathen is an executive chef at a restaurant. Leading such busy lives, the couple still manage to find a balance between their jobs and their channel.

"The nature of our job requires us to work for long hours, sometimes 12 hours in a day. For this reason we decided, with the agreement of the company, that



A dish prepared by Waleed Moathen and Budoor Al-Solami

we film our episodes during our vacation days."

The channel came to fruition when Diwanees was looking for Saudi chefs.

"They contacted me. They

wanted to create a regular cooking show just like any other cooking show, then Waleed and I thought of how we can change the idea of traditional cooking and shows, and we wanted to put

the Saudi kitchen in our show. This is how 'Saa'widha' was created," according to Al-Solami.

"And this was how we came up with many ideas such as the Saudi sushi, and Waleed came up with vegan ice cream with Saudi ingredients such as almond

full of surprises, said Moathen. "When we cook, we really enjoy it and we share new ideas with each other."

"Saa'widha," of course, is displayed in Arabic, but the couple are planning to add subtitles in different languages in their next season. "Especially because we have friends of different nationalities," explained Moathen.

Their show was warmly received by the Saudi audience, and the two are showered with positive comments under each episode.

"I am very happy to see the interaction of people in the comments, and their kind words and positive support," said Al-Solami

"I am overjoyed and this encourages me to continue what I love and what the viewers love," said Moathen.

Al-Solami and Moathen studied tourism and hospitality respectively and wish to open a restaurant chain and culinary school.



Waleed Moathen (L) and Budoor Al-Solami

coffee. We even made focaccia bread and muffins with a Saudi twist," she explained.

Working is fun

Working together is fun and



Budoor Al-Solami giving the final touch to a dish

NOTES

Kingdoms' music industry

released the album 'This is Me', is set to visit Bahrain

s-style piano ballad. Speaking to *Tribune* on her future plans Alexis said, "I think that there is a wealth of incredible 'untapped' talent that exists in Bahrain. It's just a matter of the public recognising this talent and providing support. Local musicians and artists then need to rise to the challenge and bring their very best to their audience."

Moreover, I am looking forward to visiting Bahrain again this Spring. I believe Bahraini artists are truly representative of what art and music could be a fusion of the very best of influences from around the region, progressive but still connected to tradition"

Ali Bahar, a Bahraini singer, guitarist and organ player known for his music band Al Ekhwa who was also known as the Bob Marley of the Gulf has been called as being the most popular musician in Bahrain's history until a favourite of mine. His ability to communicate a feeling in his music till rarely matched."

Bahrain is Wonderful and progressive. I hope I don't offend anyone by

saying this, but I've always felt that Bahrain was a sister state to us in the UAE. We all have our unique identities but at the same time, we share so much in common. Thus I believe that we should utilise the opportunity to further grow the industry."

Alexis wrote and produced the bulk of the album 'This is Me' alongside several high-profile collaborations. Grammy-award winning duo Carvin & Ivan co-produced one of the album's tracks while Bashiri Johnson, a long-time Michael Jackson collaborator, helped create the dynamic percussion that drives the album forward



business

Barclays rebounds into profit in 2018

London, United Kingdom

Barclays rebounded sharply into profit in 2018, as a vast hit from the previous year on the sale of its African business was not repeated, the British bank announced yesterday.

The lender's performance came despite vast litigation costs and a new charge on the impact of mounting economic uncertainty over Brexit.

Net profit, or earnings after tax, reached £1.4 billion (\$1.8 billion, 1.6 billion euros) last year, Barclays said in a results statement.

That contrasted with a large loss of £1.9 billion in 2017, when it had taken a vast £2.5-billion hit on the sale of Barclays Africa Group Limited.

The lender nevertheless faced litigation and conduct charges in 2018 of £2.2 billion.

\$400 billion climate investment plan for Sahel region

Niamey, Niger

Heads of state of 17 countries in the Sahel region of Africa will hold a summit on Monday in Niamey to approve a climate investment plan worth \$400 billion over 12 years, the Niger government said Wednesday.

The "ambitious" plan for the period 2018-30 will involve "17 nations from the Atlantic Ocean to the Horn of Africa" and will represent the "translation (into actions) of our nations' commitments through the Paris agreement on climate change", Environment Minister Almoustapha Garba told reporters.

The \$400 billion (350 billion euro) plan focuses on six projects aiming to limit greenhouse gas emissions and to help people adapt to climate change, he added.

The 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change aims to limit global temperature rises to well below two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit).

The Sahel, home to more than 500 million people, is considered especially vulnerable to climate change.

Batelco Q4 profit jumps 119pc

● Broadband customers increase 13pc

● To build a second Data Centre for Batelco at its Hamala headquarters

● Recommends a full year cash dividend of BD45.7m (US\$121.2m)

TDT | Manama



Mohamed Bubashait, Batelco Bahrain CEO



Ihab Hinnawi, Batelco Group CEO



Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Batelco Chairman

Batelco (BATELCO), the regional telecommunications group with operations across 14 countries, yesterday reported a 119 per cent jump in its fourth-quarter net profit attributable to equity holders of the company to BD4.1 million (US\$10.9m) from a BD21.7m (US\$57.6m) net loss in the same quarter a year ago.

The 2017 net profit, according to Batelco, was mainly impacted by impairment losses related to the Group's investments in Yemen and Jordan.

The board recommended a full year cash dividend of BD45.7m (US\$121.2m), at a value of 27.5 fils per share to be agreed at the Group's Annual General Meeting, of which 10 fils per share was already paid during the third quarter of 2018 with the remaining 17.5 fils to be paid following the AGM in

March 2019.

Total comprehensive income attributable to equity holders of the company was BD4.6m (US\$12.2m), an increase of 120pc from BD22.7m (US\$60.2m) loss in Q4 2017. Earnings per share (EPS) is 2.4 fils for Q4 2018 compared to -13.1 fils in Q4 2017.

Operating profit decreased by 29pc to BD12.3m (US\$32.6m) from BD17.2m (US\$45.6m) in Q4 2017. Operating profit is hurt mainly due to increased amortization charges on intangible assets.

Revenues increased by 2pc over Q4 2017 from BD101.9m (US\$270.3m) to BD104.4m (US\$276.9m). Revenues have been positively bolstered by strong performance at Batelco Bahrain, Umniah in Jordan and Dhiraagu, the Group's operation in the Maldives.

For the full year 2018, Net

profits attributable to equity holders of the company stand at BD50.1m (US\$132.9m) up from BD3.5m (US\$9.3m) for the corresponding period in 2017, an increase of 1,335pc. Full year EPS was 30.1 fils compared to 2.1 fils for the corresponding period of 2017.

Total comprehensive income attributable to equity holders of the company was BD43.3m (US\$114.9m), an increase of 275pc from BD11.5m (US\$30.5m) in 2017.

Year-on-year operating profits have increased by 25pc to BD72.7m (US\$192.8m) for 2018.

Revenues increased by 7pc from BD379.4m (US\$1,006.4m) in 2017 to BD405.9m (US\$1,076.7m) in 2018.

Batelco Chairman Shaikh Abdulla bin Khalifa Al Khalifa said, "The results reflect the effectiveness of the Group's overall

strategic initiatives and we are delighted to witness the strong year-on-year growth in digital, Datacom and fixed broadband services across the Group."

Batelco Group CEO Ihab Hinnawi said that 2018 was a turnaround year for the Batelco Group supported by the ongoing rollout of the Group's transformation strategy and key investments in targeted services, leading to a significant increase in shareholder return.

"We diversified our revenue sources to address the relentless impact of competition in our markets, particularly focusing on the acceleration of fibre implementation and data penetration and are pleased to report that Fixed Broadband is up by 10 per cent and Datacom services are up by 18pc across our markets of operation."

