

Ariana opens up about her fascination for Jim

Ariana Grande has said the celebrity she still loves the most is Hollywood star actor Jim Carrey. Grande said she adored the "Dumb and Dumber" star even more because of his inspirational quotes about depression, reports mirror.co.uk. **P14**

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THE DAILY **tribune**



Kim Kardashian slams people criticising her for working with Donald Trump

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His Majesty orders reinstatement of citizenship

Manama

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday issued an order, reinstating the citizenship of 551 convicts, whose nationality had been revoked as per court rulings.

The royal order is in line with the provisions of Article 24 bis of Law 58/2006 with respect to the Protection of the Community against Terrorist Acts stipulating that rulings related to citizenship withdrawal will not be effective unless they are approved by HM the King.

HM King Hamad had already given directives to the competent authorities to evaluate the situation of convicts whose citizenship are revoked before the final implementation of the court judgement.

The study and evaluation of the situation of convicts should be based on criteria pertaining to the seriousness, impact and consequences of the crimes, as well as on the danger the convict may pose on national security.

HM King Hamad requested the Interior Minister to study the citizenship revocation rulings, and to prepare a list of reinstatement beneficiaries.

\$3bn support to Sudan

Riyadh

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have granted Sudan \$3 billion in support, Saudi Press Agency said yesterday.

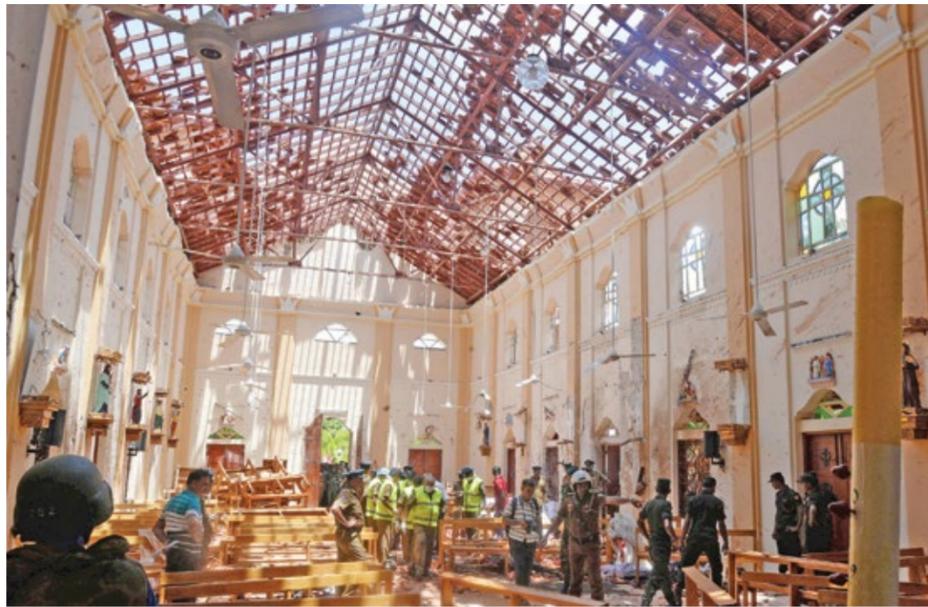
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02 'Cancer cure research progressing at fast pace'

03 623 rice bags confiscated after trademark violations

04 Schoolboy, 10, found not guilty of attacking injuring classmate



Crime scene officials inspect the site of a bomb blast inside a church in Negombo.

● **The first blasts took place at three churches celebrating Easter Mass on Sunday morning.**

● **Access to major social media platforms and messaging services were suspended temporarily by the Sri Lankan government.**

Colombo

Seven suspects were arrested in connection with the Easter Sunday bomb attacks on eight churches and hotels in Sri Lanka that left more than 200 dead and hundreds more injured, the country's defence minister said 10 years after the end of a civil war in which



bomb blasts in the South Asian nation were common.

The string of assaults rocked the capital of Colombo and Batticaloa in Sri Lanka's Eastern Province.

Anil Jayasinghe, director general of hospitals at the Ministry of Health, said there were foreigners among the dead, while nearly 500 wounded people had been taken to various hospitals for treatment.

A police official said that 35 foreigners were among the dead and hospital sources said British, Dutch and American citizens had been killed, with Britons and Japanese also injured.

A Portuguese man, two Chinese citizens and an Indian citizen were among the dead, news agencies in their countries reported.

Three police were killed during the raids on a house in Colombo on Sunday afternoon after the government announced it would impose a country-wide curfew and suspended social media.

By the early evening the death toll had reached 215, with 450 people injured.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe called a National Security Council meeting at his home. An island-wide curfew was announced.

"I strongly condemn the cow-

ardly attacks on our people today. I call upon all Sri Lankans during this tragic time to remain united and strong," the prime minister said in a Twitter post.

"Please avoid propagating unverified reports and speculation."

RANIL WICKREMESINGHE

tion. The government is taking immediate steps to contain this situation."

As of Sunday evening local time, no group had claimed responsibility for the attacks, which targeted a country that fought a decades-long war with Tamil separatists until 2009, but where there has been a lull in violence for at least a decade.

Access to major social media platforms and messaging services were suspended temporarily by the Sri Lankan government.

Police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekera said the seventh blast hit a hotel in the southern Colombo suburb of Dehiwala, killing two people.

Brahma Chellaney, a professor



A relative of a victim of the explosion reacts at the police mortuary in Colombo.

Easter Sunday horror

Sri Lanka in a state of shock after hundreds killed in bomb attacks

of strategic studies at the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi, told the New York Times that radical groups had been quietly growing in influence for years in Sri Lanka, as well as in the nearby Indian state of Tamil Nadu and the island nation of the Maldives.

Chellaney said it was unexpected that the attackers had the confidence to raid hotels in Sri Lanka, saying that such establishments had tried to provide tight security during the island's civil war and ever since.

The first blasts took place at three churches celebrating Easter Mass on Sunday morning: St Anthony's Shrine in Colombo, St Sebastian's Church in Negombo, 20 miles north of the capital, and Zion Church in the eastern city of Batticaloa.

In one case a suicide bomber waited patiently in a queue for the Easter Sunday breakfast buffet at Sri Lanka's Cinnamon Grand hotel before setting off explosives strapped to his back.

Carrying a plate, the man, who had registered at the hotel the night before as Mohamed Az-zam Mohamed, was just about to be served when he set off his devastating strike in the packed restaurant, a manager at the Sri Lankan hotel said.

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SECURITY ALERT

Daesh claim failed terrorist attack on Saudi interior ministry building

Riyadh

Four heavily armed attackers were killed in a failed terrorist attack claimed by Daesh on an Interior Ministry building in Zulfi, north of Riyadh on Sunday.

The attack happened at 9:49 a.m. on Sunday morning at Zulfi's General Directorate of Investigations Center, 260 kilometers northwest of Riyadh, Al Arabiya TV reported.

Initial reports said that four masked and heavily armed attackers, one aged about 40 and three others aged between 18 to 20 years old, were killed by security forces as they tried to



Security personnel at the site of attack.

crash their car through the main entrance of the compound.

Three of the attackers died during the exchange of fire with

the security forces. The fourth man managed to escape and hid in a neighbourhood nearby until he was killed by pursuing security officers.

The attackers were carrying pistols, machine guns and Molotov cocktails, officials said.

The gunmen were all reported to be Saudi nationals, although the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) quoted officials as saying their identities were still being determined.

Daesh said in a statement by its propaganda arm Amaq that the attack on the base had been carried out by a group of its militants.

A spokesperson from the Kingdom's Presidency of State Security said that three government security personnel suffered minor injuries during the exchange of fire with the assailants.

"The security authorities in the Presidency managed to thwart the terrorist act targeting the center of investigations ... and dealt with them as required by the situation," the spokesman was quoted by SPA as saying.

Special security personnel said they were still assessing the explosive materials that the terrorists had in their possession, the spokesperson said.



His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa received members of the royal family and senior officials at Gudaibiya Palace yesterday. He discussed with them local and regional issues, stressing that the Kingdom is the state of institutions and law which have to be respected. He praised the role of Bahraini people in serving their nation and society, stressing the one-family spirit characterising the Bahraini community under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.



His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, yesterday attended the closing ceremony of the 29th Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) recitation of the Holy Qur'an and Knowledge of Islamic Studies competition, held under his patronage. Upon arrival, His Highness Shaikh Mohammed was welcomed by the BDF Assistant Chief of Staff for Human Resources, Major General Shaikh Ali bin Rashid Al Khalifa, Commander of the Bahraini Royal Special Force, Major General Isa Mohammed Al Rumaihi, the Religious Guidance Director, and a number of senior BDF officers. During the ceremony, HH Shaikh Mohammed highlighted the support provided by the BDF in organising the annual event, which provides a platform to provide knowledge on the noble teachings of Islam.



'Cancer cure research progressing at fast pace'

World renowned biotechnologist Dr Robert Langer highlights the need to boost research commercialisation to create life-saving products

Mehr Jan TDT | Manama

A leading exemplary, who has contributed tremendously to the field of biotechnology, Dr Robert Langer is widely recognised as a renowned researcher whose publications have been cited over 283,000 times. His research laboratory at MIT is considered the largest biomedical engineering lab in the world; maintaining over \$10 million in annual grants and over 100 researchers. The US Embassy in the Kingdom recently hosted Dr Langer as he took part at the Global Entrepreneurship Congress meetings conducted. He was also visiting the island as a guest of the Capital Governorate. The Tribune had an exclusive interview with the prominent scientist as he emphasised the need for "research commercialisation" and shed light on his technological contributions to many branches of medicine including fatal diseases like cancer. Excerpts:

What has been one of the

most groundbreaking discoveries you have been a part of?

I have been part of the research, which discovered how to control the movement of macromolecules through solid materials such as polymers. This would help us pioneer the field of controlled drug release and numerous lifesaving systems to treat cancer, heart disease, and mental health disease. Also the isolating the first inhibitors of blood vessel growth, which would help lay the groundwork for the development of angiogenesis inhibitors, such as avastin, which are widely used to treat cancer and blindness.

How close are we to be able to find a cure for cancer?

Not close. But progress is being made. One of the latest advances is new ways of unlocking the immune system to treat cancer.

How far has the research and technological advancements led to breakthroughs in biotechnology?

Long ways. It has led to nu-



Dr Langer speaking at the Global Entrepreneurship Congress.

merous new therapies for treating many diseases like cancer and has laid the foundation for many more. It has also led to new ways of providing foods, like genetically modified foods, and contributed to many areas of our society.

What has been the major impact of your initiative to isolate the first angiogenesis inhibitor?

It has led to new treatments for cancer and the first pharmacologic treatments for eye diseases like macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. An article in the journal Nature estimates that they will be used by over 500 million people.

What is the latest findings on your work pertaining to tissue engineering in regenerative medicine?

It is leading to artificial skin,

An angiogenesis inhibitor is a substance that inhibits the growth of new blood vessels. It is used to effectively treat cancer, macular degeneration in the eye, and other diseases.

new treatments for paralysis, new approaches for restoring hearing, approaches for creating new blood vessels for treatment of heart disease, and the creation of an artificial pancreas to treat

around the world?

I think it is very important. There are numerous benefits: creation of new life-saving products, new methods of transportation, new methods of communication, and overall will change the future of the world for the better. It will also build the economy and create countless numbers of new jobs.

What current projects are you and your team leading right now, focused upon making a major impact towards the betterment of human life?

There are many. We are doing a number of projects funded by the Gates Foundation to help the developing world. These include ways of creating new pills that can deliver drugs orally for many weeks if needed so that a patient can be treated with a single course of treatment (malaria and AIDS are two examples), a way-- based on a new three-dimensional printing technology we developed -- to create a single step method of immunising patients as opposed to the current procedure of many multiple injections, and new approaches for providing vital nutrients like iron and Vitamin A through the use of novel edible materials that can withstand harsh cooking conditions that can encapsulate such nutrients and then release them to the body once they are eaten. We are also developing approaches for delivering macromolecules like insulin orally by designing new types of pills, and we are doing a lot of work in the area of nanomedicine to deliver potential new therapeutics based on siRNA, mRNA, and DNA. Finally we are doing a lot of work in the area of tissue engineering including developing an intestine on a chip and an artificial pancreas to treat diabetes.

diabetes, among others. It is also leading to organs on a chip including an intestine on a chip and a heart on a chip.

Have there been any major advancements through your findings and work regarding the treatment and/or cure to diabetes 1 and 2?

Yes. We have made an artificial pancreas based on the synthesis of new super biocompatible polymers (that prevent a foreign body response) that can be used to encapsulate islet cells. We have also just published a way to deliver insulin orally that is based on a swallow able capsule that can automatically inject insulin into someone's stomach tissue (which has minimal pain receptors).

How important is it to encourage 'research commercialisation' among various facilities and organisations



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'Investing in youth a top priority'

Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister yesterday welcomed this year's recipients of the Crown Prince's International Scholarship Programme (CPISP), at Riffa Palace.

During the meeting, HRH the Crown Prince affirmed that investing in Bahrain's youth is an important element of the Kingdom's efforts to help drive sustainable development as part of Bahrain's comprehensive development, led by HM King Hamad.

HRH the Crown Prince went on to highlight the significant achievements of the CPISP, stressing that the programme, which is now in its 20th edition, continues to deliver educational opportunities at world-class academic institutions for remarkable Bahraini students.

HRH the Crown Prince concluded by expressing his appre-



HRH the Crown Prince receives scholarship recipients.

ciation for all who continue to support the CPISP and extended his congratulations to the students for meeting the program's rigorous standards.

The recipients of 2019 CPISP scholarships are: Abdulla Mose Ali (International School of Choueifat), Ali Farouk Al Akri (St Christopher's School), Yasmine Nabile Nouredine (Ibn Khuldoon National School),

Zain Mohammed Zainal (AbdulRahman Kanoo International School), Ahmed Ebrahim Ali (Shaikh Abdul Aziz Bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Boys Secondary School), Ahmed Husain Salman (Al Naeem Secondary School), Hassan Tariq Al Qassab (Shaikh Abdul Aziz Bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Boys Secondary School), Fatima Mohammed Abdulla (Saar

187
university scholarships
have been awarded
under the CPISP until
now.

Secondary Girls School), Leen Mazen Al Nasoor (Al Maariffa Secondary Girls School) and Sara Saeed Mohammed (Muharrag Secondary Girls School).

