



King meets Premier



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa yesterday visited His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa. HM the King paid tribute to HRH the Premier, hailing his pivotal role in enhancing Government's work to meet citizens' needs, cater to their required services and bolster their status as the focal point of comprehensive development.

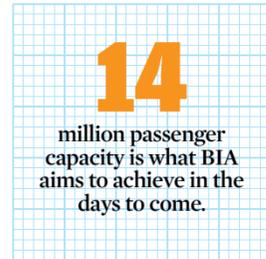
BIA adds 12 new routes

TDT|Manama

Twelve new routes have been added by various airlines operating out of Bahrain International Airport (BIA), bringing the BIA's total number of destinations up to 53, its operator and managing body, Bahrain Airport Company (BAC), announced yesterday.

The BIA also recently welcomed the arrival of Azerbaijan's flag carrier, Azerbaijan Airlines, following the commencement of its direct service between Baku and Bahrain. The airline now operates a service twice a week between Heydar Aliyev International Airport and BIA.

As part of its new corporate



strategy and network expansion, Gulf Air has added eight new routes. It now operates direct services to Bangalore (India), Calicut (India), Abha (Saudi Arabia), Tubuk (Saudi Arabia), Alexandria (Egypt), Sharm El Shaikh (Egypt), Baku (Azerbaijan), and Casablanca

(Morocco).

Meanwhile, AtlasGlobal has added new routes from Bahrain to Izmir, Antalya, and Trabzon, Turkey. Turkish Airlines has also added Trabzon to its list destinations.

BAC Chief Commercial Officer, Ayman Zainal, said: "Improvements being made to BIA's facilities, infrastructure, and services as part of the Airport Modernisation Programme have given airlines the confidence to expand their networks out of BIA."

Last year saw a marked increase in new airlines operating out of BIA, including Ethiopian Airlines, Atlas Global Airlines, and Wataniya Airways.

Jordan Premier wins confidence vote

Jordan Prime Minister Omar Razzaz's comfortable victory in a parliamentary confidence vote has given the reformist leader some breathing space - for the time being at least.

Razzaz survived the vote by a 79-49 margin after a week of intense debate in the 130-member Parliament.

However, the embattled leader, who has been in office for only six weeks, knows the victory cannot be taken for granted.

The confidence vote is likely to give Razzaz room to introduce wide-ranging reforms at least until the end of the year.

Jordan's Parliament will return from recess in October and, short of an emergency, another vote of confidence is unlikely.

Israel spits racist venom

A new barrier in ending decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Adoption of the law "reflected the regime of racism and discrimination against the Palestinian people," GCC secretary general Abdullah Al Zayani was quoted by SPA as saying.

Jeddah

Saudi Arabia has joined the UAE in slamming a controversial Israeli law as "perpetuating racial discrimination" against Palestinians by defining the country as the nation state of the Jewish people, state media reported.

The law adopted by Israel's parliament on Thursday also defines the establishment of Jewish communities as being in the national interest and downgrades Arabic from an official language to one with special status.

Citing a Saudi foreign ministry source, the official Saudi Press Agency said late Friday the kingdom "rejects and disap-



Arab lawmakers stand up in protest during a Knesset session in Jerusalem.

proves" of the new legislation which it argued contradicts international law.

The source called on the international community to "confront such a law and other Israeli attempts, aimed at perpetuating racial discrimination against the Palestinian people", SPA reported.

Saudi Arabia said the adoption of the

law would also be a barrier to ending the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

On Friday, the UAE's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash branded Israel racist for enacting the law, saying it weakened the possibility for a two-state solution.

"The Israeli Knesset's ratification of

the Jewish-state law enshrines the racist practices against Palestinians and falls in the context of weakening the current political direction for a two-state solution," Dr Anwar Gargash tweeted.

Earlier this year King Salman reaffirmed Saudi Arabia's "steadfast" support for the Palestinian cause, after Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman signalled a shift in the country's approach.

Prince Mohammed in April said in a magazine interview that Israelis as well as Palestinians "have the right to have their own land".

Arab citizens account for some 17.5 per cent of Israel's more than eight million population and have long complained of discrimination.

The Israeli legislation was also condemned by the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, comprised of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Adoption of the law "reflected the regime of racism and discrimination against the Palestinian people," GCC secretary general Abdullah Al Zayani was quoted by SPA as saying.

Beauty battle



Arianne Deseree Viardo, fifth from left, overcame 12 beauty contestants to win the title of Mutya Ng Pilipinas Bahrain 2018. Arianne will represent Bahrain at the upcoming Mutya Ng Pilipinas, which will be held in the Philippines. The Mutya Ng Pilipinas Pageantry is a Filipino foundation that organises the event every year.



02 240 Filipinos embraced Islam last year

04 Call for Arab unity to end Palestinian plight

05 Qatar behind online hatred campaigns

SPACE MUSICIAN

Astronaut drops in, plays duet from space

Berlin

Kraftwerk fans are used to hearing otherworldly tunes, but the German electronic music pioneers took it to another level at a gig in Stuttgart.

Video posted Saturday by the European Space Agency shows German astronaut Alexander Gerst "dropping in" for a live performance from the International Space Station.

Using a tablet computer with a virtual synthesizer, Gerst played a duet of Kraftwerk's 1978 song "Spacelab" with the band Friday night to cheers from the audience.



Alexander Gerst

He's not the first space musician. Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield recorded a cover of David Bowie's "Space Oddity" and played a duet with the Barenaked Ladies while 400 kilometers (250 miles) above the Earth in 2013.

American astronaut Ron McNair planned to play saxophone from orbit with Jean Michel Jarre in 1986 but died in the Challenger tragedy.

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BIG STORY  
big story

# 240 Filipinos embraced Islam last year

IAC has successfully helped around 1,500 new Muslims from 16 different nationalities to live their lives in accordance with the teachings of their new religion.

TDT|Manama  
Muhannad Mansour

As many as 243 nationals of the Philippines embraced Islam last year while 50 convert every month on an average in the Kingdom, thanks to the efforts of a Bahraini centre specialised in the teaching of Islam, which recently expanded its Daawah (proselytising) activities to include social media networks and other digital platforms.

Islam Awareness Centre (IAC) was established in 1978 and began as an idea by a group of ambitious Bahraini youth back then, says Tariq Al Wazzan, the president of the centre.

After forty years, the IAC is today one of the most active Daawah centres in Bahrain and the region, as it organises numerous activities and conducts different programmes to suit the different expatriate communities living in the Kingdom.

While speaking to Tribune, Mr Al Wazzan elaborated more on the activities of the centre and how it successfully helped around 1,500 new Muslims from 16 different nationalities to live their lives in accordance with the teachings of their new religion.

Explaining the goals, vision and mission of IAC, Mr Al Wazzan said, "Our goal is to spread awareness of Islam to non-Muslims, caring for the needs of new Muslims, teaching Arabic to non-native speakers and educating expatriate Muslim communities. We always strive to achieve excellence in spreading awareness of Islam with wisdom and good teaching, using modern tools and in partnership with the other Islamic awareness organisations."

## Growing numbers

Mr Al Wazzan revealed that the numbers of people who converted to Islam have been steadily growing since the establishment of the centre, confirming that IAC helped 25 people to convert in 2011, while in 2016 a total of 312 individuals embraced Islam. "By the grace of Allah, this is a remarkable achievement for the centre and we look forward for more accomplishments," Mr Al Wazzan commented.

He also informed that the majority of the new Muslims at the centre were women, with more than 200 women joined Islam last year in comparison with around 100 men.

According to Mr Al Wazzan, most of the people who embraced Islam through the centre were Filipinos. He said, "The centre's annual statistics indicate that Filipinos have more tendency to join Islam than people from other nations. The latest figures showed that a total of 243 nationals of the Philippines from both genders converted to Islam in 2017. There were less than 20 individuals joining from each of the other nationalities, which included India, Sri



Filipino members are offered classes in Tagalog at the centre.



The numbers of people who embraced Islam at IAC noticeably grew in the past seven years



Our programmes aim to bring about a generation of new Muslims who have a sound knowledge and awareness of the Islamic faith.

MR AL WAZZAN

Lanka, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, the UK, Ireland, Portugal, Albania and more."

IAC provides its visitors and members with a variety of free Islamic books that are available in over 10 languages. Tribune visited the centre's library, which also includes a large screen to play documentaries in different languages to visitors and members.

Additionally, the centre grants non-Arab members the opportunity to enroll in free Arabic language classes that are supervised by well-known language specialists and educators.

## Programmes

The centre organises a number of Daawah programmes and activities in public places throughout the year. This includes stands at public events such as the annual Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix and the National Day celebrations.

"For the 10th year running, and in cooperation with other Islamic awareness centres in Bahrain, the

Centre hosted an Islam awareness programme during the Formula 1 event at the Bahrain International Circuit. During the days of the race, an awareness stand was set up both at the Circuit and at Bab Al Bahrain (old market) in Manama, with the aim of raising awareness about Islam, correct the common misconceptions and offer authentic hospitality to visitors of this global event. Books, leaflets and complimentary gifts are distributed to visitors. By the grace of Allah, around 20 visitors embraced Islam from different nationalities through this activity," Mr Al Wazzan revealed.

"This project aims to connect directly with non-Muslim communities in a civil manner. Answers are provided to questions asked by visitors of different nationalities and an open channel is maintained between communities and the members of the centre," the president said, adding that "over 70 people have embraced Islam at these stands in 2017 and 60 in 2016".

He also said that the centre distributes complimentary material about Islam in different languages to non-Muslim communities in public places.

"A team of dedicated and knowledgeable members from the centre explains the basic principles of Islam to raise awareness about its message and also answers any questions or doubts on the religion. This is one of our most lively events in terms of interaction with non-Muslims," Mr Al Wazzan said while speaking about the public activities of the centre.

Another programme that targets new Muslims and members of the centre is the "Teach Me Islam" project, which is aimed at educating Muslims who newly embraced the religion.

Mr. Al Wazzan added, "This programme is focusing on teaching Islam to the 1,500 members that have embraced Islam at IAC. After declaring the Shahadah

(statement of faith), new Muslims are enrolled in classes on religious rulings, Qur'an recitation, the Arabic language, principles of Islamic sciences and other such courses."

