

You know you're in the hands of a natural born filmmaker when you can feel yourself being tugged, as if by invisible forces, from one shot to the next, into a movie's diabolical design. | **P13**



Gulf Air fastest growing in ME



TDT | Manama

Gulf Air, Bahrain's national carrier, has been awarded as the Fastest Growing Airline in the Middle East at the 19th Airline Marketing Workshop organised by Athens International Airport.

The event takes place annually in Athens and includes all carriers that operate to and from Athens International Airport.

The award ceremony was attended by Gulf Air's representative.

"This is a great achievement for Gulf Air to be awarded as the fastest growing airline in the Middle East region. The upcoming summer season will see increased flights to and from Athens as it is a popular route by many of our passengers," Gulf Air's Chief Commercial Officer Vincent Coste," said.

At least 54 dead as ferry sinks in north Iraq

Mosul, Iraq

At least 54 people died when an overcrowded ferry carrying families sank yesterday in a swollen river in northern Iraq during Kurdish New Year celebrations, officials said.

Another 28 people were missing after the disaster on the Tigris in the city of Mosul, according to an interior ministry official who did not want to be named.

"The boat sank because there were too many passengers on board, more than a hundred," another security official based in Mosul said.

Deputy Premier inaugurates Royal Hospital in Riffa

TDT | Manama

Bahrain will soon emerge as one of the leading medical destinations in the region, thanks to the growing private sector investment, said Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa.

"The continuing private investment in Bahrain's health sector reflects this as well as the investors' confidence in the legislative and regulatory ambience of the Kingdom," Shaikh Khalid said thanking His Majesty the King for the remarkable achievements.



Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid with other top officials during the inauguration of the new hospital in Riffa



The newly opened Royal Hospital for Women and Children in Riffa

Calling for further collaboration in the health sector and citing effective partnership between the public and private sector across various industries, Shaikh Khalid said such partnerships are one of the prime objectives of the Government Action Plan (GAP2019-2022).

GAP, the Deputy PM said, encourages the private sector to assume its role as the main driver of the economy with the support of Prime Minister HRH Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

The Deputy Premier said the newly opened hospital will meet the growing demand for gynaecological and paediatric healthcare in the Kingdom.

"The total number of registered health institutions in the Kingdom has increased by 7 pc in 2018 reaching 716 establishments in comparison to 617 in 2017 - this includes 21 hospitals, 95 public centres, 41 specialized centres and 132 clinics," said Shaikh Khalid.

Kingdom, Shaikh Khalid said, will back all such efforts with hassle-free licensing procedures and other regulatory clearances.

The Deputy Prime Minister was inaugurating the Royal Hospital for Women and Children in Riffa in the presence of Lt-General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, President of the Supreme Council for Health, Faeqa bint Saeed Al Saleh, the Minister of Health, senior officials and invitees from Bahrain and abroad.

Houthi 'delays' stalled Yemen peace deal: US

Reuters | Al Arabia

The US ambassador to Yemen blamed the Iran-aligned Houthi movement yesterday for the stalling of a UN-led peace deal in the main port of Hodeidah and said the group's weapons pose a threat to other countries in the region.

The Yemeni government and the Houthis reached a ceasefire and troop withdrawal deal for Hodeidah, which is under

Houthi control, at talks in Sweden in December. The agreement was the first major breakthrough in efforts to end more than four years of war.

While the truce has largely held, the troop withdrawal has yet to materialise with both parties blaming each other for lack of progress in implementing the pact.

"We are greatly frustrated by what we see as delays and stalling on the part of the Houthis in implementing what they agreed



Ambassador Tueller

to in Sweden, but I have great confidence in the UN envoy and what he is doing," ambassador

Matthew Tueller told a televised news conference in the southern port of Aden, where the internationally recognised government is based.

"We are willing to work with others in order to try to implement these (Sweden) agreements and see whether the Houthis can in fact demonstrate a political maturity and start to serve the interests of Yemen rather than acting on behalf of those who seek to weaken and destroy Yemen," he said.

TWEET IMPACT

Los Angeles 'meteor' sets internet alight

Los Angeles, United States

A "meteor" that tore across the Los Angeles skyline set Twitter alight with speculation it was a real life "Deep Impact".

A bright orange fireball that arced over Hollywood -- home of countless disaster movies -- sent people scrambling to capture the scene for social media -- even if it later turned out to be more fiction than fact.

"Anyone else just see the Meteor over LA?", one person wrote on Twitter. "Incredible. Coolest thing I've seen."



Screengrab from video tweeted by @LAFD_CERT_Batt9/NDTV

"Anyone else see a giant meteor or fireball in the middle of downtown Los Angeles like a few minutes ago? It looked

Anyone else just see the Meteor over LA?

ONE PERSON WROTE ON TWITTER

like a meteor but it was WAY too low to the ground," wrote Kasey Clark.

The Los Angeles Police Department weighed in to calm people's nerves with a Public Service Announcement, and remind them that theirs is the city of fantasy and dreams.

"PSA: A meteor did not crash into Downtown Los Angeles, and no, it's not an alien invasion ... just a film shoot. This is Tinseltown after all," the LAPD wrote on Twitter.

The phenomenon was a publicity stunt by Red Bull, which fitted skydivers with LEDs and pyrotechnics as they plunged out of a helicopter 4,000 feet (1,200 meters) above the city.

Still -- for a few moments at least -- the people of Los Angeles were allowed to dream.

"Is Captain Marvel back?" wrote Twitter user @Mighty-MisterX.

Facebook admits storing passwords

San Francisco, United States

Facebook yesterday admitted that millions of passwords were stored in plain text on its internal servers, a security slip that left them readable by the social networking giant's employees.

"To be clear, these passwords were never visible to anyone outside of Facebook and we have found no evidence to date that anyone internally abused or improperly accessed them," vice president of engineering, security, and privacy Pedro Canahuati said in a blog post.

The blunder was uncovered during a routine security review early this year, according to Canahuati.

At least 10 dead in Egypt chemical plant blast

Cairo, Egypt

At least 10 people were killed yesterday in an explosion at a chemical plant in Ain Sokhna on Egypt's Red Sea coast, security and medical sources said.

Two medics told AFP that 10 bodies had been received at a morgue in Suez.

Families of victims gathered outside the morgue, an AFP stringer at the site said.



03 Happy as ever

04 Music of 'Your Body'

05 The winning formula





His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister, with the newly-appointed Ambassador of Tunisia to Bahrain, Salim Ghariani. Shaikh Mohammed praised the distinguished fraternal ties fostered by the two countries' and mulled ways to enhance cooperation



Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa during his inspection visits to BDF sections and units. He was informed about their training programmes, as well as combat preparedness and administrative readiness. Field Marshal called on everyone to continue exerting dedicated efforts to defend the nation, and champion the Right.

Camping popularity on the rise

TDT | Manama

Camping season in the southern governorate recorded a 75 per cent jump in registered users, which according to the Southern Governor also ended safely with 42pc fewer security cases and 25pc fewer accidents.

The data was revealed by Southern Governor during a briefing to Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa in the presence of governors from all other governorates.

The minister issued directives to review the season's report to tackle various issues to ensure more successful camping season next year.

During the meeting which discussed governorates-related



Interior Minister during the meeting

issues and projects, the Southern Governor presented a proposal to organise an awareness programme for the youth in the summer, including traffic and cyber awareness.

The minister affirmed the importance of coordinating with the authorities concerned to organise those programmes. HH the Southern Governor also presented a report on the governorate's weekly majlis and

the implementation of its various projects and suggestions in cooperation with the bodies concerned.

Muharraq Governor focused on the role of a community partnership between his governorate, the NGOs and clubs to run awareness programmes and projects to promote security culture and safety of all members of society.

The Capital's Governor pre-

sented a report on his governorate's efforts to strengthen the concept of community partnership and field visits. As the head of the committee of the Maan (Together) programme against violence and addiction, he also highlighted the success of the project and its expansion to cover sports halls and malls.

The Northern Governor focused on the projects being carried in cooperation with the bodies concerned.

The minister highlighted the importance, for the governorates, of regular interaction with citizens and their integration with various organisations to meet the people's aspirations and make them the main partners for development.

The meeting was also attended by the Assistant General Coordinator of the Governorates.



Foreign Affairs Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa with Italy's Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Guglielmo Picchi. The minister stressed Bahrain's keenness to develop mutual coordination with Italy on various issues

Boosting energy ties



Dr Mirza with German ambassador Kai Boeckmann

TDT | Manama

Bahraini and German experiences when combined would pave the way for attaining great strides in boosting energy efficiency in both countries, said Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Dr Abdulhussain Mirza.

The minister was holding a discussion with German Ambassador Kai Boeckmann, who said Germany is looking forward to welcoming experts from Bahrain.

The visit, the German ambassador said, would help learn from the German experience in developing energy efficient buildings and dealing with the challenges of climate change. He added a German

delegation would visit Bahrain.

The ambassador invited Dr Mirza, on behalf of the German Economic Energy Affairs Minister, to participate in the fifth session of the Berlin Dialogue for ministers and decision makers on the transformation of energy next month.

Dr Mirza thanked the ambassador for the invitation and said the Bahrain government pays great attention to encouraging the use of clean and green energy.

The ambassador thanked the minister and officials for the welcome and hospitality, stressing readiness to strengthen this cooperation between the two countries.

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Public Security Chief Major-General Tariq Al Hassan and Ministry of Interior (MoI)'s Undersecretary Shaikh Nasser bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa with the King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH)'s CEO Major-General Dr Shaikh Salman bin Atiyatallah Al Khalifa. They reviewed ways to enhance cooperation to improve services as part of the National Ambulance Project and decided to organise an exercise to evaluate the preparedness of the concerned personnel to implement the project in all governorates



Officials during the Bahraini-British Military Committee meeting held at the UK Defence Ministry's headquarters. Bahraini delegation to the meeting which concluded on Wednesday was headed by Defence Affairs Minister Lieutenant General Abdullah bin Hassan Al Nuaimi, while the British side was headed by Major General Giles Hill, Assistant Chief of Staff for Military Cooperation.

Bahrain, Kuwait conclude Taawun4 drill

TDT | Manama

The Joint Commands Drill (Taawun4) held with the participation of Bahrain and Kuwait concluded yesterday.

On behalf of the National

Guard Commander General Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa, the National Guard Staff Director Major-General Shaikh Abdulaziz bin Saud Al Khalifa attended the conclusion of the Joint Commands Drill

(Taawun4). Shaikh Abdulaziz said "Taawun" helped increase the level of readiness and security vigilance in the protection of oil installations.

He stressed that this drill reflects the depth of mili-

tary cooperation between the two branches of the National Guards. The ceremony was held in the presence of Kuwait National Guard's Undersecretary, Lt-General Hashim Abdulrazzaq Al Refai.

big story

Happy as ever

Bahrain ranked 37th on UN’s World Happy Index

● UAE was ranked the happiest country in the Gulf region

TDT | Manama

Mohammed Zafran

Bahrain was ranked 37th on a list of 157 countries produced by the UN which ranked them based on the level of happiness of the citizens in their government.

The World Happiness Report, produced by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, said, “What governments do affect happiness, and in turn, the happiness of citizens in most countries determines what kind

of governments they support.”

“All of the top countries rank highly on all the main factors found to support happiness: caring, freedom, generosity, honesty, health, income and good governance,” the report stated.

UAE was ranked the happiest country in the Gulf region, raking 21st internationally. Saudi Arabia was ranked 28th, and Kuwait at 51.

Norway was ranked as the happiest country in the world.

Variables that support well-being, such as GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, social freedom, generosity and absence of corruption are considered when assessing the happiness of people.

37th

Bahrain on The World Happiness Report, produced by the U.N Sustainable Development Solutions Network

“Governments have a strong role in determining the happiness of a countries population,” the report noted.

This year’s World Happiness Report focuses on happiness and the community: how happiness has evolved over the past dozen years, with a focus on the technolo-

gies, social norms, conflicts and government policies that have driven those changes.

The assessment was based on the fact that Governments set the institutional and policy framework in which individuals, businesses and governments themselves operate. “The links

between the government and happiness operate in both directions.”

“It is sometimes possible to trace these linkages in both di-

”

What governments do affect happiness, and in turn, the happiness of citizens in most countries determines what kind of governments they support

THE WORLD HAPPINESS REPORT

rections,” the report said which is based on a survey that intends to understand the state of global happiness.

“The effects of government actions on happiness are often difficult to separate from the influences of other things happening at the same time. Unravelling may sometimes be made easier by having measures of citizen satisfaction in various domains of life, with satisfaction with local and national governments treated as separate domains,” the report stated.

The report was published by the UN’s Sustainable Development Solution Network and supported by a three-year grant from the Ernesto Illy Foundation.