Recipients were selected from among 420 Bahraini applicants following a comprehensive process that took into account their Grade Point Average, IELTS score, SAT score, leadership training, and a criti-

cal thinking course, which were organised by the CPISP as part of the candidacy training.

The CPISP offers scholarship recipients the opportunity to choose their own fields of study at any university they gain acceptance to.

The programme has awarded a total of 187 university scholarships since its establishment in 1999 by HRH the Crown Prince.

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Zafran

Over 600 rice bags were confiscated from shops during inspections carried out by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism after noticing trademark infringements.

The inspections were part of efforts by the ministry to ensure food safety and hygiene during the month of Ramadan.

The infringements were considered to be misleading the consumers, the ministry stated.

According to the officials, action is being taken against company that sold the rice bags.

"As part of the efforts by the ministry's inspection centre's preparations ahead of Ramadan, an inspection campaign is being carried out to ensure the rights of consumers and traders alike," the ministry stated.

"The inspection team confiscated 623 rice bags from a company after it was clear that the company infringed a trademark. The violation is one that leads to misleading consumers and the issue is being taken seriously," a ministry representative said.

Another inspection by the Standards and Metrology Directorate within the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism revealed that more than 100

weighting tools in market failed to meet the required standards, potentially giving wrong readings.

The inspection campaign by the authorities revealed that nine per cent of the weighing scales in the market were not meeting the required standards.

The Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism had in recent years stepped up its inspection team by establishing an inspection centre.

"In terms of inspection, we had previously suffered because we had small and fragmented inspection teams," the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Zayed Al Zayani said last December.

"The small workforce did not allow us to do a comprehensive job. We set up a central inspection team and we expanded the manpower within that team.



Commerce Ministry teams carry out their inspection at a warehouse.

"We ended up having 50 inspectors cross-trained to do all the inspection that the ministry does.

We have taken a clear stance that we will enforce the law. "We will not tolerate people

who have tried to break the law or cheat consumers. We have shut down 33 businesses, which have



We ended up having 50 inspectors cross-trained to do all the inspection that the ministry does. We have taken a clear stance that we will enforce the law.

MR AL ZAYANI

violated the law plus a 106 were sent to the public prosecutor.

"We do this because we want a clean business environment and we want to have as much consumer protection possible.

"We also want to make sure that those who abide by the law are protected and those who are outside the boundaries of the law are not able to gain an unfair competitive advantage."

623 rice bags confiscated after trademark violations

TradeQuest Programme winners honoured



Award winning teams with guests and dignitaries.

TDT | Manama

Under the patronage of Zayed Al Zayani, the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism and the Minister in Charge of Bahrain Bourse and in the presence of Rasheed Mohammed Al Ma-

raj, the CBB Governor, the final TradeQuest Awards Ceremony was held yesterday, where high school and university students taking part in the TradeQuest Programme, organised by Bahrain Bourse, were honoured with top finalists receiving a total of BD30,000 cash reward. The ceremony was attended

by students and their respective families, senior representatives from sponsoring organisations, and other senior officials from the Ministry of Education, as well as the officials of Bahrain Bourse.

On this occasion, Mr Al Zayani assured that one of the key competitive advantages of

the Kingdom is its human capital who are tech-savvy, young, educated, and bilingual, and that's what TradeQuest aims to nurture.

"We strongly believe in the boundless potential of young talent, empowering them with practical skills to better equip them for the future," the minis-

ter added.

The top three winners from the Private schools category are: 1st Place – Ibn Khuldoon National School, 2nd Place – Al Noor International School, and 3rd Place – St. Christopher's School.

The top three winners from the Government schools cat-

egory are: 1st Place – Khawla Secondary Girls School, 2nd Place – AlNoor Secondary Girls School, and 3rd Place – Jidhafs Secondary Girls School.

The top three winners from the Universities category are: 1st place – Ahlia University, 2nd Place – BIBF, and 3rd Place – Royal University for Women.

Schoolboy, 10, found not guilty of attacking, injuring classmate

Defendant's lawyer told judges that the case lacked solid evidence to hold his client guilty

TDT | Manama

In a rare case, the Lower Criminal Court has acquitted a ten-year-old student of causing a head injury to his schoolmate.

The boy is said to have been playing with the victim and the latter crashed his head against the wall, injuring his head.

The event happened before the morning assembly and the family

of the injured student filed a case against the 10-year-old boy, according to prosecutors.

"The boy was shocked to learn that his friend's family lodged a case against him, accusing of deliberately injuring while playing together," the defendant's lawyer said.

Meanwhile, the boy's lawyer told judges that the case lacked solid evidence to hold his client



The boy was shocked to learn that his friend's family lodged a case, accusing of deliberately injuring while playing together.

LAWYER

guilty.

"He (the 10-year-old boy) took the injured boy after the incident to the school counsellor along with his brother, something that wouldn't have happened if he had intentionally attacked him.

"The medical report confirmed that the boy's injury was due to a fall on the ground and it wasn't caused by a physical assault. Therefore, the accusations

against my client were false," he added.

The lawyer also presented to the court the academic performance of the student, which confirmed he was very good at his studies, while the school administration praised his behaviour and commitment.

Taking into account these facts, the Lower Criminal Court decided to acquit the boy.

Woman jailed for blackmailing husband

TDT | Manama

A woman allegedly resorted to blackmail her husband in order to force divorce, threatening him of publishing obscene images of him with his second wife.

The defendant had stolen the images from the victim's mobile phone.

The victim filed a case against her, as a result of which the Lower Criminal Court sentenced her to three months behind bars.

500

Bahraini dinars in fine was imposed on the woman for blackmailing her husband.

Court rejects compensation plea for lack of evidence

TDT | Manama

The High Administrative Court yesterday rejected a lawsuit filed by a Bahraini citizen who demanded over BD5,000 in compensation for a land that was acquired and turned into a public road in 1988, claiming that he owned the land back then and that it was forcefully taken from him.

The court rejected the man's claims as he didn't provide any documents proving his ownership of the land, and ordered him to pay the court fees.

The plaintiff, who alleged that he owned the land in 1988,

the year when part of it was acquired and turned into a public road, failed to provide the court with documents proving his claims.

Instead, he was only able to provide ownership documents dated on December 2, 2007, almost ten years after the incident of the land acquisition, which he demanded compensation for, took place.

According to court files, the man demanded a BD5,001 compensation for the land, in addition to "legal interests" of 10 per cent for each year since 1988 until today.

He claimed that 432 square



Rejecting the lawsuit, the court ordered the plaintiff to pay its fees.

meters of his land was acquired without an official acquisition authorisation and without being compensated.

The court initially assigned an expert to examine the location and issue a detailed report mentioning the condition of the land and its market value.

However, the court withdrew this decision after the plaintiff wasn't able to prove his ownership of the land at the time of acquisition, as shown in the ownership document he provided.

The court decided to reject the lawsuit and order the plaintiff to pay the court fees.

"She sent me personal pictures of me with my second wife. They were private images and she warned me that if I don't divorce her she would share the images with the public," the victim said.

The woman was accused of disturbing her husband and misusing her phone as well as blackmailing him.

The woman admitted to her crime and the Lower Criminal Court held her guilty and sentenced her to three months behind bars.

She was also fined BD500.

US envoy honours contest winners

The GIST Tech-I Competition is an annual competition for science and technology entrepreneurs from emerging economies worldwide.

TDT | Manama
Harpreet Kaur

The US Ambassador to Bahrain, Justin Siberell honoured the winners at an award ceremony held for the eighth annual Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) Tech-I Competition.

The GIST Tech-I Competition is an annual competition for science and technology entrepreneurs from emerging economies worldwide.

Aspiring innovators submit their ideas and startups online which are then reviewed by experts before they enter a global public vote to pick the top entrepreneurs, who compete in the Tech-I finals.

Ambassador Siberell congratulated the Tech-I 2019 finalists. Speaking to Tribune, he said: "This year we started out with more than 500 applications. The hard work and dedication illustrate that these 24 finalists are truly some of the world's best and brightest entrepreneurs."

Shura Council approves proposal to ban sale of energy drinks to children

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Zafran

A proposed law that aims to reduce the consumption of energy drinks in the nation has been approved by legislators yesterday.

Ban on sale of energy drinks to those under 18 years could be implemented as a proposed law was approved yesterday by the Shura Council.

This comes after its youth affairs committee placed a proposal intended to reduce the consumption of energy drinks in the country as reported by Tribune yesterday.

The proposal now needs to be drafted to a law and referred to the House of

Representatives.

According to the proposed law, those who sell energy drinks to children would be fined up to BD2,000.

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

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

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

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



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

and limit the consumption on those under 18.

The committee stated that due to the unhealthy nature of energy drinks, it aims to reduce its consumption in the country.

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

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

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

Jarir Bookstore to open BD4m outlet in the Kingdom

TDT | Manama
Harpreet Kaur

Jarir Bookstore, the largest retailer of books and consumer electronics in Saudi Arabia, will open a branch in the Kingdom next year.

Jarir Chief Operating Officer Nassir Al Ageel noted Seef District as the best location for their new branch, due to its attractive investment environment.

"The area is considered to be the prime tourism and commercial destination for residents and tourists in the Kingdom, and we believe this showroom will contribute to the overall sales growth of Jarir, which will reflect positively on our shareholders," he added.

Al Ageel indicated that



Mr Al Ageel speaks at the press conference.

the amount of investment in this showroom is around \$10 million (BD4 million), and it should contribute to providing many job opportunities in Bahrain.

The company will initially employ 40 Bahrainis, but the figure will go up to 70 depending on business development,

he said.

He added that the new showroom will be the ultimate destination for the lovers of latest technology gadgets and books, as it will offer a very wide range of office supplies, school supplies, English and Arabic books, arts and crafts, smartphone and laptops and



An artist's impression of the proposed Jarir Bookstore in Seef.

video games.

More branches will be opened in Bahrain later, Mr Al Ageel added.

"We will open 3-4 showrooms in Bahrain including a branch in Riffa," he said.

The company has been pushing ahead with expansion plans

into Arabian Gulf countries.

The Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) has supported the firm throughout their set-up process.

Jarir Bookstore was started in 1979 in the Saudi capital Riyadh as a bookshop that sold newspapers, magazines and school supplies.

WORLD
world

Saudi, UAE pledge \$3 bn aid for Sudan

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates yesterday announced three billion dollars (2.7 billion euros) in financial support for Sudan following the overthrow of long-time leader Omar al-Bashir.

The oil-rich Gulf states pledged to inject \$500 million into the Sudanese central bank and \$2.5 billion to help provide food, medicine and petroleum products, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

It did not specify if the money is a gift or a loan.

The deposit for the central bank is aimed at shoring up the Sudanese pound, the SPA said.

In recent years Sudan has been hit by an acute lack of dollars, a key factor behind the nationwide protests that led to the toppling of Bashir by the army this month.

After weeks of silence on Sudan's political turmoil, Saudi Arabia and the UAE called for "stability" and a "peaceful transition" in the days following Bashir's ouster.

Both Gulf nations have voiced backing for Sudan's military rulers, who are facing calls from protesters to cede power to a civilian transitional government.



Sudanese protesters gesture in front of a banner depicting ousted and detained president Omar al-Bashir, during a protest outside the army headquarters in the capital Khartoum

Since Bashir's ouster the Sudanese pound has steadily strengthened on the black market, and on Sunday it jumped to 45 per dollar, after trading at 72 at one stage last week.

The official exchange rate is 47.5 pounds to the dollar.

Earlier media reports that

Saudi Arabia was expected to send aid to Sudan were seen as a factor boosting the pound.

The Sudanese currency had plunged even after the United States lifted its 20-year-old trade embargo on the country in October 2017.

Expectations that the end of

US sanctions would bring an economic recovery failed to materialise, putting pressure on the pound.

The country's economic crisis has deepened since the secession of South Sudan in 2011 that took away the bulk of oil earnings.

Cash worth \$113 mn seized at Bashir's home: Sudan army



Sudanese boys flash victory signs as they ride on a pickup during a rally outside the army complex in Sudan's capital Khartoum on April

Khartoum, Sudan

Sudan's army ruler General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan said yesterday that more than 113 million dollars worth of cash in three currencies has been seized from ousted leader Omar al-Bashir's residence.

He said a team of police, army and security agents found seven million euros (\$7.8 million), \$350,000 and five billion Sudanese pounds (\$105 mil-

lion) during a search at Bashir's home.

Sudan's new acting prosecutor general Al-Waleed Sayed Ahmed meanwhile asked authorities to register all private properties belonging to officials of the previous regime, the official SUNA news agency reported. He also asked them to stop processing requests for the transfer of ownership of properties that belonged to former regime officials and members of their families.

Incident on SpaceX pad could delay its first manned flight



Visitors at Playalinda Beach look on as a SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket launches from Pad 39B at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, on April 11, 2019

Washington, United States

A mysterious but apparently serious incident occurred Saturday in Cape Canaveral, Florida involving the SpaceX capsule intended to carry American astronauts into space late this year, the private company and NASA announced.

"Earlier today, SpaceX conducted a series of engine tests on a Crew Dragon test vehicle on our test stand at Landing Zone 1 in Cape Canaveral, Florida," a SpaceX spokesman said in a statement. "The initial tests completed successfully but the final test resulted in an anomaly on the test stand."

A photo on the Florida Today website showed large amounts of smoke pouring out of the test site, and there was speculation about a possible explosion, but neither SpaceX nor NASA would provide any immediate detail.

NASA administrator Jim Bridenstine referred on Twitter only to an "anomaly."

"This is why we test," he

added. "We will learn, make the necessary adjustments and safely move forward."

Crew Dragon undertook a successful test flight in March, sending an unmanned capsule to dock for five days with the International Space Station before returning to Earth.

NASA called the flight "a major milestone," and it raised hopes that the Crew Dragon's first manned flight could take place before year's end.

The capsule is equipped with eight rocket engines (named SuperDraco) that can provide an emergency backup system: for example, if the launch vehicle encounters a problem, SuperDraco allows the capsule to quickly detach and return the astronauts safely to Earth.

NASA is counting on SpaceX's capsule, as well as Boeing's Starliner, to ferry astronauts to and from the ISS, a task handled since 2011 by Russia.

SpaceX was founded in 2002 by Elon Musk to help reduce space transportation costs -- and with an ultimate goal of helping colonize Mars.