"This phase that follows their entrance into Islam is of critical



Two women repeat Shahadah (statement of faith) after Mr. Al Wazzan and entering Islam

importance to a new Muslim, who requires the kind of support and direction that will allow him or her to be steadfast in faith. This project has been taking place since the establishment of the centre 40 years ago. It helps to bring about a generation of new Muslims who have a sound knowledge and awareness of their Islamic faith," he underlined.

## Digitalising Daawah

At the centre, Tribune witnessed the workflow of the centre's staff members, which included online Daawah activities, such as communicating with individuals who are curious to know more about Islam through emails and social media networks.

Tribune met Faith Adviser Zeeshan Mehboob, who spends around 12 hours a day practising online Daawah, through Facebook, What'sApp, emailing and other

digital communication methods. Mr Mehboob highlighted that many individuals are more comfortable to learn about Islam online instead of actual books or personal interaction.

He noted that "the Internet has become the main communication platform nowadays and it's easier to overcome the boundaries of anxiety or embarrassment for some people".

However, Mr Mehboob also underlined that different nations interact differently, mentioning that "some prefer interacting online, while others find more comfort in reading books and others in direct interaction".

"This depends on the social and cultural background of a person," he commented.

Mr Mehboob added that online Daawah activities and programmes are available at the centre for both genders, adding that the centre's page on Instagram and Facebook has around 20,000 followers.



## New destinations this summer

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200  
women embraced  
Islam last year  
compared to 100 men.

# Call for Arab unity to end Palestinian plight

Parliamentary delegation raps unjust use of force by Israelis against Palestinian people

● Shura Council member, Ahmed Bahzad, stressed that the occupation forces' incessant violations against the brotherly Palestinian people contravene international resolutions, as well as all conventions.

Cairo

Members of the parliamentary delegation to the 28th extraordinary session of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU) have called for the need to protect the rights of the brotherly Palestinian people, continue providing them with the necessary support and reject the continuous violations of the Israeli Occupation Forces in the occupied territories.

Shura Council member, Hala Ramzi, expressed her condemnation of the unjustified and excessive use of force by the Israeli occupation forces against civilians in the Gaza Strip, while demanding their just and legitimate rights.

She said that such abhorrent practices contravene all norms,



The Bahraini delegation at the 28th extraordinary session of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union.

traditions and religious principles, stressing the importance of Arab solidarity and cooperation to put an end to such dangerous escalation in the occupied Arab lands.

Member of the Council of Representatives, MP Jamal Dawood,

said that supporting the Palestinian issue requires a comprehensive Arab and international action to stop the massacres and grave violations committed by the Zionist authorities.

The delegation affirmed the support of the Kingdom for the

Palestinian cause and its brotherly people in obtaining their legitimate rights, according to the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, and based on the two-state solution on the 1967 borders, and all the relevant UN resolutions.

Shura Council member, Ahmed

Bahzad, stressed that the Occupation Forces' incessant violations against the brotherly Palestinian people contravene the International Legitimacy resolutions, as well as all the international conventions, norms and agreements that protect human rights, especially the right to protest which is guaranteed to the Palestinians as per such conventions and covenants.

He added that the AIPU meeting aims to re-assert the Arab firm stance in support of the brotherly Palestinian people's right on their land, and right to establish their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Representatives Council member, MP Mohammed Milad, stressed the need for stepping up Arab coordination, cooperation and consultation to address the current challenges facing the Palestinian cause, the Arab's central cause.

Shura Council member, Dr Mansour Sarhan, welcomed the convening of the extraordinary session of AIPU to discuss the latest dangerous escalation in the Palestinian territories, calling on the Palestinians to rally together, and urging concerted Arab, Islamic and international efforts to put an end to the Israeli Occupation Forces' illegitimate practices against the Palestinians.

## 10 years prison for drug seller

TDT|Manama  
Ali Tarif

The High Criminal Court sentenced a drug seller to 10 years behind bars in addition to BD5,000 fine.

The defendant was arrested on King Fahad Causeway along with another man and he was carrying hashish weighing 270 grams, court details show.



I noticed he was nervous and ordered a search, which found he was carrying drugs.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

The drugs were hidden inside his underwear. He told police officers during questioning that he bought hashish with co-accused from Saudi Arabia with an aim to sell it across the Kingdom.

"I noticed he was nervous and ordered a search, which found he was carrying drugs," the customs officer who nabbed them told prosecutors.

"They said there was nothing in their possession. When I inspected them I found hashish hidden inside his underwear," he added.

The defendant's saliva also tested positive for hashish and other types of drugs.

The defendant revealed to prosecutors that he bought hashish from a Saudi national for BD1,800.

## Bahrain shines at British Parliament

London

All eyes were on Bahrain as the Diplomat Business Club organised a unique and highly prestigious seminar at the British Parliament Committee Room titled "Bahrain Opportunities Forum 2018".

The first-of-its-kind event was organised by the President of Diplomat Business Club, Javed Malik who previously served as Pakistan's Ambassador to the Kingdom and now presides the UK-based Diplomat Business Club.

The guests at the high profile forum included British MPs, Lords and senior businessmen including Andrew Rosindell MP, Lord Robertson, as well as Sir Anwar Pervez OBE, who is the owner of Bestway group and the most affluent and successful British Muslim businessman. Speaking on the event, Mr Malik said that "it was a huge success with the venue filled to capacity which indicates the we were able to generate positive interest about Bahrain".

He added, "the presentation by Khalid Al Rumaihi, chief executive of the EDB, was excellent highlighting



The event was a big success with a full house in attendance.

the business, trade and investment opportunities in Bahrain and the participants showed a lot of interest in the excellent opportunities that Bahrain has to offer."

"The huge interest shown by the par-

ticipants was evident from the fact that Mr Al Rumaihi met back to back with various individuals who were almost queuing up to see him post the event."

Mr Malik, further said that "the business delegation led by Samir Nass,

chairman BCCI, who was accompanied by first vice chairman Khalid Mohammed Al Najibi was very instrumental in showcasing Bahrain's business climate".

Andrew Rosindell MP, who is the



### Bahrain-UK trade relations have been growing over the years.

honorary chair, of the UK chapter of the Diplomat Business Club said he was delighted to welcome the Bahraini delegation and looks forward to growing business ties between UK & Bahrain.

Mr Al Rumaihi, gave a detailed presentation about the unique and attractive business climate that has been created in the Kingdom to welcome investors from around the world.

Mr Nass in his speech highlighted the tremendous opportunities in Bahrain being the hub of trade and gateway to the Gulf.

### Tribute

The President of the Diplomat Business Club was joined by other guests in paying a special tribute to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Mr Malik said, "The wise, dynamic and visionary leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has positioned Bahrain as one of the most business friendly and welcoming societies in the Arab world and His Majesty's policies have made Bahrain an inclusive society that welcomes people from different cultures, faiths and traditions without any discrimination."



Mr Malik and Mr Rosindell honour Mr Al Rumaihi, Mr Al Najibi and Mr Nass.



# Health warning as food product recalled over Listeria outbreak

Bahrain received shipments of only one product that could have been possibly contaminated

TDT|Manama  
Mohammed Zafran

A frozen food product is being recalled from the market over worries about it being contaminated with deadly Listeria bacteria.

The Listeria outbreak concern has come in the form of a frozen corn product imported from Europe.

Although a total of 43 different products by a number of different companies are believed to have been contaminated, Bahrain has only received shipments of one product which is believed to have a possibility of being contaminated, according to sources.

The product in question is frozen sweetcorn product by the brand 'Penguin'.

The Ministry of Health released a statement yesterday warning customers against purchasing or consuming the product and urging sellers to remove it from the market.

"The Ministry received a notification from The International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) of the World Health Organisation with regards to concerns about frozen products by the Penguin brand. In its notification, the organization informed about the Listeria outbreak and the withdrawal of the products from markets of a number of European Union countries," the ministry stated.



It is suspected that many sweetcorn products got infected with the bacteria.

**47**  
cases of Listeriosis infection have been reported across the Europe.

Authorities have already informed the sellers and relevant companies to remove the products from the brand which were packed between August 13, 2016 and 20 June, 2018.

The Ministry stated that the products

must not be consumed and rather be returned to the seller while sellers of the products are urged to follow the required procedures.

Apart from Penguin Sweetcorn, other products from well known brands to be recalled globally include Tesco Frozen Every Day Value Sweetcorn, Ross Mixed Vegetables, Sainsbury's Frozen Basic Mixed Vegetables, and Lidl Frozen Green Grocer Supersweet Corn.

However, it is not clear whether contaminated shipments of these products have reached Bahrain as no official confirmation has been made on these products.

According to WHO, the outbreak can be traced to frozen vegetables pro-

cessed at a single plant in Hungary. The outbreak has been spreading since 2015 and has resulted in 47 cases.

Hungarian Food Chain Safety Office recently shut down the the factory in which the food was processed. Major product recalls have been made around the world.

Explaining the outbreak, the WHO stated, "Since 2015, an outbreak of invasive listeriosis, caused by the bacteria Listeria Monocytogenes, has been ongoing in five European countries, resulting in 47 cases over a multi-year period. This outbreak has been linked by whole genome sequencing (WGS) to frozen corn and possibly other frozen vegetables processed at a single plant



**Listeriosis can lead to hospitalisation and even death. High risk people include elderly, pregnant women, patients undergoing treatment for cancer, and HIV-infected.**

in Hungary.

"Since this outbreak has been identified, one case of Listeriosis was reported outside of Europe, in Australia, that was found to be highly related to the current outbreak strain."

"The implicated frozen vegetables have since been recalled from the market. Many of the recalled products were recently determined to have been exported to over 100 countries. The WHO, through the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), has been actively engaging with members in recipient countries to ensure distribution details are received and risk management measures are implemented, including recalls and public communication," it said.

This is the second Listeria outbreak concern that has made its way to Bahrain this year.

Rockmelons imported from Australia in April were feared to have been contaminated with the bacteria and were promptly recalled by the health authorities.

Listeriosis can lead to hospitalisation and even death. The milder symptoms of listeriosis are diarrhea and fever.