GULF INTERNATIONAL BANK B.S.C. - RETAIL BRANCH

Financial Statements
for the period ended 31st December 2018

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		31.12.18 BHD
ASSETS		
Cash and other liquid assets		1,475,050
Loans and advances		9,153
Due from Head Office and Branches		21,684,684
Equipment		1,138,515
Other assets		147,135
Total assets		24,454,537
LIABILITIES		
Deposits from customers		2,489,739
Due to Head Office		3,017,352
Other liabilities		225,255
Total liabilities		5,732,346
HEAD OFFICE ACCOUNT		
Capital funds		20,000,000
Retained earnings		(1,277,809)
Total head office account		18,722,191
Total liabilities and head office account		24,454,537

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN HEAD OFFICE ACCOUNT			
	Capital funds BHD	Retained earnings BHD	Total BHD
At inception on 4 th May 2017	-	-	-
Transactions with Head Office:-			
Investment of capital funds	20,000,000	-	20,000,000
Total transactions with Head Office	20,000,000	-	20,000,000
Total comprehensive income:-			
Comprehensive loss for the period	-	(1,277,809)	(1,277,809)
Total comprehensive loss	-	(1,277,809)	(1,277,809)
At 31 st December 2018	20,000,000	(1,277,809)	18,722,191

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		4.5.17 to 31.12.18 BHD
Net interest expense		(17,624)
Net fee and commission income		1,773
Foreign exchange income		26,162
Total Income		10,311
Staff expenses		221,548
Premises expenses		163,355
Other operating expenses		903,217
Total operating expenses		1,288,120
Net loss		(1,277,809)
Other comprehensive income		-
Total comprehensive loss		(1,277,809)

INCORPORATION AND ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Gulf International Bank B.S.C. - Retail Branch is a branch of Gulf International Bank B.S.C. The Branch is principally engaged in the provision of retail banking services, and carries out its operations online and through mobile banking and at its physical store located in The Avenues Mall, Manama, Sea front, Shop No. 172, Building 3977, Road 4660, Block 346.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and in conformity with the Central Bank of Bahrain and Financial Institutions Law. The financial statements cover the period from 4th May 2017 to 31st December 2018 and have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS		4.5.17 to 31.12.18 BHD
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Net loss		(1,277,809)
Adjustments to reconcile net loss to net cash outflow from operating activities:-		
Depreciation		40,698
Increase in statutory deposit with the Central Bank		(53,000)
Net increase in loans and advances		(9,153)
Increase in amounts due from Head Office and Branches		(21,684,684)
Net increase in other assets and liabilities		78,120
Net increase in deposits from customers		2,489,739
Increase in amounts due to Head Office		3,017,352
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(17,398,737)
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of equipment		(1,179,213)
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(1,179,213)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Capital funds from Head Office		20,000,000
Net cash inflow from financing activities		20,000,000
Increase in cash and cash equivalents		1,422,050
Cash and cash equivalents at 4 th May 2017		-
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 st December 2018		1,422,050

The financial statements have been approved on 20th March 2019 and signed by:-

Salah S. AIMashjari
Acting Head of Retail Banking

Craig D'Souza
Head of Finance - Retail Banking

The above has been extracted from the financial statements, which have been audited by Ernst & Young (EY).

Gulf International Bank B.S.C., P.O. Box 1017, Al-Dowali Building, 3 Palace Avenue, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain. Tel: +973 17534000

Gulf International Bank B.S.C. - Retail Branch is licensed by the Central Bank of Bahrain as a conventional retail bank

Music of ‘Your Body’

Bahraini DJ Abdulla Almuharraqi releases worldwide single

TDT/Manama

Harpreet Kaur

Following years of work in the local and international music scene, a popular Bahrain-based DJ has made strides in the music industry by releasing a worldwide single with a Romania-based record label.

The crowd-favourite Bahraini DJ Abdulla Almuharraqi, known widely by his stage name DJ Jackson recently launched the catchy music single, Your Body, through the record label, Cat Music.

DJ Jackson told *Tribune*, “The completion of the project has taken close to a year and we’re extremely happy with and proud of the results. Cat Music is Eastern Europe’s hottest pop music label and has several worldwide partners in the music industry,



DJ Jackson during a performance meaning that the track will reach a whole other level.” Cat Music also has its own TV music channel and radio station.

The music video for Your Body, Jackson said, was shot at the beach-side nightlife venue, Coral Bay, here in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the 2018 Formula One Grand Prix. “Moreover, the video features a rich cast of people from all walks of life including models from Spain, Venezuela, Colombia and Ukraine.”

“There’s also a guest appearance from the Arabian socialite and big screen diva, Shaima Sabt, who holds an impressive Instagram following of one million plus followers all located in and around the GCC, and of course German and UK-based Zimbabwean acts Carlprit and Kazz,” he added.

The single’s official music video garnered over 35,000 views, in the first three days, on Cat Music’s official YouTube channel, which currently has over 5 million subscribers spread across the world.

“The track has also been played on local (Radio Bahrain 96.5 FM) and international radio stations. We’ve had feedback from listeners all around the world, from the Middle East all the way to Hawaii.

“Bahrain is one of the leading countries for music in the Middle East back in the 80s and 90s before Dubai came in the mar-

Bahrain is one of the leading countries for music in the Middle East back in the 80s and 90s before Dubai came in the market in early 2000. There are all types of talents from singers, DJs, dancers, RJs and bands that are trying their best to pursue their passion

BAHRAINI DJ, ABDULLA ALMUHARRAQI

ket in early 2000. There are all types of talents from singers, DJs, dancers, RJs and bands that are trying their best to pursue their passion.

“I still remember the days where people from London who visited Bahrain in the past who highly spoke about Bahrain as one of the best clubs in the Middle East. This release is not the first one but its the right one as cat Music is the biggest in Romania and big in the worldwide music record labels industries. My last release was under a small label and they have a

lot of followers in Romania,” he said. Almuharraqi told *Tribune* that he is now looking forward to finishing his next single. “I’m now preparing for my tour from next month till the end of summer 2019 and next step is to finish the next single which I am currently working on but we will keep it to be released in the next November 19 while I prepare for a Europe tour this summer.”

When asked about his advice to artists in the Kingdom, he told *Tribune*: “My advice to aspiring music artists in the kingdoms is to start learning how to use music software and make music from early stages because it will be very difficult later, just follow your dreams and keep fighting for it and one day u will see the result.”

“This is definitely a great development for the music industry in Bahrain and I hope all the listeners here enjoy it,” he added.

Boyfriend charged after causing disability, head injury to teen girl’s father

TDT | Manama

A Bahraini father was left to suffer from a broken skull and permanent disability for attempting to stop his daughter and her boyfriend from driving away.

The case was reported from Sanabis Village in the Capital Governorate.

According to court files, the incidents leading to case occurred when the teen’s father learned on the day at 6 am that his 16-year-old daughter had left the house at 3 am and haven’t returned yet.

The matter took a disastrous turn when the father sighted her daughter reaching home with her boyfriend in a car.

Seeing his angry father, the girl and her boyfriend tried to sneak away. However, the father who spotted them tried to stop the car by grabbing on to its bonnet only to come crashing down, banging his head hard on the asphalt, when the boy reversed the car forcefully. He was rushed to Salmani-

ya Medical Complex and remained in the Intensive Care Unit with a broken skull and internal haemorrhage.

The duo was later arrested and referred to the Public Prosecution where they admitted that they were in a relationship for the past three years.

The boyfriend, a 20-year-old Bahraini, told the interrogators that he went to pick the girl from her house in Sanabis after receiving a message from her to reach there at 3 am.

The boy claimed that he reversed the car as his girlfriend asked him to do so, adding that the victim fell to the floor when he attempted to stop the vehicle.

The Public Prosecution accused the man of assault that caused the 54-year-old man permanent disability.

The High First High Criminal Court adjourned the case to April 9 and ordered to keep the defendant behind bars until then.

Lawyer ordered to pay BD1,300 fine

TDT | Manama

A Bahraini lawyer was ordered by the Labour Court to pay over BD1,300 to a female Bahraini lawyer for arbitrarily sacking her from work.

The incident occurred when the female Bahraini lawyer was working at his office as a trainee for a monthly salary of BD400.

The woman claimed that her work contract was terminated by the defendant without providing a sensible reason or notice. She worked there from March 31, 2016, to July 26, 2017.

The court ordered the defendant to pay the woman BD346 and interest at a rate of 6 per cent per annum, as well as late payments for 6 months.

The court also ordered to pay a BD400 allowance for not providing a termination notice, BD188 annual leave allowance and BD426 in compensation for dismissal.

He was also ordered to provide the plaintiff with an end of service certificate for the period from March 2016 to August 2018.

The defendant meanwhile initiated another case against

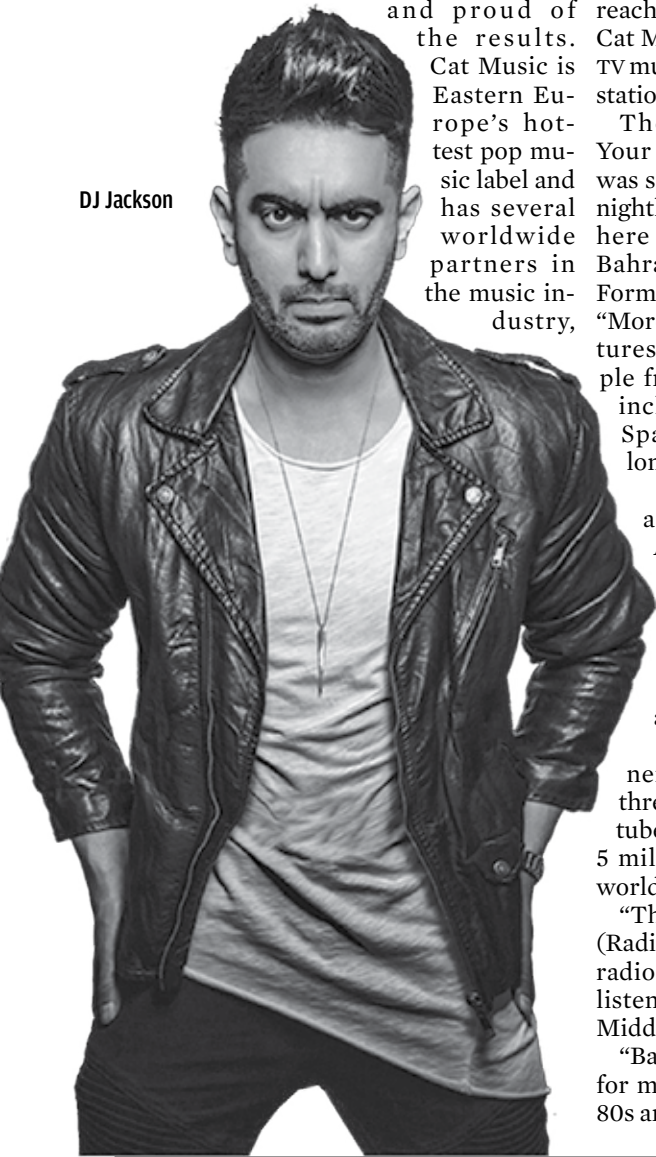
A female Bahraini lawyer claimed that the lawyer sacked her from his office without providing a sensible reason or notice. He was also ordered to pay the plaintiff with an end of service certificate

the woman, demanding her to pay over BD50,000 for violating professional ethics, as he accused her and two of her colleagues of contacting a client of his company without prior approval.

The man provided the court with an auditor’s report proving that an amount of BD51,250 was deposited by the client into the accounts of the three employees and not to the company’s bank account.

However, the court rejected the man’s claims for lack of evidence, irrelativeness and not being a cause to immediately terminate her work contract, but to only take a disciplinary procedure against her as per the law.

DJ Jackson



Japanese Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Hideki Ito, and Senior Advisor to SBI ALAPharma and President of SBI Pharma MENA - Bahrain office - Professor Riyadh Rehani during a visit to the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland - Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain) campus in Busaiteen to meet with senior officials, including RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom. The delegation was shown a presentation on the University’s Research Strategy in addition to its links with SBI Pharma. SBI is a subsidiary of Tokyo-based SBI Holdings Inc. which is engaged in research and development of pharmaceuticals, health foods and cosmetics using 5-ALA and operating out of Bahrain



US Embassy, AmCham discuss Bahrain’s new business laws

TDT | Manama

Bahrain’s new commercial legislation demonstrates its “commitment to attract entrepreneurs, promote the private sector, and improve the commercial legal framework existing in the country,” said US Ambassador Justin Siberell.

Speaking during a luncheon and panel discussion on Bahrain’s new business laws, the US Ambassador said that the discussion and the ideas and partnerships that it will form today “will serve to improve our joint

efforts, as government representatives, to provide the private sector what it needs.”

The event was organised by the American Chamber of Commerce in Bahrain (AmCham) in cooperation with the US Embassy and the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP).

President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bahrain (AmCham) Qays Zu’bi said: “The aim here is to get a better understanding of these laws to provide further confidence to businesses venturing into new sectors and at the same time

making business easier.”

Bankruptcy Restructuring Law, Electronic Transactions Law, Electronic

Transferable Records, Data Protection Law, and SME Procurement Law were discussed during the meeting.

Arezo Yazd from the Commercial Law Development Programme (CLDP) said the new commercial laws in Bahrain will enable the business environment for all companies, both small and large. “By enabling the legal environment in Bahrain, CLDP hopes to sustain econom-



Justin Siberell, US Ambassador

ic growth and development for years to come.”



Participants during the meeting

The winning formula



● This year's Formula One (F1) Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix weekend will run for four days for the first time



● The 2018 Bahrain Grand Prix saw a crowd of 33,000 on race day alone



● Aside from Formula 1, equally thrilling will be the action from the FIA Formula 2 Championship

● Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East is the biggest and most popular one-make motor racing championship in the entire region



TDT | Manama

With the Formula one spectacle revving hard around the corner, the time has come around for Bahrain to unleash its sparkle to the global audience like a pearl for which it is always known for.

The archipelago in the Arabian Gulf, whose culture dates back 5000 years to the ancient Dilmun era, this time is offering more excitement than ever for F1 with its economy now on an upward trajectory guided by the Royal vision.

The local economy has shrugged off its weaknesses, caused by the prolonged period of lower prices, to reach a refreshing growth, helped by a slew of measures rolled out to boost revenues and balance books.

Investments in the fintech sector; a major oil and gas find and the development of Bahrain as a hub for foreign companies are helping the Kingdom to move its feet firmly into the future.

Bahrain's inclusion in JPMorgan's emerging market indexes

and a rise in the price of Bahrain's 2028 dollar bonds stands as a testament to the country's emergence.

According to Bahrain's ministry of finance and national economy, the Kingdom's fiscal programme is on track to deliver a balanced budget by 2022.

"This is a comprehensive and credible plan which, through a combination of spending reductions and revenue measures, is already delivering significant progress," the ministry said.

Amid recovering oil, 5 per cent value-added tax (VAT), subsidy cuts, voluntary retirement plan, the Kingdom continues to attract business to the region with Amazon Web Services (AWS) being the latest entrant. Amazon, the world's biggest cloud computing provider, is opening a regional data centre in Bahrain later this year.

As Zubin Chagpar, the head of the public sector for Amazon Web Services in the Middle East puts it, Bahrain is looking forward to leverage technology to redefine economy.

Add to this a burgeoning art and food scene, a growing reputation as a financial technology hub and the annual Formula 1 Grand Prix spectacle.

999th Formula 1 Race

So when it happens in Bahrain, the 999th Formula 1 Race weekend will be the sixth race taking place under BIC's state-of-the-art floodlights as a night race in the heart of the Arabian desert.