Egyptians vote in second day of referendum to extend Sisi rule



Egyptian security forces stand guard at the entrance of a polling station in the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria, where locals were voting in a referendum on constitutional amendments on the second day of a three-day poll.

Cairo, Egypt

Egyptians voted for a second day yesterday in a referendum on proposed constitutional amendments aimed at cementing the rule of President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

Sisi is widely expected to win backing for changes making it possible for him to stay in power until 2030.

Egyptian media outlets have carried images of packed voting stations.

Some voters say their employers have encouraged them to vote, while others say they have received food coupons from unidentified people.

In their initial report on the first day of the nationwide elec-

toral process, an international observer team said "there were no hurdles to voting".

The three-day referendum bucks the trend of North Africa's renewed uprisings, in which mass pro-democracy protests this month swept away veteran presidents in Algeria and Sudan.

Former defence minister Sisi took power in 2013 and was elected president in 2014 after leading the army's overthrow of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi.

He was re-elected for another four-year term in 2018 with more than 97 percent of the vote. The proposed constitutional changes would allow him to extend his current term by two years and to run for another

six-year term.

Since Sisi took power, rights campaigners have regularly accused his government of abuses including mass trials and torture, as well as a clampdown on opposition and the press.

Human Rights Watch has slammed the proposed changes, saying they would "entrench repression".

In a statement Saturday, the New York-based watchdog criticised the "grossly unfree, rights-abusive environment" of the vote.

Supporters of the amendments say they will help ensure Egypt's political stability, security and economic development.

The results are expected to be announced on April 27.

Pakistan PM Imran Khan makes first visit to Iran

Tehran, Iran

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan began his first official visit to Iran yesterday for talks set to focus on strengthening ties and countering terrorism, state media reported.

Khan began his two-day visit with a stop in the northeastern holy city of Mashhad, Iran's second largest and home to the shrine of Imam Reza who is revered by Shia Muslims, state television said in a live broadcast.

After visiting the shrine, Khan was to fly to Tehran where today he is expected to hold talks with President Hassan Rouhani and other top officials.

Khan's visit to Iran, the first since he took office last year, also comes days after gunmen killed 14 members of Pakistan's security forces in the Balochistan province.

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

Balochistan, which borders Afghanistan and Iran, is Pakistan's poorest province and the largest by land-mass.



India: We stand with you

Narendra Modi, the leader of neighbouring India, said his thoughts are with the bereaved families. "There is no place for such barbarism in our region," he tweeted. "India stands in solidarity with the people of Sri Lanka."



Russia: 'Cynical crime'

"I would like to reassert that Russia has been and remains a reliable partner of Sri Lanka in combating the threat of international terrorism," Vladimir Putin said in a Kremlin statement.

"I expect that the masterminds and perpetrators of such a heinous and cynical crime committed in the midst of Easter celebrations will get the punishment they deserve."

Who did it?

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe declined to identify any suspected perpetrators.

At least three people have been arrested in connection with the attacks, police said, without providing further details.

The island nation has suffered deadly militant attacks for years, especially by ethnic Tamil militants during a decades-long civil war that ended in 2009 when Sri Lankan forces crushed the insurgency.

In recent years, there have been clashes between the majority Sinhalese Buddhist community and minority Muslims, and in March last year the government imposed a 12-day state of emergency to quell anti-Muslim riots.



Sri Lankan security personnel walk through debris following an explosion in St Sebastian's Church in Negombo

Bomber queued at buffet



Sri Lankan security personnel walk next to dead bodies on the floor amid blast debris at St. Anthony's Shrine

● Powerful explosions struck in quick succession at three hotels in the capital Colombo.

● The Cinnamon Grand was hit at around 8:30 am (0300 GMT), and the high-end Shangri-La soon after at 9:05 am.

● Three churches were also targeted in that wave of blasts: Colombo's historic St Anthony's Shrine, the St Sebastian's church in the town of Negombo -- north of the capital -- and the Zion Church in the east-coast town of Batticaloa

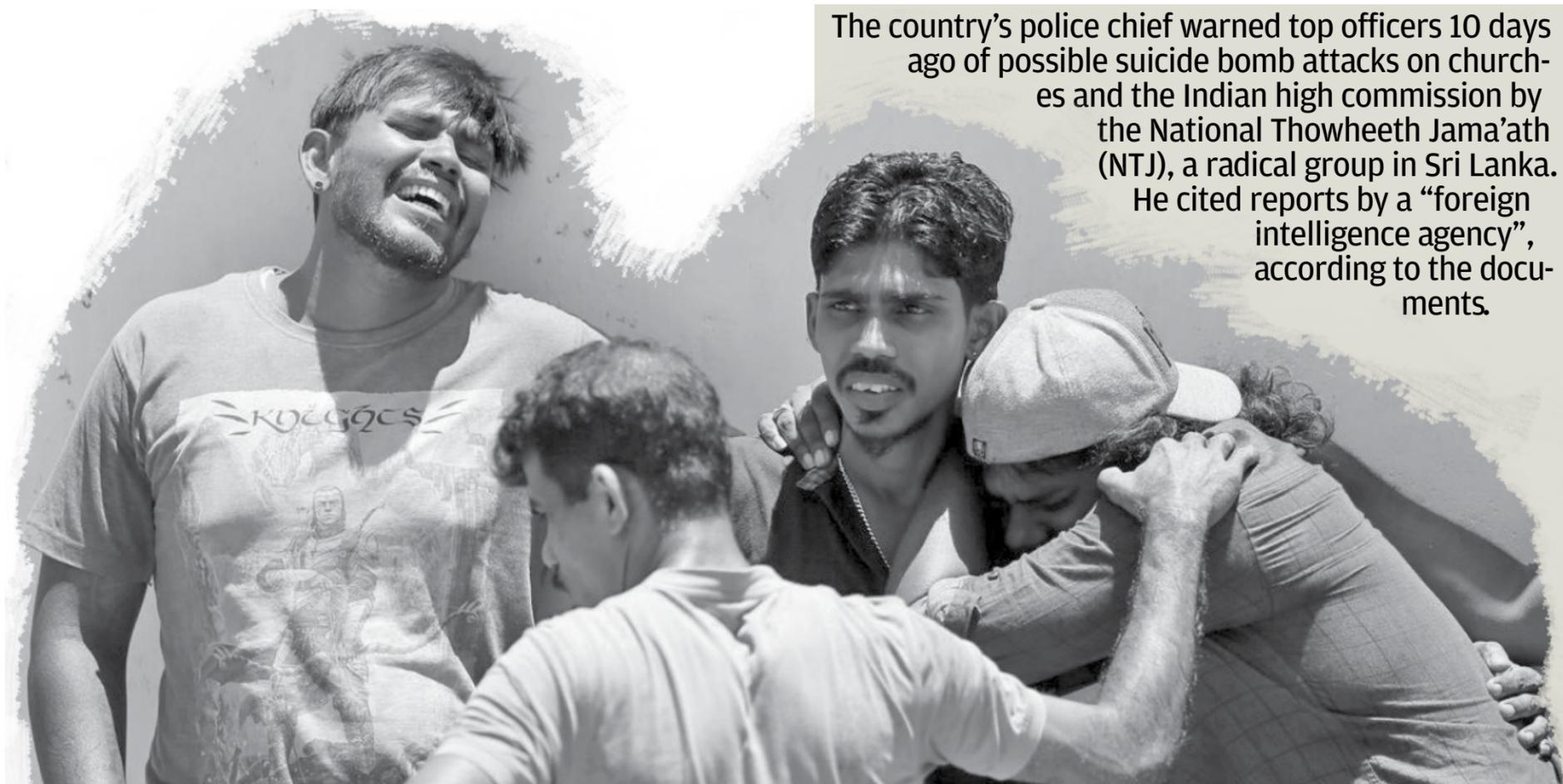
● Hours later, there were two more blasts -- one of them at another Colombo hotel. At least two of the eight were carried out by suicide bombers

● There was no immediate claim of responsibility

● A Sri Lankan foreign ministry official said there were 27 bodies of suspected foreign nationals, while the police said at least 35 of the dead were foreigners

● Eight people have been arrested in connection with the attack, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said

The country's police chief warned top officers 10 days ago of possible suicide bomb attacks on churches and the Indian high commission by the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NTJ), a radical group in Sri Lanka. He cited reports by a "foreign intelligence agency", according to the documents.



Relatives of a victim of the explosion at St. Anthony's Shrine, Kochchikade church react at the police mortuary in Colombo, Sri Lanka

The victims?

The blasts hit the churches when they were full of worshippers gathered for Easter services. A photographer saw bodies and debris lying on the floor at St Anthony's.

A detailed breakdown of casualties in the eight blasts and the nationalities of victims was not immediately available.

A Sri Lankan foreign ministry official said there were 27 bodies of suspected foreign nationals, while the police said at least 35 of the dead were foreigners.

Hospital sources said British, Dutch and American citizens were among those killed, with Britons and Japanese also injured. A Portuguese man also died, according to the Iberian nation's LUSA news agency. Two Chinese nationals were injured, the country's embassy said.



An injured Sri Lankan woman lays on a stretcher

Unleashed devastation



Sri Lankan security personnel walk past debris outside Zion Church

AFP | Colombo, Sri Lanka

The suicide bomber waited patiently in a queue for the Easter Sunday breakfast buffet at Sri Lanka's Cinnamon Grand hotel before setting off explosives strapped to his back.

Carrying a plate, the man, who had registered at the hotel the night before as Mohamed Azzam Mohamed, was just about to be served when he set off his devastating strike in the packed restaurant, a manager at the Sri Lankan hotel said.

"There was utter chaos," said the manager, who spoke on condition of anonymity as he is not allowed to speak for the company.

The Taprobane restaurant at the hotel was having one of its busiest days of the year for the Easter holiday weekend.

"It was 8:30 am and it was busy. It was families," the manager said.

"He came up to the top of the queue and set off the blast," he added.

"One of our managers who was welcoming guests was among those killed instantly."

The bomber also died. Parts of his body were found intact by police and taken away.

Other hotel officials told how the bomber, a Sri Lankan, checked in giving an address that turned out to be false, saying he was in the city for business.

Two other hotels, the Shangri-La and the



A relative of a Sri Lankan victim of an explosion at a church weeps outside a hospital in Batticaloa

Kingsbury, were hit at about the same time, along with three churches packed with worshippers attending Easter Sunday services.

The blast at St Anthony's Shrine, an historic Catholic Church, was so powerful that it blew out much of the roof, leaving roof tiles, glass and splintered wood littering the floor that was strewn with bodies.

Many of the 35 foreigners killed in the blasts were at the hotels, officials said.

'Shock, grief and mourning' -

"There was utter chaos, but we rushed all the injured to hospital in a very short time," the Cinnamon Grand manager said.

"About 20 people were seriously wounded and we sent them to the National Hospital."

The hotel is close to the Sri Lankan prime minister's official residence and Special Task Force commandos were quickly at the scene.

At the Shangri-La, witnesses said they heard two loud blasts and that staff reported some people had been killed. But details of the toll were not immediately given.

A photographer saw extensive damage in the second floor restaurant at the hotel, with windows blown out and electrical wires hanging from the ceiling.

The Shangri-La said in a statement that the bomb hit at approximately 9:00 am local time at its Table One restaurant.

"We are deeply saddened and shocked by the incident and our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the casualties and those who have been affected," it said.

"Our immediate priority is to look after the safety and wellbeing of all involved. A Shangri-La crisis management team has been activated to provide all necessary support."

The Kingsbury is also one of Colombo's most expensive hotels, positioned near the city's World Trade Center.

The toll there was not known.

In a statement on its Facebook page, the hotel said: "On behalf of the entire Kingsbury team we share in the shock, grief and mourning of our entire nation in the aftermath of the recent attack."

"Medical evacuation and treatment of the injured guests and employees were handled immediately."

US: 'Senseless attacks'

"Heartfelt condolences from the people of the United States to the people of Sri Lanka on the horrible terrorist attacks on churches and hotels," he tweeted. "We stand ready to help!"

The US leader erroneously wrote that "138 million people" were killed in the attacks.



EU: 'Sad day for the world'

EU commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker expressed his "horror and sadness" at the blasts, while EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said the attacks marked "a truly sad day for the country and for the world".

"Such acts of violence on this holy day are acts of violence against all beliefs and denominations, and against all those who value the freedom of religion and the choice to worship," she added in a statement.



Britain: 'Stand together'

British Prime Minister Theresa May described the attacks as "truly appalling".

"The acts of violence against churches and hotels in Sri Lanka are truly appalling, and my deepest sympathies go out to all of those affected at this tragic time," she tweeted.

"We must stand together to make sure that no one should ever have to practise their faith in fear."



The Netherlands: 'Terrible reports'

"Terrible reports from Sri Lanka about bloody attacks on hotels and churches on this Easter Sunday," Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte tweeted after the attacks first emerged.

"Thoughts are with the victims and their relatives."

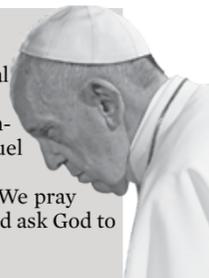


Pope: 'Cruel violence'

Pope Francis expressed his sadness over the attacks during his traditional Easter address at the Vatican.

"I want to express my affectionate closeness with the Christian community, attacked while it was at prayer, and to all the victims of such cruel violence," he said.

The Catholic Church in Jerusalem had said in an earlier statement: "We pray for the souls of the victims and ask for speedy recovery of the injured, and ask God to inspire the terrorists to repent of their killing and intimidation."



Australia: 'Terrorist attack'

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said in a statement: "To the beautiful people of Sri Lanka, Australia sends its heartfelt sympathies and our prayers and our support -- and our offer to do whatever we can to support you in this terrible time of need."

"At this time as Easter Sunday draws to a conclusion here in Australia, our heart goes out to those Christians and all of those other innocents who have been slaughtered today in this horrific terrorist attack."



New Zealand: 'Devastating'

A month after dozens of Muslims were killed in a shooting at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern described the attack as "devastating".

"New Zealand condemns all acts of terrorism, and our resolve has only been strengthened by the attack on our soil on the 15th of March. To see an attack in Sri Lanka while people were in churches and at hotels is devastating."