High risk people such as elderly people, pregnant women, patients undergoing treatment for cancer, and HIV are more likely to suffer from the severe form of the disease which can also cause septicemia and meningitis.

## BCCI delegation visits more markets



The delegation interacting with traders at a market.

Manama

Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) delegation paid field visits to the local markets in Sitra, Riffa, Salmabad, Budaiya and Jidhafs.

Led by BCCI Second Deputy Chairman Mohammed Abdul Jabbar Al Kooheji, the delegation also included board member

Sonia Janahi and representatives of ministries, government departments and other official entities.

Members of the BCCI markets committee were also present.

Mr Al Kooheji stressed the chamber's keenness on visiting local markets as part of efforts to meet traders' needs and aspirations and serve the national economy.

He underlined the importance of stepping up all efforts with competent authorities to develop markets to be more attractive for citizens, residents and tourists.

He said that hotline 38212030 functions round the clock to help traders reach out directly to the committee and submit their proposals as well as the challenges they are facing.

## Saudi national jailed for vandalism

● **The convicted Saudi man was also fined BD300 for committing the crime.**

TDT|Manama  
Ali Tarif

A 45-year-old Saudi man has been jailed for one month after he was convicted of attacking police officers and vandalism.

The defendant is said to have been under the influence of alcohol when he committed the crime.

According to court files, the defendant caused a mayhem

in the office of a private company operating public buses. And police officers had to intervene to end the chaos, and he assaulted them too.

"I went to the company to book a ticket to return to Saudi. I was told the tickets for the trip were sold out. I headed to a local bar and drank alcohol. I returned back to the office for the next trip. But I was denied from taking the bus. I got very angry," the 45-year-old revealed to prosecutors.

It's said that police had to use pepper spray to control the 45-year-old man.

The convicted Saudi man was also fined BD300 for committing the crime.

## Long-time resident passes away

TDT|Manama

Mrs Rachel Philip, a long-time resident of the Kingdom, passed away in her home state of Kerala in India on Friday. She was 82.

Mrs Philip worked as a tutor at the College of Health Sciences from 1968 to 1987 (19 years).

Her funeral will be held on Sunday at St Thomas Orthodox Church, Kumarapuram, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.



Mrs Rachel Philip

Her immediate survivor include a son.

# business

## BisB, Dadabhai Travel team up

TDI| Manama

**B**ahrain Islamic Bank (BisB) has signed a joint venture agreement with Dadabhai Travel. This comes on the heels of the bank's relaunch of AlThuraya Privileged Banking Services, which offers a selection of new, unique features as part of its ongoing commitment to the continuous development of its products and services. The signing ceremony was attended by Dalal AlQais, General Manager of Retail Banking of BisB and Shahnaz Al Qaseer, Chief Operating Officer of Dadabhai Travel, along with a number of officials from both parties.

Dalal AlQais, said, "We are delighted to form this exclusive partnership with Dadabhai



Dalal AlQais and Shahnaz Al Qaseer signing the agreement

**”**  
This alliance will allow us to offer our Al Thuraya account holders special travel related deals, promotional offers and exclusive holiday packages

DALAL ALQAIS

Travel, considering its outstanding level of service and reputation in the market as one of the leading travel agencies in the Kingdom. At BisB, we are always seeking to cater to the needs of our customers, by of-

fering access to a wide range of exclusive services that simplify their daily life. This alliance will allow us to offer our Al Thuraya account holders special travel related deals, promotional offers and exclusive holiday packages."

Shahnaz Al Qaseer, General Manager of Dadabhai Travel, added, "For more than thirty-five years, Dadabhai Travel has continued to strengthen its position as a leader in the tourism industry of the Kingdom of Bahrain. We are proud to partner with BisB, the leading provider of Sharia-compliant integrated financial solutions, through which we will be able to offer an unprecedented range of services by virtue of our first-rate, experienced consultants at Dadabhai Travel."

## S&P boosts Greece debt outlook to 'positive'

AFP| Washington

**T**he ratings agency S&P Global on Friday raised its outlook for Greek sovereign debt to "positive" from "stable," citing greater political stability in the long-troubled European nation.

But S&P did not change its highly speculative "B+" debt rating, which it had raised on June 25 due to what it said was an improving balance of risks.

"The positive outlook on Greece reflects the likelihood of an upgrade should the government implement reforms to broaden the tax base and improve the business environment, leading to a stronger economic recovery," the agency said in a statement.

The agency also said public infrastructure projects could boost investment in tourism and logistics and thereby raise economic growth forecasts.

Athens in June reached an agreement with its euro area creditors, allowing a 10-year extension for repaying much of its debts, which, at a 180 percent of GDP, are still the highest in the European Union.

The agreement will also allow Greece to exit its financial bailout program on August 20.

## GFH awards \$150 million contract to Chinese company

**China Machinery and Engineering Corporation will finance and construct California Village, a Dubai based project**

TDI| Manama

**G**FH Financial Group (GFH) has awarded a turnkey Engineering, Procurement & Contracting (EPC) Contract to China Machinery and Engineering Corporation (CMEC) for the construction and financing of up to 85pc of its Dubai based project, California Village, for approximately \$150 million. The contract will see financing provided by Chinese banks under an insurance policy to be issued by Chinese state government agencies.

California Village is one of the high-end mixed-use development and gated community located in Dubai with more than 200 private villas and 400 branded residence opposite



Hisham Al Rayes

to the well-known IMG.. park on Sh Mohammed Bin Zayed Highway in Dubai.

CMEC, which is listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange with a market capitalization of \$15 billion and owned by the State Government of China, will assume all activities necessary at the Dubai-based project for the completion of villas, apartments, facilities and other amenities.

Commenting, Hisham Al-rayes, CEO of GFH, said, "We're



The contract will see financing provided by Chinese banks under an insurance policy to be issued by Chinese state government agencies

pleased to create this important strategic relationship with CMEC, who is a leading global EPC provider. California Village will mark our first cooperation and we expect to build on this relationship with CMEC and other Chinese partners to undertake works that reach up to US\$ 1 billion in value covering other projects currently under discussion in the Gulf region. We look forward to obtaining the necessary approvals and concluding this important milestone successfully."

## VIVA, Skiplino to introduce queue management system

DT News| Manama

**I**n line with its commitment to empower the Bahraini start-up landscape, VIVA has partnered with the home-grown Skiplino Technologies, to introduce the Kingdom's first cloud-based queue management system by a telecom operator.

A revolutionary online system which allows people to queue digitally through a mobile application, VIVA customers will now be able to book their appointments at any of the 19 VIVA retail outlets or via the VIVA self-care app in just a few clicks anywhere, and at any time.

This collaboration with Skiplino marks another significant step from VIVA Bahrain towards digital transformation and extending its support to Bahrain Economic Development Board's (EDB) initiatives in encouraging the growth of local ecosystem as a key engine to foster grassroot innovation and entrepreneurship.

Commenting on the part-

nership, VIVA Bahrain Chief Commercial Officer, Karim Tabbouche said,

"As the fastest-growing, most innovative telecommunication operator in Bahrain, we recognise the need to support Bahrain's Economic vision 2030 and play an active role to support the scale-up of the Bahraini start-ups by empowering them with technological support and market visibility to help them succeed. Moreover, this is in line with our efforts to maintain an edge in innovation by enhancing our customers' experience through a convenient, on-the-go digital offering that gives them greater control over their time and life."

CEO of Skiplino Technologies, Zaman Abdulhameed Zaman said,

"Skiplino was developed to eliminate the problem of queues and replaces it with efficient, real-time queue monitoring information for businesses to understand and respond to their customers' needs more efficiently.

## Germany drops sanctions on Turkey

AFP| Berlin

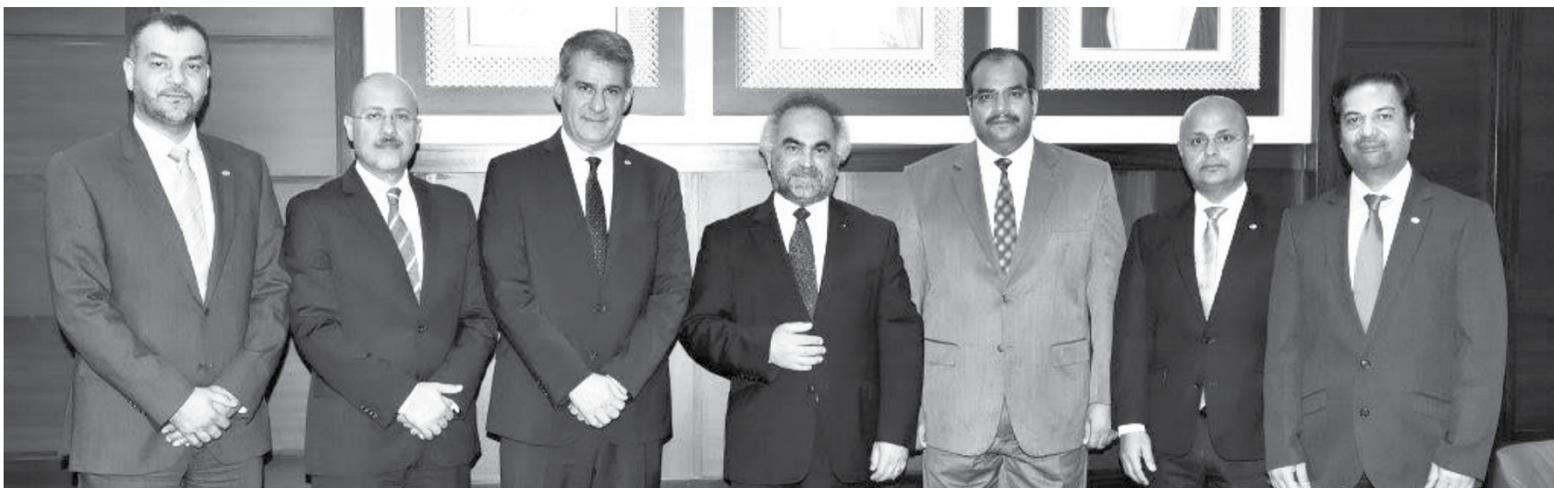
**G**ermany has lifted economic sanctions on Turkey and relaxed its travel advice to the country, Berlin said Saturday, after Ankara ended its two-year state of emergency.