Batelco Bahrain Chief Executive Officer Mohamed Bubashait said: "Our successful investment strategy with a focus on crucial in-demand services has resulted in a significant improvement in performance over 2017 for Datacom and fixed Broadband services, with revenue growth up by 27pc for Datacom and by 15pc for fixed Broadband, fuelled by our fibre rollout. Meeting the demand for faster internet services remains high on the agenda and the success of our fibre delivery has also attributed to a 13pc increase in Broadband customers in the Kingdom of Bahrain."

Looking ahead, Bubashait said Batelco will open a new Data Centre very soon, and plans are already in place to build a second Data Centre for Batelco at its Hamala headquarters.

Aero India 2019



A foreign delegate poses for a picture next to a floral model of an aeroplane on the inaugural day of the five-day Aero India airshow at the Yelahanka Air Force station, in Bangalore. The Aero India 2019 airshow began on February 20 and ends on February 24.

Brexit breakthrough possible within days, says UK minister

London, United Kingdom

Britain's finance minister Philip Hammond said yesterday there had been "some movement" by the European Union that could lead to a breakthrough in Brexit talks in "the next few days".

Hammond said progress in the ongoing negotiations could result in a fresh vote next week on prime minister Theresa May's EU divorce deal, which was rejected by lawmakers last month.

"There may be an opportunity to bring a vote back to the House of Commons," he told the BBC.

"But that will depend on progress that's made over the next few days. These discussions are ongoing."



Philip Hammond

May and the other 27 EU leaders approved a Brexit withdrawal agreement at a summit on November 25 last year, but the British parliament voted against it overwhelmingly on January 15.

Since then, she and her ministers have repeatedly urged EU leaders and their negotiator Michel Barnier to revise a "backstop" clause in the text on the Irish border that is hated by eurosceptic MPs.

US couple in cannabis business owed taxman \$3 million

Los Angeles, United States

A US couple who operated a lucrative marijuana business in the western state of Colorado are in hot water with federal authorities for failing to pay the taxman more than \$3 million.

According to authorities, Andrew Poarch and his wife

Shuntay opened "Lazy Lion," a cash-only marijuana club, in Colorado Springs in January 2013 -- earning more than \$10 million over three years.

But the couple failed to properly declare their income during that period and even claimed they were due a refund in 2014 because they had earned just \$19,292 -- when in fact their in-

come stood at nearly \$3 million, officials say.

Poarch pleaded guilty in the case last week, prosecutors announced Wednesday, and charges are pending against his wife.

The case illustrates the tax pitfalls of owning a cannabis business in the United States, where the drug has been legalized in many states but remains

Poarch faces up to three years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. He has also agreed to pay tax authorities a little over \$3 million in restitution, according to his plea deal.

illegal at the federal level.

That has translated to a cash-only marijuana industry as business owners are unable to deposit the money they earn into banks, which refuse to open accounts for cannabis-related businesses.

According to the charge sheet against Poarch and his wife, Lazy Lion obtained its supply

of cannabis from a series of grow operations that they controlled. Their customers could purchase the marijuana at the club and consume it on the premises.

Authorities determined the scale of the business by reviewing records from a sale program the couple, both aged 31, used to record all transactions.

High-level US-China trade talks resume

● **Trump has repeatedly claimed the talks with Beijing are going "very well"**

● **Chinese trade envoy Liu He will lead Beijing's delegation in meetings**

● **Trump this week said a March 1 deadline to reach a deal was in fact "not a magical date"**

Washington, United States

With eight days left in their trade truce, top US and Chinese officials were due yesterday to return to the daunting task of bridging a chasm between the world's two largest economies.

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly claimed the talks with Beijing are going "very well," but concrete signs of progress have not been apparent in the three months since the two sides agreed to pause their trade war.

Analysts say the distance separating Washington and Beijing and the short time remaining before the March 1 deadline make it likely the outcome would feature banner announcements but



China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi (R) speaks during a meeting with Myron Brilliant (not pictured), executive vice president and head of International Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing

would fall short of Trump's most far-reaching goals.

"I think the consensus of people that have been following this thing is that they're not making nearly as much progress as the president tweets that they've been making," said William Reinsch, a former US trade official now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Chinese trade envoy Liu He will lead Beijing's delegation in

\$200bn
in Chinese goods are slated by Trump for double-duties if the talks fail

meetings with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and other American officials Thursday and Friday as they work to head off an escalation of US tariffs. This fourth round of negotiations follow two days of preliminary talks at the deputy level.

Trump this week said a March 1 deadline to reach a deal was in fact "not a magical date," raising hopes that he could delay the

plan to more than double duties on \$200 billion in Chinese goods.

China's party-owned Global Times late Tuesday warned raising US tariffs would amount to "a catastrophic strike" on global stock markets, which have been buffeted for months by the uncertainty and the prospects for slower global growth.

Since July, Washington and Beijing have hit each other with tariffs on more than \$360 billion in the manufacturing sectors in both countries.

Washington has demanded that Beijing reverse much of its industrial policy, charging that China has sought global dominance through the alleged theft of American technology, massive subsidies and the promotion mammoth state-owned enterprises.

US officials have stressed that any agreement must have teeth to ensure that China keeps its promises.

When Trump can claim 'victory!'

Demands for structural changes likely will be far harder to resolve than complaints about the soaring US-China trade imbalance, which has hit record heights since Trump took office.

Trump has said the ultimate bargain will be struck at a meeting with China's President Xi

Jinping.

Reinsch said the two sides were likely to strike some kind of bargain.

"I'm sure they'll come up with something that will be more than cosmetic but less than we're asking," he said.

"It'll probably in the area of intellectual property theft and more open investment in China because they're the things that benefit them as well as benefit us." But other changes -- such as subjecting China's state-owned enterprises to free-market principles -- could weaken the communist party's hold on power, making Chinese officials very reluctant to budge, he added.

Meanwhile, China's economy has begun slowing sharply as well, eroding prospects for global growth this year. Japan reported Tuesday that China-bound exports had dived 17.4 percent last month, the biggest drop in three years as demand there tumbled.

But research by the Institute for International Finance, the impact of punitive US tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese goods has been partly offset by last year's six percent depreciation of the currency.

While that softened much of the blow China's exports and on the US consumer, IIF chief economist Robin Brooks told AFP it has hit the bottom line of Chinese companies.

Ghosn held \$260,000 Rio party billed to Renault-Nissan

Paris, France

Former Renault and Nissan head Carlos Ghosn and his wife invited friends to a \$260,000 Carnival party in Brazil last year and charged it to his employers, documents show, a move Ghosn's lawyer defended as a routine corporate function for a multinational CEO.

News of the party is the latest evidence of Ghosn's expensive lifestyle to emerge as his time as one of the top executives in the auto industry faces fresh scrutiny following his arrest in Tokyo last November.

According to documents seen

by AFP, which confirm a report in the Express magazine, Ghosn invited eight couples to watch the Carnival parade in Rio de Janeiro in February last year from a beach-side luxury hotel.

While the guests were asked to pay their own air fare, the invitations specified that local teams would take charge of transport, lodging and other expenses.

"On behalf of Mr and Mrs Ghosn, I have the pleasure to inform you that they would be delighted if you would accept to be their guest at the 2018 Rio Carnival," according to the December 2017 email invitation.

"You will be responsible to

book your flight and the team will take care of you from the Rio airport," it said, adding that the guests would be staying at the beachside Hilton Hotel in Copacabana.

The event required costly security measures including two bullet-proof vehicles which were put at the guests' disposal.