"New Zealand rejects all forms of extremism and stands for freedom of religion and the right to worship safely. Collectively we must find the will and the answers to end such violence."

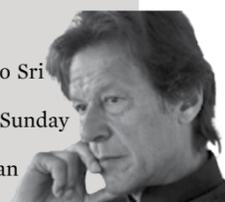


Pakistan: 'Horrific'

Pakistan's leader Imran Khan offered his "profound condolences" to Sri Lanka.

"Strongly condemn the horrific terrorist attack in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday resulting in precious lives lost & hundreds injured," he tweeted.

"My profound condolences go to our Sri Lankan brethren. Pakistan stands in complete solidarity with Sri Lanka in their hour of grief."



France: 'Odious acts'

"We strongly condemn these odious acts," French President Emmanuel Macron wrote on Twitter.

"Full solidarity with the Sri Lanka people and our thoughts for all those close to the victims this Easter."



AMLO is not our ultimate boss

The Mexican President has systematically discredited journalists and media outlets. He is powerful and popular, but he is not untouchable



JORGE RAMOS

Mexico is the only country in the world where the president holds a news conference every day (except Saturdays and Sundays). It is known as la Mañanera: At 7 in the morning Andrés Manuel López Obrador sets the agenda for his young government, responds to criticism and answers questions from the reporters in attendance.

It's an extraordinary democratic exercise. The president's communication office has laid out the 13 rules that journalist must abide by: Each reporter is granted two questions, and questions are not censored, nor is it necessary to submit them in advance. The microphone circulates among reporters and AMLO, as he is known, calls upon them. The daily routine lasts for an hour or more.

I was there recently, and couldn't miss the opportunity to participate. In our over 20-minute exchange, we talked about security in Mexico — 8,524 Mexicans were murdered in his government's first three months — and his strategy of silent restraint (rather than fighting) towards the Trump administration. But it's his torturous relationship with the press that has sparked a fiery debate on social networks. I also asked about that.

The Mañaneras benefit from wide distribution on social networks and, often, dominate the news in the traditional media as well. Despite the journalistic effort on display, López Obrador has systematically used the space to discredit reporters, columnists, and the media that criticise him. He calls them "fifi media," among other qualifiers (such as conservatives and dishonest). He says he is only exercising his "right of reply," which he is entitled to.

But the criticism is worrisome. Mexico is ranked one of the deadliest countries for journalists.



President Andrés Manuel López Obrador of Mexico speaking at the morning press conference.

Six have been murdered since AMLO's inauguration on Dec 1. At least 124 people have died in connection with their work since 2000, according to the organisation Article 19. In a country wracked by violence related to drug trafficking, journalists fall as if they were in a war zone. The president can and must do much more to protect my brave colleagues.

The primary social responsibility of journalists is to question those in power. It is up to us to serve as a critical counter-power and to ask difficult questions. But López Obrador doesn't seem to understand this. He recently praised those journalists he deemed "prudent," and declared: "If you cross the line, well, you know what happens, right? But it's not me it's the people."

Indeed the wild jungle of social media can be brutal in the face of criticism of López Obrador. He is

a very powerful president — he controls Congress — and won the presidency thanks in part to a wide popular social support. More than 30 million people voted for him in a nation mired in violence and corruption. After Enrique Peña Nieto's disastrous presidency, it's understandable that López Obrador has managed to garner people's hopes for change. Particularly among the most vulnerable Mexicans.

But that doesn't mean that AMLO is untouchable. It would be grievous for Mexico to resuscitate some of the practices of the period from 1929 to 2000, when presidents dictated what could and could not be published. And the only way to avoid that is by being irreverent and disobedient toward authority. It's not a lack of respect; it's the way in which vigorous and independent journalism is done. The president is not our boss. As journalists, we

The power-press relationship will always be tense. But in a developing democracy like Mexico's, it is fundamental to discuss, defer and dialogue; not attack.

are accountable to our readers, viewers, and listeners, and above all, to the truth. In the end, it's a simple matter of credibility. And credibility is not achieved by being close to power, or by praising it. He must develop a thicker skin. López Obrador was out of line when he asked the Mexican

newspaper Reforma to reveal its sources. Reforma published the text of a private letter that the Mexican president sent to the king of Spain requesting his apology for the abuses and grievances committed during the conquest. Asking for the disclosure of journalistic sources, I told AMLO at the Mañanera on April 12, is an attack on press freedom. "No journalist, Mr President, will reveal their sources. None." He didn't agree, but he hasn't followed up on his request to the newspaper.

One of the few points in common between AMLO and Donald Trump is their obvious annoyance and impatience with the press that questions them. Both have very thin skin, overreact to their adversaries, and demonstrate great skill in handling Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. These are different times, López Obrador says often. "The blessed social networks," he has called

them. But there is one significant difference between the two: López Obrador endured and answered all my questions during the news conference in Mexico City, while Trump, in 2015, expelled me with a bodyguard from a news conference in Dubuque, Iowa.

The governments of Mexico and the United States recently cooperated to get me out of Venezuela, along with a team from Univision — for which I am grateful — after President Nicolás Maduro detained us and confiscated our cameras and video cards from our interview with him. And they still have not returned anything to us.

It's clear that Mexico is not and will not be Venezuela, and López Obrador has nothing to do with Maduro. Nor with Trump's racist and xenophobic affronts. But the president of Mexico should not disqualify journalists who question his work; that is precisely our job. Personal attacks are unnecessary, and unfortunately, they proliferate and intensify dangerously in social media. Especially if they come from the president.

Journalists do not question his well-earned legitimacy — that's why I addressed him as "Mr President" during the news conference — just as he should not resort to personal attacks, nor ask media groups like Reforma to violate journalistic ethics. López Obrador says he wants transparency. And yet, if he had made the text in the letter he sent to the king of Spain available, Reforma would not have had to publish it.

The power-press relationship will always be tense. But in a developing democracy like Mexico's, it is fundamental to discuss, defer and dialogue; not attack. The challenge is to coexist, even if at times we disagree. We inhabit different spaces — ours must always be on the other side of power, regardless of who wields it.

(Jorge Ramos is an anchor for the Univision network and the author of, most recently, "Stranger: The Challenge of a Latino Immigrant in the Trump Era.")

CIVILIAN'S TRIBUNE

Hate, division can't heal wounds

According to the Global Terrorism Database, almost two-thirds of terrorist attacks in the US in 2017 were tied to right-wing extremism.

This statistic, which was garnered from media information, leaves us in no doubt that extremism isn't just confined to far eastern or Asian countries.

It is something that is very much on our doorstep.

Dangerous rhetoric is what we have heard this past number of years.

It has not been helped by the President of the US, Donald Trump, who tries to put the blame for an attack on a Pittsburgh synagogue on the fact there was no armed guard to repel the attacker, and not on the fact that his acidic vitriol and rhetoric has assisted some right-wing supporters and extremists to use it as an excuse to carry out



A man prays at the memorial for Pittsburgh synagogue attack victims.

their deadly deeds.

Instead of President Michael D's "hope over division and fear" speech, in America sadly the opposite has become a reality.

We should not be complacent when we saw how well former presidential candidate Peter Casey did when he touched a raw nerve in the Irish psyche when he spoke about "ethnicity" and "welfare" in both very loose and, to some, inflammatory terms.

Hopefully, we will never see any of the attacks as we saw in Charlottesville or in Pittsburgh come to our island.

Thirty years of terrorism in Northern Ireland should tell us that "hate and division will never succeed in healing wounds, only respect for each other's point of view".

Christy

1500

Portuguese navigator **Pedro Álvares Cabral** lands in Brazil.



1519

Spanish conquistador **Hernán Cortés** establishes a settlement at Veracruz, Mexico.

1529

Treaty of Zaragoza divides the eastern hemisphere between Spain and Portugal along a line 297.5 leagues or 17° east of the Moluccas.

1622

The Capture of Ormuz by the East India Company ends Portuguese control of **Hormuz Island**.

For refugee children, reading helps heal trauma

Psychologists find that story time can build the strong relationships they need for healthy development



RACHEL CERNANSKY

As the war in Syria has uprooted lives by the millions, humanitarian organisations have worked to supply food, shelter and medical relief. These services are a lifeline for millions, and it's a herculean task to fulfil them on the scale that refugee crises demand. But humanitarian workers are also now doing more to address the mental and emotional health of refugees, particularly children.

It's a need that until recently has been largely overlooked. Research reveals that the traumatic experiences of many refugees can affect their health in wide-ranging ways that can last a lifetime — social anxiety, depression, addiction, cardiovascular disease and more. Children and youth are most vulnerable. A mounting body of evidence demonstrates that repeated traumatic events early in life, if unbuffered by adults who can restore a child's sense of calm, interfere with healthy brain development. This physiological response is known as "toxic stress."

But the damage is not irreparable if treated in time.

Alexandra Chen, a child trauma specialist affiliated with Harvard who works with refugee families around the world, said humanitarian intervention has not done nearly enough to build resilience in children who face circumstances unimaginable to those who have never been forced to leave their homes for safety; and programs that have been designed to provide psychosocial support have been insufficient in their reach and inadequate in their quality.

"We need to act in a strategically different way," she said. That includes exploring the potential for intervention procedures that haven't previously fallen into the psychosocial services category "but that may in fact be more effective" in providing psychosocial support.

Rasha Al Masry, who fled Syria in 2014, may be part of this shift in the community in Jordan where she now lives. Al Masry, 30, is an "ambassador" for We Love Reading, a local organisation that trains adults to read aloud to children in dedicated public spaces and provides books written specifically for the context they're going to be read in, with messages and images that the children can relate to. "It's through these stories that kids learn to deal with their challenges," from gender inequality to migration, said Rana Dajani, the founder of We Love Reading.

A few months ago, Al Masry started leading story times twice a week at a nearby community center, and she has already no-



Asthma, a member of We Love Reading with a group of children at a refugee camp.

ticed changes in the children who attend. One book in particular, "Above the Roof," has helped some identify and overcome fears triggered by everyday events, a residual effect of having lived through conflict.

"It's about children who hear sounds like wind and rain, and there's one boy, he always feels afraid," Al Masry said, through a translator. For some children she was reading to, sudden sounds and other everyday things had become emotional triggers, and the book resonated with them. By the end of the story, the boy understands the wind and rain are sounds of nature and that there's nothing to be afraid of.

One boy in Al Masry's group had been wetting his bed at night because he was afraid to go to the bathroom alone. His parents had no idea what was happening, so they couldn't help. After a few reading sessions with Al Masry, that changed. He no longer wets his bed, but the root issue — the discomfort or fear of talking openly about the problem — is what the story sessions really helped him overcome. As Al Masry put it: "The children, they can't speak about their fears, they can't share these fears with others. After the stories, they start to share their fears."

Dajani, a molecular biologist, started We Love Reading in 2006 in her neighbourhood in Amman, Jordan, with the goal of fostering a love of reading in the children. The program has since been adopted more widely, and it demonstrates the links between education and psychosocial health, and between supportive, loving relationships and resilience in children.

With the backing of UNICEF, the organisation embarked on a pilot program for Syrian refugees in the Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan in 2014. Two years later, it was working in all of Jordan's refugee camps for Syrians and in the Gambella camp for South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia.

The program has gained the respect of renowned child specialists like Chen because it not only makes space for education in environments where that is so

The International Rescue Committee has also formed a partnership with "Sesame Street" to provide early childhood education to refugees in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan.

often missing but also restores a semblance of normalcy and fosters healthy relationships. "Because of the way in which it's designed, bringing together parents and children in a positive organic way of reading together at home, my theory is that this improves the bond between parent and child, and in doing so may very well improve children's psychosocial well-being," Chen said. It can also be adapted to different cultures and remain responsive to children's specific needs.

While refugee camps have long had dedicated safe places for children, said Catherine Panter-Brick, a medical anthropologist at Yale, "they're just providing a safe space, without changing anything for the family or their structural environment."

Books are also read in the children's native language, which Dajani emphasised is crucial for building confidence and a sense of identity — important qualities for healthy development in anyone, but paramount for building resilience in children dealing with trauma. "If you want to plant a love of reading — not education, but a love of reading — it has to be in your native tongue," Dajani said. "We use We Love Reading as a stepping-stone to falling in love with your identity, which is so important for psychosocial health. When you know who you are, you don't get lost."

The bonding that the dedicated reading time promotes is especially important. The most powerful finding about trauma's

effects on brain function and development is that a healthy, loving relationship with a parent or caregiver can provide a buffer against the problem, even — perhaps especially — in highly stressful settings. To the degree that story times increase the time that grown-ups focus on and attune to children, they may help to form or strengthen that protective buffer.

Dima Amso, a neuroscientist at Brown University who studied the impact of We Love Reading on children's cognitive function and regulate their emotions, said that one of the most important benefits identified wasn't literacy but mental health, particularly relating to anxiety and anger management. And it had the greatest impact on the most traumatised or vulnerable children.

When We Love Reading was being set up in the refugee camp in Ethiopia, Zahra Kassam, an independent consultant who helped the rollout, noticed something similar. Children fleeing South Sudan have experienced different kinds of trauma than children in Syria, and started out with different backgrounds. Yet the reading program filled a need that was not being addressed by the services providing food and shelter.

"It helps to create connection in a lost space," Kassam said. "Imagine these kids, they've left everything they've ever known. These camps are not places where people are thriving. They're simply surviving. A programme like this gives kids a little bit of focus, even without the formal setting of schools." That provides a value that can be hard to see and even harder to measure.

"We grow up and we forget these little things need, she said. "I'm grown up and I completely forget that maybe bedtime stories had more things attached to them than getting kids to go to sleep."

We Love Reading has received grants from both UNICEF and USAID, an indication that the humanitarian community is waking up to the growing body of evidence about toxic stress.

Dajani has partnered with researchers at institutions that in-

clude Yale and New York University Abu Dhabi to demonstrate the importance of such mental health intervention.

There is still a long way to go, both in the quality and the reach of programs, Chen said. "Even the best psychosocial support intervention programs in existence require more precise impact evaluation and more dedicated coaching supervision for front-line facilitators and service providers."

Efforts towards those goals are growing, if slowly. The humanitarian organisation Mercy Corps now runs a programme specifically for adolescents affected by the Syrian crisis. The goal is to foster healthy socialisation in safe spaces, through activities like sports and chess, and education or training in skills like technology and carpentry, to help them start dreaming and preparing for their future. The International Rescue Committee, under its Healing Classrooms initiative, has developed resources for teachers in the Democratic Republic of Congo and other conflict areas to ensure that schools support not just academic learning but psychological and social development as well.