A 1.5 billion-euro (\$1.7 billion) limit on export guarantees to Turkey would not be renewed this year, Germany's economy ministry told AFP, confirming an earlier report by the newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. The measure was imposed in July 2017 as a way to pressure Ankara after the detention of a German human rights campaigner and five other activists, including the head of Amnesty International in Turkey.

Opposition parties in Germany have accused the 1.5 billion-euro limit of being too timid, given that the value of export guarantees increased from 1.1 billion euros in 2016 to 1.46 billion euros the following year.

Germany's foreign ministry also removed a warning on its website about its nationals facing a high risk of arrest when visiting Turkey.

Turkey's state of emergency, imposed after a failed 2016 coup and saw the biggest purge of officials in the country's modern history, came to an end on Thursday.



The Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC) President Dr Abdulrahman Jawahery and Yasser Al Abbasi, General manager, manufacturing, with technical managers. As part of its plans and strategies to inject new blood into the executive management, GPIC Board of Directors has announced rotation of its senior managers. The company named Fadhil Malallah Al Ansari as General Manager Corporate Support; Yasser Abdul Rahim Al Abbasi, General Manager, Manufacturing; Jehad Ali Khalfan, Finance and Marketing Manager; Khalid Yousuf Al Bin Ali, Plants Operations Manager; Jassim Ahmed Darwish, Maintenance Manager; Bader Mohammed Al Mansouri, Technical Services Manager; Jamal Ali Al Shawoosh, Safety, Security, Health and Environment Manager; and Ahmed Mubarak Al Arabi, Procurement and Warehousing Manager.

## State-actors likely behind Singapore cyberattack: Experts

AFP | Singapore

State-actors were likely behind Singapore's biggest ever cyberattack to date, security experts say, citing the scale and sophistication of the hack which hit medical data of about a quarter of the population.

The city-state announced Friday that hackers had broken into a government database and stolen the health records of 1.5 million Singaporeans, including Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong who was specifically targeted in the "unprecedented" attack.

Singapore's health minister said the strike was "a deliberate, targeted, and well-planned cyberattack and not the work of casual hackers or criminal gangs".

## US open to lifting sanctions off Rusal

Reuters | Sao Paulo

The US Treasury is open to removing Russian aluminum producer Rusal from a US sanctions list, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said on Friday, adding the objective was "not to put Rusal out of business." Mnuchin's comment was the latest indication the Trump administration was trying to aid sanctions-hit Rusal, which has taken a series of steps to try to appease the US government and get the restrictions lifted. The US Treasury in April imposed sanctions against billionaire Oleg Deripaska and the eight companies in which he is a large shareholder, including Rusal, for what it called "malign activities" by Russia.

# Aramco's potential SABIC deal likely to affect IPO timing

● **Aramco is looking to buy a strategic stake in SABIC, which could boost its market valuation ahead of a planned IPO**

Reuters | Riyadh

Saudi Aramco's potential acquisition of a stake in petrochemicals maker SABIC would affect the timeframe of its own planned initial public offering, the firm's chief executive, Amin Nasser, said in a TV interview.

The offering is the centerpiece of an ambitious plan championed by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to diversify Saudi Arabia's economy beyond oil, but preparations for the IPO, which could prove the biggest in history, have slowed.

Saudi-owned Al Arabiya television cited Nasser as saying that buying a stake in a petrochemicals company would make the



Preparations for Saudi Aramco IPO, to be the biggest in history, has slowed

state oil giant less vulnerable to price volatility.

"If the deal is completed, with relevant regulations taken into account, it will definitely affect

the timeframe for the partial IPO of Saudi Aramco," he said in a transcript provided by the government media office.

Aramco said on Thursday it

was looking to buy a strategic stake in SABIC, which could boost its market valuation ahead of a planned IPO. When Aramco is ready to list, the IPO timing



**If the deal is completed, with relevant regulations taken into account, it will definitely affect the timeframe for the partial IPO of Saudi Aramco**

AMIN NASSER  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ARAMCO

would be up to the government to decide, Nasser said.

"As I said in previous interviews, when Saudi Aramco is ready, the decision of going ahead with the IPO is for the state to make," he said

On Thursday, Aramco said it was in "very early-stage discussions" with the kingdom's Public Investment Fund (PIF) to acquire the SABIC stake in a private transaction, and had no plans to acquire any publicly held shares.

## Xi ends UAE visit with raft of deals signed

AFP | Dubai

The United Arab Emirates yesterday said it agreed to set up a "comprehensive strategic partnership" with China as President Xi Jinping wrapped up a three-day visit to the Gulf country.

"The UAE and China have agreed to enhance cooperation in all fields to higher levels and forge overall strategic partnerships," the official WAM news agency said.



Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan bids farewell to Xi Jinping, President of China, as he leaves the UAE after a three-day state visit

It said this would "contribute to cementing and intensifying cooperation, boost joint development and prosperity, which is consistent with the common interest of both countries and their peoples". China and the UAE had already signed on Friday a raft of economic agreements and in the run-up to Xi's visit they agreed oil and trade deals.

Xi met UAE Vice President Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, ruler of Dubai, and Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan during his visit.

Abu Dhabi was the Chinese president's first stop on a tour which now takes him to Senegal, Rwanda and South Africa.

A joint statement by China and the UAE, published Saturday by WAM, said the two countries were committed to bolster cooperation across the board, including politics, economy, oil, gas and security. There would also be joint military training, the two countries agreed.

## Trump ups ante ahead of G20 meet

AFP | Buenos Aires

US President Donald Trump's latest attacks on China and the European Union will shape the discourse on global trade conflicts and competitive devaluation as Group of 20 finance ministers meet in Buenos Aires this weekend.

Trump's protectionist policies that have seen him slap steep tariffs on steel and aluminum, angering allies such as the EU, Canada and Mexico, already looked set to fashion discussions between finance ministers and central bankers from the world's 20 leading economies during two days of meetings. That is even more the case after his latest Twitter outburst on Friday saw him accuse the EU and China of "manipulating their currencies and interest rates lower," while he also took aim at the US Federal Reserve for hiking interest rates, complaining that it eroded "our big competitive edge."

China and the US have no plans for bilateral talks, according to US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who has vowed to "respond to concerns on US trade policies" when he meets with fellow ministers. But China will be a hot topic as Group of Seven ministers hold a one-hour session on the margins of the wider meeting, not least after Trump threatened to crank up punitive tariffs against the country to include the entire \$500 billion in



Donald Trump

goods the US imports from the Asian powerhouse. As well as his steel and aluminum duties, and threats to likewise hit foreign car imports with tariffs, Trump has already slapped China with a 25 percent levy on \$34 billion in goods, with another \$16 billion on the way.

**'Very serious'**

Other than announcing counter-measures, China has kept relatively quiet over Trump's various threats -- perhaps safe in the knowledge that his tariffs are a drop in the bucket next to their expected \$2.4 trillion exports for 2018. But German Chancellor Angela Merkel warned that the EU was "ready" to respond to the US should more excises be forthcoming, describing current trade tensions as "very serious."

International Monetary Fund chief



**Trump has already slapped China with a 25pc levy on \$34 billion in goods, with another \$16 billion on the way**

Christine Lagarde, whose press conference will kick off activities on Saturday morning, said earlier this week that increasing trade restrictions pose "the greatest near-term threat" to the world economy, despite projected growth of 3.9 percent through 2019.

She also warned Trump that "the US economy is especially vulnerable" due to "retaliatory measures."

IMF economists say that in a worst case scenario \$430 billion -- a half point -- could be cut off global GDP in 2020 if all tariff threats and retaliation are implemented. Others are also worried about Trump's measures, including India, which alongside China, Brazil, Russia and South Africa make up the five emerging market BRICS countries, all of which are G20 members.

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The Directorate of Purchasing & Supply hereby invites Suppliers / Contractors to the following Public Tenders:

No.	Tender No.	Project Title	Initial Bond (BD)	Document Fees (BD)	Tender Closing Date & Time
1	2018-158-PIP-EPD PR: 10021617	SUPPLY OF ORIGINAL SPARES FOR KSB. BOILER FEED WATER PUMP AT PH-1 AT SPWS	500/-	15/-	28/08/2018 14:00
2	2018-159-PIP-WPD PR: 10021408	SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF ION CHROMATOGRAPH (IC-ECD) AT RAS ABU JARIUR RO PLANT	500/-	15/-	28/08/2018 14:00

- Vendors who are eligible and interested to supply/provide the goods/ services/ works specified above are kindly requested to collect the appropriate tender documents from the Purchasing & Supply Directorate (Room no. 21-4) Ground Floor, Electricity & Water Authority, P. O. Box: 5325 - Sitra, from Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2018 between 08:00 AM To 13:00 PM after submission of a Cheque for the non-refundable fees specified above, until Thursday 09<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

- An Initial Bond should be enclosed for the amount specified above or at a rate of 1% of the quotation value whichever of the amount is lesser, provided that no initial bond's value shall be less than BD 100/- . Ensure that the initial bond is in a form of Certified Cheque, Cash, Bank Guarantee or Insurance Policy, valid for the duration specified in the tender documents.

- Quotation should be deposited in the tender box provided at the Tender Submission Office, Purchasing & Supply Directorate (Room no. 21-4) Ground Floor, Electricity & Water Authority- Sitra, before 14:00 on the tender closing date.

- All tenders/Auction should comply with the provisions of the General Tenders Regulations, Nos. 36 & 37 of 2002 and its executive regulations.

- The following conditions should be complied with:

- 1- Enclose a copy of the Commercial Registration Certificate valid for the current year, and related to the subject tender.
- 2- Form No. (PI-02) is to be filled completely, mentioning the Total Tender Value and Unit Price (accordingly).
- 3- Enclose a copy of Certificate of Compliance with the Employment Percentage for Bahraini Manpower issued by Ministry of Labour.
- 4- Ensure to stamp with the official seal on all the original documents and copies there-of, which form part of the offer.

- This advertisement is considered to be a supplementary to the Tender Documents.