Nissan's Brazilian subsidiary later sent a bill of \$257,872 (around 227,000 euros at current exchange rates) to the Renault-Nissan holding company based in the Netherlands.

The Dutch firm coordinates the operations of the French-Japanese alliance, which

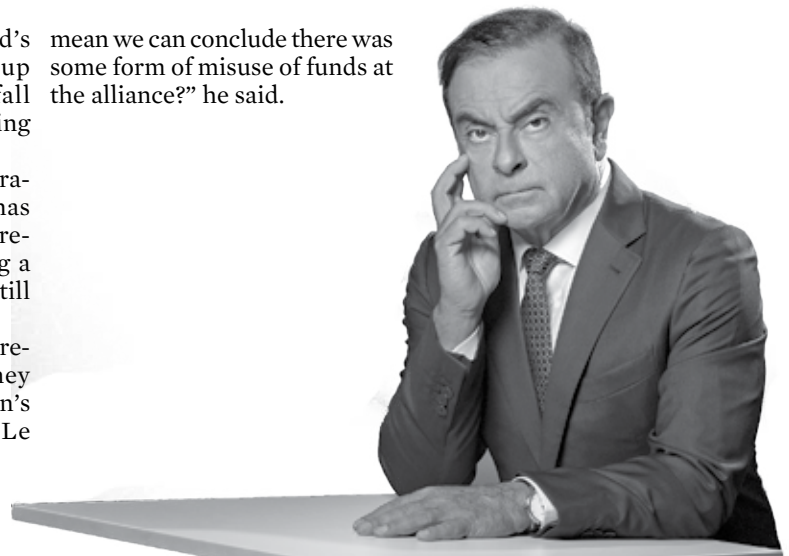
Ghosn built into the world's top-selling automotive group before his stunning downfall on charges of under-reporting his salary.

The 64-year-old French-Brazilian-Lebanese executive has denied any wrongdoing, but remains in detention awaiting a trial in Japan which could still be months away.

"Friendly relations do not preclude business relations, they can even help them," Ghosn's French lawyer Jean-Yves Le Borgne said.

"We're told it involved Carlos Ghosn's personal relationships, but does that

mean we can conclude there was some form of misuse of funds at the alliance?" he said.



Samsung launches folding smartphone, first 5G handset

San Francisco, United States

Samsung on Wednesday unveiled a smartphone that folds open to be a tablet, becoming the first major manufacturer to offer the feature as it strives to stoke excitement in a slumping market.

The South Korean giant also appeared to get the jump on rivals by announcing the first smartphone for fifth-generation -- or 5G -- wireless networks, while stepping up its efforts in artificial intelligence and wearables.

The Galaxy Fold, unveiled at a San Francisco event, serves as a smartphone with a 4.6-inch display and opens like a book to become a 7.3-inch tablet.

"We are giving you a device that doesn't just define a new category, it defies category," said Samsung's Justin Denison at the event.

The Fold will be available



Samsung Galaxy Fold (Courtesy of Wired)

April 26 starting at \$1,980, the company said.

The launch comes as the smartphone market experiences its worst-ever decline with consumers keeping devices longer

and waiting for new innovations.

Samsung made the announcement on the home turf of rival Apple, with the two giants battling in the premium segment of the market.



No price or release date was announced for the S10 5G version. Other options include the S10e starting at \$749, and the largest version, the S10 Plus, at \$999 -- which will be available March 8.

Denison touted the Fold as "a one of a kind luxury device" and boasted that it lets three apps operate simultaneously on its large screen.

"You can watch a YouTube

video of Hawaii; text your friend about it, and browse travel options all at the same time," Denison said while showing off the device.

Samsung also announced new Galaxy S10 models, upgrading its current line of flagship handsets to include a 5G device.

Rivals are expected to make 5G smartphone announcements at next week's Mobile World Congress.

"We are pushing beyond the limits of today's technology to inspire a new generation of smartphones and recharge growth for our industry," said DJ Koh, head of mobile communications at Samsung Electronics.

"For those who say everything possible has already been done, I say open your mind and get ready for the dawn of a new mobile era. Buckle your seat-belt, the future is about to begin."



DJ Koh, President and CEO of IT & Mobile Communications Division of Samsung Electronics speaks on stage during the Samsung Unpacked product launch event in San Francisco, California

US growth easing: Fed

● Fed raised the benchmark lending rate four times last year

● US inflation has so far remained muted

● Fed expected to end the sales of investments it had built up in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis

Washington, United States

The Federal Reserve believes US growth will “step down” this year from last year’s rapid pace amid rising global risks, including from tense trade relations, according to minutes released Wednesday.

And given the greater uncertainty about the economic outlook, the central bankers said they were not sure what their next move would be, according to the minutes of the Fed’s last policy meeting of January 29-30.

While the US economy is expected to remain solid, the waning stimulus from the Republican-driven tax cuts of 2017 will contribute to the slowing, with “GDP in 2019 to step down somewhat from the pace seen over 2018,” the minutes said.

The Fed raised the bench-



Federal Reserve building is seen in Washington, DC

mark lending rate four times last year but after the last increase in December, policymakers found “the economic outlook had become more uncertain,” the minutes said.

As financial markets became roiled amid the trade war between the United States and China, policymakers kept interest rates on hold last month, and sent clear signals that they would be in no hurry to raise them again soon.

The global economy “continued to record slower growth and consumer and business sentiment had deteriorated,” the report noted, adding that Brexit, the trade tensions and the recent partial federal government shutdown also were seen as factors “contributing to uncertainty about the economic outlook.”

The Fed last month shifted its stance dramatically and said explicitly that officials were

prepared to remain patient before deciding on the next move.

The minutes said that wait-and-see posture “would allow time for a clearer picture of the international trade policy situation and the state of the global economy to emerge,” in particular regarding “the extent and persistence of the economic slowdown in Europe and China.”

Ending asset sales

The Fed minutes show policymakers were concerned about markets and took note of the steep decline seen on Wall Street late last year as “financial asset prices appeared to be sensitive to information regarding trade policy tensions, domestic fiscal and monetary policy, and global economic growth prospects.”

But the minutes showed “several” officials believed the economy would be strong enough to require another rate hike this year, while “many” policymakers noted that if uncertainty abated the Fed would have to find a new way to describe policy other than by being “patient.”

“Almost all participants thought that it would be desirable to announce before too long a plan to stop reducing the Federal Reserve’s asset holdings later this year,” the minutes said, but indicated the final amount would remain higher than before the crisis.

Trump threatens tariffs on EU if no deal reached



● Trump has threatened 25 per cent duties on European autos

● Negotiations with the EU have not yet begun

● US negotiating goals include agriculture, while EU officials insist that will be off limits

Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump threatened Wednesday to impose tariffs on European auto imports if he is unable to strike a trade deal with the EU.

“We’re negotiating. If we don’t make the deal, we’ll do the tariffs,” Trump told reporters in response to a question on new tariffs.

Trump’s renewed threat against the EU auto industry takes on a new edge as it came two days after the Commerce Department delivered a report that sources said found European car imports constitute a national security threat to the United States.

The report could set the stage for the White House to impose tariffs within 90 days, a move Brussels has vowed to parry with its own set of counter-tariffs.

Washington already has

used the national security argument to impose steep tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, drawing instant retaliation from the EU, Canada, Mexico and China.

In one of many aggressive moves against US trading partners, Trump, who boasts that he favors tariffs, has threatened 25 percent duties on European autos, especially targeting Germany, which he says has harmed the American car industry.

Trump reached a truce with the EU following a meeting last July with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker but on Wednesday expressed frustration with the state of talks.