The 57-lap Bahrain Grand Prix also marks the second round of the 2019 FIA Formula 1 World Championship, which had its opening round in Australia with Mercedes claiming a fine one-two triumph led by Finn superstar Valtteri Bottas.

In 2007 the circuit became the first Grand Prix circuit to be awarded the distinguished FIA Institute Centre of Excellence award, given for excellent safety, race marshal, and medical facilities, and for the high standards of technology required to maintain these.

Formula 2

Aside from Formula 1, equally thrilling will be the action from the FIA Formula 2 Championship season-opener and the Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East championship finale.

Formula 2 is widely accepted to be the chief feeder series to Formula 1, with many of its graduates moving on to the top

flight after honing their skills at this level. Formula 2 will be staging the opening round of its 2019 season in Bahrain with 20 cars representing 10 teams on the grid.

Engines provide over 612bhp, plus ground effects and proper slick tyres make Formula 2 cars powerful and tricky to handle.

Among the more prominent drivers competing this year is Mick Schumacher, who is the son of seven-time Formula 1 World champion Michael Schumacher. He will be taking to the tarmac with Italian outfit Prema Racing, alongside Indonesian teammate Sean Galeal.

GT3 challenge

The Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East is the biggest and most popular one-make motor racing championship in the entire region.

It has been the number one choice of the Arab world's most promising circuit racing drivers to broaden their racing experience in a professionally run series. Drivers race in identical Porsche GT3 Cup Car 911s, supplied by the founders from Lechner Racing.

Clear rules ensure an equal footing – single-seated, near-standard race vehicles of

the same make adhering to strict safety guidelines. At the Bahrain Grand Prix, the Porsche GT3 Cup is holding the sixth and final meeting of its 2018/2019 campaign.

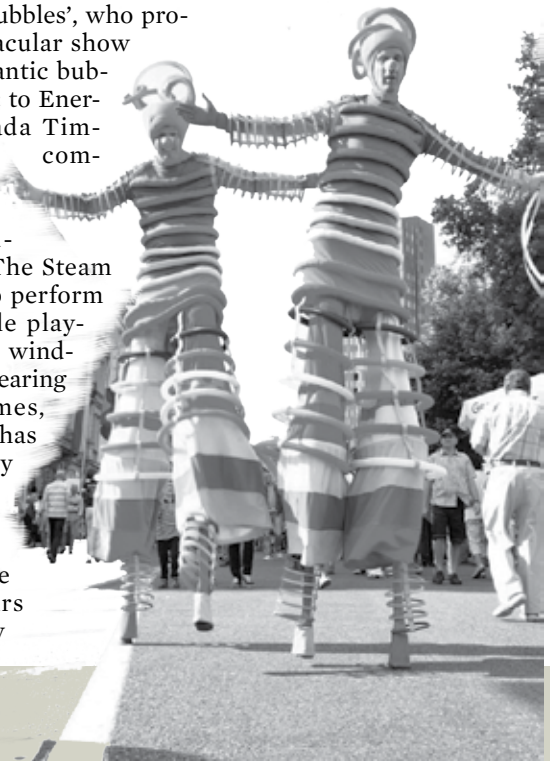
Something for everyone

But as they say, there is something for everyone at the Bahrain International Circuit's (BIC) Formula 1 Village vending area when the Grand Prix spectacle takes place March 28 to 31 in Sakhir.

From 'Dr Bubbles', who provides a spectacular show with his romantic bubble and music to Energetic 'Batucada Timba', which composed of young and talented musicians and 'The Steam Dancers' who perform on stilts while playing with large wind-sleeves and wearing funky costumes, BIC this year has lined up many special acts suitable for family audience as in the previous years highlighted by

the back-to-back live performances of Martin Garrix on the Friday of the event and Kygo on Saturday.

Ferris Wheel, a Star Flyer and a Venetian Carousel, an interactive F1 Fanzone, The Mummy's Tomb, carnival games and roaming performers, dancers, magicians... the list goes on and on at the four-day extravaganza.



Don't miss these when in Bahrain

Bahrain National Museum



Asprawling complex surrounded by contemporary art sculptures and installations, which will transport you straight into the Dilmun era giving a glimpse into ancient artefacts, coins, jewellery, seals, stone burial mounds etc. The exhibition also will take you a walk through you to the current Islamic period from a short-lived Greek influence.

A'ali village

Best know for it pottery tradition, the village is must visit if you like watching potters in action. You can also get your hands dirty at the Delmon pottery by learning how to work with the wheel.



Al Fateh Grand Mosque

With more than 7,000 worshippers at a time, Al Fateh Grand Mosque is one of the largest mosques in the world. Austrian-made Chandelier, Italian marble floors and carved doors are especially noteworthy



Shopping



Opportunities are aplenty when it comes to shopping options with several malls to visit. Need local experience, head to Bab Al Bahrain, a historical building in Manama where you can buy local products. Or you can walk through the alleys of Manama Souq where you will find all that you need.

Al Jasra Handicrafts centre

The centre offers a glimpse into Bahrain's long legacy of arts and crafts. Artisans there will offer you a chance to watch them at work. The centre was established in 1990.

Muharraq

When it comes to knowing old Bahrain, Muharraq, the former capital of Bahrain has many valuable tales to tell. Muharraq will speak volumes about traditional architecture and the 'pearl trail'.



Local cuisine

Influences from all around the world, especially from India, can be easily tasted in the rich variety of dishes on offer at various local restaurants in the kingdom.

Qal'at al-Bahrain



The fortified Portuguese fort stands over layers of Bahrain's history and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Adventure

Next to Grand Prix circuit, this 3.5 km off-road track help you negotiate the twists and turns either alone or as a passenger. Gravity indoor, scuba, snorkelling, diving tours, horseback riding and pearl diving tours will offer you enough instances to satisfy your craving for adventure.

world

Italy driver hijacks, torches school bus

● 51 students were in the bus at the time of incident

● A dozen children and two of the adults were taken to hospital for smoke inhalation

● Hijacker “wanted the whole world talking about his story”

● One of the children managed to pick up a phone that had been dropped and call their parents who in turn phoned the police

AFP | Rome, Italy

Italian police on Wednesday rescued 51 children taken hostage by their school bus driver, who doused the vehicle in petrol and set it alight apparently in protest at migrant deaths in the Mediterranean.

Some of the children were tied up during the 30-minute ordeal, which saw the bus slam into a car but was brought to an end by police after one of the children was able to call for help. No one was seriously injured.

“It is a miracle, it could have been carnage. The police were outstanding, blocking the bus and getting the children off,” said Milan prosecutor Francesco Greco.

Photos showed the burnt-out shell of the bus and the car, which were travelling on a road near Milan.

Driver Ousseynou Sy -- a 47-year-old Italian citizen of Senegalese origin -- explained under questioning that he wanted “to draw attention to the consequences of migra-



The wreckage of a school bus that was transporting some 50 children is pictured after it was torched by the bus' driver, in San Donato Milanese, southeast of Milan.



The 51 students in year two of secondary school in Crema were coming back from a sports outing accompanied by three adults when the driver abruptly changed route, announcing he was taking them all hostage.

tion policies”, according to his lawyer.

The 51 students in year two of secondary school in Crema were coming back from a sports outing accompanied by three adults when the driver abruptly changed route, announcing he was taking them all hostage.

“No one is getting out of here alive,” he said, according to several of the students.

A dozen children and two of the adults were taken to hospital for smoke inhalation while the arrested driver also needed treatment for burns to his hands.

The Milan police anti-terrorism unit has been charged with investigating the hostage-taking which lasted a little over 30 minutes.

Tied up

However Sy had no links with Islamic terrorism, Alberto Nobili, head of counter-terrorism at the Milan public prosecutor's office, told a press conference, saying he “acted as a lone wolf”.

Planning the hijack over several days, Nobili said Sy “wanted the whole world talking about his story”. He posted a video on Youtube to explain his actions and say “Africa -- arise”, directed at family and friends in Crema but also in Senegal.

The driver, armed with two canisters filled with petrol and a cigarette lighter, threatened the children, took their telephones and told the adults to tie them

up with electric cable.

“I lost three children at sea,” he said, according to one of the rescued children.

“He threatened us, said that if we moved he would pour the petrol and set it alight. He kept saying there were so many people in Africa who kept dying and that it was the fault of (deputy prime ministers) Di Maio and Salvini,” a rescued girl told Italian media.

Luigi Di Maio and in particular Matteo Salvini, who is also interior minister, have taken a hard line against migrants since they formed a populist coalition government in June, including trying to close Italian ports to ships that rescue migrants in the Mediterranean.

“Then the police arrived and saved us,” the rescued girl said.

Prosecutor Greco said the man kept two of the children close to him, brandishing the lighter. The bus crashed into a car, from which a father and son escaped before it burst into flames.

One of the children managed to pick up a phone that had been dropped and call their parents who in turn phoned the police.

“I hurt my hands a bit picking it up... we were all terrified,” the boy told Italian television.

Police blocked the bus in the street and broke open the back windows to get the children out before the vehicle went up in flames.

“The children were banging on the windows, calling for help,” said Roberto Manucci, one of six carabinieri at the scene.

Thousands of migrants have crossed from North Africa to Italy, many of them losing their lives on the dangerous journey.

“I want to put an end to it, I want to stop the deaths in the Mediterranean,” several reports cited the driver as saying.

Tough anti-migrant laws

Sy had been an Italian citizen since 2004, with reports saying was divorced from his Italian wife and has two teenage children.

The interior ministry said in a statement that the driver had been previously caught driving while drunk and had sexually assaulted a minor. It gave no dates for the alleged offences.

Interior ministry sources said the minister was looking at withdrawing the driver's Italian citizenship, a move made possible by tough anti-migrant legislation adopted late last year.

Earlier on Wednesday Salvini said his immigration policies has saved thousands of lives. “Fewer departures, fewer arrivals, fewer deaths,” he said.

New Zealand bans assault weapons, triggering similar calls in US

● New Zealand's steps include interim measures to prevent any rush to purchase guns

● For the guns already out there, Ardern announced a buyback scheme

Wellington, New Zealand

New Zealand imposed an immediate ban on assault weapons yesterday, taking swift action in response to the Christchurch massacre and triggering renewed calls from leading American politicians for curbs in the United States.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said assault rifles and military-style semi-automatic weapons would be banned with im-

mediate effect, making good on a pledge to ensure that nothing like last week's slaughter of 50 people ever occurs in the Pacific nation again.

The killings by an Australian white supremacist have caused national soul-searching over New Zealand's lax gun laws.

But the tough crackdown promises to have political repercussions beyond the country's shores, including in the United States where gun control is one of the most divisive political issues.

“In short, every semi-automatic weapon used in the terrorist attack on Friday will be banned in this country,” Ardern said.

She added that high-capacity magazines and devices similar to bump stocks -- which allow users to fire weapons faster -- will also be banned.

Proponents of gun control in the United States and around



New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern

the world praised the move and denounced the US pro-gun lobby on social media, while American gun supporters defended their constitutional right to bear arms.

‘Follow NZ’s lead’

“This is what real action to stop gun violence looks like,” Democratic US Senator and presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders tweeted.

“We must follow New Zealand's lead, take on the NRA

(National Rifle Association) and ban the sale and distribution of assault weapons in the United States.”

High-profile Democratic Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez contrasted the swift ban with US failure to enact even modest controls following recurring deadly shootings such as the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut in 2012, in which 20 children and six school staff died.

“Sandy Hook happened 6 years ago and we can't even get the Senate to hold a vote on universal background checks,” Ocasio-Cortez tweeted.

“Christchurch happened, and within days New Zealand acted to get weapons of war out of the consumer market. This is what leadership looks like.”

No reaction was immediately seen on the Twitter feed of US President Donald Trump.

Alleged shooter Brenton Tar-

rant livestreamed the carnage in real-time, and the horrific scenes have heightened global concern over access to guns and the use of social media by extremists.

New Zealand's steps include interim measures to prevent any rush to purchase guns before legislation is enacted and effectively outlaw all such weapons already in private possession.

“The effect of this will mean that no one will be able to buy these weapons without a permit to procure from the police. I can assure people that there is no point in applying for such a permit,” Ardern said.

For the guns already out there, Ardern announced a buyback scheme that will cost between Nz\$100 million and \$200 million (between US\$69 million and \$139 million), depending on the number of weapons received and valuations.

11 dead, 50 rescued after India building collapse
New Delhi, India

Eleven people were confirmed dead on Thursday three days after a building under construction in southern India caved in, officials said.

Around 400 rescuers have been scouring through tonnes concrete and steel after the latest tragedy in Karnataka state on Tuesday.

Fifty-three people have been rescued from the rubble of the five-storey building in Dharwad district, but three more bodies were pulled out on Thursday.

“At least 15 people are possibly still under the debris and it’s unlikely they will survive,” emergency official Srikant, who goes by one name, told AFP.

Heavy earth-movers and rescuers with specialised equipment and sniffer dogs were deployed in the increasingly desperate operation.

Brazil ‘still studying’ Jerusalem embassy

Brasília, Brazil

Brazil is “still studying” the relocation of its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, Brazil’s top diplomat said Wednesday, days before President Jair Bolsonaro is due to visit the country.

After taking power in January, Bolsonaro reiterated a pledge to follow US President Donald Trump’s lead in moving the embassy from Tel Aviv.

But his far-right government has since rowed back in response to fears the shift could endanger Brazil’s valuable meat exports to Arab markets.

Foreign Minister Ernesto Araujo’s latest remarks, however, suggest the controversial

proposal is still on the table.

“The issue of Jerusalem is very important, it is part of the essence of what this new relationship with Israel may mean, we are still studying the way that (decision) will be taken,” Araujo told reporters.

The shift must be in line with “other policies in the region to make it clear that, if it were the case, it would be a positive movement, as part of Brazil’s

We are still studying the way that (decision) will be taken

ERNESTO ARAUJO, FM



sonaro’s January 1 inauguration in Brazil.

The decision to move the embassy is highly sensitive because Israel claims all of Jerusalem as its capital, while Palestinians view east Jerusalem as the capital of its future state.