- All public tenders related to the Purchasing & Supply Directorate are published in the Authority's website: <http://www.ewa.bh>

# Trump's tweets spark fear of 'currency war'

Trump attacked China and the European Union for keeping their currencies low

New York | United States

The dollar slid against the euro and pound yesterday as US President Donald Trump adopted an aggressive posture on trade and foreign exchange, stoking talk of a currency war in addition to a trade war.

In an interview with CNBC television broadcast Friday, Trump bluntly threatened to slap all Chinese imported goods with tariffs, saying the US has been "ripped off by China for a long time."

Later in a pair of tweets, Trump attacked China and the European Union for keeping their currencies low to gain a trade advantage, while again blasting the Federal Reserve for raising interest rates.

That came after CNBC on Thursday aired portions of a Trump interview in which he criticized the Federal Reserve's current course of interest rate hikes.

The dollar fell against most major currencies on Friday, adding to Thursday's declines.

"Currency is now part of the trade war, folks," said Greg McKenna, market strategist at AxiTrader.

"And it is worth pondering whether this is a president who is going to break with 25-30 years of tradition in not interfering in Fed policy deliberations going forward."

## Yuan weakness hits imports

But Trump's comments did not do much to push the dollar down versus the yuan, however. The Chinese central bank implemented the sharpest one-day



Traders work on the floor at the closing bell of the Dow Industrial Average at the New York Stock Exchange

## Key figures at 2100 GMT

New York - Dow	▼	less than 0.1% at 25,058.12 (close)
New York - S&P 500	▼	0.1% at 2,801.83 (close)
New York - Nasdaq	▼	0.1% at 7,820.20 (close)
London - FTSE 100	▼	0.1% at 7,678.79 (close)
Frankfurt - DAX 30	▼	1.0% at 12,561.42 (close)
Paris - CAC 40	▼	0.4% at 5,398.32 (close)
EURO STOXX 50	▼	0.2% at 3,464.08 (close)
Tokyo - Nikkei 225	▼	0.3% at 22,697.88 (close)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng	▲	0.8% at 28,224.48 (close)
Shanghai - Composite	▲	2.1 at 2,829.27 (close)
Euro/dollar	▲	at \$1.1723 from \$1.1642 at 2100 GMT
Pound/dollar	▲	at \$1.3135 from \$1.3014
Dollar/yen: DOWN at 111.50 yen from 112.47 yen		
Oil - Brent Crude	▲	49 cents at \$73.07 per barrel
Oil - West Texas Intermediate: UP \$1.00 at \$70.46 per barrel		

lowering of the trading range for the yuan in two years.

The yuan, which has fallen about 10 percent since mid-

April, is expected to extend its steady decline, providing Beijing with a buffer against punitive US trade tariffs.

"Chinese authorities have been responding to Mr. Trump's threat of tariffs (by) continuously devaluing the yuan, a policy move that has the impact of making exports into China more expensive," said Boris Schlossberg, managing director at BK Asset Management.

Fears are growing over a fierce global trade war, after Trump's imposition of hefty import taxes on steel and aluminum from the EU, Canada and Mexico, in addition to levies already on goods from China worth tens of billions of dollars that have sparked retaliatory tariffs.

European stocks slid sharply in afternoon trading, buffeted by their stronger currencies, but clawed back much of their losses. London closed less than a tenth of a percentage point lower while Frankfurt ended the day down nearly 1.0pc.

## India cuts sales tax

### ● Tax rate on lithium ion batteries was cut to 18 percent

### ● The revised tax rates will be applicable from July 27

Reuters | Mumbai

India slashed the sales tax rate on over 50 products yesterday in a move aimed at appealing to traders and the middle classes.

A nationwide goods and services tax (GST) was implemented a year ago that has hit businesses and public hard.

The GST council, headed by interim finance minister Piyush Goyal, agreed to lower the indirect tax slab on products such as paints, leather goods, bamboo flooring, stoves, televisions and washing machines from the highest rate of 28 percent to mostly 18pc.

"The exercise was to ensure simplification and rationalization of GST and extend relief to the common man," Goyal told a news conference in New Delhi on Saturday evening.

The tax rate on ethanol blended with petrol, footwear costing up to 1,000 rupees and fertilizer grade phosphoric acid has been cut to from 12 to 5pc, Goyal said.

The council cut taxes on sanitary pads and fortified baby milk to zero, Goyal said.

In a boost to mobile phone manufacturing and electric vehicles, the tax rate on lithium ion batteries was cut from 28 percent to 18pc.

"The decision taken today will increase compliance and the revenue impact on total tax collections will be marginal," said Goyal.

The revised tax rates will be applicable from July 27.

Revenue collections from GST are a crucial pillar of government's plan to cut its fiscal deficit in the current year. India's GST collection for the fiscal 2017/18 was 98pc of the budgeted target.

"The broad level reductions in rates could lead to lower tax collections," said M S Mani, partner at consulting firm Deloitte India.

However, the tax cut will lead to higher sales which could offset revenue losses, Mani added.

## IMF warns G20 that tariffs hurting economy



Argentina's Economy Minister Nicolas Dujovne (L) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde offer a joint press conference in Buenos Aires

Reuters | Buenos Aires

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) warned world economic leaders yesterday that a recent wave of trade tariffs would significantly harm global growth, a day after US President Donald Trump threatened a major escalation in a dispute with China.

IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde said she would present the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors meeting in Buenos Aires with a report detailing

the impacts of the restrictions already announced on trade. "It certainly indicates the impact that it could have on GDP (gross domestic product), which in the worst case scenario under current measures ... is in the range of 0.5 pct of GDP on a global basis," Lagarde said at a joint news conference with Argentine Treasury Minister Nicolas Dujovne.

The IMF said global growth may peak at 3.9 per cent in 2018 and 2019, while downside risks have increased due to the growing trade conflict.

## STEPPING STONE



MIKE ORLOV

## Strategic Performance Management

Recognising their organisation's current performance measurement systems were based mainly on financial factors, measuring monthly revenue, profit and total costs against last year and budget, leadership decided there had to be a change. Most of their performance measurement frameworks focused on the needs of the owners and non-executive board members. Even their customer information was being collected to be reported upwards, not to aid in building stronger relationships with customers. It was clear these monitoring systems were no longer acceptable.

These performance measurement frameworks were too limiting, rigid and inflexible. Leaders felt they needed measurements enabling rapid shifts to the organisation's strategies, resource-allocation, process-development and capability-building; shifts which would help them tackle the volatility, uncertainty, changes and ambiguity in social, economic, political and technological environments.

The needs of other stakeholders such as employees, customers and suppliers had actually been forgotten, or at best, not systematically reviewed. The leadership did an about-turn in how they thought about other stakeholder groups, particularly employees.

All stakeholders, not just owners and the board, expect something from the organisation but the organisation also wants something in return. Performance measurement should therefore consider whether such stakeholders are delivering for the organisation and its needs and whether the leadership of the organisation is delivering for the stakeholders.

These leaders recognised they were not measuring the right things; what they were actually measuring were results. They reviewed some of the more common performance measurement tools, such as Six Sigma, Balanced Scorecards, Activity Based Costing, Total Quality Management, certain ISO Standards and the Five Prism Model.

All these are renowned strategic management performance measurement approaches attempting to improve companies' performance. Some of them are very detailed and data-heavy in their attempts to reduce the number of errors in individual business processes by using statistical measurements to find errors, then attempt to remove the problem.

Deciding to develop their own measuring processes based on a management-by-objectives approach, the leadership team believed most of

the reviewed models were unsatisfactory. They developed their own quantitative tools included using hard measures to determine how well the company was tracking over time to achieve explicit goals as well as qualitative analysis relying more on personal judgments from their experienced key managers and supervisors; releasing knowledge which exists in the enterprise and stimulating a learning-organisation approach.

Through goal-setting, employees and managers agreed realistic objectives to help focus on concrete action plans, with key performance indicators explicitly outlined, ensuring measurement of activity was possible when reviewed.

Alignment of employees against goals and objectives, their morale, individual competencies, how well they worked together and skills-gaps became the most important strategic performance management issues, linked with improvement of internal activities and processes.

Reviewing those factors which were outside the company's power to influence became part of the organization's culture. This ensured early warning systems for both threats and opportunities from changes in the social, technological, political and economic influences on the company, particularly those of high importance, immediacy and impact.

Delivering, delighting and exciting customers became common language in the company, not just customer-satisfaction. Suppliers were treated as partners, not as enemies to be fought. Measuring quality of delivery and implementing incremental improvements became part of the company-culture, not because it was dictated from above and because a form needed to be filled in but because employees cared, management gave them freedom to act.

Strategic performance management involved the leaders taking a detailed look and re-setting specific goals and objectives for divisions, departments, managers, and employees, and then gathering information to measure performance, making changes and improving performance with the involvement of employees who are key players in achieving results for all stakeholders.

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

# Roots of Balochistan conf



MALIK SIRAJ AKBAR

**Increasing attacks by the Islamic state in Balochistan are connected to Pakistan's failed strategy of encouraging and using Islamist militants to crush Baloch rebels and separatists**

On July 13, several hundred tribesmen and students from religious seminaries gathered at a public meeting in Mastung, a town in Pakistan's southwestern Balochistan province, to hear Siraj Raisani, a 55-year-old politician from the Balochistan Awami Party.

As he appeared on stage wearing dark sunglasses, the crowd cheered, whistled and raised their hands, in a gesture affirming their loyalty to him. "O! Brave people of Balochistan!" said Raisani, who was known and feared for his strong ties to the Pakistani military. Before he could utter a second sentence, a suicide bomber blew himself up near the stage. The explosion killed Raisani and 149 of his supporters, and injured 186 others.

Abdul Khaliq, a resident, told the BBC Urdu that three of his sons had gone to the rally. "All three of them were killed," he said. Another person lost 15 relatives. In some homes, there were no men left to lead the funerals.

The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack, citing Raisani's relationship with the military. The group has been terrorizing Pakistan's border regions such as Balochistan by attacking unarmed civilians. The suicide bombing was the first time the group targeted a prominent political asset of the military.