“We’re trying to make a deal,” Trump said. “They’re very tough to make a deal with, the EU. They’ve been very difficult over a period of time, over many, many years.”

However, negotiations with the EU have not yet begun. The European Commission must seek approval from member states on a negotiating mandate before it can enter into talks. EU trade ministers will meet in Bucharest on Thursday and Friday to review the proposal.

But the sides have differences over what is to be included: the US negotiating goals include agriculture, while EU officials insist that will be off limits, and talks will be restricted to industrial goods and regulatory issues.

India overhauls oil and gas exploration rules to lift output

Reuters | New Delhi

India yesterday revamped rules for future exploration and production of oil and gas blocks in its efforts to attract private investment and increase domestic production.

India imports four out of every five barrels of crude oil it consumes and is likely to shell out more than \$100 billion on oil purchases in 2018/19.

“The emphasis of the new rules is for raising hydrocarbon production,” Dharmendra Pradhan, India’s oil minister said in New Delhi.

Under the new rules, producers will be given pricing

and marketing freedom that is currently non-existent in natural gas blocks in India. Explorers will also be given financial incentives for early production from their blocks, Pradhan said.

“Fiscal incentive is also provided on additional gas production from domestic fields over and above normal production,” a government statement said.

Pradhan said that state-owned companies Oil and Natural Gas Corp and Oil India will be allowed to induct private players to enhance production from its existing blocks and bring in new technology and capital.

Brazil sees \$300bn in savings with pension reform

Brasília, Brazil

Brazil expects to save more than \$300 billion over 10 years through a bill presented to Congress Wednesday that aims to overhaul the country’s unsustainable pension system, the government said.

The bill, which requires constitutional changes to impose a minimum retirement age and extended pay-in periods for workers in both the public and private sectors, is a crucial plank of right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro’s plan to overhaul Latin America’s biggest economy.

Bolsonaro personally delivered the much-anticipated



Bolsonaro

text to Congress, where he was jeered and booed by leftist deputies in the opposition.

“We are all counting on your abilities and your patriotism to save the Brazilian economy. We don’t have any other option,” he told the lawmakers.

Eurozone industry slips into contraction

Brussels, Belgium

Eurozone manufacturing slipped into contraction in February, as an industrial slump in Germany continued to weigh down on the European economy, a closely watched survey showed yesterday.

The IHS Markit purchasing managers’ index (PMI) for manufacturers only hit a lowly 49.2 in February — below

the crucial 50 point level and signalling a contraction in activity. It rose to 51.4 points in February from 51.0 in January, and was better than a forecast of 51.1 points made by analysts surveyed by data firm Factset.

The overall data indicates that gross domestic product (GDP) growth in the eurozone will struggle to reach a feeble 0.1 per cent in the first quarter of this year.

StanChart sets aside \$900 million to cover US, British fines

Reuters

Standard Chartered PLC (StanChart) has set aside \$900 million to cover fines resulting from regulatory investigations in the United States and Britain, potentially drawing a line under probes which have dogged the bank for years.

News of the provision, made for the fourth quarter of last year, comes ahead of a strategy update from the bank along with its 2018 earnings results on Tuesday, when Chief Executive Bill Winters is widely expected to outline an overhaul of operations.

In a filing to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange on Thursday, StanChart said the provision related to the potential resolution

of U.S. investigations into alleged violations of U.S. sanctions, and for probes relating to foreign exchange trading.

The filing is the first time the bank has quantified the possible cost of the investigations. Previously it said only in filings that it was “not practicable” to estimate the financial impact because the range of potential outcomes was too broad. StanChart has been the subject of multiple investigations by U.S. authorities into its dealings with Iran, which is the subject of heavy U.S. sanctions.

In 2012, the bank agreed to pay \$667 million to settle alleged sanctions breaches from 2001 through 2007. It also agreed deferred prosecution agreements with the Department of Justice



People pass by the logo of Standard Chartered in Toronto, Ontario



StanChart also included in the provision a 102.2 million pound (\$133.3 million) fine from Britain’s Financial Conduct Authority related to historical financial crime controls. It said it was considering its options in relation to the penalty.

and New York County District Attorney’s Office. The agreements were extended to March 31 this year in December 2018.

The current investigations are examining the extent to which the bank allowed clients with Iranian interests to conduct transactions after 2007, as well as the extent to which it shared such dealings with authorities at the time of the 2012 settlement.

In October, Winters said US authorities were also investigating whether StanChart breached Iran-related compliance rules as recently as 2013.

Media reports said London-based StanChart faced a possible \$1.5 billion fine for Iran-related sanctions violations.

SHOW

OASIS JUFFAIR

1-FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW
 Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM
 DAILY AT (VIP): 10.45 AM + 3.30 + 8.15 PM

2-TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW
 Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR
 FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN

3-THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW
 Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN
 DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM

4-KIKORIKI. DEJAVU (G) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW
 Ⓢ DENIS CHERNOV, JEFFREY HYLTON
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 10.45 AM + 2.45 PM

5-JUNE (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW
 Ⓢ JOJU GEORGE, RAJISHA VIJAYAN, SARJANO KHALID, ARJUN ASOKAN
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM

6-KODATHI SMAKSHAM BALAN VAKEEL (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW
 Ⓢ DILEEP, MAMTA MOHANDAS, PRIYA ANAND
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 2.15 + 5.15 + 8.15 + 11.15 PM

7-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)
 Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.30 + 11.45 PM
 DAILY AT (VIP): 1.00 + 5.45 + 10.30 PM

8-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)
 Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

9-THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 Ⓢ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 12.30 + 4.30 + 9.00 PM

10-SPIDER MAN INTO THE SPIDER VERSE (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 Ⓢ HAILEE STEINFELD, NICOLAS CAGE, MAHERSHALA ALI
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 6.45 + 11.15 PM

11-URI: THE SURGICAL STRIKE (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA)
 Ⓢ VICKY KAUSHAL, KIRTI KULHARI, PARESH RAWAL
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.45 + 9.00 PM

12-KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM)
 Ⓢ FAHADH FAASIL, SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM

13-9 (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)
 Ⓢ PRITHVIRAJ SUKUMARAN, PRAKASH RAJ, MAMTA MOHANDAS
 DAILY AT: 2.00 + 8.00 PM

14-PERANBU (PG-15) (TAMIL)
 Ⓢ MAMMOOTTY, SADHANA, ANJALI
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 5.00 + 11.00 PM

CITYCENTRE

1- FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW
 Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 PM + 12.00 MN + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
 DAILY AT (VIP II): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM

2- TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW
 Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR
 FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN

3- DUMPLIN (15+) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW
 Ⓢ DANIELLE MACDONALD, JENNIFER ANISTON, LUKE BENWARD
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM

4- UPGRADE (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW
 Ⓢ LOGAN MARSHALL-GREEN, RICHARD ANASTASIOS, ROSCO CAMPBELL
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM

5- THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW
 Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

6-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)
 Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY
 DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 2.15 + 7.00 + 11.45 PM
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.45 + 5.15 + 7.45 + 10.15 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

7-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)
 Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

8-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)
 Ⓢ LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
 DAILY AT (VIP II): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM

9-HAPPY DEATH DAY 2U (PG-15) (THRILLER/COMEDY/CRIME)
 Ⓢ JESSICA ROTHE, RUBY MODINE, PHI VU
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.45 + 4.45 + 6.45 + 8.45 + 10.45 PM

10-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)
 Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM

11-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER)
 Ⓢ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM

12-THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 Ⓢ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 PM
 DAILY AT (IMAX 2D): 12.00 + 4.45 + 9.30 PM