Virtually all countries agree that Jerusalem’s status can only be defined through wider Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

So far, only the United States and Guatemala have broken with that consensus by opening embassies in Jerusalem. Paraguay backtracked on a decision last year to move its embassy. Israel and the US have spoken with Honduras about its embassy going to Jerusalem.

contribution to peace and stability,” he added.

Bolsonaro, who has been in the United States this week for talks with President Donald Trump before going to Chile, is due to visit Israel from March 31 to April 2 as he seeks to strengthen ties with ultraconservative governments around the world.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attended Bol-

Tuberculosis can be eradicated by 2045: experts
Paris, France

The world can eradicate tuberculosis by 2045 if the fight against the killer disease is properly funded, an international team of experts said Wednesday.

Warning of the immense economic and social costs of inaction, they said that better screening, treatments and public awareness were needed to reduce the more than 10 million cases recorded every year.

A chronic lung disease which is preventable and largely treatable if caught in time, tuberculosis is the top infectious killer of our time, causing over 1.6 million deaths each year.

“That is huge and the economic burden of that to both developing and developed nations is staggering,” Eric Goosby, the United Nations’ special envoy for the disease, said.

Burund schoolgirls jailed for doodling on president’s photo
Nairobi, Kenya

Three teenage schoolgirls in Burundi have been sent to prison to await trial for scribbling on a picture of President Pierre Nkurunziza in textbooks, activists said yesterday.

The girls, aged 15, 16 and 17, face up to five years in prison for insulting the head of state if found guilty. Judges said the three girls should be “prosecuted for contempt of the head of state”, and ordered them to a juvenile section of a prison in the north of Burundi at Ngozi to await trial, said FENADEB, a civil society umbrella group of 48 organisations.

The trio has been in custody since March 12, when they

were arrested with three other schoolgirls and a 13-year old boy. The boy was released immediately because he was below the age of criminal responsibility, while the three girls were released without charge. The girls are accused of defacing photographs of Nkurunziza in five textbooks belonging to their school, but teachers pointed out that the books are shared among all the pupils as there are not enough for everyone to have their own.

A judicial source, who called the case “very sensitive” and said it was overseen directly by the Attorney General, reported that the girls arrived at the prison on Wednesday afternoon.

Blast rocks east China chemical plant

AFP | Beijing, China

At least six people were killed and 30 seriously injured in a chemical plant blast that rocked eastern China yesterday, officials said.

Numerous others in the vicinity were slightly injured in the blast at a facility run by Tianjiayi Chemical in Yancheng, Jiangsu province, city officials said on their official Twitter-like Weibo account.

“At present, on-site rescue is still going on... The cause of the accident is under investigation,” officials said.

The blast occurred at around 2:50 pm (0650 GMT) at a facility run by Tianjiayi Chemical in Yancheng, Jiangsu province, city officials said on their



Social media pictures from the blast site (Courtesy of Daily Mail)

official Twitter-like Weibo account. Footage from state

broadcaster CCTV showed windows of nearby houses blown out from the force of the explosion. An aerial view of the blast area showed a large swath of destruction in an industrial park, where multiple fires still raged.

Injured residents near the site of the explosion have been sent to hospital for treatment, according to local authorities.

Medical staff, as well as personnel from the public security bureau and fire department, have been sent to the scene, they added. The provincial fire brigade said on Weibo they had recovered 12 injured victims.

Thirty-one people have been rescued so far, officials added, without specifying whether or not they were injured.

Police, tradesmen rush to prepare mosque for Friday prayers

Christchurch, New Zealand

New Zealand police and tradesmen are working intensively in the hope of readying the Al Noor mosque to hold Friday prayers, just a week after it was the centre of a racist shooting which left 50 dead.

“Police have been working relentlessly, doing everything in our power to gather all appropriate evidence from what are active crime scenes so we can allow people to return to the mosques as quickly as possible,” a police spokesman said, referring to Al Noor and a second mosque in Christchurch attacked by the gunman.

An army of carpenters, glaziers, gardeners and carpet layers could be seen entering the Al Noor grounds Thursday and the police spokesman said they were trying to return the mosque to its original state.

The areas around the mosques remained cordoned off and guarded by armed police, but the spokesman said they were working “to allow the Muslim community back into the mosque on Friday for Friday prayers”.

Fifty people were killed and as many wounded when a self-



Residents and schoolchildren wearing headscarves arrive for the funeral of those killed in New Zealand’s twin mosque attacks



A digger delivers a load of gravel to the Al Noor mosque in Christchurch

across the road in the spacious Hagley Park.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has called for the nation to observe two minutes of silence on Friday and said the call to prayer would be broadcast live by the state-owned radio and television in a show of support for the Muslim community.

New Zealand women were also being encouraged to wear headscarves as a gesture of solidarity with Muslims on Friday, the Muslim holy day.

“We are going to pray here on Friday,” the Imam Gamal Fouda

told the New Zealand Herald from behind the cordon opposite the mosque.

“We will never forsake it to please those people who actually attacked us,” he said.

Linwood mosque Imam Alabi Lateef Zirullah said his congregation will join the Friday prayer at Al Noor.

Sagger said the people answering his call to prayer would form a human wall outside the mosque.

“If the mosque isn’t open, we will make the circle opposite the mosque in the cricket grounds,



A “Hello Brother” message left in a tree outside the Al Noor mosque in Christchurch. “Hello brother.” The warm-hearted words an elderly Muslim reportedly used to greet a white supremacist gunman have become Christchurch’s answer to his volley of hate. Mohemmed Daoud Nabi, a 71-year-old from war-torn Afghanistan, was buried on March 21. But his supposed final words echo across this broken New Zealand city

Hagley Park,” he said.

Police said they would continue to maintain a presence at

both mosques when they reopen “for the public’s reassurance and safety”.

CLASSIC STEPS

Bahrain musical gains appreciation at Indian festival

*The musical drama has multifaceted dimensions
as it portrays the loneliness of woman and her
sufferings in a male-dominated society*



Sneha Ajith performs during a scene in 'Kamala'

A GREAT



T.N. Suresh Kumar

TDI | Manama

After having visited 125 countries, T.N. Suresh Kumar, a senior Indian scientist, is all set to explore the 'Door to Hell' shortly. The scientist who is on a mission to visit 28 more countries revealed this during his visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain recently. The 'Door to Hell' or 'Gates of Hell', is a natural gas field collapsed into an underground cavern located in Derweze, Turkmenistan. Geologists intentionally set it on fire to prevent the spread of methane gas, and it is thought to have been burning continuously since 1971. T.N. Suresh Kumar, a senior scientist who was working with the ISRO's Master Control Facility in Hassan, was in Bahrain to attend a seminar titled Journey to Edge of Space and Zero Gravity at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Juffair. The programme was organ-

ised by the Institution of Engineers (India) Bahrain Chapter. Kumar is the first Indian to visit the stratosphere – the second major layer of the Earth's atmosphere. He made it to an altitude of 17,100 metres on August 15, 2014 in a MIG-29 from Sokol Airbase near Nizhny Novgorod in Russia paying a hefty fee of around INR 15 lakhs (BD 8000) from his savings. "It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and one that I have been dreaming of for two decades. I am happy I did it," Kumar says. The flight reached a maximum speed of 1,850 km per hour, reaching the stratosphere in 48 minutes. With this, Kumar became the 259th person and the first Indian to take the flight ever since the Country of Tourism Ltd., an agency conducting space travel in Russia, started the journey called 'Edge of Space'.



A view of Darvaza gas crater popularly known as 'Door to Hell'

Indian Scientist

1622

First American Indian (Powhatan) massacre of Europeans in Jamestown Virginia, 347 killed

1765

Stamp Act passed; 1st direct British tax on American colonists, organized by Prime Minister George Grenville



1784

The Emerald Buddha is moved with great ceremony to its current place in Wat Phra Kaew, Thailand

1954

Northland Center, the world's largest shopping mall of the time, opens in Oakpark, Michigan

TDT | Manama

Harpreet Kaur

Bahrain produced dance drama ‘Kamala’ was selected by the renowned cultural society Soorya for presenting in many art festivals organized by Soorya, across India.

The inaugural show which was staged at Tagore Theatre Trivandrum, on 10 March 2019 as part of the 111 days long Soorya Festival.

Kamala, the art form has multifaceted dimensions as it portrays the loneliness of woman and her sufferings in a male-dominated society. The dance drama has been conceived and choreographed by Vidya Sreekumar, with music composed by Palakkad Sreeram and the Sanskrit lyrics by the famous poet Dr L Sampath. The script has been adapted by scriptwriter Sreeku-mar Ramakrishnan.

Sneha Ajith who had elevated Kamala with her dedicated artistic talent and proficiency in dance forms was the lead among the other Bahrain artists as it was staged at Soorya Festival in Trivandrum. Kamala is set to be televised as the musical has secured a rare distinction of this kind to stage a Bahrain produced programme at this prestigious setting in India.

“Inspired by Herman Hesse’s Novel Sidhardha, we have decided to develop the same from a women perspective. It was made possible by our vision to see it staged. It was always my dream to be part of a Dance Drama and to have everything play out at the right time with the right team. To me, Kamala is a dream come true,” Sneha Ajith who takes the centre stage as Kamala told tribune.

“Playing Kamala not only meant that I will be present on stage for the most duration of the drama, but also that I had to instil a level of confidence and conviction in my teammates. I believe that each character and dancer in the drama was a vital asset and for them to feel important, I had to play a connecting force that held them together. All of Kamala team is now a family and through our journey of staging it, we definitely felt the connection.”

“Moreover, I take inspiration from people I see doing great work. The desire to do more in my field of interest keeps me motivated. Besides being an entertaining dance drama, Kamala had a very contemporary story at its core that every woman of today can relate to. Therefore, I have experienced how I can combine my passion for dance with something so profound as creating awareness with a social message. I wish to carry that forward with my future works. As a dancer, I know that there is always room for improvement, and I aspire to be the best version of myself.”

Since childhood, Sneha would never leave an



Actors perform during a scene in ‘Kamala’



Inspired by Herman Hesse’s Novel Sidhardha, we have decided to develop the same from a women perspective. It was made possible by our vision to see it staged. It was always my dream to be part of a Dance Drama and to have everything play out at the right time with the right team. To me, Kamala is a dream come true

SNEHA AJITH

opportunity to perform, regardless of whether it was just an impromptu performance in front of guests that came home or a competition she had worked hard for.

“There never had to be a turning point for when I got into dancing, it was just in my DNA. Everything I do is with a passion which is the driving force for me to take challenging tasks like Kamala. The things I do, be it my job as a Legal Officer or my performance as dancer, keeps me surrounded by positive thoughts that help me grow. I believe, whatever you do, it is the most important to stay away from any negativity and

have a peaceful mind,” she added.

“Every day is a new challenge, what felt like a challenge in Law School, feels like a walk in the park in my working life now. I have been blessed to be born to parents who love me unconditionally. They have protected me and my sister from all the struggles they have encountered while raising us. Therefore, all my struggles have been personal, to be in peace with my body, my mind and my thoughts.”

Dance is the most therapeutic feeling for Sneha since she was very young.

“I began dancing at the age of 3 to songs that played on TV, after which my mother put me to Bharatanatyam classes. Her constant support

‘Kamala’ has been conceived and choreographed by Vidya Sreekumar, with music composed by Palakkad Sreeram and the Sanskrit lyrics by the famous poet Dr L Sampath. The script has been adapted by scriptwriter Sreeku-mar Ramakrishnan

and encouragement made me able to find my passion and interest in dancing. Even today when I have a tough day, I turn to dance to calm me down and bring me back. It is like meditation. You know as they say, when you do what you love, you won’t have to work a single day. In short, Dance is my escape,” she said.

“As an artist, I need to have the opportunity to portray different characters and tell different stories. Novelty and variety excite me. Being able to voice our thoughts and portray our emotions through art is an exuberant feeling. There is no sense of being stuck in a monotony, there are no bars to the imagination and no boundaries to possibilities.”

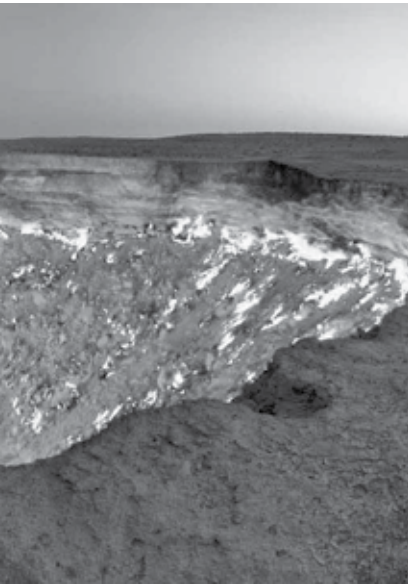
“There is some quality in every artist that will inspire you. I choose to imbibe selective qualities from people without letting one person influence me entirely. But there is one person whose greatness I will never be able to match and that is my Father. The times he has seen and composure he has constantly maintained has always left me in awe. Him, along with my Mother, are my biggest teachers as well. So undoubtedly, they have had the most influence on me,” Sneha added.



Sneha Ajith and other actors perform during a scene in ‘Kamala’

MISSION

Artist set to visit ‘Door to Hell’



“Money alone will not buy oneself this opportunity. They look for physical fitness, communication skills and a basic knowledge of science before selecting people for this journey,” he said. During the selection process Kumar had to take clearances from different agencies, including his workplace and embassies.

Kumar nurtured space travel dreams since 1985 when he was one among the four selected by ISRO to travel to space. But he missed the chance when the flight was called off following the explosion of space shuttle ‘Challenger’ in February 1986. “It was highly disappointing. Later, my wife and I decided to save a major part of our earnings for travel,” he said.

Kumar has visited 170 countries across seven continents over the last 20 years. His wife Geetha, also a senior scientist at MCF in Hassan, has accompanied him to 100 countries.



T.N. Suresh Kumar with Institute of Engineers India Bahrain Chapter executive committee members

“I am a budget traveller and plan the trips well in advance to avoid extra expenditure on airfare. I carry ready-to-eat food and

spend little on lodging,” he said.

Kumar also interacted with 200 science students of Indian School Bahrain.