The carnage in Balochistan can be understood by considering the long history of separatism in the province, the resentment against the federal authorities for denying its people their proper share of resources and opportunities, and the failed strategy of the Pakistani military to use repression and to encourage and use Islamist groups and militants to crush Baloch nationalist rebels and politicians.

Balochistan, which is home to about 12 million of Pakistan's 208 million people, is the country's largest province, stretching from the Arabian Sea coast through a vast desert and mountainous landscape to Iran in the west and Afghanistan in the north. The gas, gold and copper reserves of Balochistan are among the largest in Asia and account for half of Pakistan's gas production. The province's resources generate about a billion dollars every



A man mourns the death of a relative who was killed in a suicide blast in Balochistan province.

year for the federal government, but its people barely receive their share of state investment and opportunities.

Raisani, who came from a prominent pro-Pakistan family in a province with a long history of separatism — his father was the governor, his brother was the chief minister, another brother was a senator — was contesting his first election. His party, which was formed in March, is widely believed to be an initia-

tive of the military to unite the pro-Pakistan tribal chiefs to help them defeat Baloch nationalist politicians — who seek an end to the military's control over the state's resources — in the forthcoming elections.

Before he started his election campaign, Raisani was mostly known for working with the military to fight the Baloch separatists. In a video posted on social media, Raisani is administering an oath of loyalty on the Quran

to his band of counterinsurgents. The video was uploaded with the soundtrack of an immensely popular Taliban battle song.

The most recent insurgency in Balochistan against the Pakistani government and the military — dominated by ethnic Punjabis — started in 2004. Five separatist militant groups with about 500 men have been fighting the military.

The Pakistani army has few Baloch soldiers and officers, so

## How World Cup guarded against holl

*Ignorance is bliss, but untenable. Temporary distraction, i*



TOM PHILIP

When history looks back and remembers the stunning 2018 World Cup, what will be the lasting images: Neymar attempting, game after game, to break the land speed record for rolling while clutching your ankle? The referees experimenting with VAR? The replays of celebrating players and fans in rapture, tossing their drinks in the air, after yet another last-minute game-winning goal? (This tournament's 23 stoppage time goals shattered the previous record.)

Or maybe it will be a singular moment, like Kylian Mbappé's strike to make it 4-1 and become the first teenager to score in a World Cup final since a man named Pelé. Regardless, this has been hands-down the most entertaining World Cup in recent memory, and it turns out we needed this more than we could have imagined.

The World Cup, while perennially mired in FIFA corruption and never far away from fraught

politics, is also colorful, joyful, downright good television and, in the grand scheme of things, not all that important.

This is not an insult. It's an ode. At a time when 7 out of 10 Americans admit they are worn out by the high-stakes anxiety of the news, this summer's tournament couldn't have come at a better time.

You may have heard: The world is a dark and unstable place right now. Syria is still burning, and chauvinism is on the rise seemingly everywhere. In the United States, Flint, Michigan, still does not have clean drinking water, and the government appears to be preoccupied with kidnapping and then losing people's children.

Luckily, for every new horror or outrage, there has been the respite of obsessively watching a sport in which 22 men sprint after a ball for an hour and a half — the game that can end with a score of 0-0, yet somehow consistently produce moments of ecstasy and tension.

"Egypt are in trouble here," a Fox commentator said gravely on the second day of the tournament, referring to nothing more than their inability to press Uruguay higher up the field. Egypt's political landscape

remains volatile. And many images of young Arabs and North Africans in Western media are, to put it kindly, reductive.

But for weeks the nation made headlines around the world simply for the exploits of their forward Mohamed Salah, the 26-year-old winger with a wide smile and quick feet, who scored dozens of goals this past season for his English professional club, Liverpool. When Salah scores, he often celebrates by kneeling in prayer — a public display of faith to which his adoring Liverpool fans dedicated an entire tongue-in-cheek chantey:

"Mo Sa-la-la-la-lah! If he's good enough for you, he's good enough for me. If he scores another few, then I'll be Muslim too. If he's good enough for you, he's good enough for me. Sitting in the mosque, that's where I wanna be!"

In mid-June, Donald Trump ended an inflammatory anti-immigration speech by hugging the American flag, a truly ridiculous and near-dystopian sight that would have haunted me for days had I not been numbed to the whole thing by Cristiano Ronaldo's sublime hat trick against Spain and the minicontroversy that erupted around his awful goatee.



Many caught in the soccer magic naturally ignored political developments across the world.

On June 27, as the debate raged over whether White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders should have been asked to leave a little restaurant in Virginia, I was preoccupied by Germany's loss to South Korea, which in a wild turn of events simultaneously sent the defending champions home before the knockout round and put Mexico into knockouts despite having been routed by Sweden.

Please, feel free to engage in

the self-important discourse about the proper way to protest being volleyed around by verified Twitter accounts ever since the Sanders incident. I sat it out and instead looked up foreign embassy jobs after seeing a video of Mexican fans holding the Korean consul general to Mexico aloft, celebrating him as if this bespectacled middle-aged gentleman were the hero who had scored the winning goal.

Trump's second Supreme

Court nomination? A watershed moment in American politics but I missed the empty buildup and hours of conjecture (turnout Kavanaugh was reportedly Kennedy's mandated pick) because I was too busy laughing and texting my friends about all the cheekily maximalist memes surrounding England's team and, before that, lying down in a cold dark room to recover from the seven-goal thriller that was France vs. Argentina.

1789

Thomas Jefferson becomes the first head of the U.S. Department of Foreign Affairs.

1812

A British army under the Duke of Wellington defeats the French at Salamanca, Spain.

1894

The first automobile race takes place between Paris and Rouen, France.



1943

Palermo, Sicily surrenders to General George S. Patton's Seventh Army.

# Conflict run deep

it relies heavily on native proxies such as Raisani for counter-insurgency operations. Raisani seemed more likely to be attacked by Baloch militants, who killed his teenage son in 2011. In a rare move, Lt Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, the army chief of Pakistan, travelled to Balochistan and attended Raisani's funeral.

The conflict became more complex after the Sept. 11 attacks, as the United States got embroiled in the war on terror; Arab, Central Asian and Taliban militants spilled out of Afghanistan finding sanctuary; and the Chinese started building the massive Gwadar Port on Balochistan's Arabian Sea shore.

Gwadar port is the flagship project in the \$50 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which is a part of China's "Belt and Road" initiative. But the Chinese presence and investment have not improved the economic conditions of the Baloch people, who have come to see the Chinese as the new colonizers. Baloch militants have attacked Chinese engineers, and about 10 people have been killed.

After September 11, Pakistan utilised the resources Washington had provided it to fight al-Qaida and the Taliban to crush Baloch separatists. Since

**The Pakistani army has few Baloch soldiers and officers, so it relies heavily on native proxies such as Raisani for counterinsurgency operations. Raisani seemed more likely to be attacked by Baloch militants, who killed his teenage son in 2011.**

2004, Pakistan has disappeared, tortured and assassinated thousands of young Baloch students, activists and rebels, as the Americans weren't concerned about Baloch aspirations and needed the military.

The separatist sentiment intensified after the military killed Nawab Akbar Bugti, a prominent Baloch leader. Pakistan's security establishment responded by using Islamist militant groups such as the Taliban, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and the Lashkar-e-Taiba to promote radical Islam in the region to balance and isolate the Baloch separatists. But the strategy of using radical Islamist groups and mil-

itants boomeranged as the Islamist militants began attacking the Pakistani state after gaining some strength.

In recent years, Pakistani authorities retaliated by killing some leaders of the extremist groups, which has only given rise to a more militant cadre of jihadis. Raisani's assassination by the Islamic State seems to be a part of the ongoing battle between the military and jihadists loyal to the Islamic State.

Islamabad blames India and Afghanistan for supporting Baloch separatists while continuing to allow Taliban leaders to find sanctuary in the province and form new alliances with various jihadi groups.

The new jihadis seek to undermine the Pakistani state while the generals still seem to be deluded that they can use and control these groups. Islamabad needs to dismantle these networks and deal with the legitimate demands of the residents of Balochistan for control of their resources, reduce the coercive military presence, stop the rights violations and move toward equal citizenship for the people of Balochistan.

(Malik Siraj Akbar is a journalist from Balochistan based in Washington.)

## How news bits?

however is quite nice

Ignorance is bliss, but untenable. Temporary distraction, however, is quite nice.

Even the host nation Russia got in on the fun. On a geopolitical scale, the nation's government has a lot to answer for. Still, for those who, like me, are exhausted by "Russia" appearing in headlines and Facebook fights every day, it has been endearing to see TV stations around the world praising the Russians for their strong defense capabilities and inexhaustible aggression in the context of athletics.

For four glorious weeks, the World Cup has also stood guard against the more hollow daily news bits that are, typically, inconsequential but usually invade my news feed and my thought.

The speculative master theories on the Mueller probe; the latest nonsensical tweets from President Trump; Papa John's racist comments on a conference call. The part of my brain dedicated to getting worked up by these trending-for-a-day controversies has taken a much-needed breather.

In a time of threatened democracy, staying vigilant and remaining an engaged citizen is an essential duty. It's also terribly exhausting. In its small

**A watershed moment in American politics, but I missed the empty buildup and hours of conjecture because I was too busy laughing and texting my friends about all the cheekily maximalist memes surrounding England's team.**

yet oversized way, the World Cup has allowed the news-obsessed among us to remember that some shiny objects of distraction aren't all so bad. Some, like earnestly cheering for your countrymen — or even better, whimsically for someone else's country — are probably, in fact, pretty healthy.

The World Cup will not raise wages or fix our crippled health care system. It will not make "Arrested Development" good again, nor will it decide for the left whether Hillary or Bernie was right. It may engender global unity but it can't end our wars. In fact, there's a good case to be made that it once flamed the

fires of war in Central America. I am in no way an advocate of looking away. Not being angry, not being scared, not thinking about the barrage of bad news — even for a moment — is a luxury.

In the 52nd minute of the final, three Russians from the protest-art group stormed the pitch, clad in police uniforms, bringing the match to a brief halt and reminding us that this spectacle of smiley-faced globalism was hosted by a harsh police state. Before security dragged the protesters away, France's star, Kylian Mbappé — in a moment maybe more brilliant than his goal — smirked and high-fived one of the women.