13-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY)
 Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM

14-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 Ⓢ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM

15-JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (PG) (COMEDY/ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 Ⓢ ROWAN ATKINSON, OLGA KURYLENKO, EMMA THOMPSON
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 3.00 + 7.15 + 11.30 PM

16-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER
 DAILY AT: 2.15 + 6.30 + 10.45 PM

17-RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 Ⓢ JOHN C. REILLY, SARAH SILVERMAN, GAL GADOT
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 5.00 + 9.15 PM

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



Ⓢ TAYLOR SCHILLING, JACKSON ROBERT SCOTT, PETER MOONEY
 DAILY AT: 9.45 + 11.45 PM

19-SPIDER MAN INTO THE SPIDER VERSE (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 Ⓢ HAILEE STEINFELD, NICOLAS CAGE, MAHERSHALA ALI
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 4.15 + 8.30 PM

SEEF (II)

1 FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW
 Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM

2- TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW
 Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR
 FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS
 DAILY AT: (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)

3-DUMPLIN (15+) (COMEDY/DRAMA) NEW
 Ⓢ DANIELLE MACDONALD, JENNIFER ANISTON, LUKE BENWARD
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.15 + 9.30 PM

4- UPGRADE (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW
 Ⓢ LOGAN MARSHALL-GREEN, RICHARD ANASTASIOS, ROSCO CAMPBELL
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 PM + 12.00 MN

5- THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW
 Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN
 DAILY AT: (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

6-WHAT THEY HAD (PG-15) (DRAMA) NEW
 Ⓢ HILARY SWANK, MICHAEL SHANNEN, ROBERT FORSTER
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.00 + 9.00 PM

7-THEN CAME YOU (PG-15) (COMEDY/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW
 Ⓢ NINA DOBREV, MAISIE WILLIAMS, ASA BUTTERFIELD
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 3.15 + 7.30 + 11.45 PM

8- KIKORIKI. DEJAVU (G) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW
 Ⓢ DENIS CHERNOV, JEFFREY HYLTON
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.00 + 2.45 + 4.30 PM

9-TIME OUT (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY/ROMANTIC) NEW
 Ⓢ MAGUY BOU GHOSN, YORGO CHALHOUB, WISSAM SABBAGH
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 3.00 + 7.00 + 11.00 PM

10-ALONE / TOGETHER (PG-15) (FILIPINO/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW
 Ⓢ LIZA SOBERANO, ENRIQUE GIL, JASMINE CURTIS
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM

11-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)
 Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN

12-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)
 Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 3.00 + 6.00 + 9.00 PM + 12.00 MN

13-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)
 Ⓢ LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM

14-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)
 Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN
 DAILY AT: 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM

15-THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 Ⓢ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 4.00 + 8.15 PM

16-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER
 DAILY AT: 2.00 + 6.15 + 10.30 PM

SEEF (I)

1- TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW
 Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR
 FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM

2- THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW
 Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM

3- KODATHI SMAKSHAM BALAN VAKEEL (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW
 Ⓢ DILEEP, MAMTA MOHANDAS, PRIYA ANAND
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM

4-JUNE (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW
 Ⓢ JOJU GEORGE, RAJISHA VIJAYAN, SARJANO KHALID, ARJUN ASOKAN
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM

5- KANNE KALAIMAANE (PG-13) (TAMIL) NEW
 Ⓢ UDHAYANIDHI STALIN, TAMANNAH
 FROM FRIDAY 22ND
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 4.00 + 9.00 PM

6-L.K.G (PG-13) (TAMIL) NEW
 Ⓢ RJ BALAJI, PRIYA ANAND
 FROM FRIDAY 22ND
 DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.30 + 11.30 PM

7- KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM)
 Ⓢ FAHADH FAASIL, SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM

SAAR

1-FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW
 Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)

2-TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW
 Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR
 FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS

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

3- THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW
 Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.00 + 6.15 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)

4-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)
 Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY
 DAILY AT: 6.00 + 8.30 + (11.00 PM THURS/FRI)

5-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL)
 Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI
 DAILY AT: 3.15 + 8.30 PM

6-THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 Ⓢ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 PM

AL HAMRA

1- KODATHI SMAKSHAM BALAN VAKEEL (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW
 Ⓢ DILEEP, MAMTA MOHANDAS, PRIYA ANAND
 DAILY AT: 3.00 + 9.00 PM + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)

2-JUNE (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW
 Ⓢ JOJU GEORGE, RAJISHA VIJAYAN, SARJANO KHALID, ARJUN ASOKAN
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 6.00 PM

1-FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COMEDY/BIOGRAPHY) NEW
 Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM

2-TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVENTURE) NEW
 Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR
 FROM THURSDAY 21ST 7.00 PM ONWARDS
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM

3-UPGRADE (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW
 Ⓢ LOGAN MARSHALL-GREEN, RICHARD ANASTASIOS, ROSCO CAMPBELL
 DAILY AT: 7.45 + 9.45 + 11.45 PM

4- THE KNIGHT OF SHADOWS: BETWEEN YIN AND YANG (PG-13) (ACTION/COMEDY/FANTASY) NEW
 Ⓢ JACKIE CHAN, ELANE ZHONG, ETHAN JUAN
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM

5- KIKORIKI. DEJAVU (G) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW
 Ⓢ DENIS CHERNOV, JEFFREY HYLTON
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.15 PM

6-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/ROMANTIC)
 Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM

7-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL) NEW
 Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI
 DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.30 PM

8-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)
 Ⓢ LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN
 DAILY AT: 6.00 + 11.30 PM

9-THE LEGO MOVIE 2 (G) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 Ⓢ CHRIS PRATT, ELIZABETH BANKS, WILL ARNETT
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.00 + 3.15 + 5.30 PM

MISSING PETS



KENCHIE - Female Lhasa Apso, 3-4 Yrs, Curly Brown Hair, Microchipped, Escaped From Home - Possibly Stolen, Not Wearing Collar Or Id Tag, Jid Ali/Isa Town, 14/1/19. **66349010**



DUSKY - Male Persian mix, 3 yrs, black and grey, neutered, microchipped, quiet (can be distant w humans), not wearing collar or ID tag, may have escaped thru peep hole in kitchen, Hamad Town (roundabout 4 near Yusuf Zainel home) 24/11/18. **39252695**



SIMBA - Male Husky, 4 yrs, neutered, microchipped, black/grey/white, wearing red collar - no ID tag, should respond to name, door not shut properly, Saar (near the college/cinema), 18/2/19. **35113550**



PASOL - Male Persian mix, 1.5 years, white and ginger, light brown eyes, neutered, not wearing collar or ID tag, escaped balcony, Isa Town (Khartoum Ave near school), BD20 REWARD for safe return. 2/1/19. Call or WhatsApp **38208721**



RACE - Male Persian, 1.5 yrs, shades of tan, not wearing collar or ID tag, gate left open, Juffair (Careedore Apartments), 12/2/19. **36935130**



UNCLE DOG - Male GSD/Rottweiler/desert dog mix, 2-3 yrs, neutered, no collar/ID tag, 2 notches left ear, black/brown w white chest, cautious-but friendly, may be sick, lives on compound behind Day to Day on Budaiya Hwy at Janussen Village, caring for him is a real community effort, 14/2/19. **39716258**

Movie Review

Fighting with My Family: a genuine, feel-good feature – even if you aren't a WWE fan

Fighting with My Family is a 2019 biographical sports comedy film based on the 2012 documentary The Wrestlers: Fighting with My Family, depicting the WWE career of professional wrestler Paige.