The ‘Door to Hell’ or ‘Gates of Hell’, is a natural gas field collapsed into an underground cavern located in Derweze, Turkmenistan

business

May pleads to save Brexit plan



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May listening during the weekly Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) question and answer session in the House of Commons in London

● **May is hoping a third vote could be admitted despite the speaker's decision**

● **Chancellor Angela Merkel agreed, telling lawmakers that EU leaders would approve some Brexit guarantee**

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

A dogged but isolated Prime Minister Theresa May was headed back to Brussels yesterday to beg for more time to deliver her Brexit plan, in defiance of the MPs who twice rejected the withdrawal deal.

May's fellow European Union leaders, meeting for their spring summit, say they will tell her that Britain can postpone Brexit until May 22, but only if she can win over British lawmakers next week.

If the withdrawal agreement is rejected again, an emergency summit could be called next week to agree a longer extension until at least the end of the year -- otherwise Britain's four-decade-year-old European adventure comes to an abrupt end on March 29.

Time is tight, but there will be no decision on an extension in Brussels on Thursday, and May seemed to have done no favours to her efforts to persuade more MPs to back the withdrawal agreement on the eve of the summit, when she blamed them for the impasse.

"All MPs have been willing to say is what they do not want," she said, in a televised address that sought to reach over the heads of parliament to the British people and infuriated lawmakers on both sides of the House of Commons.

"I passionately hope MPs will find a way to back the deal I've negotiated with the EU, a deal that delivers on the result of the referendum and is the very best deal negotiable," she said.

The deal could be brought back to parliament as early as Tuesday.

May wrote to EU Council president and summit host Donald Tusk on Wednesday to ask for a three-month delay of Brexit until June 30, but EU diplomats insisted that Britain would either have to leave before the May 23 European election or take part in the vote and stay in the bloc until at least the end of the year.

May, however, has insisted that she will not oversee a long delay, which would increase pressure at home for a general election or for a second Brexit



The British parliament has been deadlocked for months over Brexit, with MPs unable to decide how to implement the referendum result, and voters themselves are also sharply divided.

referendum that might reverse the decision to leave.

"You want this stage of the Brexit process to be over and done with this. I agree. I am on your side," May told voters, blaming the MPs opposed to her Brexit plan and insisting she was requesting a delay until June 30 with "great personal regret".

'Brexit fatigue'

Tusk, meanwhile, admitted that European leaders are suffering "Brexit fatigue". He said he feared his hopes for an orderly Brexit agreement with a plan in place to prevent economic and political chaos may prove "frail, even illusory."

Lawmakers have twice re-

soundingly rejected May's agreement, and a third vote the premier hoped to hold this week was cancelled by the House of Commons speaker on procedural grounds.

Nevertheless, Tusk was clear that Europe wants May to try again.

Surge in support to revoke Brexit

London, United Kingdom

An online petition asking the British government to revoke Brexit briefly crashed yesterday after a surge in support saw it garner more than 600,000 signatures in less than 24 hours.

With just eight days to go until Britain is scheduled to leave the European Union, the petition launched on Wednesday admitted that a second referendum "may not happen -- so vote now".

"The government repeatedly claims exiting the EU is 'the will of the people'. We need to put a stop to this claim by proving the strength of public support now, for remaining in the EU," the petition read.

Denmark's Vestager to run for European Commission head



Margrethe Vestager

Copenhagen, Denmark

EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager yesterday announced her candidacy to be the next head of the European Commission, in an interview with a Danish newspaper.

"I'm in," she told the daily Politiken, Denmark's newspaper of record, in reference to a bid to succeed Jean-Claude Juncker.

The European parliament's liberal group ALDE is expected to announce later Thursday its team to lead the campaign for the European elections in May with Vestager in line to be its candidate for European Commission president.

"Up until the elections, I will take part (in the debate) by recalling what we have accomplished in the past five years," Vestager told Politiken.

Finland to investigate Nokia Chinese data breach

Helsinki, Finland

Finnish authorities will launch an investigation into claims that Nokia phones have been transmitting users' personal data to China, the country's data protection ombudsman announced yesterday.

"Based on our initial analysis it appears that personal data has also been transferred (to China)," Reijo Aarnio, Finland's data protection ombudsman, told the news agency STT.

The Norwegian broadcaster NRK published claims on Thurs-

day that data from Nokia's 7 Plus mobile phones, including location information and serial numbers, has been sent to servers of the state-owned company China Telecom.

"The idea is that data moves freely within the EU, but when we go outside the EU, there must always be a legal basis," Aarnio said. "We are requesting information to try and find out whether there was a legal basis in this case. The second thing is how notification has worked, so were phone users aware that information about them is being



Reijo Aarnio

transferred to China?" he said.

The Finnish-owned company HMD Global, which manufactures Nokia handsets and has recently seen robust sales growth on the Chinese market, told NRK

that some information from the 7 Plus handset has been sent to China, but denied that individual users can be identified from the data.

"We can confirm that there has been an error in the software packing process in a single batch of one handset model, which mistakenly attempted to send activation data to a foreign server," the company said in a statement reported by NRK.

"The data was never processed and no personal information was shared with third parties or authorities," it said.

Norway hikes interest rate, bucking global trend

Oslo, Norway

Norway's central bank raised its key interest rate yesterday and said it would continue to tighten its monetary policy due to the strength of the Scandinavian country's economy, in contrast to a slowdown in much of the rest of the world.

The key rate was hiked by 0.25 points for the second time in six months, rising to 1.0 per cent.

"Our current assessment of the outlook and balance of risks suggests that the policy rate will most likely be increased further in the course of the next half-year," the bank's governor Oystein Olsen said in a statement.

The bank said that the "upturn in the Norwegian economy

appears to be stronger than anticipated earlier".

Analyst David Oxley of Capital Economics said that the increase had been expected after policymakers signalled they would raise rates at their last meeting in January.

"However, the more hawkish stance adopted by the bank, saying that the next hike will 'most likely' be in the second half of 2019 has caught the market on its toes," he said.

"Having already risen strongly against the euro this year, the Norwegian kroner surged by one percent against the single currency after the decision."

Rising oil prices have propelled the economy of Norway,



Oystein Olsen (file)

the biggest oil and gas producer in western Europe.

The country's so-called "continental" GDP, which excludes the oil and shipping sectors, is

expected to grow 2.7pc this year and 2.5pc in 2020, according to estimates released by the government this week.

The strong growth stands in

stark contrast with the rest of Europe and the United States, where recent downbeat data and signs of a global slowdown have led to cautious stances by central banks.

Norway's decision came after the US Federal Reserve surprised economists on Wednesday by indicating it will not raise interest rates this year, after previously forecasting two hikes.

The Swiss National Bank meanwhile opted to leave its own rates unchanged. In September Norway's interest rate was increased for the first time since 2011 after hitting a record low following the effects of the 2008 financial crisis and plunging oil and gas prices.

Boeing 737 MAX to face first congressional hearing

Washington, United States

Boeing's ill-fated 737 MAX and federal regulators next week will face the first public grilling by Congress over the two fatal plane crashes in recent months.

Senator Ted Cruz, the Texas Republican, called for a hearing of the Commerce Subcommittee on Aviation and Space, for March 27, with three transportation officials, notably the acting head of the Federal Aviation Administration.

Cruz intends to hold a second hearing to question Boeing officials as well as pilots and others in the industry, according to the statement.

More than 300 people perished in the two crashes of 737 MAX 8s that occurred shortly after takeoff in Indonesia in October and in Ethiopia earlier this month.

Boeing and the FAA are under investigation by the Transportation Department for how the rollout of the jet was handled, especially the a new flight system, the MCAS stall-prevention system, which was implicated in the Lion Air crash in October.

Brazil central bank holds rates steady

Brasília, Brazil

Brazil's interest rates remained unchanged Wednesday after the central bank held its first monetary policy meeting under its new chief Roberto Campos Neto.

The central bank's unanimous decision -- only the second since pro-business President Jair Bolsonaro took power in January on a promise to revive Latin America's biggest economy -- to keep rates at 6.5 per cent was in line with market expectations.

Rates have been at the historic low for a year and the bank gave no indication of plans to cut them any time soon despite slowing growth.

Cuba a thriving hang-out for sidecars

AFP | Havana, Cuba

Cuba's love affair with 1950s-era American cars is still intact, but the communist-run island also has a lingering attachment to a stalwart of Soviet-era leftovers, the motorcycle sidecar.

Ranging from rusting relics to the pampered and the pristine, hundreds of old motorcycle sidecars rattle through the streets of Havana.

The retro appeal gets a lot of attention from tourists "but here it's common, normal," says Enrique Oropesa Valdez.

Valdez should know. The 59-year old makes a living as an instructor teaching people how to handle the sidecar in Havana's traffic, where riders seem able to squeeze the machines through the narrowest of gaps.

And they've built up an intense loyalty among the mend-and-make do Cubans.

"They're very practical," according to Alejandro Prohenza Hernandez, a restaurateur who says his pampered red 30-year-old Jawa 350 is like a second child.

Cheaper and more practical than the gas-guzzling, shark-finned US behemoths, the bikes are used for anything from the family runabout to trucking goods and workers' materials.

"A lot of foreigners really like to take photos of it,"

says Hernandez. "I don't know, I think they see it as something from another time."

Different world

Cuba lags several decades behind the rest of the world due to a crippling US embargo, so the makers' badges on the ubiquitous sidecars speak of a bygone world.

Names like Jawa from the former Czechoslovakia and MZ from the former East Germany, as well as antiquated Russian Urals, Dniepers and Jupiters.

When the Cuban government bought sidecars from the Russians in 1981, it was for state-owned companies. Later, the companies sold them on to the most deserving employees

JOSE ANTONIO CEOANE NUNEZ

Havana's military acquired them from big brother Moscow at the height of the Cold War in the 1960s and 70s, for use by state factories and farms. Over the years, they gradually filtered down to the general public.

That's how Jose Antonio Ceoane Nunez, 46, found his bright red Jupiter 3.

"When the Cuban government bought sidecars from the Russians in 1981, it was for state-owned companies," he told AFP.

Later, the companies "sold them on to the most deserving employees," he said. His father, who worked for a state body, passed the bike on to him.

"Even if the sidecar gets old. I'll never sell it because it's what I use to move around. It's my means of transport in Cuba, and there aren't many other options," said Nunez.

Valdez himself has a cherished green 1977 Ural.

"I like it a lot, firstly because it's the means of transport for my family, and secondly because it's a source of income."

And it costs less



Locals travel on an old motorcycle with sidecar along a street of Havana



A mechanic repairs an old motorcycle with sidecar in Havana

than a car, still out of reach of many Cubans.

Settled on the island with his Cuban wife, 38-year-old Frenchman Philippe Ruiz didn't realize at first how ubiquitous the motorcycle sidecar was.

"When I began to be interested, I suddenly realized that I was seeing 50 to 100 a day!"

Renovating a house at the time, he saw that many sidecars were being used to transport building equipment.

Through an advert on the internet, he bought a blue 1979 Ural a few months ago for 6,500 euros.

"It's a year older than me and in worse shape," he said. "Soon he had to strip the bike down and 'start repairing everything.'"

With few spare parts available in Cuba, "people have to bring them in from abroad," which slows down repairs.

But he has no regrets. An experienced motorcyclist, he's discovered a whole new side to his passion by riding the Russian machine.

"It's very funny, it's a big change from the bike because we cannot turn the same way, we can't lean, so you have to relearn everything but it's nice."

"It's especially nice with the family because you can put a child in the sidecar, my wife behind, and suitcases," he said.

In future he hopes to take advantage of the interest in the old bikes to rent it out.

"I think it will be a bit of a change from all the convertibles here."

Levi's raises \$623 mn ahead of NYSE debut Thursday

New York, United States

US jeans company Levi Strauss & Co. announced Wednesday strong pricing ahead of its Wall

Street return, enabling it to raise a better-than-expected \$623 million.

The iconic brand, which is set to begin trading Thursday on the New York Stock Exchange, said it would initially price at \$17 a share, above the \$14 to \$16 per share range it had previously targeted.

Strong demand for the shares means the IPO will raise \$623 million.

First founded in 1853 in San Francisco as a wholesale dry goods business, Levi's invented the blue jean 20 years later, a product that was initially worn by primarily by miners and cowboys before becoming ubiquitous in the 20th century.

The brand has had its ups and downs since in terms of its cultural relevance, but has been seen as again rising under Chief Executive Charles



Logo of Levi Strauss & Co

Bergh, who joined Levi's in September 2011 after a lengthy stint at Procter & Gamble.

Most recently, Levi's won attention when musical superstar Beyonce wore Levi's cutoff shorts in an April 2017 performance at the Coachella music festival, a point highlighted in the company's securities filing, which noted the garment was deemed the "ultimate Coachella clothing item" by People magazine.

"The Levi's brand epitomizes classic, authentic American style and effortless cool," the company said in its prospectus.

Levi's plans to use proceeds from the offering for general corporate purposes, as well as for potential acquisitions, the company said in the filing.

US trade negotiators to visit China on March 28-29: Beijing

Beijing, China

US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin will visit China on March 28-29 for a fresh round of talks aimed at resolving the bruising trade war, the Chinese commerce ministry said yesterday.

After their visit, Chinese Vice Premier Liu He will head to the United States in April to continue the negotiations, ministry spokesman Gao Feng said at a press briefing.

Washington and Beijing are battling over the final shape of a trade deal, with American



Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin

officials demanding profound changes to Chinese industrial policy.

President Donald Trump

warned Wednesday that US tariffs on Chinese imports could remain in place for a "substantial period," damp-

ening hopes that an agreement would see them lifted soon.

Over the last eight months, the United States and China have slapped tariffs on more than \$360 billion in two-way goods trade, weighing on the manufacturing sectors in both countries.

On Friday, China's parliament approved a foreign investment law to strengthen protections for intellectual property -- a central US grievance -- but critics said the bill was rammed through without sufficient time for input from businesses.

BisB holds general meeting, names new board

TDI | Manama

The Ordinary General Meeting of Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB) held yesterday approved a recommendation of its board of directors to allocate a net profit of BD 11,381,516 for the year ended 31st December 2018 by transferring BD 1,138,152 to the statutory reserve.