So thank you for helping us multitask the light with the dark, World Cup, it's been fun. In the proverbial post-match analysis, that should matter more to us than whoever won the thing.

Except for me — I'm Scottish; so in watching England lose in the semis and in the third-place game, stripped of their World Cup dreams, I'm proud to say my country has never been stronger.

(Tom Philip is a writer based in Brooklyn, New York. He contributes to *Vulture*, *The New Yorker*, *GO* and other outlets.)



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



I got severely criticized by the Fake News Media for being too nice to President Putin. In the Old Days they would call it Diplomacy. If I was loud & vicious, I would have been criticized for being too tough. Remember when they said I was too tough with Chairman Kim? Hypocrites!

@realDonaldTrump

02



It was in your leadership skip @ImrankhanPTI that we became world champions in 1992. It is in your leadership that we can again become a great democratic country. #vote-for-kapatan#nayapakistan

@wasimakramlive

03



Could everyone screaming at me about Trump & Brexit please just shut up? It's Saturday, I'm watching @TigerWoods light up The Open, and I just don't have the patience today for your incessant, foul-mouthed, ill-informed echo chamber hysteria. Sorry.

@piersmorgan

04



Modi is an aggressive orator. But if you don't have new content, public gets bored. Modi is repeating same old speech.

@waglenikhil

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

## Trouble in fishing waters



CAPT. MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

What a racist society we are. Yes, I know Bahrain is celebrated for its harmony and its freedom of religion and cultural identity. It's a quirk of human nature that these admirable traits can exist cheek-by-jowl with casual racism that would never pass muster in countries that boast of a high happiness index.

I am speaking about the views expressed by Bahraini fishermen to our Tribune reporters, which placed the blame of rising fish prices (quite seasonal in high summer) squarely on expatriate fishermen. Really? Rules in Bahrain are very strict about restricting the operating of fishing vessels to Bahraini owners. It is quite another matter that the Bahraini fishing fleet owners employ expats from other cheap labour nations to man the boats and they work under very difficult conditions. These are the 'expat fishermen' that Bahrainis are blaming, quite overlooking the fact that they are not independent operators but merely employees of Bahraini fishermen.

What are the conditions at sea for fishermen? Firstly, despite the mechanised trawlers, it is a tough life, exposed to the elements, the salty air and spray and the blazing sun. Even if the fleet goes out at night, there will be stinging sea waves and always, the risk of straying into non-Bahraini waters and facing arrest and imprisonment. There is no guarantee of a boatload of catch — it is a profession of chance. It is a job that requires patience, nerves and muscles of steel, the focus of a fighter and the ability to withstand the disappointment of poor catches and fluctuating of prices.

**Sometime back, top class restaurants in Dubai started a 'Say No to Hamour' movement to encourage guests to explore other fish options and reduce the pressure in the market for the endangered fist. Why can we not do this in Bahrain?**

In Bahrain, because the sea is a bay and the waters are not ocean-deep, fishing boats are of medium size. Still, the problem of over-fishing persists even in our territorial waters. Reclamation has bitten huge chunks into our coastline and our waters and boats are having to travel further and further inland to seek fish. Moreover, in their rush to meet market demand, fishermen are fishing indiscriminately — so much so, that classic Bahraini fish such as Hamour and Safi are being pushed to scarcity.

Even now, during these months of the shrimping ban to allow stocks to replenish during the breeding season, violators are being caught daily.

What can we, the chair-bound advisors in air-conditioned offices and homes, do to make this situation better? Firstly, we need to watch what we are eating and eat seasonally available food. That means, no shrimp biryani during summer months. Sometime back, top class restaurants in Dubai started a 'Say No to Hamour' movement to encourage guests to explore other fish options and reduce the pressure in the market for the endangered fist. Why can we not do this in Bahrain? Start a 'Say No to Shrimp' movement and refuse to buy the illegal catch. If we choke off demand, supply will automatically dwindle.

Fishing methods need to be reorganised. Countries like Bahrain are still closer to sustainable fishing methods. But in the big seas, we have fishing factories in the high seas which, the FAO says, account for 8 per cent of the total weight of the world's captures, or more than 7.3 million tonnes of fish.

We can reduce our use of single-use plastic and microplastics which end up causing damage to the marine environment.

You know how you spot a fresh fish catch? By its clear eyes. Similarly, we have to spot our fisheries problems with clear eyes and not get diverted by cloudy judgement that blames expats and other non-existent causes.

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune)

WORLD  
world**Firefighters injured as blaze near Yosemite grows**

Los Angeles, United States

A fire that claimed the life of one firefighter and injured two others near California's Yosemite national park has almost doubled in size in three days, authorities said Friday.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) said the so-called Ferguson fire had spread to an area of 22,892 acres (92.6 square kilometers), and is so far only 7 percent contained.

More than 2,700 people are tackling the blaze, which started a week ago in the Sierra Nevada forest. Currently, there is no prediction as to when it will be completely contained. Two firefighters were injured days after their colleague Braden Varney, 36, was killed while fighting the fire.

**Astronaut plays duet from space**

German astronaut Alexander Gerst

AP | Berlin

Kraftwerk fans are used to hearing otherworldly tunes, but the German electronic music pioneers took it to another level at a gig in Stuttgart. Video posted by the European Space Agency shows German astronaut Alexander Gerst "dropping in" for a live performance from the International Space Station. Using a tablet computer with a virtual synthesizer, Gerst played a duet of Kraftwerk's 1978 song "Spacelab" with the band Friday night to cheers from the audience.

**Australian skull displayed in US museum buried in France**

AP | Canberra

An Australian soldier's skull has been buried in a French war grave a century after it was taken for eventual display in a Philadelphia museum, Australia's government said yesterday.

Private Thomas Hurdis was wounded in Belgium on Sept. 26, 1917, and died a week later in a U.S. field hospital in France at the age of 26.

**Gaza truce largely holds**

Friday's flare-up is the latest on the frontier since March have seen at least 149 Palestinians killed



Palestinian brother (1st-R) of 27 years old Mohammed Badwan mourns during his funeral in Gaza City on July 21, 2018. Gaza's health ministry said on July 20 that a fourth man named as Mohammed Badwan was shot dead by Israeli forces that day during protests along the border.

- Israel declined to confirm the truce

- The United Nations urged all sides to step "back"

- Soldier's death was the first linked to Gaza violence since 2014

AFP | Gaza City, Palestinian Territories

A ceasefire announced by Hamas largely held yesterday after a wave of deadly air strikes across the Gaza Strip sparked by the death of an Israeli soldier shot near the border.

The soldier's death was the first linked to Gaza violence since a 2014 war and raised fears Israel's response could spiral into full-out war.

But Hamas's decision to accept a ceasefire and not further retaliate reduced those fears for now.

As has been the case with previous such truces, Israel did not confirm the deal announced by Gaza's rulers that went into effect around midnight Friday.

There was relative calm on Saturday except for one incident, with the Israeli army saying a tank struck a Hamas observation point east of Gaza City in retaliation for an attempted border infiltration in northern Gaza.

There were no reports of injuries in that strike and there was no major Israeli bombing campaign overnight or mortar fire from the Palestinian enclave toward Israel.

"With Egyptian and UN efforts, we reached (an agreement) to return to the previous state of calm between the (Israeli) occupation and the Palestinian factions," Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said in a

statement early Saturday.

A senior Hamas official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the deal involved "the cessation of all forms of military escalation" including Israeli air strikes and Hamas mortars and rockets.

The source said that balloons and kites attached with incendiary devices, which Palestinians have been floating over the border for months to spark fires inside Israel, were not included in the agreement.

Israeli politicians have been calling for a fierce response to the kites and balloons, which have caused damage amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Israel's army and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office declined to confirm a truce was reached. The soldier, shot dead along the border in southern Gaza, was the first to be killed in and around the Palestinian enclave since a 2014 war between Israel and Hamas.

**Nine family members among 17 dead in 'duck boat' tragedy**

A tourist duck boat is seen bobbing in rough water before capsizing in the severe thunderstorm that struck the area

- Five of the dead were aged 15 or younger

- The accident occurred Thursday night in full view of witnesses

AFP | Chicago, United States

Nine members of one family were among 17 people killed when an amphibious US tourist boat capsized during a sudden storm on a Missouri lake, a tragedy which raised renewed questions on Saturday about the safety of the craft known as "duck" boats.

The hybrid vessels, with wheels allowing them to drive on city roads but which can also travel on water, are popular with tourists in many cities.

The accident occurred Thursday night in full view of witnesses, at least one of whom captured video of the vessel bobbing in rough waters on Table Rock Lake near the city of Branson, a vacation destination popular for its theaters and country music.

"My heart is very heavy. Out of 11 of us there's only two that's surviving, that's me and my nephew" Tia Coleman, her voice breaking, told Fox59 from her hospital bed.

"I lost all of my children. I lost my husband. I lost my mother-in-law and my father-in-law," along with other relatives, she told the Indianapolis

TV station.

Coleman said the boat's captain had told passengers earlier in their trip that they "won't need" life jackets.

"He said it when we were in the water," she told Fox59. "When it was time to grab them, it was too late and I believe that a lot of people could have been spared."

She added that the water "didn't look ominous at the very first."

Coleman told CNN affiliate KOLR of her own near-death by drowning: "I was yelling, I was screaming, and finally I said, 'Lord, just let me die, let me die.' She eventually floated to the surface.

Early Saturday, the Stone County Sheriff's Office confirmed to AFP the identity of the 17 victims -- nine of whom had the name Coleman.

They ranged in age from one-year-old Arya Coleman to the oldest victim Ervin Coleman, 76.



Duck boats are amphibious vessels that travel on both land and water, and are popular among tourists in major cities

**Girl 15-yr-old raped by brother jailed over abortion**

- Indonesia forbids abortion unless a woman's life is at risk

AFP | Jakarta, Indonesia

A 15-year-old girl who was raped by her older brother has been jailed for six months for having an abortion, an Indonesian official said yesterday. The girl was sentenced Thurs-



An Indonesian woman takes part in a 2016 protest against child sexual abuse in Jakarta (Courtesy The Guardian)

day alongside her 17-year-old brother in a closed hearing at Muara Bulian District Court on the island of Sumatra, court spokesman Listyo Arif Budiman said. Her brother was sentenced to two years in jail for sexually assaulting a minor.