The International Rescue Committee has also formed a partnership with "Sesame Street" to provide early childhood education to refugees in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan. They plan to introduce a version of "Sesame Street" this fall with Arabic-speaking Muppets that deal with experiences that children in these countries can relate to. The first season will focus on the "emotional ABCs," to help children develop the social-emotional skills that build resilience. The program also works with community centres to train staff and provide educational tools like books and activity sheets, and conducts home visits. Dajani is an adviser on the project.

Dajani says We Love Reading and programs like it offer examples of an intervention that helps to fill the gap in psychological and social health services — without reinforcing the power dynamic that all too often prevails between nonprofit organisations and communities they aim to serve. "If you're designing for refugees, you should have refugees with you at the table," Dajani said. "And make sure that the power dynamics at that table are equal."

That's a shift that many see as long overdue in the humanitarian world in general. For working with traumatised populations, it is particularly important. "We may need to shift the narrative from trauma and stress to resilience," Panter-Brick said, observing that the world has focused on the narrative of a lost generation of children in Syria. "There's a counternarrative," she said, "in the hopes and aspirations, in the resilience of these children."

(Rachel Cernansky is a freelance journalist based in Denver.)



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Strongly condemn the Shorrific blasts in Sri Lanka. There is no place for such barbarism in our region. India stands in solidarity with the people of Sri Lanka. My thoughts are with the bereaved families and prayers with the injured.

@narendramodi

02



The acts of violence against churches and hotels in Sri Lanka are truly appalling, and my deepest sympathies go out to all of those affected at this tragic time. We must stand together to make sure that no one should ever have to practise their faith in fear.

@theresa_may

03



Strongly condemn the horrific terrorist attack in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday resulting in precious lives lost & hundreds injured. My profound condolences go to our Sri Lankan brethren. Pakistan stands in complete solidarity with Sri Lanka in their hour of grief.

@ImranKhanPTI

04



We grieve for those affected by the violence and devastation of today's attacks in Sri Lanka. Today of all days we are reminded of the sacrifices that have been made for peace, and that love will always rise up and triumph over hate.

@tim_cook

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

business

Consumer prices rise in March

TDT | Manama

The Consumer Price Index (CPI), a broad measure of prices of a basket of goods and services in Bahrain, increased 0.8 per cent in March from the prior month, the Information & eGovernment Authority has said.

The change was largely driven by a jump in the Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and other fuels index and an increase in the prices of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco from February 2019.

But excluding these volatile categories, the CPI index was held down by falling prices for health care services as well as for clothing and footwear, which dropped 1.0pc and 1.6pc respectively.

Prices for communication dropped 0.3pc from February, as did the costs of transportation (0.3pc).

The index recorded moderate price increases in sectors including Restaurants (0.5pc), Recreation and Culture (0.4pc), Furnishing and Household equipment (0.2), while the Education sector remained unchanged from the prior month.

In the 12 months through March, the CPI increased 1.2pc, as shown by the increase in the CPI from 131.3 points in the first quarter of 2018 to 132.9 points in the first quarter of 2019, according to the authority's monthly report.

Compared to March of last year, the index was boosted by an increase in communication costs, which jumped 5.4pc in the month, as did the costs of Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and other Fuels, an increase of 4.1pc. The index was also held down by a 10.3pc decline in the Recreation and Culture sector when compared with Q1 2018.

The items within the CPI basket are based on the information collected from Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2005/2006 in which it covers 476 weighted commodities.



Representative picture (Courtesy of Stars and Stripes)

| Year | The Consumer Price Index (Points) | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| | February | March | January-March |
| 2018 | 131.4 | 132.1 | 131.3 |
| 2019 | 132.6 | 133.7 | 132.9 |
| Percentage Change (%) | 0.9 | 1.2 | 1.2 |

| Main Group | March 2019 (Point) | February 2019 (Point) | Percentage Change (%) ¹ | March 2018 (Point) | Percentage of Change (%) ² |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages | 160.6 | 160.5 | 0.1 | 157.1 | 2.2 |
| Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco | 306.5 | 301.8 | 1.6 | 282.2 | 8.6 |
| Clothing and Footwear | 107.9 | 109.7 | -1.6 | 110.7 | -2.5 |
| Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and other Fuels | 123.5 | 119.1 | 3.7 | 118.7 | 4.0 |
| Furnishing, Household Equipment and Routine Household Maintenance | 135.3 | 135.0 | 0.2 | 132.6 | 2.0 |
| Health Care Services | 122.4 | 123.7 | -1.0 | 123.3 | -0.7 |
| Transportation | 138.9 | 139.3 | -0.3 | 135.2 | 2.7 |
| Communication | 91.0 | 91.3 | -0.3 | 86.4 | 5.3 |
| Recreation and Culture | 132.3 | 131.8 | 0.4 | 147.2 | -10.1 |
| Education | 139.0 | 139.0 | 0.0 | 139.0 | 0.0 |
| Restaurants | 124.8 | 124.2 | 0.5 | 123.2 | 1.3 |
| Miscellaneous Goods and Services | 153.8 | 152.4 | 0.9 | 153.3 | 0.3 |
| General CPI | 133.7 | 132.6 | 0.8 | 132.1 | 1.2 |

GIB opens Saudi branch with \$2 billion capital

● GIB Saudi Arabia will be equally owned by Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF) and GIB

TDT | Manama

Gulf International Bank (GIB) yesterday said it has converted its branches in Saudi Arabia into a locally incorporated bank with a paid-up capital of SR7.5 billion (\$2 billion).

GIB Saudi Arabia will be equally owned by the Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF) and GIB.

The bank, GIB said, will operate as a fully-fledged local bank offering comprehensive banking and financial services across the Kingdom, as it looks to further strengthen and build its presence and levels of service in the Saudi market.

GIB said this is also the first time that a foreign bank in Saudi Arabia has become locally incorporated, having received approval in May 2017.

GIB Saudi Arabia is now regulated by the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA) and headquartered in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, the first bank in the Kingdom to be based in the region, with branches in Riyadh and Jeddah.

GIB said it has been operating in Saudi Arabia for nearly twenty years and in 2015 launched 'meem' the world's first Shariah-compliant digital bank, providing the market with innovative and comprehensive products for retail customers.

Chairman of GIB Saudi Arabia, Abdulla bin Mohammed Al Zamil, said: "The establishment of GIB Saudi Arabia is an important milestone in the implementation of the Bank's strategy, which remains fo-



The establishment of GIB Saudi Arabia is an important milestone in the implementation of the Bank's strategy, which remains focused on the expansion of its service offering and position as a leading digital bank and is expected to contribute positively to enhanced performance and profitability

ABDULLA BIN MOHAMMED AL ZAMIL
CHAIRMAN OF GIB SAUDI ARABIA

cused on the expansion of its service offering and position as a leading digital bank and is expected to contribute positively to enhanced performance and profitability."

The board members of GIB Saudi Arabia are: Chairman - Abdulla bin Mohammed Al Zamil, Vice Chairman - Dr. Abdullah Bin Hasan Alabdulgader, Executive Director and CEO - Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al-Helaissi, Non-Executive Directors - Dr. Najem Bin Abdullah Alzaid, Rajeev Kakar, Bandar bin Abdul Rahman bin Mogren, Sultan bin Abdulmalik Al-Sheikh, Anju Patwardhan, Riyad bin Mustafa Al-Dughaiter and Muhanad Bin Qusai Al Azzawi.



Alba's Chief Executive Officer, Tim Murray, presenting a workshop based on the book 'Thanks for the Feedback' highlighting the three kinds of feedback companies must utilise to be effective: evaluation, coaching and appreciation. The workshop, customised to teach key takeaways that address Alba's challenges as well as promote the culture of feedback and a growth mindset, was attended by Alba's Executives, Directors, and Managers on 18 April 2019 at Alba SHE Hall. Based on the book by Sheila Heen and Douglas Stone this workshop comes in the continuum of various initiatives led by CEO Murray to coach Alba employees from various levels

Invita upgrades ISO standard



Officials during the award ceremony

TDT | Manama

Bahrain-based Invita, an ISO and PCI DSS certified regional provider of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) services, has upgraded the ISO certification from 9001:2008 to 9001:2015.

Invita was the first Third Party BPO in Bahrain to receive the ISO Certification in 2016.

Talking about the company's initiative, Invita CEO Rahul Bhalla said, "We are happy to have achieved another milestone with the aim of continually improving our standards."

More than 5,000 airport stakeholders undergoing BIA training

TDT | Manama

Familiarisation training for more than 5,000 BAC team members and strategic airport partners which began in March will continue until the Bahrain International Airport's (BIA) new terminal launch, said Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications and Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) Chairman, Kamal Ahmed.

This was announced during a meeting of the National Operations Readiness and Airport Transfer (ORAT) Steering Committee chaired by Kamal Ahmed.

In attendance were representatives from Bahrain Civil Aviation Affairs (CAA); Bahrain Customs; the Ministry of Interior's Airport Police; Nationality, Passport, and Residence Affairs; BAC; private companies operating out of BIA; and Fraport AG Frankfurt Airport Services Worldwide, which is providing a comprehensive ORAT pro-



Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications and Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) Chairman, Kamal Ahmed during a group photo opportunity with BIA officials other top officials

gramme for the new terminal.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister stressed the importance of this current stage of the ORAT programme, which will

see the new terminal's systems undergo extensive practical evaluation.

He also highlighted the major role that BIA's strategic partners

play in the operational readiness of the new systems and equipment, which are advanced and technologically complex, requiring extensive expertise and

in-depth knowledge to operate.

The Minister also pointed out that this stage will see all systems, facilities, operations, and employees undergo testing

under simulated and live conditions, requiring all stakeholders to be well informed and have a clear understanding of all systems and procedures.

Aramco to buy Shell's stake in Saudi refining JV for US\$631m

Reuters | Dubai

Saudi Aramco will acquire Royal Dutch Shell's 50 per cent stake in their Saudi refining joint venture SASREF for \$631 million, the two companies said yesterday.

The purchase, which is part of Aramco's strategy to expand its downstream operations, will be completed later this year, they said in a joint statement.

Saudi Aramco Shell Refinery Co (SASREF), based in Jubail Industrial City in Saudi Arabia, has a crude oil refining capacity of 305,000 barrels per day (bpd).

"Saudi Aramco will take full ownership and integrate the refinery into its growing downstream portfolio. SASREF will continue to be a critical facility in our refining and chemicals business," Abdulaziz al-Judaimi, Aramco's senior vice president of downstream, said in the statement.

Aramco aims to become a



An Aramco employee walks near an oil tank at Saudi Aramco's Ras Tanura oil refinery and oil terminal in Saudi Arabia

global leader in chemicals and the world's largest integrated energy firm, with plans to expand its refining operations and petrochemical output.

For Shell, "the sale is part of an ongoing effort to focus its refining portfolio, integrating with Shell trading hubs and chemicals," the company said.

Shell has sold over \$30 billion of assets in recent years as it shifts its focus to lower carbon businesses such as natural gas and petrochemicals.

Toyota establishes research institute in China to study hydrogen, green technologies

Reuters | Beijing

Japan's Toyota Motor Corp said yesterday it was setting up a research institute in Beijing in partnership with Tsinghua University to study car technology using hydrogen power and other green technologies that could ease environmental problems in China.

The initiative, outlined by Toyota's President and Chief Executive Akio Toyoda in a speech at Tsinghua University, is part of the Japanese carmaker's efforts to share more technology with China as it seeks to expand its business in the country by beefing up manufacturing capacity and distribution channels, a source close to Toyota said.

The Tsinghua-Toyota Joint Research Institute will conduct research into cars and new technology to solve environmental problems in China, including reducing traffic accidents, Toyota said in a statement.

The institute will "cooperate in research not only related to cars for Chinese consumers,



Akio Toyoda

but also in research related to active utilization of hydrogen energy that can help solve China's energy problems," the company said.

The move dovetails with Toyota's announcement this month that it would offer carmakers and suppliers around the world free access to nearly 24,000 patents for electric vehicle technologies.

Executive Vice President Shigeaki Terashi said earlier this month that the automaker intended to become a tier 2 supplier of hybrid systems and that it had already received enquiries from more than 50 companies.

Gulf Air completes IOSA Audit, renews registration



Officials during a photocall on the occasion of Gulf Air successfully completing biennial IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA)

TDT | Manama

Gulf Air yesterday announced successfully completing the internationally recognised, biennial IATA Operational Safety Au-

dit (IOSA) and has been renewed on the IOSA Safety Audit Registry until May 2021.

The audit covers approximately 1,000 standards and recommended practices that are

all related to the safety of operations and procedures of the airline.

Gulf Air's Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Captain Waleed Al Alawi congratulated employees

for their efforts in maintaining these international standards, saying: "Our latest IOSA renewal cements our ongoing commitment to safety and Gulf Air's continuous development of IATA

standards, regulatory requirements and practices within our operations." This is the eighth IOSA audit successfully completed by Gulf Air since 2005, in-line with IATA's two-year audit cycle.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the trade association for the world's airlines, representing some 290 airlines or 82pc of total air traffic.

Abu Dhabi outperforms on financials, realty

Reuters | Dubai

Abu Dhabi stocks outperformed Gulf markets yesterday on expectations that banks and real estate companies will benefit from new rules which would allow foreigners to own land and property in investment areas on a freehold basis.

The Abu Dhabi index rose 1 per cent, lifted by RAK Properties, up 2.7pc, and Aldar Properties, up 2.1pc.

Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank rose 1.8pc and Union National Bank rose 2.3pc.

The rise in investor interest came ahead of a company filing that said Al Hilal Bank's owner, the Abu Dhabi Investment Council, appointed Alaa Eraiqat as the lender's chairman.

Eraqat is currently group chief executive of Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank (ADCB), which is expected to merge with Al Hilal Bank and Union National Bank (UNB) in the first half of 2019.



An investor watching stock movements at the Saudi Stock Market (AFP)

Eraqat will serve as chairman at Al Hilal in addition to his current role at ADCB.

First Abu Dhabi Bank continued a recent rally to add 1.4pc. The top lender in Abu Dhabi rose nearly 9pc last week after

obtaining regulatory approval to increase its foreign ownership limit to 40pc from 25pc.