The meeting also elected a new board of directors.

The meeting held at the bank's headquarters in the Diplomatic Area further approved an allocation of BD 179,335 to the Zakat fund and BD 250,000 for charitable donations with the authorization of the Board of Directors of the Bank to distribute and transferring BD 9,814,029 to retained earnings.

The General Meeting also gave nod to the issuance of additional stock dividend relating



Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB) officials during an Ordinary General Meeting held yesterday at the bank's headquarters in the Diplomatic Area

to treasury shares for the year ended 31st December 2017; the payment of a total amount of BD 282,285 as remuneration to the Board of Directors for the financial year ended on 31st December 2018 among others.

The newly appointed board members, a BisB statement said,

will represent the National Bank of Bahrain, Social Insurance Organization and the Islamic De-

velopment Bank in Jeddah.

New members are Dr Esam Abdulla Fakhro – Representing NBB, Khaled Yusuf Abdulrahman- Representing NBB, Brig. Ebrahim Abdulla Al-Mahmood - Representing (SIO) Social Insurance Organization, Abdulla Ahmed Kamal - Representing SIO and Muhammad Azarrug Rajab – Representing IDB (Islamic Development Bank).

Other independent board members are Mohamed Abdulla, Marwan Cecil, Khalid Abdulaziz Al Jassim and Mohammad Abdullah Al Jalahmah.

The Ordinary General Assembly also approved the re-appointment of the members of the Shari'a Supervisory Board 2019 and authorized the Board of Directors to set their fees and re-appointed KPMG Fakhro as the External Auditors for the financial year 2019.

Pound under pressure ahead of Brexit summit



A trader works ahead of the closing bell on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE)

London, United Kingdom

The pound fell further ahead of a key Brexit summit in Brussels yesterday, while equities investors tried to come to grips with an unexpectedly dovish message from the US Federal Reserve.

Sterling, seen as a barometer for Britain's long-running Brexit saga, remained on the backfoot over fears that the country could crash out of the EU without a deal continued to fester.

British Prime Minister Theresa May was back in Brussels on a last-gasp mission to beg EU leaders for more time to deliver a Brexit deal that was twice rejected by her own parliament.

May has declared that she is

“determined” to deliver Brexit, after formally requesting a three-month delay on Wednesday.

However, investor fears persist that the 27 other EU leaders could refuse the request, potentially sending Britain crashing out of the bloc in just eight days' time.

The pound fell as low as \$1.3106 in midday trading.

“If the European leaders decide that they need more time -- possibly a week -- to respond to May's request then the pound will travel south towards the \$1.30 support as uncertainty will again soar,” warned analyst Konstantinos Anthis at trading firm ADSS.

The Bank of England (BoE),

Key figures around 1340 GMT

London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.3pc at 7,312.20 points
Frankfurt - DAX 30:	▼ 0.9pc at 11,502.11
Paris - CAC 40:	▼ 0.4pc at 5,361.40
EURO STOXX 50:	▼ 0.5pc at 3,356.76
New York - DOW:	▼ 0.3pc at 25,660.07
Hong Kong - Hang Seng:	▼ 0.9pc at 29,071.56 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	▲ 0.4pc at 3,101.46 (close)
Tokyo - Nikkei 225: Closed for a public holiday	
Pound/dollar:	▼ at \$1.3138 from \$1.3198 on Wednesday
Euro/pound:	▲ at 86.69 pence from 86.48 pence
Euro/dollar:	▼ at \$1.1391 at \$1.1413
Dollar/yen:	▼ at 110.59 yen from 110.70 yen
Oil - Brent Crude:	▼ 24 cents at \$68.26 per barrel
Oil - West Texas Inter:	▼ 19 cents at \$60.04

as expected, held its main interest rate steady at 0.75pc.

But it expressed concerns that further “uncertainties” over a “cliff-edge” no-deal Brexit “could have a significant effect on spending” by businesses.

Sentiment on equities markets was hit after the Federal Reserve forecast overnight that it would not raise US borrowing costs this year -- a shift from an earlier projection of two hikes -- and cut its annual growth outlook.

European markets were mostly down in afternoon trading and Wall Street opened lower.

“US stocks are under some early morning pressure as the Fed unexpectedly reflected an easier policy stance yesterday and warned that too-low inflation is one of the major challenges of our time,” said analysts at Charles Schwab brokerage.

Investors were also spooked after US President Donald Trump dashed hopes on Wednesday for a quick resolution to the China-US trade talks by warning tariffs would stay in place for some time after any agreement is reached.

Saudi near-4 year high

Reuters

All of Saudi Arabia's banks arose yesterday, lifting its stock exchange to a near-four year high following its inclusion in the FTSE Russell's emerging-market index this week.

Saudi's Tadawul index will have a weighting of 2.9 per cent in the FTSE Emerging All Cap Index and this year will join the MSCI emerging market benchmark. The market is positioned for passive fund inflows of around \$20 billion.

Saudi Arabia's index was up 0.8pc with Al Rajhi Bank and Riyadh Bank gaining 2.2pc each.

The Abu Dhabi index was up 0.6pc with First Abu Dhabi Bank and Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank (ADCB) adding 1.3pc each. ADCB shareholders approved its proposed merger with Union National Bank, which traded flat.

In Dubai, the index fell 0.6pc after four straight days of gains, with DAMAC Properties losing 2.8pc.

Blue-chip developer Emaar Properties decreased 1.5pc. Its board proposed a full-year dividend of 15 fils a share.

Arqaam Capital said it expected flat dividends of 15 fils per share from Emaar Proper-

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▲ 0.8pc to 8,709 pts
ABU DHABI	▲ 0.6pc to 5,127 pts
DUBAI	▼ 0.6pc to 2,629 pts
QATAR	▼ 0.2pc at 9,954 pts
EGYPT	▲ 0.4pc to 14,783 pts
KUWAIT	▲ 1.3pc to 5,890 pts
OMAN	▼ 0.2pc to 4,153 pts
BAHRAIN	▲ 0.2pc at 1,426 pts

ties and 11 fils per share from its unit Emaar Malls, adding that the brokerage is “selectively positive” on UAE real estate despite a challenging market in 2019.

Qatar's index was down 0.2pc with Barwa Real Estate plunging 7.3pc and Commercial Bank losing 0.6pc as the stocks traded ex-dividend.

Egypt's blue-chip index was up 0.4pc.

Kuwait's premier index rose 1.3pc with market heavyweight Kuwait Finance House adding 3.7pc. The stock has risen in the last three sessions after its chairman said the due diligence process to buy Bahrain's Ahli United Bank may conclude in two to three months. Ahli United was up 1.2pc.

BIG BANG SANG BLEU II

Manama

More ambitious than the Big Bang Sang Bleu launched in 2016, the new Big Bang Sang Bleu II passionately channels the design skills of world famous tattoo artist Maxime Plescia-Buchi. A case with more finely-chiselled lines, conveyed in three dimensions.

An expression of the passage of time, the hands - two elongated diamonds and an arrow - are stylised fragments of tattoos, set above a hypnotic chronographic movement.

Even more disruptive, the Big Bang Sang Bleu II channels the creative inspiration of Maxime Plescia-Buchi into its three-dimensional angles and edges. The motif spans the case, cutting into

its hexagonal bezel, and carving into the sapphire crystal, juxtaposed against the hands with their geometric lines, and moulded onto the interchangeable bracelet. The dial plays with transparency, allowing glimpses of the Unico movement. It is a feat of construction, almost architectural in scope, in a 45-mm case.

Within the meticulously interlaced geometric lines of this new case lies the HUB1240 Unico manufacture self-winding chronograph movement: the chronograph seconds are tracked along a straight hand, whilst the chronograph minutes complete their laps on one of the two discs on the dial. It oscillates at a frequency of 28,800



Maxime Buchi, Hublot Ambassador, Founder and Creative Director of Sang Bleu (5)

Thanks to Maxime Buchi and Sang Bleu, the art of tattooing has evolved to reach new heights. For this second collaboration, we wanted to reflect on this development by extending the motif across the case and hands. Each of these illustrates the graphic style of this illustrious tattoo artist

RICARDO GUADALUPE
CEO HUBLOT



vibrations per hour, for a period of 72 hours. Two hundred titanium and one hundred King Gold pieces will be released.

A key component of contemporary Pop Culture, tattooing is no longer the sole preserve of a largely masculine underground scene. From a primitive practice to a celebrated field of Art, and cultural phenomenon, its growing creative influence shows tattooing is not merely a trend but a cultural shift which will last and influence all generations to come.

The new Big Bang Sang Bleu II is the horological expression of a tattoo, set in motion with timeless precision, unifying materials and crafts through geometry by Sang Bleu's founder.

SHOW

OASIS JUFFAIR

1- US (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW Ⓢ LUPITA NYONG'O, ELISABETH MOSS, ANNA DIOP DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.15 + 11.15 PM DAILY AT (VIP): 3.15 + 8.15 PM
2- KESARI (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ AKSHAY KUMAR, PARINEETI CHOPRA, BHAGYASHREE DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM
3- FIVE FEET APART (PG-15) (DRAMA/ROMANTIC) NEW Ⓢ HALEY LU RICHARDSON, COLE SPROUSE, MOISES ARIAS DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 4.15 + 8.45 PM
4- HOTEL MUMBAI (18+) (CRIME/THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DEV PATEL, ARMIE HAMMER, NAZANIN BONIADI DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 4.15 + 9.00 PM
5- MARD KO DARD NAHIN HOTA (PG-15) (HINDI/AC-TION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW Ⓢ ABHIMANYU DASANI, GULSHAN DEVAIAH, RADHIKA MADAN DAILY AT: 2.00 + 6.45 + 11.30 PM
6- MANOU THE SWIFT (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE) NEW Ⓢ WILLEM DAFOE, KATE WINSLET, ROB PAULSEN DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 12.30 + 8.30 PM
7- ULAN (PG-15) (FILIPINO/DRAMA/THRILLER) NEW Ⓢ MARCO GUMABAO, ANGELI BAYANI, KYLIE VERZOSA DAILY AT: 12.00 + 4.30 + 9.00 PM
8- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE) NEW Ⓢ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM DAILY AT (3D): 2.00 + 6.30 + 11.00 PM DAILY AT (VIP): 12.45 + 5.45 + 10.45 PM
9- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) Ⓢ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 10.30 AM + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 + 10.30 PM
10- BADLA (PG-15) (HINDI/THRILLER/CRIME) Ⓢ AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
11- TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/AD-VENTURE) Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR DAILY AT: 3.15 + 8.45 PM
12-GULLY BOY (PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/MUSICAL) Ⓢ ALIA BHAT, RANVEER SINGH, SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI DAILY AT: 2.00 + 8.00 PM
13- KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) Ⓢ SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR, FAHADH FAASIL DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 5.00 + 11.00 PM
14-KODATHI SMAKSHAM BALAN VAKEEL (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) Ⓢ DILEEP, MAMTA MOHANDAS, PRIYA ANAND DAILY AT: 12.15 + 5.45 + 11.15 PM

CITYCENTRE

1- US (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW Ⓢ LUPITA NYONG'O, ELISABETH MOSS, ANNA DIOP DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI) DAILY AT (VIP I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM
2- KESARI (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA) NEW

Ⓢ AKSHAY KUMAR, PARINEETI CHOPRA, BHAGYASHREE DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
3- FIVE FEET APART (PG-15) (DRAMA/ROMANTIC) NEW Ⓢ HALEY LU RICHARDSON, COLE SPROUSE, MOISES ARIAS DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
4- HOTEL MUMBAI (18+) (CRIME/THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DEV PATEL, ARMIE HAMMER, NAZANIN BONIADI DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM
5- MANOU THE SWIFT (PG) (HINDI/ANIMATION/AD-VENTURE/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ WILLEM DAFOE, KATE WINSLET, ROB PAULSEN DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 PM
6- DAMASCUS ALEPPO (PG-13) (ARABIC/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DOURAID LAHAM, SABAH JAZAIRI, SALMA MASRI DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
7- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE) Ⓢ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON DAILY AT (ATMOS): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN DAILY AT:(1.00 AM THURS/FRI) DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM DAILY AT (VIP II): 11.30 AM + 2.15 + 5.00 + 7.45 + 10.30 PM
8- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) Ⓢ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 + 8.30 + 10.30 PM DAILY AT (ARABIC DUBBED): 11.30 AM + 3.30 + 7.30 + 11.30 PM
9- ESCAPE ROOM (PG-15) (THRILLER) Ⓢ TAYLOR RUSSELL, LOGAN MILLER, DEBORAH ANN WOLL DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 PM + 12.00 MN
10- BADLA (PG-15) (HINDI/THRILLER/CRIME) Ⓢ AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE DAILY AT: 12.15 + 4.45 + 9.15 PM
11- GRETA (15+) (THRILLER/CRIME) Ⓢ CHLOE GRACE MORETZ, ISABELLE HUPPERT, MAIKA MONROE DAILY AT: 8.00 + 10.00 PM + 12.00 MN
12-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA) Ⓢ LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
13- FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY (15+) (DRAMA/COM-EDY/BIOGRAPHY) Ⓢ DWAYNE JOHNSON, FLORENCE PUGH, JACK LOWDEN DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM
14-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA) Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
15-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
16-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER) Ⓢ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.00 + 5.30 + 8.00 + 10.30 PM
17-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE) Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER DAILY AT: 1.30 + 5.30 + 9.30 PM
18-ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVEN-TURE/ROMANTIC) Ⓢ ROSA SALAZAR, CHRISTOPH WALTZ, JENNIFER CONNELLY DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 4.00 + 9.15 PM

19-JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (PG) (COMEDY/ ACTION/ADVENTURE) Ⓢ ROWAN ATKINSON, OLGA KURYLENKO, EMMA THOMPSON DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM
20-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE) Ⓢ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.30 + 11.45 PM

SEEF (II)