It stars Florence Pugh as Paige, along with Jack Lowden, Nick Frost, Lena Headey and Vince Vaughn, and is written and directed by Stephen Merchant. Dwayne Johnson executive produces and also appears in the film.

It premiered at Sundance Film Festival on 28 January 2019, was released on 14 February 2019 in the United States.

On review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes, the film holds an approval rating of 94% based on 65 reviews, with an average rating of 7.3/10.

The website's critical consensus reads, "Much like the sport it celebrates, Fighting with My Family muscles past



Lena Headey, Florence Pugh and Nick Frost in 'Fighting with My Family'

clichés with a potent blend of energy and committed acting that should leave audiences cheering."

On Metacritic, the film has a weighted average score of 70 out of 100, based on 24 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews". Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an

average grade of "A" on an A+ to F scale.

Nick Allen of RogerEbert.com opined in a three-out-of-four star review: "Even though Fighting with My Family is undoubtedly about branding the WWE as a fantasy factory, its biggest strengths are its wit and surprisingly big heart."

celebs

Gwyneth Paltrow files countersuit in skiing case, seeks \$1

Reuters | Los Angeles

Oscar-winning actress Gwyneth Paltrow on Wednesday counter-sued a retired optometrist who has taken her to court over a 2016 ski slope collision in Utah, saying he caused the crash and was seeking to exploit her fame and fortune three years later.

Paltrow, 46, seeks a symbolic \$1 in damages from Terry Sanderson, 72, who sued her last month for \$3.1 million in Summit County District Court in Utah over the Feb. 26, 2016, incident at Deer Valley Resort in Park City.

"Resolution of this counter claim will demonstrate that Plaintiff (Sanderson) ran into Ms. Paltrow and nonetheless blamed her for it in an attempt to exploit her celebrity and wealth," attorneys for the actress wrote in the 18-page complaint.

Sanderson announced his lawsuit against Paltrow at a news conference last month in



Gwyneth Paltrow seeks a symbolic \$1 in damages from Terry Sanderson who sued her last month for \$3.1 million

Salt Lake City, saying that he was skiing on a beginner slope when he heard a "hysterical scream" from behind before he was struck between the shoulder blades by the actress.

The retired eye doctor, who said he had skied for more than 30 years, said he suffered four broken ribs and a traumatic brain injury from the blow, which had left him with short-term memory loss. Sanderson

also claimed that Paltrow skied off without a word following the impact, in violation of a local ordinance requiring skiers involved in a collision to stop and help the injured.

In her counter-suit, Paltrow alleged that it was Sanderson who struck her from behind, delivering a "body blow." The actress said that during the brief encounter, Sanderson apologised and assured her that he was not hurt.

"The statement made by Ms. Paltrow that Dr. Sanderson hit her from behind is false," Bob Sykes, a Salt Lake City-based attorney for the optometrist, told Reuters on Wednesday.



Gwyneth Paltrow

Hugh Jackman becomes Guinness record holder

IANIS | London

Actor Hugh Jackman has fulfilled his dream of becoming a Guinness World Records holder by being feted with the honour for having the Longest Career as a Live Action Marvel Superhero.

"The Wolverine" star received the honour during a surprise presentation on British TV show "This Morning" on Wednesday, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Jackman, who has played the character for 16 years and 228 days, shares the honour with his "X-Men" castmate Sir Patrick Stewart, who has portrayed Professor Charles Xavier (Professor X) for the same amount of time.

"When I was a kid, the Guinness Book of Records was it... That's it, I've made it! This is why I got into showbiz, thank you," he said.

During a recent radio interview, the Australian star said he was hoping the success of his "The Greatest Showman" soundtrack would land him in the record books.



Hugh Jackman

Kim Kardashian sues fashion company

IANIS | Los Angeles

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian West has filed a lawsuit against an online retailer for using her name and image without permission to advertise their own designs.

Kim on Wednesday filed a case against Misguided USA, seeking damages in excess of \$10 million, reports TMZ.com.

In the documents, the 38-year-old cited multiple instances where Misguided USA posted its own ver-

sions of outfits Kim was photographed wearing.

The "Keeping Up With The Kardashians" star's lawsuit also included photographs of her own social media posts side-by-side with the company's posts, showing their similarities and misrepresentation.

Apart from this, Kim recently slammed another company Fashion Nova for recreating her vintage Mugler dress, saying this practice by fast fashion companies was "devastating".



Kim Kardashian

Hormonal changes are ruining my life: Dakota Johnson

IANIS | London

Actress Dakota Johnson feels that her menstrual cycle is ruining her life.

In an interview to InStyle magazine, Johnson opened about her monthly period cycle saying it is traumatic, reports dailymail.co.uk.

She said: "If I'm honest, my hormonal changes during my menstrual cycle are ruining my life. Every month. It's unbelievable."

"It's really a



Dakota Johnson

traumatic thing and it happens every month, I just can't get used to it."

Due to her painful periods, the "Fifty Shades of Grey" actress finds the right type of birth control a struggle.

"It's really, really insane. It's also very tricky to figure out what type of birth control you're meant to be on, and if it's even healthy," she added.

Chris Hemsworth to play Hulk Hogan in biopic

IANIS | Los Angeles

Actor Chris Hemsworth is likely to star as wrestling legend Hulk Hogan in a biopic which is in early stages of development at Netflix.

The streaming platform has obtained the exclusive life rights and consulting services from Terry Gene Bollea, also known as Hulk Hogan. Todd Phillips, whose credits include "War Dogs" and "The Hangover" trilogy, is attached to direct the project from a script by the writing team of Scott Silver and John Pollono, reported variety.com.

The project is expected to deal with the formative years of Hogan's ascent into fame, starting with the Florida wrestling circuit in the late 1970s and becoming the face of the World Wrestling Federation during the 1980s.

The term "Hulkamania" was coined in 1984 with Hogan frequently referring to his fans as "Hulkamaniacs" in his interviews and encouraging them to focus on training, saying prayers, and eating vitamins. Hemsworth is best known for portraying Thor in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, beginning with "Thor" in 2011, followed by "The Avengers," "Thor: The Dark World," "Avengers: Age of Ultron," "Doctor Strange," "Thor: Ragnarok," "Avengers: Infinity War," and the upcoming "Avengers: Endgame," scheduled to be released in April.



Chris Hemsworth

Diane Lane, Kevin Costner to work together in thriller 'Let Him Go'

ANI | Hollywood

Diane Lane and Kevin Costner are set to star in Focus Features' suspense thriller 'Let Him Go.'

Based on a novel of the same name by Larry Watson, the story follows retired sheriff George Blackledge (Costner) and his wife Margaret to be essayed by Diane Lane as they leave their Montana ranch to rescue their young grandson from a dangerous family living off the grid in the Dakotas, Ratching in the Rain.



Kevin Costner

headed by matriarch Blanche Webby.

The film will be produced by Paula Mazur and Mitchell Kaplan of The Mazur Kaplan Company, alongside Bezucha. Kimi Armstrong Stein, Jeffrey Lampert, Costner and Rod Lake will executive produce.

Notably, Costner will next be seen in the Netflix film 'The Highwaymen' and Fox's 'The Art of Ratching in the Rain.'



Diane Lane

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SPORTS

sports

Atletico stun Juventus

Atletico spoil Cristiano Ronaldo's return to Madrid for the Champions League last-16, first leg tie

● **Diego Simeone's triple change inspires 'brave' Atletico Madrid to impressive win over Juventus**

AFP | Madrid

Cristiano Ronaldo's Champions League mission with Juventus stalled on Wednesday as Atletico Madrid secured a deserved 2-0 victory from a thrilling first leg at the Wanda Metropolitano.