Saudi Arabia's main index, the Tadawul All-Share benchmark, was up 0.5pc, lifted by financials and telecommunications.

Islamic lender Alinma and telecommunications firm Etihad Etisalat (Mobily) were up 5.3pc and 4.8pc, respectively, after reporting strong earnings for the first quarter.

"Generally, the (Saudi) cor-

Closing Bell

| | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| SAUDI | ▲ 0.5pc at 9,240pts |
| ABU DHABI | ▲ 1pc to 5,346pts |
| DUBAI | ▲ 0.2pc at 2,821pts |
| QATAR | ▲ 0.1pc at 10,355pts |
| EGYPT | ▼ 0.3pc at 14,839pts |
| BAHRAIN | ■ at 1,446pts |
| OMAN | ▲ 0.1pc at 3,984pts |
| KUWAIT | ▲ 0.1pc at 6,249pts |

porate results coming in today have been encouraging. Sentiment remains positive on foreign inflows as the next FTSE and MSCI inclusion nears," said Muhammad Faisal Potrik, head of research at Riyadh Capital.

Saudi shares joined the FTSE Emerging All Cap Index in March with a weighting of 2.9pc. In May, Saudi shares will join the MSCI Emerging Markets Index.

In Dubai, the index rose 0.2pc on the back of a strong performance by real estate stocks such

as Deyaar, Emaar Development and Emaar Malls which were up 3.7pc, 2.1pc and 1.2pc, respectively.

Qatar's stock market inched up 0.1pc on financials, as Qatar First Bank rose 1.1pc, Qatar Islamic Bank gained 0.3pc and Qatar Insurance company added 1pc.

Egypt's blue-chip index was down 0.3pc, with Alexandria Mineral Oils Co SAE shedding 3.6pc and El Sewedy Electric slipping 2pc.

"Regional markets have been focusing on passive flows from MSCI and FTSE events in Saudi and Kuwait while ignoring other markets like Dubai, Oman and Bahrain due to lack of catalysts," said Sanat Sachar, equity research analyst at Dubai's Al Mal Capital.

"We expect this theme to remain valid for the next couple of months and post that investors will start looking at other markets in search of better investment opportunities with cheaper valuations," Sachar added.

Trump lawyer attacks Mueller report

Washington, United States

Donald Trump's top lawyer yesterday attacked "calumny, lies and distortions" in the Mueller investigation report, and said there is "nothing wrong" with taking hacked information from Russia.

Rudy Giuliani mounted a combative defense of the president in Sunday talk show appearances that took aim at Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigators, the evidence they amassed and the witnesses they cited.

The former New York mayor heaped special scorn on Senator Mitt Romney, a former Republican presidential candidate who said Friday he was "sickened" by the report's findings and "appalled" that Trump's election campaign "welcomed help from Russia."

"What a hypocrite. What a hypocrite. Any candidate in the whole world in America would



US President Donald Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, and his daughter Tiffany Trump (L) arrive at the Bethesda-by-the-Sea church for Easter services in Palm Beach, Florida

take information," Giuliani said of Romney on CNN's "State of the Union."

He was referring to Democratic emails that were hacked by Russian operatives and dis-

seminated by WikiLeaks in 2016 to hurt Trump presidential rival Hillary Clinton.

"Who says it's even illegal?" Giuliani added. "Does the information turn out to be false, by

the way? The information that was gleaned and disseminated, every newspaper printed it."

Trump publicly encouraged Russia and WikiLeaks while top campaign officials, including his son and son-in-law, met in Trump Tower with a Russian promising dirt on Clinton.

"There is nothing wrong with taking information from the Russians. It depends on where it came from," Giuliani said, adding that as a lawyer he would have advised against it.

"This didn't become an international scandal because of immorality. It became an international scandal because the president was accused of violating the law falsely," he said.

His comments echoed Trump, who mocked Romney on Twitter Sunday, after lashing out Friday at the "bullshit" Mueller report. The president was in Palm Beach, Florida where he attended Easter services.

Saudi ADC to acquire Schlumberger's Saudi drilling business

Reuters | Dubai

Kanbar-based Arabition Drilling Company (ADC) will acquire the Saudi drilling business of Schlumberger, news publication Al Maaal reported yesterday, citing unnamed sources.

ADC is a partnership between the Industrialization & Energy Services Company (TAQA), a Saudi Joint Stock company and Services Petroliers Schlumberger S.A., which owns the remaining 49 percent, according to ADC's website.

London climate protesters seek talks

London, United Kingdom

Climate change protesters who have brought parts of London to a standstill said yesterday they were prepared to call a halt if the British government will discuss their demands.

Some 831 arrests have been made and 42 people charged in connection with the ongoing Extinction Rebellion protests. On the seventh day of

demonstrations that have occupied key spots in the British capital, organisers said they were willing to switch tactics. "We are prepared to pause, should the government come to the negotiating table," Extinction Rebellion spokesman James Fox told AFP.

"What the pause looks like is us stopping an escalation. "We can discuss leaving if they are willing to discuss our demands.

Motorcity hosts Chery Family Day

TDI | Manama

Motorcity, the sole distributor of Chery vehicles in Bahrain, hosted a Chery Family Fun Day at the Marassi Beach in Diyar Al Muharraq, in appreciation for customers, fans and followers of the social media pages as well as to highlight the Tiggo2, the latest SUV from the multiple award-winning Chinese automobile manufacturer.

The Chery Tiggo2 was also on prominent display throughout the venue along with the full Chery range of vehicles for test-driving.

Speaking on the occasion, Motorcity Chairman, Waleed Kanoo said, "More people are realising the true potential of superior Chinese products and their high quality, along with the trusted Motorcity brand name and our world-class service facility in Ma'ameer."

The Tiggo2 is the latest SUV from Chery, boasting a 1.5L VVT engine that delivers a maximum



Highlights of the event

105HP and 135Nm of Torque. It comes in two trims; Basic and Comfort to match customers'

needs, both focusing on safety with front airbags for driver and passenger, Anti-Lock Braking

System (ABS), Electronic Stability Program (ESP), Electronic Brake-Force Distribution (EBD)

and rear parking sensors. The Comfort trim also comes with added rear camera, audio sys-

tem with an eight-inch display screen and 17 inches aluminium alloy wheels.



SHOW

OASIS JUFFAIR

1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.30 + 4.45 + 8.00 + 11.15 PM
 DAILY AT (VIP): 2.15 + 7.45 PM

2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 4.15 + 6.30 + 12.00 MN
 DAILY AT (VIP): 12.00 + 5.30 + 11.00 PM

3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 PM
 DAILY AT (3D): 12.15 + 5.00 + 9.45 PM

4-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 6.00 + 11.15 PM
 DAILY AT (3D): 2.15 + 7.00 + 11.45 PM

5-DUMBO (PG) (ADVENTURE/DRAMA/FAMILY)
 COLIN FARRELL, MICHAEL KEATON, DANNY DEVITO
 DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 8.30 + 10.45 PM

6-HELLBOY (18+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY)
 DAVID HARBOUR, MILLA JOVOVICH, AND IAN MCSHANE
 DAILY AT: 3.30 + 8.45 PM

7-LUCIFER (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)
 MOHANLAL, MANJU WARRIER, VIVEK OBEROI, TOVINO THOMAS
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.15 + 4.30 + 7.45 + 11.00 PM

8-MADHURA RAJA (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)
 MAMMOOTTY, JAI, ANUSREE, SALIM KUMAR, RAMESH PISHARODY
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

9-MERA NAAM SHAJI (PG-15) (MALAYALAM) NEW
 ASIF ALI, BIJU MENON, BAIJU
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 5.30 + 11.15 PM

10-JERSEY () (TELUGU) NEW
 NANI, SHARDAH, SREENATH, SATHYARAJ
 FROM FRIDAY 19th
 DAILY AT: 2.30 + 8.15 PM

11-VELLAI POOKKAL () (TAMIL) NEW
 VIVEKH, CHARLE, POOJA DEVARIYA
 FROM FRIDAY 19th
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.00 + 5.30 PM

12-KANCHANA-3 (15+) NEW
 RAGHAVA, LAWRENCE, VEDHIKA, OVIYA
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH (TAMIL)
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 8.45 PM

CITYCENTRE

1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.45 + 5.00 + 8.15 + 11.30 PM + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)

2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 + 12.00 MN + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
 DAILY AT: DAILY AT (VIP I): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM
 DAILY AT (IMAX 2D): 3.00 + 8.00 + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 + 8.30 + 10.30 PM

4-TRIPLE THREAT (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW
 TONY JAA, IKO UWAIS, SCOTT ADKINS
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 3.30 + 7.45 + 12.00 MN

5-STOCKHOLM (PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME/DRAMA) NEW
 ETHAN HAWKE, NOOMI RAPACE, MARK STRONG
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 5.15 + 9.45 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

6-THE HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW
 JESSE EISENBERG, ALEXANDER SKARSG'RD, SALMA HAYEK
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 5.30 + 9.45 PM

7-MISSION OF HONOR (HURRICANE) (PG-15) (ACTION/DRAMA/WAR) NEW
 IWAN RHEON, MILO GIBSON, STEFANIE MARTINI
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 3.15 + 7.30 + 11.45 PM

8-KURSK (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW
 LEA SEYDOUX, COLIN FIRTH, AUGUST DIEHL
 DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM

9-TEEN SPIRIT (PG-15) (DRAMA/MUSICAL) NEW
 ELLE FANNING, REBECCA HALL, ZLATKO BURIC
 DAILY AT: 1.15 + 5.30 + 9.45 PM

10-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
 DAILY AT (VIP II): 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM
 DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 12.15 + 5.15 + 10.15 PM

11-DUMBO (PG) (ADVENTURE/DRAMA/FAMILY)
 COLIN FARRELL, MICHAEL KEATON, DANNY DEVITO
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.15 + 3.30 + 5.45 + 8.00 + 10.15 PM

12-HELLBOY (18+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY)
 DAVID HARBOUR, MILLA JOVOVICH, AND IAN MCSHANE
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 + 12.00 MN

13-LITTLE (PG-15) (COMEDY)
 REGINA HALL, ISSA RAE, MARSAL MARTIN
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM

14-DRAGGED ACROSS CONCRETE (18+) (CRIME/THRILLER/DRAMA)
 BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.45 + 9.00 PM

15-CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM

16-US (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER)
 LUPITA NYONG'O, ELISABETH MOSS, ANNA DIOP
 DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.45 + 12.00 MN

17-ESCAPE ROOM (PG-15) (THRILLER)
 TAYLOR RUSSELL, LOGAN MILLER, DEBORAH ANN WOLL
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM

18-WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIFER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.00 + 9.00 PM
 DAILY AT (ARABIC DUBBED): 11.00 AM + 3.00 + 7.00 + 11.00 PM

19-PET SEMATARY (18+) (HORROR/THRILLER)

20-COLD PURSUIT (15+) (ACTION/CRIME/DRAMA)
 LIAM NEESON, EMMY ROSSUM, LAURA DERN
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.30 + 8.30 PM

21-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY)
 KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 2.45 + 7.00 + 11.15 PM

22-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER)
 JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 6.00 + 11.00 PM

23-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)
 KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN
 DAILY AT: 2.15 + 6.45 + 11.15 PM

24-JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (PG) (COMEDY/ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 ROWAN ATKINSON, OLGA KURYLENKO, EMMA THOMPSON
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 5.00 + 9.15 PM

25-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 + 6.30 + 8.30 + 10.30 PM

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 TONY JAA, IKO UWAIS, SCOTT ADKINS
 DAILY AT: 5.15 + 7.15 + 9.15 + 11.15 PM

5-STOCKHOLM (PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME/DRAMA) NEW
 ETHAN HAWKE, NOOMI RAPACE, MARK STRONG
 DAILY AT: 5.30 + 7.30 + 9.30 + 11.30 PM

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 LEA SEYDOUX, COLIN FIRTH, AUGUST DIEHL
 DAILY AT: 2.30 + 7.00 + 11.30 PM

9-TEEN SPIRIT (PG-15) (DRAMA/MUSICAL) NEW
 ELLE FANNING, REBECCA HALL, ZLATKO BURIC
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM

10-MISSION IN 7 DAYS (PG) (KUWAITI/COMEDY/THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW
 ABDULLAH AL-TARARWAH MOHAMED SAFAR
 DAILY AT: 6.45 + 11.15 PM

11-DUMBO (PG) (ADVENTURE/DRAMA/FAMILY)
 COLIN FARRELL, MICHAEL KEATON, DANNY DEVITO
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 + 6.00 + 8.15 + 10.30 PM

12-HELLBOY (18+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY)

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 DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.15 + 11.00 PM

14-CAPTAIN MARVEL (PG-13) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 BRIE LARSON, GEMMA CHAN, SAMUEL L. JACKSON
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 8.45 PM

15-WONDER PARK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 BRIANNA DENSKI, JENNIFER GARNER, KEN HUDSON CAMPBELL
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.30 + 3.30 PM

16-MASHA AND THE BEAR THE NEW ADVENTURES (G) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 1.45 + 3.30 PM

17-BADLA (PG-15) (HINDI/THRILLER/CRIME)
 AMITABH BACHCHAN, TAPSEE PANNU, TONY LUKE
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 4.45 + 9.30 PM

18-LUCIFER (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)
 MOHANLAL, MANJU WARRIER, VIVEK OBEROI, TOVINO THOMAS
 DAILY AT: 2.45 + 8.15 PM

19-MERA NAAM SHAJI (PG-15) (MALAYALAM) NEW
 ASIF ALI, BIJU MENON, BAIJU
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN

20-JERSEY () (TELUGU) NEW
 NANI, SHARDAH, SREENATH, SATHYARAJ
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 6.15 + 11.45 PM

21-VELLAI POOKKAL () (TAMIL) NEW
 VIVEKH, CHARLE, POOJA DEVARIYA
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH
 DAILY AT: 3.45 + 9.15 PM

22-KANCHANA-3 (15+) NEW
 RAGHAVA, LAWRENCE, VEDHIKA, OVIYA
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH (TAMIL)
 DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 8.15 PM
 FROM FRIDAY 19TH (TELUGU)
 DAILY AT: 2.00 PM