1- US (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW Ⓢ LUPITA NYONG'O, ELISABETH MOSS, ANNA DIOP DAILY AT: (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
2- KESARI (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ AKSHAY KUMAR, PARINEETI CHOPRA, BHAGYASHREE DAILY AT: (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
3- FIVE FEET APART (PG-15) (DRAMA/ROMANTIC) NEW Ⓢ HALEY LU RICHARDSON, COLE SPROUSE, MOISES ARIAS DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
4- HOTEL MUMBAI (18+) (CRIME/THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DEV PATEL, ARMIE HAMMER, NAZANIN BONIADI DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN
5- MANOU THE SWIFT (PG) (HINDI/ANIMATION/AD-VENTURE/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ WILLEM DAFOE, KATE WINSLET, ROB PAULSEN DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 3.45 + 8.15 PM
6- ULAN (PG-15) (FILIPINO/DRAMA/THRILLER) NEW Ⓢ MARCO GUMABAO, ANGELI BAYANI, KYLIE VERZOSA DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.30 + 3.30 + 5.30 + 7.30 + 9.30 + 11.30 PM
7- DAMASCUS ALEPPO (PG-13) (ARABIC/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DOURAID LAHAM, SABAH JAZAIRI, SALMA MASRI DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM
8- MIRAI (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DANIEL DAE KIM, REBECCA HALL, JOHN CHO DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM
9- THE BRAND NEW ADVENTURES OF ALADIN (PG-15) (ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW Ⓢ KEY ADAMS, JAMEL DEBBOUZE, VANESSA GUIDE DAILY AT: 2.15 + 6.45 + 11.15 PM
10- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE) Ⓢ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 2.00 + 4.45 + 7.30 + 10.15 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
11- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) Ⓢ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.45 + 4.45 + 6.45 + 8.45 + 10.45 PM DAILY AT (ARABIC DUBBED): 11.45 AM + 3.45 + 7.45 PM
12-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA) Ⓢ LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN DAILY AT: 1.15 + 5.45 + 10.15 PM
13-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA) Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN DAILY AT: 2.30 + 7.00 + 11.30 PM
14- CAPHARNAUM (18+) (ARABIC/DRAMA) Ⓢ KAWTHAR AL HADDAD, NADINE LABAKY, FADI YOUSEF DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 4.15 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM
15-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE) Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER DAILY AT: 1.45 + 5.45 + 9.45 PM

SEEF (I)

1- US (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW Ⓢ LUPITA NYONG'O, ELISABETH MOSS, ANNA DIOP DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
2- KESARI (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ AKSHAY KUMAR, PARINEETI CHOPRA, BHAGYASHREE DAILY AT: 12.00 + 3.00 + 6.00 + 9.00 PM + 12.00 MN
3- MARD KO DARD NAHIN HOTA (PG-15) (HINDI/AC-TION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW Ⓢ ABHIMANYU DASANI, GULSHAN DEVAIAH, RADHIKA MADAN DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
4- ESCAPE ROOM (PG-15) (THRILLER) Ⓢ TAYLOR RUSSELL, LOGAN MILLER, DEBORAH ANN WOLL DAILY AT: 2.00 + 6.30 + 11.00 PM
5- BADLA (PG-15) (HINDI/THRILLER/CRIME) Ⓢ AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
6-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 4.15 + 8.45 PM
7- TOTAL DHAMAAL (PG-13) (HINDI/COMEDY/ADVEN-TURE) Ⓢ AJAY DEVGN, MADHURI DIXIT, ANIL KAPOOR DAILY AT: 3.30 + 9.00 PM
8- KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) Ⓢ SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR, FAHADH FAASIL DAILY AT: 12.30 + 6.00 + 11.30 PM



SAAR

1- US (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW Ⓢ LUPITA NYONG'O, ELISABETH MOSS, ANNA DIOP DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + (11.15 PM THUR/ FRI)
2- KESARI (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ AKSHAY KUMAR, PARINEETI CHOPRA, BHAGYASHREE DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + (11.00 PM THURS/FRI)
3- FIVE FEET APART (PG-15) (DRAMA/ROMANTIC) NEW Ⓢ HALEY LU RICHARDSON, COLE SPROUSE, MOISES ARIAS DAILY AT: 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)
4- HOTEL MUMBAI (18+) (CRIME/THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DEV PATEL, ARMIE HAMMER, NAZANIN BONIADI DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 3.45 + 8.45 PM
5- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE) Ⓢ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.15 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)
6- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) Ⓢ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.45 PM

AL HAMRA

1- OTTAM (PG-15) (MALAYALAM) NEW Ⓢ NANDHU ANAND, ROSHAN ULLAS, ALENCIER DAILY AT: 6.00 PM + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)
2- TO LET (PG-13) (TAMIL) NEW Ⓢ P SANTOSH SREERAM, SHEELA RAJKUMAR, AADHIRA APNDILAKSHMI DAILY AT: 12.00 NOON
3- KUMBALANGI NIGHT (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) Ⓢ SHANE NIGAM, SOUBIN SHAHIR, FAHADH FAASIL DAILY AT: 3.00 + 9.00 PM

WADI AL SAIL

1- US (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW Ⓢ LUPITA NYONG'O, ELISABETH MOSS, ANNA DIOP DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
2- KESARI (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ AKSHAY KUMAR, PARINEETI CHOPRA, BHAGYASHREE DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 2.15 + 5.15 + 8.15 + 11.15 PM
3- FIVE FEET APART (PG-15) (DRAMA/ROMANTIC) NEW Ⓢ HALEY LU RICHARDSON, COLE SPROUSE, MOISES ARIAS DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
4- HOTEL MUMBAI (18+) (CRIME/THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DEV PATEL, ARMIE HAMMER, NAZANIN BONIADI DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 3.45 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM
5- DAMASCUS ALEPPO (PG-13) (ARABIC/DRAMA) NEW Ⓢ DOURAID LAHAM, SABAH JAZAIRI, SALMA MASRI DAILY AT: 1.15 + 6.15 + 11.15 PM
6- CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE) Ⓢ BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
7- WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) Ⓢ BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 PM

MISSING PETS

 BARNEY - Male Shirazi/Persian, 18 mos, not wearing collar or ID tag, jumped from window on first floor, Um al Hassam (near Al Arusha Restaurant), 14/3/19. Tel: 66991282 or 33202513	 DARCI - Male King Charles Spaniel, 1 yr 10 mos, blue collar w crowns - no ID tag, not sure if neutered, tie-out broke and he followed another dog, West Riffa (near Prime Minister Palace), 8/3/19. Tel: 35328740	 SNOWBALL - Male Himalayan, 3 yrs, white w caramel tones (especially on tail), blue eyes, neutered, blue collar w bell/no ID tag, disappeared from compound, Budaiaa Beach Park area (Atlanta Gardens 3), BD50 REWARD for safe return, 22/10/18. Tel:33550734/33144648
 BROOK - Female German Shepherd mix, 1 yr, medium size, big ears, two black dots on both her cheeks and under chin, wearing collar - no ID, gate left open, may have been picked up or stolen, Jerdab/Jidali in Isa Town, 2/2/19. Tel: 39300680	 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. Tel: 39252695	 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. Tel: 66349010

MOVIE REVIEW

Us: another beautiful nightmare from Jordan Peele

You know you’re in the hands of a natural born filmmaker when you can feel yourself being tugged, as if by invisible forces, from one shot to the next, into a movie’s diabolical design.

That’s the sensation provoked by Jordan Peele’s Us, which begins with a sequence so expertly shot, cut, and orchestrated that you can only submit to the internal, infernal logic of its construction.

On the boardwalk of Santa Cruz circa 1986, illuminated by a carnival glow, a small girl (Madison Curry) strays from her parents’ side. She’s drawn, by signs and coincidence, to that enduring symbol of fractured identity, the hall of mirrors.

What she finds inside is a different kind of movie monster: a reflection made flesh, a phantom spitting image of self. It’s the audience, though, that’s



Lupita Nyong’o stars in ‘Us’

really being ushered into the funhouse.

And by the end of this ominously enthralling prologue, bracketed on one side by a rabbit-ear TV and the other by actual rabbit ears, you’re ready to go wherever the movie plans to take you.

Us, as it turns out, doesn’t go anywhere quite as clever or daring as Peele’s last film, his Oscar-winning transition out

of sketch comedy and into the upper echelons of Hollywood.

Get Out, remember, grabbed its audience right from the start, too. It was, as they say, a hard act to follow: a slow-burn supernatural thriller that was really a damning satire about the way racism survives and thrives, even in the cosiest of liberal enclaves.

While hardly devoid of ideas (whether telling jokes or staging scares, Peele remains an incisive social critic), Us operates in a less directly subversive mode. And yet if Peele is taking his victory lap in the genre sandbox—having a grand time, not making a grand statement—it’s with enough panache to continue outpacing the competition.

He’s made a primo popcorn slasher: fun, funny, elegant even when aiming for the jump-scare reflexes of the same multiplex crowd that gobbled up Get Out.

celebs



Lili Reinhart

Cardi B, Lili Reinhart join Jennifer Lopez in ‘Hustlers’

PTI | Los Angeles

Cardi B and Lili Reinhart are joining Jennifer Lopez and Constance Wu in stripper story ‘Hustlers’.

The film is based on a New York based biweekly American Magazine article by Jessica Pressler titled ‘The Hustlers at Scores’. The article was about a group of former strip club employees who band together to scam their

Wall Street clients.

According to reports, Julia Stiles and Keke Palmer are also joining the ensemble cast.

Lopez will play the ring-leader to the group of ambitious women who take their plans of getting their full cut too far.

Lorene Scafaria is attached to direct from a screenplay she adapted from the 2015 piece by Pressler.

Scafaria’s script is set in the late 2000s in New York City

in the wake of the financial crisis and explores the toll it took on the livelihood of the dancers who relied on Wall Street clientele.

“We could not have asked for a more exciting or talented lineup of performers to join our cast,” Adam Fogelson, chairman of STX-films, said in a statement.



Cardi B

John David Washington joins Christopher Nolan’s next

PTI | Los Angeles

‘BlacKkKlansman’ star John David Washington is set to star in Christopher Nolan’s next directorial venture.

According to reports, Nolan will also produce along with his partner Emma Thomas.

The project was described as an event film, although any other specifics including title and plot are currently under wraps.

Warner Bros earlier announced that Nolan’s upcoming untitled film will open in on July 17, 2020.

Washington is the son of veteran actor Denzel Washington.

Nolan’s last release was World War II drama ‘Dunkirk’, which won three Academy Awards and earned the filmmaker his first best director Oscar nod.

Lopez opens up about her engagement with Rodriguez

ANI | Los Angeles

American singer Jennifer Lopez and Alex Rodriguez recently got engaged after two years of dating. The singer is already excited to build a future with her beau and opened up about the same for the first time ever since her engagement.

Expressing her happiness, Lopez told People: “We’re really happy.”

Rodriguez also spoke about their relationship and added, “We have the appreciation for where we are in our lives today, and that’s what we’re enjoying the most.”

This comes just days after Rodriguez surprised Lopez with a stunning diamond ring and a romantic proposal while on a vacation

in the Bahamas.

After returning to New York from their island getaway, Lopez and Rodriguez revealed that engagement isn’t their only new collaboration.

The two just announced their first fashion partnership as a couple as the newest brand ambassadors for an eyewear label called Quay Australia.

The two co-stars in the new ad campaign and also inspired two different collections for the brand-Quay x JLo and Quay x ARod.

The pair believes in teamwork and they pull it off well. They seamlessly coordinate their red carpet fashion looks and they even set off a trend with their #10DayChallenge no-sugar, no-carb diets.

“Everything that we do, we do



Alex Rodriguez

together. He knows my dreams and I know his dreams, and together we feel like we’re stronger,” Lopez said.

The two also like spending quality time with their family, which includes Rodriguez’s daughters Natasha (14) and Ella (10) with ex-wife Cynthia Scurtis and Lopez’s 11-year-old twins Max and Emme with ex-hus-

band Marc Anthony.

While shooting with the eyewear brand in Miami, their children even stopped by the set.

“We all come down here and it’s our city, it’s our second home,” Lopez said.

“We’re constantly supporting each other in our individual endeavours and thinking about all the things that we can build together,” Lopez added.

The duo announced the happy news of their engagement on March 10, sharing matching photos of Lopez wearing her stunning diamond engagement ring as Rodriguez can be seen holding her hand in the picture.

Lopez was previously married to waiter Ojani Noa, dancer Cris Judd, and Marc Anthony, while Rodriguez settled his divorce with Scurtis in 2008.

Noah Centineo may take on He-Man’s role



Noah Centineo

IAN5 | Los Angeles

Actor Noah Centineo is in talks to play He-Man in the “Masters of the Universe” reboot.

Brothers Adam and Aaron Nee are directing the reboot, based on Mattel Films’ popular toy line that spawned a successful animated TV series (1983-85) as well as a 1987 film. The banner has collaborated with Sony on the new movie, reported variety.com

The property is about the warrior He-Man, the last hope of a magical land called Eternia. Dolph Lundgren starred in the original movie as the title character while Frank Langella played the villainous Skeletor.

Centineo has most recently starred in Netflix’s hit romantic comedies “To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before” and “Sierra Burgess Is a Loser”.

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Kaling lands comedy drama for Netflix

IAN5 | Los Angeles

Actress Mindy Kaling, who has Indian roots, is set to work on a semi-autobiographical coming-of-age comedy show.

“I’m joining the Netflix family. Lang Fisher and I are working on a brand new Netflix TV comedy about the life of a modern day first generation Indian American teenage girl. Get ready for lots of relatable awkward teen moments. More coming soon,” Kaling tweeted.

Netflix has given a 10-episode series order for it, reported deadline.com.

Kaling landed her first TV

staff-writing job on the first season of “The Office”. She became a rising star, ascending to an executive producer on the Emmy-winning series where she also played customer service representative Kelly Kapoor.

The actress, who has authored two books, went on to create, executive produce and star in the praised TV comedy “The Mindy Project”, which ran for six seasons.

Kaling’s feature “Late Night”, on which she serves as producer, writer and star opposite Emma Thompson, made a strong debut at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival.



Mindy Kaling

Harington compares Trump to GoT’s ‘mad king’

IAN5 | Los Angeles

“Game of Thrones” star Kit Harington has compared US President Donald Trump to

the fantasy show’s ‘mad boy-kings’ Joffrey Baratheon.

He said that if people had paid attention to the HBO hit, they could have avoided living in a “Thrones-like world”.