Ronaldo returned to the Spanish capital, where he enjoyed unprecedented success in this tournament with Real, but it was their rivals celebrating at the final whistle as goals from Jose Gimenez and Diego Godin put Atletico within sight of the quarter-finals.

"We are not through yet," Atletico coach Diego Simeone said. "There is another match to play and we know we will have to suffer."

"Fortunately we didn't concede a third," said Juventus boss Massimiliano Allegri. "Because 2-0 is a result that can be turned around. We're not dead yet."

But this was a victory that Simeone's side fully deserved. Antoine Griezmann had hit the



Atletico Madrid's Jose Gimenez (second from left) scores against Juventus

crossbar while VAR twice intervened, correctly, in Juve's favour, cancelling a penalty for a foul on Diego Costa and then ruling out an Alvaro Morata header just before Gimenez struck.

While Juventus tried to preserve the stalemate, Atletico were bold. Simeone introduced Morata, Thomas Lemar and Angel Correa, all around the hourmark, and his daring paid off. "I showed balls," Simeone said.

Juve are certainly not dead and buried, particularly given Costa and Thomas Partey will both be suspended for the return

in Turin after each picked up yellow cards.

But the failure to score an away goal, and their clear inferiority in the second half does not bode well for any hopes of a comeback.

"They don't give you chances," said Allegri. "They make you play badly."

Defeat in the last 16 for either team would be unthinkable, for Atletico, who know the final will be played here, at their own stadium, on June 1, the perfect chance to wrestle the trophy off Real in the very city they share.

Ronaldo subdued

And for Juventus, whose wait for Europe's premier prize has now entered its 23rd year, when expectations are higher than ever given they now boast the tournament's most prolific ever player.

Ronaldo, though, endured a disappointing night, suffocated from the outset by a typically relentless Atletico backline.

Perhaps it was frustration that made him wave five fingers in the direction of the baiting Atletico crowd, presumably to sig-



Cristiano Ronaldo waved five fingers in the direction of the baiting Atletico crowd, presumably to signify his five Champions League triumphs

nify his five Champions League triumphs.

His best contribution was an early, driven free-kick from 30 yards, that had to be pushed over by Jan Oblak, and the dummy-shot before it, that exposed Costa as encroaching, for which he received his yellow card.

Costa was his bristling self and almost won a penalty when referee Felix Zwayer thought he was tripped by Mattia de Sciglio. But VAR showed he had not only exaggerated the contact but also extended his run into the area.

The rest of the half was tighter but Atletico had two golden opportunities early in the second. First, Griezmann volleyed Costa in behind but the Spaniard side-footed wide with only Wojciech Szczesny to beat.

Lassana Diarra released by PSG

AFP | Paris

Former French international midfielder Lassana Diarra has been released from the remainder of his contract by Paris Saint-Germain, the club announced.

Diarra, 33, signed for PSG in January last year on a deal through to the end of this season.

He made 15 appearances in the second half of last season but has played just four times in the current campaign under coach Thomas Tuchel, most recently in October.

Stokes, Buttler rested from England T20 series against West Indies

AFP | London

Ben Stokes and Jos Buttler will be rested for England's Twenty20 series against the West Indies, selectors announced.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Sam Billings and batsman Dawid Malan return to the 14-man squad for the first time since last year's tour of Australia and New Zealand.

Stokes and Buttler were both involved in the Test series in the West Indies and are playing in the ongoing one-day international series which ends on March 2.

Mbappe starts for PSG against Montpellier

AFP | Paris

Angel Di Maria scored a sumptuous free-kick and Kylian Mbappe was also on target as Paris Saint-Germain continued their relentless march towards another French title by hammering Montpellier 5-1 on Wednesday.

With Neymar and Edinson Cavani still absent, Layvin Kurzawa also scored for PSG at the Parc des Princes, while two own goals completed the rout.

Florent Mollet had equalised at one point in the first half for the visitors before they crumbled in a rearranged fixture that had initially been postponed in early December due to disruption caused by "yellow vest" anti-government protests in France.

As they warm up for the second leg of their Champions



PSG's Kylian Mbappe (R) vies with Montpellier's Petar Skuletic

League last-16 tie against Manchester United on March 6, PSG are now a huge 15 points clear of second-placed Lille, and still have a game in hand as they race to a sixth Ligue 1 title in



seven seasons.

"It came down to patience, and quality, and a bit of luck as well," said PSG coach Thomas Tuchel after his side maintained their perfect home record in the league this season.

It was also their ninth win by a margin of at least four goals in the current campaign.

"It was not our best performance, but with our attacking quality it was a deserved victory," added Tuchel.

Sterling winner caps late Man City comeback

AFP | Gelsenkirchen, Germany

Raheem Sterling sealed a dramatic 3-2 Champions League win for 10-man Manchester City at Schalke on Wednesday as the English champions scored twice in the last five minutes.

Sterling tucked away the winner at the Veltins Arena in the 90th minute just after substitute Leroy Sane fired home a stunning free-kick for the Premier League leaders against his former club in the last 16, first leg.

"I waited for my chance and wanted to shoot from there as I had previously scored from that position and it restored our confidence," a delighted Sane told broadcaster DAZN after his equaliser.

“We will not go far in this competition unless we improve”

PEP GUARDIOLA
MANCHESTER CITY MANAGER

Schalke led 2-1 at half-time as the video assistant referee (VAR) twice intervened to award penalties, both converted by Nabil Bentaleb, cancelling out Sergio Aguero's opener in Gelsenkirchen.

City were in real trouble with 22 minutes left when Nicolas Otamendi, who gave away the controversial first penalty, was sent off for a second yellow card before Sane's moment of brilliance and Sterling's winner.



Manchester City's English forward Raheem Sterling scores the winning 2-3 goal in front of Schalke's German goalkeeper Ralf Faehrmann

Sanad kids show football skills

TDT | Manama

Young footballers from Sanad were the most recent engagers of the recently-launched 'Al Firjan Playgrounds' programme.

In their visit to Sanad area, former national football team stars Mohammed Juma'a Bashir and Khalid Jassim Al Nusuf, joined by Bahrain Olympic Committee's Mohammed Salman, met the kids at the playgrounds and presented them with some of their experiences while explaining the idea of the programme.

The team also performed a short practice session for the kids, which was conducted by programme supervisors Hamad Mohammed and Mohammed Sulaiman. Late on, the 62 youngsters received footballs as incentive gifts donated by BOC.

This gesture was well admired by the kids and their youngsters who thanked BOC and the team for their efforts to activate the project, and expressed their motivation to continue playing football and hoped to represent one of the national clubs and the national team in the future.

BCC excel in CBA's ETS league

TDT | Manama

BCC defeated Pak Arab Zalmi by 92 runs in the ETS Div A T25 league organized by Cricket Bahrain Association.

Batting first BCC posted 270 runs. Adnan Butt top scored with 73 runs. Adil Hanif supported with 56 runs. In reply Pak Arab Zalmi could

only manage 178 runs. Ali Dawood claimed 2 wickets for BCC.

BDS Bassali defeated Exelon Young Boys by 82 runs in another fixture. Batting first BDS posted 222 runs. Hammad Shakeel posted 66 runs for BDS. Zeeshan Abbass claimed 2 wickets for Young Boys. In reply Exelon Young Boys could only manage

140 runs. Abdul Basit claimed 4 wickets for BDS Bassali.

Indian Blue defeated Climax Zalmi by 6 wickets. Batting first Climax Zalmi posted 137 runs. Younis claimed 3 wickets for Indian Blue. In reply Indian Blue chased target for loss of 4 wickets. Nishant top scored with 34 runs for Indian Blues.