23-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM

24-SHERDIL (PG-15) (URDU/ACTION/DRAMA)
 MIKAAL ZULFIQAR, ARMEENA RANA KHAN, BELAL SHAHID
 DAILY AT: 5.15 + 11.30 PM

25-MADHURA RAJA (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)
 MAMMOOTTY, JAI, ANUSREE, SALIM KUMAR, RAMESH PISHARODY
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

26-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL
 DAILY AT: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM

27-SHERDIL (PG-15) (URDU/ACTION/DRAMA)
 MIKAAL ZULFIQAR, ARMEENA RANA KHAN, BELAL SHAHID
 DAILY AT: 5.15 + 11.30 PM

28-MADHURA RAJA (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)
 MAMMOOTTY, JAI, ANUSREE, SALIM KUMAR, RAMESH PISHARODY
 DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

SAAR

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

2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.00 + (11.15 PM THURS/FRI)

3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 PM

4-STOCKHOLM (PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME/DRAMA) NEW
 ETHAN HAWKE, NOOMI RAPACE, MARK STRONG
 DAILY AT: 9.30 + (11.30 PM THURS/FRI)

5-KURSK (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW
 LEA SEYDOUX, COLIN FIRTH, AUGUST DIEHL
 DAILY AT: 12.30 + 5.45 + (11.00 PM THURS/FRI)

6-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL
 DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.15 PM

AL HAMRA

1-LUCIFER (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)
 MOHANLAL, MANJU WARRIER, VIVEK OBEROI, TOVINO THOMAS
 DAILY AT: 5.45 + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)

2-MADHURA RAJA (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)
 MAMMOOTTY, JAI, ANUSREE, SALIM KUMAR, RAMESH PISHARODY
 DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 9.00 PM

WADI AL SAIL

1-KALANK (PG-15) (HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW
 VARUN DHAWAN, ALIA BHATT, MADHURI DIXIT
 DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 1.15 + 4.30 + 7.45 + 11.00 PM

2-THE CURSE OF LA LLORONA (15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW
 LINDA CARDELLINI, RAYMOND CRUZ, PATRICIA VELASQUEZ
 DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM

3-MISSING LINK (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW
 HUGH JACKMAN, ZOE SALDANA, ZACH GALIFIANAKIS
 DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 PM

4-TRIPLE THREAT (15+) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW
 TONY JAA, IKO UWAIS, SCOTT ADKINS
 DAILY AT: 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 + 12.00 MN

5-STOCKHOLM (PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME/DRAMA) NEW
 ETHAN HAWKE, NOOMI RAPACE, MARK STRONG
 DAILY AT: 11.00 + 3.15 + 7.30 + 11.45 PM

6-THE HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT (PG-15) (THRILLER/DRAMA) NEW
 JESSE EISENBERG, ALEXANDER SKARSG'RD, SALMA HAYEK
 DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.15 + 9.30 PM

7-SHAZAM! (PG-15) (ACTION/COMEDY/ADVENTURE)
 ZACHARY LEVI, MARK STRONG (II), ASHER ANGEL
 DAILY AT: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM

8-DUMBO (PG) (ADVENTURE/DRAMA/FAMILY)
 COLIN FARRELL, MICHAEL KEATON, DANNY DEVITO
 DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 PM

9-HELLBOY (18+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY)
 DAVID HARBOUR, MILLA JOVOVICH, AND IAN MCSHANE
 DAILY AT: 9.00 + 11.30 PM

MOVIE REVIEW

Triple Threat: action stars double down on one killer third act

● A messy plot gets in the way of a throwdown with Iko Uwais, Tony Jaa, Scott Adkins, Tiger Chen, and more

Triple Threat is an 2019 martial arts film directed by Jesse V. Johnson and starring Tony Jaa, Iko Uwais and Tiger Chen, as well as Scott Adkins, Michael Jai White, Michael Bisping, Celina Jade, and Jeeja Yanin.

The film was released to mixed to positive reviews, with critics praising the fight choreography as well as the cast performances, however there was criticism on the lack of plot and character development.

On Review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes gives the film a score of 67% based on 27 reviews, with an average rating of 5.72/10. The website's consensus reads: "Triple Threat might have made better



Iko Uwais and Tony Jaa in 'Triple Threat'



The film focuses on a group of mercenaries who team up to protect a billionaire's daughter from a ruthless and skilled group of assassins when a hit is taken out against her

use of its attention-getting cast, but action fans should still find the end results entertaining enough to rate a rental." Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigns the film a score of 60 out of 100 based on 4 reviews, indicating "mixed or average reviews."

For Forbes, Scott Mendelson wrote:

"That being said, this is still an action movie starring a host of action movie all-stars, and they all get a chance to shine both in terms of character work and butt-kicking."

Fred Topel of We Live Entertainment wrote: "You've got Silat vs Kung Fu and Muay Thai. They each get plenty of chances to fight solo too, or to team up against a powerful foe. Triple Threat really explores all the possible combinations of martial arts talent at their disposal."

Amanda Sink of Hollywood Outsider wrote that Triple Threat is explosively fun, with some of the best martial arts fight scenes, basic story turned intriguing, and a pronounced cast."

Eoin of Action Elite gave the film 4 out of 5 stars wrote: "Overall, Triple Threat is a near perfect blend of fist-fights and firepower making it easily the best action movie of the year so far; it has plenty of breakneck action, a cast that is clearly having a ball and one of the highest body counts in years."

Chloe Grace Moretz

celebs

Chloe Grace Moretz says new film has 'completely distanced' itself from writer Max Landis

Los Angeles

Chloe Grace Moretz says her upcoming film "Shadow in the Cloud" has been "rewritten" after screenwriter Max Landis was accused of sexual misconduct.

In an interview with The Guardian, the 22-year-old actor said the cast and crew of the film, being directed by Roseanne Liang, have completely "distanced" themselves from Landis in the aftermath of the revelations.

"We've completely distanced ourselves from him. We've rewritten it several times now. His name is kind of far away from the project. Communication is key and being held accountable is key. It's a really horrific thing to hear those stories," Moretz said.

In 2017, several women took to social media to accuse the writer of sexual harassment and misconduct.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the film is described as an "action horror" and will feature Moretz as a pilot aboard a B-17 Flying Fortress.



Brian Tyree Henry in talks for Jennifer Lawrence-starrer A24 film

Los Angeles

Actor Brian Tyree Henry is in negotiations to join Jennifer Lawrence in A24's new drama film. The project marks Lawrence's return vehicle to acting after a year-long gap.

To be directed by Lila Neugebauer, the as-yet-untitled movie will feature Lawrence as a US soldier who suffers a traumatic brain injury in Afghanistan. Elizabeth Sanders is penning the screenplay, according to Collider.

Henry, who most recently featured in Steve McQueen-directed heist film "Widows", is being eyed for the male lead.

The film will be produced by Lawrence and Justine Polsky through their production banner, Excellent Cadaver. Scott Rudin and Eli Bush are also producing.



Brian Tyree Henry



Jennifer Lawrence

Kim Kardashian slams people criticising her for working with Donald Trump

Los Angeles

Kim Kardashian has no time for criticism and she did not hold back on her viewers after facing backlash over working with US President Donald Trump.

In June, last year, Kardashian commuted the life sentence of Alice Marie Johnson, who had been serving time in prison since 1996 for a first-time drug offense, reported E! News.

Trump granted her clemency after Kardashian met him and spoke to him at the White House. 'The Keeping Up With the Kardashians' star later met Johnson after she was released on parole.

Kardashian, who recently revealed that she is studying to become a lawyer, has continued to work for criminal justice reform. The 38-year-old star has maintained a relationship with the White House and is working with the officials to try to obtain more clemencies.



Kim Kardashian



Patrick Carney and Michelle Branch

Michelle Branch, Patrick Carney are now married!

Los Angeles

Singer-songwriter Michelle Branch and musician Patrick Carney, just tied the knot.

The singer and 'The Black Keys' drummer got hitched in New Orleans at the beautiful Marigny Opera House, reported E! News.

The 'All You Wanted' singer posted a screenshot of People's notification about their wedding on her Instagram account and captioned it, "Can confirm."

Michelle's friend Anda shared photos and videos of the wedding nuptials on her Instagram account, including Michelle walking down the aisle with

her Patrick as well as the bride being escorted by her father to the altar.

It looked like a beautiful sunny day in the Big Easy, as the attendees partied in a brick courtyard after the wedding ceremony.

According to E! News, famous chef, Andrew Zimmern was also there as he was seen in some of the social media videos and commented on one of Michelle's earlier photos from an outing in New Orleans.

The couple's special day comes about two years after they announced their engagement. 'The Black Keys' drummer popped the big question on Michelle's 34th birthday on July 2, 2017.



Ariana Grande

Ariana Grande opens up about her fascination for Jim Carrey

Los Angeles

Singer Ariana Grande has said the celebrity she still loves the most is Hollywood star actor Jim Carrey. Grande said she adored the "Dumb and Dumber" star even more because of his inspirational quotes about depression, reports mirror.co.uk. "The no tears left to cry" hitmaker uploaded a series of posts about the



Jim Carrey

57-year-old actor to her Instagram story. One included a line by Carrey about depression and how to understand it. Grande opened up about her "headspace" and how she was not in the place to deal with things like social media like she once was. Last week, she told her fans she was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and posted images of her brain scan. She told fans of her love for Carrey. "My first AIM username was jimcarreyfan42 when I was in like 4th grade," she said talking about the chatting website.

JLo spends 'quality time' with Alex Rodriguez's daughter

Los Angeles

Singer-actor Jennifer Lopez spent some quality time with her fiancé Alex Rodriguez and his daughter Natasha.

Rodriguez, the former New York Yankees player, shared a video on Instagram, where Lopez and Natasha can be seen having some good time and singing Bon Jovi's 'Livin' on a Prayer'.



Jennifer Lopez and Natasha

"Living on a prayer!! Happy Easter," Rodriguez captioned the video.

In the video, Natasha can

be seen strumming a Ukulele, while Lopez can be seen lying beside her. "I can do this for a living guys," Rodriguez mockingly says at the end of the video.

Recently, Lopez expressed her love for Rodriguez's youngest daughter, Ella in her Instagram stories. "Love you Ella. Happy Birthday", wrote Lopez. Ella celebrated her birthday on Saturday.

When Paloma Faith threatened to kill neighbour's dog

Los Angeles

Singer-actress Paloma Faith, who stars in the "Batman" spin-off "Pennyworth", says playing villain Bet Sykes turned her into a real-life psycho as she threatened to kill her neighbour's dog.

"I recently got into an argument with my next-door neighbour and told him I was gonna kill his dog. And I realised afterwards that I hadn't got out of character yet, and that's not really my natural behaviour... Now I am creating bad relations with people who live on my street," she said.

As well as scaring her neighbours, Faith, 37, said her co-stars were left terrified by her performance on screen, reports mirror.co.uk.

"It's very odd because people keep coming up to me on the set saying, 'I'm scared of you. It's too real, and we're really worried'. People on set are British and they know me as a person who's kind of a bit playful and stuff, and Bet's not that playful, except with people's bodies."

Tara Reid glad she is getting 'older roles' to play

Los Angeles

"S harknado" actor Tara Reid says she is happy filmmakers have started approaching her with age appropriate roles.

The 43-year-old actor, who found fame after playing Vicky in the "American Pie" films, said earlier she looked "too young" to play a

mother on screen but now she has started getting parts where she can showcase "another side" of her.

"I'm finally getting to play older roles and that's what I needed because I was kind of stuck. I looked too young to play the 'mom', yet I was too old for a 'high school girl!'" Reid said, as quoted by ContactMusic.

"Everyone saw me as the girl from 'American Pie' but that was in my 20s and I'm in my 40s now. I'm grateful I had that moment but now I'm getting the chance to show another side of me. And now I have a great team behind me, I couldn't have planned better things. It's my time again and no one is taking it away from me," she added.



Tara Reid

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SPORTS
sports

Barca race towards title

Jordi Alba's goal gave Barcelona a 2-1 win over Real Sociedad

AFP | Madrid

Barcelona are closing in on their eighth La Liga title in 11 years after Clement Lenglet and Jordi Alba both scored in a 2-1 win over Real Sociedad on Saturday.

Victory means Barca only have to beat Alaves on Tuesday and then Levante next Saturday to be crowned champions at Camp Nou, while three points against Alaves will be enough on its own if Atletico Madrid then lose to Valencia on Wednesday.

Whether in three days or seven, it is now surely only a matter of when rather than if Ernesto Valverde's side successfully defend their trophy, despite Atletico keeping the gap to nine points after they edged past Eibar earlier on Saturday.

"We have to get it out of our heads that we are nine points clear," Valverde said. "We now have three days until we play again and it will be difficult."

Wrapping it up early though would allow Barcelona the luxury of focusing completely on the Champions League, which could give them an advantage over their semi-final opponents Liverpool, who seem to be embroiled in a Premier League race to the finish with Manchester City.

But this was no stroll, with Real Sociedad pulling level in the second half thanks to Ju-



Barcelona's Spanish defender Jordi Alba shoots to score his team's second goal

anmi's equaliser, even if parity lasted less than two minutes.

Lionel Messi might not have scored but it was his cute pass that teed up the excellent Alba to score the winner after Lenglet had earlier powered in a header from Ousmane Dembele's cross.

Barcelona racing towards title

Barcelona stumbled out of the blocks this season but they are now tearing down the home straight.

This was their 21st league

game without defeat while Real Madrid sit 16 points behind them ahead of their game at home to Athletic Bilbao.

"You always look at the matches of Real Madrid because you always consider them a rival," Valverde said. "In their case, they may be thinking about next season."

It was a surprise when Messi failed to score with two free-kicks in the first half while Sociedad could have been in front but Juanmi was denied by

Marc-Andre ter Stegen and Wilian Jose spurned the rebound.

There was nothing complicated about Lenglet's opener, the Frenchman rising high above two defenders and heading into the corner for his first league goal in a Barcelona shirt.

Ter Stegen and Alba were fortunate not to be punished for a mix-up and then La Real did score, in the 62nd minute, as Juanmi slid to connect with Mikel Merino's brilliant through ball. But in the 64th minute, Barca

”
We have to get it out of our heads that we are nine points clear. We now have three days until we play again and it will be difficult

ERNESTO VALVERDE

were ahead again as Messi weaved one way and then the other before finding Alba to his left. The defender jinked inside and drove a shot into the far corner.