“I think it’s always been about two things for me,” variety.com quoted Harington as saying.

He added: “About dysfunctional families -- or families in general, always where the best drama is -- and the everlasting idea that people who seek power are very often the last people who should have it. Unfortunately, we’re leaving ‘Thrones’ with a Joffrey as the President of the United States of America.”



Kit Harington

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SPORTS

sports

New-look Germany make promising start

● Germany midfielder Leon Goretzka salvaged a draw against Serbia

Reuters | Wolfsburg, Germany

Germany's new-look team made a promising return to the international stage with a 1-1 draw against Serbia in a friendly on Wednesday, showing signs of improvement following a disastrous 2018.

The Germans, knocked out of the World Cup in the group stage and relegated in the Nations League last year, had only one player from their 2014 World Cup victory in the starting line-up and their oldest outfield player was aged 24.

More aggressive and quick-



Germany's Marco Reus in action with Serbia's Marko Dmitrovic

er than in recent games, with Kai Havertz, Julian Brandt and Leroy Sane playing behind forward Timo Werner, the hosts needed only three minutes to get a shot on target with Havertz firing the ball at Serbia keeper Marko Dmitrovic following a quick passing move.

Coach Joachim Loew sent world champions Mats Hummels, Jerome Boateng and Thomas Mueller into international retirement in a surprise decision last week as his team prepare to launch their Euro 2020 qualification campaign

against the Netherlands on Sunday.

Serbia went forward after 11 minutes and their first corner bounced off the back of two players to land perfectly for Luka Jovic to head in for his first international goal.

The 21-year-old, who has scored 22 goals in 35 appearances for Eintracht Frankfurt this season, is likely to be among the biggest transfer targets this summer, with Real Madrid and Barcelona among clubs reportedly interested.

Werner twice went close to

an equaliser before Serbia, who won promotion in the Nations League after an undefeated run in their group, wasted a chance when Adem Ljajic fired a shot over the bar.

But the Germans kept their foot firmly on the gas and wasted several chances in the second half before substitute Leon Goretzka grabbed a deserved equaliser in the 69th minute.

"In the first half the automation in this new team, playing together for the first time, did not function that well," Loew told reporters.

Juve opt for Asian pre-season amid Ronaldo US rape claims

AFP | Milan

Cristiano Ronaldo's Juventus will play the pre-season International Champions Cup in Asia and not in the United States amid the Portugal star's rape investigation there, the New York Times has reported.

Most of the matches take place in the United States but organisers are planning to play Juventus' elsewhere amid Ronaldo's legal case, eliminating the risk of the Portuguese star being detained by authorities in the US as part of their investigations, the newspaper reported.

Juventus have confirmed their participation in the event with the official programme to be unveiled on March 27.

Juventus' games will "most likely be in China and Singapore", where they will be joined by Premier League teams Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur, the New York Times said.

Ronaldo, 34, has denied allegations made by former model

Kathryn Mayorga that he sexually assaulted her in Las Vegas in 2009.

Las Vegas police asked Ronaldo to submit a DNA sample in January as part of their investigation into rape allegations made against him.

Contacted by AFP, a spokeswoman for Juventus said that "going east to Asia was normal after spending recent pre-seasons in the United States".

Juventus signed the five-time Ballon d'Or winner for 100 million euros (\$117 million) last summer from Real Madrid and pay him a 31-million-euro annual salary.

The team are on track for an eighth consecutive Italian league title, while his hat-trick against Atletico Madrid sent them through to the Champions League quarter-finals.

Ronaldo, meanwhile, rejoined his Portugal teammates this week ahead of Euro 2020 qualifying, as they begin their title defence, following a nine-month absence from the national team.



Juventus' forward Cristiano Ronaldo shoots a penalty to score during the UEFA Champions League match against Atletico Madrid (file photo)

Roaming acts set to dazzle race-goers during Bahrain GP weekend

TDT | Manama

The Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix will see an army of roaming performers helping keep race-goers entertained off the track next Thursday to Sunday at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

Offering something for everyone, these acts range from musicians and dancers to magicians and stilt-walkers, and each and every one of them will contribute to the "Limitless" fun of the Grand Prix weekend.

This year's roster of roaming performers includes Dr Bubbles, Tri-Colour Walkabout, Batucada Timba, the Steam Dancers, Circolo Stilt-Walkers, Circus Parade, The Dans, Men-Alien and Rainbow Ballet. But the long list of acts taking to BIC's Formula 1 Village vending area would not be complete without the Walking Funfair, Rainbow Carnival and Steve and Tom's Circus Entertainment.

Walking Funfair, also known as Oakleaf Stelzenkunst, was founded in 2004 by Bettina Eichblatt. The following years,

they consistently participated in carnival parades in Germany. In 2010, they took a big leap, developing from an amateur group to a professional street theatre company. Since then, Walking Funfair have performed all over Europe. One of their highlights is building technical supported costumes with moving parts like Ferris Wheels and roundabouts, fire-breathing dragons and inflatable, illuminated costumes – perfect for photo opportunities and much more.



A performer who will be seen at BIC

Ayyad gets hero's welcome as he touches down after win at Brave 22



Hussain Ayyad with his teammates at the airport

TDT | Manama

Brave Flyweight contender and Bahrain's Hussain Ayyad touched down home this week after a successful trip to the Philippines, where he quickly disposed of Jason Vergara in the preliminary card of Brave 22: Storm of Warriors, which took place last Friday, in Manila, Philippines.

Ayyad's performance was praised by commentators and fans alike, as he was able to lock in a triangle choke in the very first round to make his opponent tap out.

The KHK MMA representative received a true hero's welcome as his teammates showed their appreciation for "Iron" by flocking the Bahrain Airport and receiving their friend with open arms after yet another dominant win.

The team made sure to meet a smiling Ayyad, who was delighted with the surprise and posed for pictures with colleagues and fans of his work.

Ayyad is on a two-fight winning streak as he built on his dominant performance against Mohammed Abo Ali back at Brave 18, with a flawless victory

over a tough Vergara, who was fighting in front of his fans. After the fight, "Iron" showed his sportsmanship by praising his opponent's toughness, even though the fight lasted less than five minutes.

As Brave Combat Federation still waits to crown an inaugural Flyweight champion, Ayyad made sure he was inserted in the conversation for a title fight with two dominant performances in a row. "Iron" is hoping to build up to an eventual title shot in the fastest growing MMA promotion in the world.

Shaikh Khalid emerges lone candidate for BOC presidency

TDT | Manama

HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa is the only candidate running to become the new president of the Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC), it was announced yesterday.

As submission of BOC candidacy campaign came to an end, it emerged that Bahrain Athletics Association candidate HH Shaikh Khalid emerged the lone presidential candidate for a four-year electoral cycle.

However, the one and only remaining seat in the board of directors is being closely contested by Bahrain Swimming Association president Mohammed Mejjel, Bahrain Martial Arts Association board member Faisal Kanoo and Bahrain Triathlon Association general secretary Mai Al Haji.

The campaign was overseen by BOC secretary general Mohammed Hassan Al Nusuf and Executive Director of Sports Affairs Abdul Jalil Asad, among others.



Manchester United's caretaker manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer (R) celebrates their victory with midfielder Paul Pogba (L) after a match (file photo)

Pogba wants 'happy coach' Solskjaer to stay at Man Utd

AFP | London

Paul Pogba hopes Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is given the Manchester United manager's job on a permanent basis after the Norwegian turned the club's fortunes around.

The former United striker has transformed the mood and results at Old Trafford, leading the club into the Champions League quarter-finals and lifting them into contention for a top-four finish in the Premier League.

When Solskjaer was given the role following the departure of Jose Mourinho in December it was widely assumed he was merely keeping the seat warm for a bigger managerial name but his success has led to a clamour for the appointment to be made full-time and midfielder Pogba has now added his voice.

"Of course we want him to stay," the France midfielder told Sky Sports. "The results have been great. I have a great relationship with him, he has a great relationship with the players."

"When a player is happy, he wants to keep being happy. Solskjaer deserves it. He knows the club, he knows everything about the club."

"He is a really happy coach that gave confidence back to

When a player is happy, he wants to keep being happy. Solskjaer deserves it. He knows the club, he knows everything about the club

PAUL POGBA

the players. This gave us the freedom to play and enjoy football again because maybe we lost that with the results that we had before."

It is a striking contrast to the final months of Mourinho's reign, with Pogba the player who was repeatedly claimed to be at odds with the Portuguese.

He declined to elaborate, saying only: "Maybe we lost confidence, maybe things went wrong. A lot of talking outside that we weren't used to."

"I don't like to talk about the past. I like to talk about the future because that's what matters. We are better now and the results have been brilliant."

Despite their good run, United were beaten by Wolves in the FA Cup quarter-finals on Saturday, a week after losing to Arsenal in the Premier League -- the only two domestic defeats since Solskjaer replaced Mourinho in December.

Novak says all good with Roger, Rafa

Djokovic has dismissed suggestion of a rift with Federer as tennis politics persist

● Novak Djokovic maintains he would welcome the input of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal despite Kermode ouster

AFP | Miami

Novak Djokovic played down a reported rift with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal on Wednesday, saying he welcomed their views on the controversial ousting of ATP Chairman Chris Kermode.

Federer and Nadal ripped top-ranked Djokovic, current president of the ATP Player Council, for failing to contact them over the decision to terminate Englishman Kermode, whose reign began in 2014 and concludes at year's end after a vote at Indian Wells earlier this month.

Serbian star Djokovic vociferously pushed for change despite many within the game strongly advocating for Kermode to remain in charge.

Federer said Wednesday he was not "chasing" Djokovic for an explanation despite claiming at Indian Wells it was "hard to understand" why Djokovic turned down a request to discuss the situation.

Djokovic, however, maintains he would welcome the input of the Swiss and Spanish legends.

"We welcome them as well as anyone else who wants to join the political discussions," Djokovic said ahead of the ATP Miami Open, where he is due to begin play Friday.



Novak Djokovic (L) and Roger Federer shake hands at the end of their tennis match in Paris (file photo)

"The player council is only part of the structure. We are not part of the board or deciding anything. We are in consultation and collaboration with player board representatives."

"Federer and Nadal have been icons of our sport for so many years and their opinions are extremely important to everyone. If they want to be active and part of it, either officially or unofficially, I think it's only positive for us."

"I saw Roger today. We were cutting the ribbon at the opening of the center court. We had a small chat but there was no time to talk about the political stuff. Hopefully we will have time in the next few days to go through some things."

Novak sees no change

Nadal stressed the decision to make a change at the top of

the ATP was so big that everyone should have been consulted, raising the chance of a major fall-out between the three stars.

"I have not noticed anything from their side or from mine," Djokovic said.

"It's not necessary for people to create any tensions or divisions between us. On the contrary, I have a good relationship with both of them. We always respected each other. We are rivals of course so it's hard to be friends."

"We need an open dialogue and for people to have different opinions. That's what a democratic society is. We all try and be part of that."

Djokovic said many players were frustrated at the current system.

"It's frustrating for me personally and other players who have been part of the structure

because it has failed us many times," he said.

"And many times when top players wanted to be involved and be heard they felt like everything they have said was not really followed through in a way it was supposed to be."

Political conversations will continue over the next few months as Kermode's successor is found, but for now Djokovic, who suffered an early exit in California, will aim to transfer his energy into landing a seventh Miami title.

Djokovic, 31, enjoyed a stellar 2018, winning Wimbledon and the US Open before taking his major tally to 15 by reigning in Australia at the start of 2019.

Federer, meanwhile, is chasing his 101st career title after narrowly losing to Austrian Dominic Thiem in the Indian Wells final last weekend.

Disgruntled Icardi back training with Inter



Inter Milan's forward Mauro Icardi (R) misses an opportunity to open the scoring during a match against Parma

AFP | Milan

Disgruntled Inter Milan striker Mauro Icardi returned to training with the club yesterday after a month on the sidelines amid a protracted contract dispute.

The 26-year-old Argentine has been absent since February 13 after being stripped of the captain's armband.

He had complained of a knee injury but the club insisted a scan has not revealed any new injury.

But he returned to the fold at the team's Appiano Gentile training centre, north of Milan, training separately in a reduced squad as many of his teammates are on international duty.

The strained relationship had thawed in recent days with Icardi missing the team's 3-2 derby win over city rivals AC Milan which moved them third in Serie A, two points ahead of their rivals.

Inter are 22 points behind leaders Juventus, and 13 adrift of second-placed Napoli.

Luciano Spalletti's side have crashed out of the Europa league and are now looking to consolidate next year's Champions League place.

Icardi -- joint top scorer in Serie A last season with 29 goals -- has scored 15 goals in all competitions for the club this term.

He has not scored in the league since December 15, with his last game against Parma on February 9.

Inter next play Lazio on March 31.

Giroud seeks France return to boost game time

Reuters | Paris

Chelsea striker Olivier Giroud wants to move back to France when his contract expires at the end of the season after growing frustrated by a lack of

playing time under manager Maurizio Sarri.

Giroud has not started a Premier League game for Chelsea since the club signed Argentina international striker Gonzalo Higuain in January.

"The future may be hectic this summer," Giroud told French radio station RTL. "I'm not afraid to go down a level to have more playing time. It could be I end my career in France."

The striker, who won the World Cup with France last year, scored 33 goals in 73 league appearances for Montpellier before moving to Arsenal in 2012, and has attracted interest from Olympique Lyonnais, according to reports in the French media.

The 32-year-old has been used mainly in the Europa League by Sarri and is the competition's top scorer this season with nine goals in nine appearances, but does not believe he can force his way into the Italian coach's Premier League plans.

"Today, I have the impression there's clearly no competition (for places in attack) since January. It's like that, I know



Olivier Giroud



Chelsea are sixth in the Premier League, three points below the fourth and final Champions League qualification place currently occupied by Arsenal

that I will only play in the Europa League," Giroud added.

"I try to do what it takes to be as effective and as important as I can for the team."

Chelsea are sixth in the Premier League, three points below the fourth and final Champions League qualification place currently occupied by Arsenal.

Sarri's side could also secure Champions League football for next season by winning the Europa League, where they face Slavia Prague in the quarter-finals.