Hsieh upsets Pliskova

Hsieh Su-wei won the quarter final match in Dubai to face Petra Kvitova in her first Premier-level semi-final

● Kvitova cruises past Kuzmova in last six

AFP | Dubai

Hsieh Su-wei won the last six games to beat fourth seed Karolina Pliskova 6-4, 1-6, 7-5 yesterday in Dubai and will face a woman she has never beaten, Petra Kvitova, in the semi-finals.

Second seed Kvitova, winner of the event in 2013, left nothing to chance as she crushed Viktoria Kuzmova 6-4, 6-0.

Double Wimbledon winner Kvitova has won all four of her meetings with Hsieh, most recently in January's Sydney International second round.

Yesterday, Hsieh staged a remarkable fightback to beat another Czech. Pliskova had looked in command serving for the set at 5-1 and then 5-3.

The persistent Hsieh kept up the pressure, narrowing the gap and levelling with a second straight break at 5-all.

Hsieh then held for 6-5 and clinched the upset a game later on a second match point after



Petra Kvitova of Czech Republic returns the ball to Viktoria Kuzmova of Slovakia



Taiwan's Hsieh Su-wei returns the ball to Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova

two hours.

"I'm so excited, I was screaming like a baby when I won," Hsieh said in victory. "It was a tough comeback."

"She had a lot of aces (nine), I'm just happy I was able to make it back."

The third-set recovery by the 31st-ranked Hsieh from Taiwan was eerily reminiscent of a similar fightback from Pliskova herself as she beat Serena Wil-



Petra Kvitova was the winner of the Dubai Tennis Championships in 2013

liams in their Australian Open quarter-final from a similar disadvantage in the third set.

"I was obviously tired today, my legs were not doing much," Pliskova said.

"It was a tough match. To play against her, you need to be ready on the legs a lot, which I was not."

Pliskova had reached at least the semi-final at her previous three Tour events, dating to the

Singapore ATP Finals last October.

Kvitova, winner of the event in 2013, beat Kuzmova in just 62 minutes.

"I am pleased, I didn't give her any time to do her job, maybe turn the match her way," Kvitova said.

"I do feel my muscles, for sure, especially on the legs. I need a treatment and massage again. I played two long matches before,

and I'm still fine, which is great."

Kvitova said she felt her game was on the rise again after losing the Australian Open final to Naomi Osaka and winning just one match a week later.

"Today was the first day of the better days on the court, off the court. It's been tough since I came from Australia and St. Petersburg.

"I'm glad that it's on the way up."

Late South African strikes spoil Sri Lanka's day



South Africa's Quinton de Kock bats during the second test cricket match between South Africa and Sri Lanka

AFP | Port Elizabeth, S Africa

Three late strikes by South Africa's fast bowlers yesterday helped atone for a poor batting performance on the first day of the second Test against Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka were 60 for three at the close at St George's Park after bowling out South Africa for 222.

Earlier, Vishwa Fernando and Kasun Rajitha both took three wickets as Sri Lanka followed up their surprise win in the first Test in Durban with a disciplined bowling performance on a slow but well-grassed pitch.

Some of their good work was undone after Dimuth Karunaratne and Lahiru Thirimanne gave the Sri Lankan innings a reasonable start, putting on 25 for the first wicket.

Captain Karunaratne was caught behind off Kagiso Rabada for 17 in the 12th over. Duanne Olivier then bowled Oshada Fernando and had Kusal Mendis caught behind.

South Africa, needing a win to share the series, made a poor start after winning the toss, losing three wickets with the total on 15, two of them off

successive balls from Vishwa Fernando.

They never recovered fully despite three half-century stands, two of which involved top-scorer Quinton de Kock, who made 86.

Aiden Markram and captain Faf du Plessis put on 58 for the fourth wicket but it was 73 for four when captain Du Plessis was bowled by opposite number, part-time bowler Karunaratne, with the last ball before lunch.

The hosts seemed to be recovering when Markram and De Kock put on 57 at almost a run a ball for the fifth wicket before Kasun Rajitha took three wickets in successive overs.

South Africa, first innings	
D. Elgar b V. Fernando	6
A. Markram lbw b Rajitha	60
H. Amla b V. Fernando	0
T. Bavuma run out (Rajitha)	0
F. du Plessis b Karunaratne	25
Q. de Kock b De Silva	86
W. Mulder lbw b Rajitha	9
K. Maharaj c Dickwella b Rajitha	0
K. Rabada c Dickwella b De Silva	22
D. Steyn not out	3
D. Olivier c Dickwella b V. Fernando	0
Extras (b1, lb6, nb4)	11
Total (61.2 overs)	222

Albon keeps Toro Rosso on top

Reuters | Barcelona

Thai racer Alexander Albon kept Toro Rosso on top of the Formula One testing timesheets at lunchtime yesterday while champions Mercedes unlocked a little more pace and finally went faster than Ferrari.

British-born Albon, one of three Formula Two graduates making their F1 race debuts when the season starts in Australia on March 17, lapped the Circuit de Catalunya with a best time of one minute 17.637 seconds on the softest and fastest tyres.

He also completed another 44 laps after an impressive 132 on Tuesday, with the Honda engine showing good gains in both performance and reliability after



Toro Rosso's Thai driver Alexander Albon drives during the tests

the problems of recent years.

Albon's Russian team mate Daniil Kvyat had produced the fastest lap on Wednesday, a 1:17.704 but also on softest of tyre compounds.

Australian Daniel Ricciardo

slotted in with the second fastest time for Renault, a 1:17.785 also on the softest tyres on a cold but sunny morning.

Five-times world champion Lewis Hamilton was third for Mercedes, who had said on

Wednesday they planned to focus a bit more on performance, and just under the 1:18 barrier with a 1:17.977 on harder tyres than the top two.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was fourth on the timesheets in 1:18.046, but on a harder compound than Hamilton.

The Monegasque did the most laps, however — his 75 before lunch comparing to Hamilton's 58. Frenchman Romain Grosjean did 64 in the Ferrari-powered Haas.

Poland's Robert Kubica was also on track for Williams, who only started testing on Wednesday afternoon, and did 48 laps. He was still 10th and slowest, more than a second and a half off Canadian Lance Stroll for Racing Point.

Ferrari seem to be ahead of Mercedes: Bottas

Reuters | Barcelona

Ferrari are looking stronger than Mercedes in testing and the Formula One champions have work to do before next month's season-opening race in Australia, Valtteri Bottas said yesterday.

The Finn, team mate to five-times world champion Lewis Hamilton at Mercedes, gave his assessment on the final day of the first four-day pre-season test at Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya.

Ferrari were fastest on the first two days and the Italians have also covered an impressive amount of mileage in their new SF90 car while Mercedes have been working through their programme without setting any eye-catching times.

"They do seem very strong,"



Mercedes' Finnish driver Valtteri Bottas takes part in the tests

Bottas said of Ferrari, Mercedes' closest rivals last year.

"No matter which kind of fuel load or engine modes they are running, whatever you try to correct that for, in any case they are quick on short runs and long runs.

"I think we feel at this point

they are maybe a bit ahead, but obviously it's impossible to make detailed calculations. It is very early days. With the new rules its going to be a big development race."

Bottas said the cars would be very different by the time of the Melbourne race on March 17

”
In the team, (there is a) kind of ... excitement to discover more about the car and really try to improve it because at this point it looks like we are not miles ahead of everyone. It seems like Ferrari are in a better place

VALTTERI BOTTAS

and Mercedes had new parts coming before then.

The Finn warned, however, that even with the upgrades Mercedes still needed to make the car better and quicker, with work to do on the balance.