Earlier, Atletico Madrid had needed Thomas Lemar to come off the bench and find an 85th-minute winner against Eibar as they stretched their lead over Real Madrid to seven points.

Without Antoine Griezmann and Diego Costa, who were both suspended, Diego Simeone's side looked set for a stalemate that would have given Real at least a sniff of second place.

Instead Lemar, on as a substitute, tucked in Koke's cross to deliver another timely boost to Atleti's morale, in the same week their star goalkeeper Jan Oblak extended his contract with the club until 2023.

BOC conducts symposium on recovery and restoring sports activity

TDT | Manama

A course on recovery and restoring sports activity, organized by the Bahrain Olympic Committee's Olympic Academy, got underway yesterday with a group of coaches representing sports clubs and federations, taking part.

This programme is part of the annual plan of the Olympic Academy in an attempt to develop and qualifying national technical staff.

It is being run by Dr. Nicolas Berryman, assistant professor of sports studies at Sherbrooke University, lecturer at Physical Activity and Research Faculty at the University Studies Centre at the University of Montreal.

The Olympic Academy aims to enhance the capacity of national technical competencies in the field of recovery and restoring sports activities due to their great contributions in improving the players' abilities and avoid injuries.

Dr. Berryman himself gave a lecture on Saturday, April 20, entitled "Integrating Muscle Strength and Fitness Training", which was held at the Olympic Academy in Manama, Juffair with the participation of men and women national teams' coaches.

Australia beat Belarus to make first Fed Cup final since 1993

AFP | Brisbane, Australia

Australia powered into its first Fed Cup final since 1993 yesterday with Ashleigh Barty and Samantha Stosur clinching the deciding fifth rubber in Brisbane against Belarusian pair Victoria Azarenka and Aryna Sabalenka.

Their battling 7-5, 3-6, 6-2 win set up a title match against either France or Romania in November.

The tie was sent into the crucial doubles match after Azarenka crushed Stosur 6-1, 6-1 in the reverse singles, following Barty sweeping past Sabalenka 6-2, 6-2.

Belarus, a losing finalist in 2017, was scheduled to pit Lidziya Marozava and Vera Lapko against the Australian duo, who were playing together for the first time. But with so much on the line team captain Tatiana Poutchek opted instead for the more accomplished pairing.

But they fell short to give seven-time champions Australia a crack at their first title since last winning in 1974.

"I could not have picked two more perfect athletes to compete. Ash and Sam are superstars," said elated Australian captain Alicia Molik.



Ashleigh Barty of Australia hits a return to Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus

Barty called making the final "unbelievable" while Stosur said it was "super exciting".

"We knew it was going to be a tough one and we just so happy with how we played," added Stosur. "All the girls have worked so hard throughout the year and we really stick together."

Watched on Pat Rafter Arena by Evonne Goolagong, who led Australia to that last Fed Cup win, the home team grabbed an early break against the Sa-

balenka serve in the opening game.

Belarus evened it up in game six and they exchanged breaks again before the Australians attacked the Azarenka serve to break and go 6-5 in front, with Stosur securing the set with an overhead smash.

The second set went with serve until a powerful Sabalenka forehand off the Stosur serve gave Belarus the edge and Sabalenka served out the set to take the tie to the wire.

Ronaldo '1,000 per cent' committed

AFP | Milan

Cristiano Ronaldo said he was "1,000 per cent committed to staying" with Juventus next season as he claimed his first Serie A title and Juventus their eighth in a row on Saturday.

Massimiliano Allegri's side had needed just one more point for a 35th Scudetto and their latest title triumph helped ease some of the pain of their shock Champions League exit at the Juventus Stadium to Ajax on Tuesday.

A come-from-behind 2-1 win over Fiorentina was enough to give them a 20-point lead on nearest rivals Napoli with five games to play.

Serbian defender Nikola Milenkovic put Fiorentina ahead after less than six minutes.

But Alex Sandro's diving header on 37 minutes and an own goal from Fiorentina defender German Pezzella after a Ronaldo cross in the 53rd minute sealed another title to ease their European disappointment.

"It was a great season and I adapted well. We won the Scudetto and the Italian Super Cup, which is not easy to



Juventus' Cristiano Ronaldo in action with Fiorentina's Bryan Dabo

achieve," said Ronaldo.

"It didn't go well in the Champions League but next year is a new page, the fans all want it and so do we.

"I'm staying at Juve, 1,000 per cent."

Ronaldo makes history

It was the 34-year-old's sixth domestic league title, having won three with Manchester United and two with Real Madrid, as he becomes the first player to win the Premier League, La Liga and Serie A.

Juventus purchased the five-time Ballon d'Or winner for 100 million euros (\$112 million) last summer.

Japan avoid Fed Cup drop

AFP | Osaka, Japan

Misaki Doi thrashed Bibiane Schoofs 6-3, 6-2 yesterday as Japan completed a 4-0 Dutch white-wash in a one-sided Fed Cup world group two relegation playoff.

The Netherlands, who just three years ago reached the Fed Cup semi-finals, slipped into the Europe/Africa group one after an abject display in Osaka.

Doi and Nao Hibino had put Japan firmly in control of the tie on Saturday, despite the absence of world number one Naomi Osaka.

World 104 Doi finished the job with a clinical performance against Schoofs, before Shuko Aoyama and Eri Hozumi added insult to injury for the Dutch by beating Lesley Kerkhove and Demi Schuurs 6-3, 3-6, 10-6 in the dead doubles rubber.

The final singles match was subsequently scratched.

"It took a while to find my rhythm but the crowd got behind me and gave me a lift," said Doi after overpowering Schoofs with a barrage of backhand winners.

"To stay in the world group gives us something to aim for. It's a victory that gives hope to women's tennis in Japan."

Everton thrash United

Four-star Everton pile on the agony for Man United boss Solskjaer



Richarlison acrobatically scores the opening goal for Everton

AFP | London

One Gunnar Solskjaer's problems since taking over as permanent Manchester United manager intensified with a humiliating 4-0 loss away to Everton yesterday.

Defeat at Goodison Park -- United's sixth in eight games -- also dealt a huge blow to the Red Devils' hopes of playing in the Champions League next season.

Goals from Richarlison, Gylfi Sigurdsson, Lucas Digne and Theo Walcott inflicted the largest defeat on United since they lost by the same scoreline at Chelsea three years ago.

But, after starting his reign with eight consecutive victo-

ries, the best start ever made by a manager at the club, former United striker Solskjaer is now collecting some other, very unwanted, statistics.

This latest loss means United have now leaked 48 league goals, the most they've conceded in a season, since letting in 63 back in the 42-game 1978/79 campaign.

Yesterday's loss also means United have conceded in 12 consecutive games for the first time since December 1998 while, under Solskjaer, the Reds have lost five consecutive away games for the first time in 38 years.

Second best

United looked second best even before the hosts scored

twice inside the opening half-hour, conceding a succession of corners from which Everton threatened.

It was another type of set-piece, a long throw-in by Digne, from which Everton took the lead after 12 minutes when the full-back launched the ball deep into the United area.

Dominic Calvert-Lewin helped the ball on with the flick of his head and Richarlison sent a spectacular scissor-kick finish flying past David de Gea.

After a humbling 3-0 Champions League exit at Barcelona in midweek, it was not the start Solskjaer had been looking for. Everton soon made the situation worse for the visitors.



Manchester United crashed to a fifth consecutive away defeat

After 27 minutes, Everton cleared a United corner and immediately broke on the counter-attack, with winger Bernard playing a delightful ball inside to Idrissa Gueye.

He, in turn, released Sigurdsson who, with Nemanja Matic

English Premier League

| | | | |
|--------------|---|---|-------------------|
| Everton | 4 | 0 | Manchester United |
| Arsenal | 2 | 3 | Crystal Palace |
| Cardiff City | 0 | 2 | Liverpool |

German Bundesliga

| | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| Sport-Club Freiburg | 0 | 4 | Borussia Dortmund |
|---------------------|---|---|-------------------|

Spanish La Liga

| | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---------------|
| Levante | 2 | 2 | Espanyol |
| Getafe | 3 | 0 | Sevilla |
| Real Madrid | 3 | 0 | Athletic Club |

French Ligue 1

| | | | |
|----------|---|---|------------|
| Nantes | 3 | 2 | Amiens |
| Toulouse | 0 | 0 | Lille |
| Reims | 0 | 2 | St Etienne |

*Scores as of closing

backing off, unleashed a magnificent 25-yard shot which bounced just in front of the diving de Gea on its way into the bottom corner.

Richarlison might have given Everton the lead even earlier. His 10th minute shot drew an amazing reaction save from de Gea. From the rebound the Brazilian hurried his follow-up effort wide.

Brilliantly timed

With the recalled Romelu Lukaku booed every time he touched the ball by his former fans at Everton, United had little response to an impressive effort from the home side.

In between the goals, United star Paul Pogba's long diagonal pass freed Marcus Rashford who could only poke his effort over from a tight angle.

Everton effectively killed the game in the 56th minute. De Gea punched clear a Sigurdsson corner to the unmarked Digne who sent a superb, first-time volley flying back past the United keep-

er from 20 yards.

Three minutes later, and from the same left wing, another Sigurdsson corner almost crept in at de Gea's near post before the Spaniard stuck out a boot to clear off his line.

Even though Richarlison had limped off through injury, the agony was not over for United with the Brazilian's replacement Walcott continuing the rout in the 64th minute.

Sigurdsson again carved out the opening with a brilliantly-timed through ball which allowed the former England international the space to sprint into the area and beat the advancing de Gea.

Not until the 86th minute, and a comfortably saved Anthony Martial strike, did United have a shot on target.

Meanwhile Everton, who had not beaten a 'big six' rival in 25 attempts before last month, have now won consecutive home matches against Chelsea, Arsenal and United while keeping three clean sheets in the process.

Fognini becomes first Italian to win Monte Carlo title in 51 years

AFP | Monte Carlo

Colourful Fabio Fognini defeated Dusan Lajovic 6-3, 6-4 to win the Monte Carlo Masters yesterday, the first Italian to triumph at the clay court showpiece in over half a century.

The 13th seed, based just 20 kilometres over the border in San Remo, followed on from compatriot Nicola Pietrangeli, who watched his record fall from the royal box at the Monte Carlo Country Club.

Pietrangeli won the trophy in the principality in 1961, 1967 and 1968.

He came to the court after the trophy ceremony to pose for pictures with his new tennis heir, who was following up his shock semi-final win over 11-time Monte Carlo champion Rafael Nadal.

"I was born nearby so this is extraordinary," Fognini, 31, said. "I started the season rather badly, so this is unbelievable. I'm very content with this victory, especially with all of the Italians here today."

The 48th-ranked Serb La-



Winner Italy's Fabio Fognini kisses the trophy after winning the final j.pgtennis match against Serbia's Dusan Lajovic

jovic was playing in the first ATP final of his career and got to the title match without the loss of a set.

Fognini looked to be temporarily hampered as he limped momentarily after breaking Lajovic for 3-2 in the second after claiming the opening set in 44 minutes.

During a medical timeout, he was taped on his right thigh and a heel, but carried on without apparent problems as he finished the final on his second match point as Lajovic returned long.

The winner of his first Masters 1000 trophy came to the first major week of the pre-Roland Garros run-up with a 0-4 record on the clay, the surface he grew up on.

Among his victims this week was number three Alexander Zverev, and his stunning stunning 6-4, 6-2 victory over Nadal on Saturday to end the Spanish star's 25-set win streak in the principality.

"This is something just incredible," added Fognini who had been a set and 4-1 down to Andy Rublev in his tournament opener.

"I'm really tired now, I've been running all week. I prepared for this final as best I could, I knew it would be tough, since Dusan has my ex-coach (Jose Perlas).

He added: "This is a great achievement, but it's tough to beat Rafa and then play a final." Lajovic was playing his first career ATP final and was far from crushed by defeat.

"It was my first time in the finals, so a great experience for me. Today was not easy, there was a lot of wind.

Benzema's treble fires Real past Bilbao

AFP | Madrid

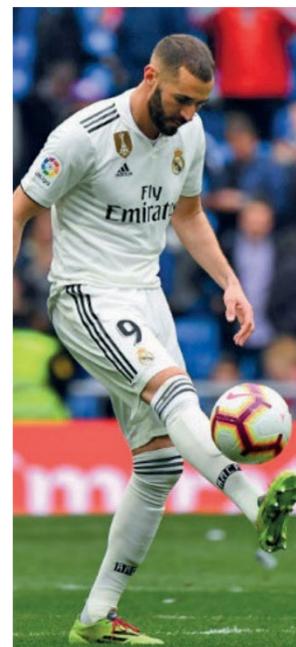
Karim Benzema made it 30 goals for the season yesterday as he led the way again for struggling Real Madrid with a hat-trick that shot his side to a 3-0 win over Athletic Bilbao.

Benzema has been one of the few bright sparks in an otherwise dreary campaign for the European champions and it was his second-half treble that proved the difference at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Victory moves Madrid four points behind Atletico in second, while Bilbao stay seventh, with their chances of sealing a spot in the Europa League dented. However Zinedine Zidane's side stay 13 points behind La Liga leaders Barcelona, who beat Real Sociedad 2-1 on Saturday.

Benzema's advance in the absence of Cristiano Ronaldo and surge since the reappointment of Zidane comes in stark contrast to Gareth Bale, who was whistled here introduced as a substitute here and frequently during his 20 minutes on the pitch.

For all the impatience of the home crowd, it was Bale who won the corner for Benzema's



Real Madrid's French forward Karim Benzema leaves the pitch with the match ball after scoring a hat trick

press support or suggest he wants the Welshman to stay beyond the summer.

Bale and Benzema with the gargantuan task of filling the void left by Ronaldo's departure for Juventus last summer and while Bale seems to have shrivelled under the weight of expectation, Benzema has thrived.

The 31-year-old has now claimed all of Madrid's last eight goals in La Liga, a run that includes five matches, while in his last seven games, he has scored 10.

- Benzema saves limp Real - Benzema said at the start of the season he wanted 35 goals in all competitions and, despite his opportunities being reduced by his team's early exit in the Champions League, he is now only five short of his target with the same number of games left to play.

Zidane has already said he expects Benzema to be a Madrid player again at the start of next season and on this evidence it is easy to see why.

The striker's clinical performance aside, the reigning European champions lacked spark in the final third and, the emphatic scoreline flattered them.