Indonesia law requires that an abortion must be performed by a registered professional no later than six weeks into a pregnancy.

The girl, who was raped by her brother eight times starting in September last year, had the

abortion about six months after becoming pregnant, Budiman said. She was helped by her mother who is facing separate charges.

Police arrested the siblings in June after a male foetus was discovered at a palm oil plantation near Pulau village in Jambi province.

Prosecutors had originally asked that the girl be jailed for one year and her brother for seven. They say they may still appeal the decision.

## Austria ditches Turkish driving theory test

Vienna, Austria

Learner drivers in Austria will no longer be able to take their theory test in Turkish, the transport ministry announced on Saturday, blaming the cost of translating the exam.

Of the nearly 300,000 theory tests taken last year, only 3,631 were conducted in Turkish -- or 1.2 percent of the total.

There are around 360,000 people of Turkish origin in Austria, including 117,000 Turkish nationals.

## More than 100 report sexual misconduct by late Ohio State doctor

Reuters | Washington

More than 100 former students have told investigators they were victims of sexual misconduct by a now-deceased Ohio State University doctor employed by its athletic department and medical staff for nearly two decades, the university said on Friday.

New details about the investigation of the late Dr. Richard Strauss were made public days after five former varsity wrestlers sued Ohio State over allegations Strauss had sexually abused them and others and that the university was complicit in failing to take action against him.

## Hundreds protest over HK move to ban party

Reuters | Hong Kong

Hundreds of Hong Kong pro-democracy protesters yesterday rallied against the government's attempt to ban a political party, saying it dealt the most serious threat to the city's freedom of association since its return to Chinese rule.

Organisers said 1,200 protested, while the police estimated 600 attended at the peak.

## Macron security aide scandal deepens

Paris, France

The most damaging scandal of Emmanuel Macron's presidency deepened yesterday with his interior minister due to face a grilling in parliament over his response to a top security aide of Macron caught on video beating up a young man at a Paris protest in May.

Opposition lawmakers have demanded that Macron, who has so far remained silent about the incident, explain the government's stand after the videos of his aide Alexandre Benalla emerged this week.

# They believed they were safe!

After 15 years, thieves behind French heist surface in Serbia

● These criminals are thought to have carried out at least 380 armed robberies

● Identified following an investigation into blood on one of the glass cabinets

AFP | Uzice, Serbia

They believed they were safe but a few blood drops betrayed them: 15 years after a daring robbery at a French jewellery store, the four alleged perpetrators have been found -- in Serbia.

The Belfort job had all the hallmarks of a "Pink Panther" operation, the modus operandi used by an international jewel thief network of Serbs and Montenegrins responsible for some of the most audacious robberies of the past two decades.

Between 1999 and 2015, these criminals are thought to have carried out at least 380 armed robberies, targeting high-end jewellery stores and snatching 334 million euros (\$391 million) worth of loot, Interpol says.

One morning in September 2003, a group of masked men burst into a jewellery shop in Belfort, a town in eastern France just 25 kilometres (15 miles) from the Swiss border.

One pulled a handgun, while the others smashed open the glass cases, snatching 350,000 euros worth of jewellery and watches before fleeing -- all within the space of a minute.

Police later managed to arrest their Serbian fences, one of whom had a stolen watch on his wrist.

But the thieves themselves were never caught.

Nor were they identified until 2013 following progress in a forensic investigation into traces of blood on one of the glass cabinets, on a cupboard and on a Cartier box.

By analysing the DNA, they identified two Serb nationals who were unknown in France



The so-called Pink Panthers, an international network of jewel thieves, stole valuables worth 334 million euros between 1999-2015, Interpol says

but wanted in Austria: "Zica" and "Boka", both of them 41 years old.

And by crosschecking their phone records, they also found the other two suspected of involvement in the robbery: "Sasa", 37, and "Luka", 48.

### 'Cult of the criminal'

All four come from Uzice, a once prosperous industrial town some 150 kilometres (90 miles) southwest of Belgrade which has since fallen on hard times.

"Most of these criminals originate from Nis, Cacak and Uzice," the town's prosecutor Ljubisa Dragasevic said, explaining that many in this western region end up turning to crime due to problems making ends meet.

But there is also "the cult of the criminal within society, the tough guys", he said.

"In such circles, these activities overseas are a matter of prestige. They... see themselves as defenders of poor Serb victims of the West," the prosecutor said.

Even though they have been identified, the four remain out of reach for the French justice system because Serbia does not extradite its citizens.

Over the past decade, France and Serbia developed close judicial ties following the 2009 murder of a French football fan in Belgrade, prompting a French judge to demand that the four be summoned to a hearing before a

Serbia prosecutor.

### Funding a luxury lifestyle

At the hearing in November, all four denied involvement in the robbery.

If they were in Belfort at the time, they were there for "techno music parties", one claimed. Another said they were there "to buy second-hand cars".

Boka had just been jailed over a fatal car accident, while shortly after the November hearing, Zica and Sasa began serving five years for stealing watches worth almost 950,000 euros from a Hamburg jeweller in 2014.

Several of them are also suspected of involvement in robberies in Switzerland and The Netherlands.

Such audacious robberies fund a lavish lifestyle back home, Dragasevic says, explaining that their takings are quickly spent "in bars and restaurants, taking

cocaine, paying for prostitutes... buying luxury cars and expensive clothes" and often at expensive tourist sites.

### Statute of limitations expiring

Their activities are not just limited to hitting jewellery stores, with one Serb investigator saying they also link up with Albanian gangs to smuggle drugs to the West. The money is also used for loansharking, financing younger criminals, or investing in property, bars and restaurants, he said.



One pulled a handgun, while the others smashed open the glass cases, snatching 350,000 euros worth of jewellery and watches before fleeing -- all within the space of a minute.

But they never stage robberies on home territory, their "refuge".

With extradition out of the question, if France wants a trial to be held in Serbia over Belfort, as happened with the Hamburg heist, the justice system will need to transfer the case to Belgrade.

If found guilty, the perpetrators could face up to 15 years behind bars.

Otherwise, French prosecutors will have to fall back on a conviction in absentia and the issuing of an international arrest warrant -- which would mean the four thieves could no longer leave Serbia without risking arrest and extradition.



## Trump lashes ex-lawyer, says taping of client 'perhaps illegal'

● Former Playboy model Karen McDougal claims she had a months-long affair with Trump after they met in 2006

AFP | Washington, United States

Donald Trump yesterday said his ex-lawyer Michael Cohen may have acted illegally after it emerged he had secretly taped a discussion about payments to a former Playboy model who claims she had an affair with the US president.

In his first direction reaction to a report broken by the New York Times a day earlier, Trump added: "The good news is that your favourite President did



US President Donald Trump and Playboy model Karen McDougal

nothing wrong!"

The Times reported the FBI had seized the recording

during a raid on Cohen's office earlier this year, quoting lawyers and others familiar

with the recording. Cohen has not yet been arrested or charged.

"Inconceivable that the government would break into a lawyer's office (early in the morning) - almost unheard of," Trump tweeted.

"Even more inconceivable that a lawyer would tape a client - totally unheard of & perhaps illegal."

Former Playboy model Karen McDougal claims she had a months-long affair with Trump after they met in 2006, shortly after Trump's wife Melania gave birth to their son Barron. She told CNN previously that he tried to pay her for sex.

The Wall Street Journal said the September 2016 conversation between Trump and Cohen was about buying the

rights to McDougal's story, which she sold a month earlier to The National Enquirer for \$150,000.

The tabloid ultimately sat on it, preventing it from becoming public. The chairman of its parent company, American Media, is a friend of Trump.

Friday's reports raised questions about why Trump's campaign denied knowledge of the deal between McDougal and American Media when it became public and fanned speculation about how much damage Cohen can inflict on the president.

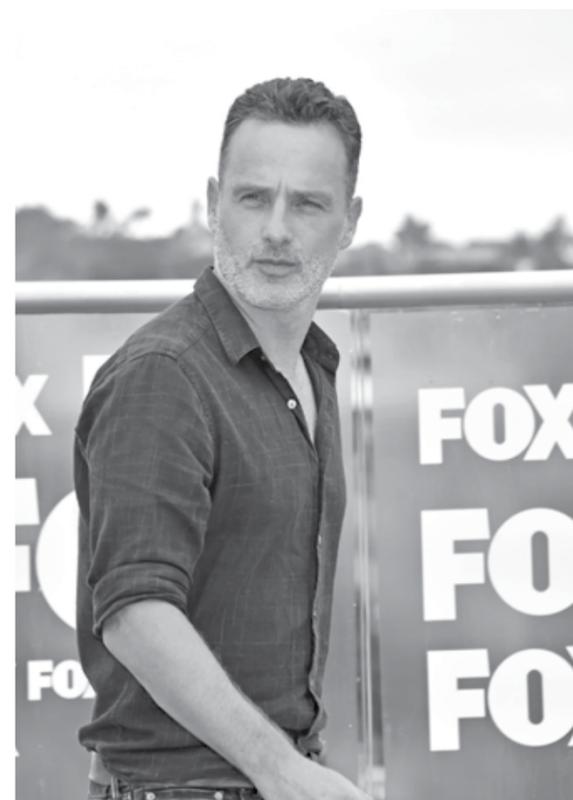
Trump's current personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, had confirmed to the Times that the Cohen tape existed, but said it showed the president had done nothing wrong.

# WORLD

## features



Cosplayers attend Comic-Con



British actor Andrew Lincoln arrives for "The Walking Dead" photo call

# Zombies take over San Diego

Comic-Con laments departure of 'Walking Dead' star

San Diego | United States

The world's largest fan convention bid a poignant farewell to the star of the most successful show in cable TV history on Friday as zombies took over San Diego Comic-Con.

An extensive line-up of stars descended on the city's sprawling convention center to whet appetites for AMC's "The Walking Dead" and its sister show "Fear the Walking Dead."

The departure of British actor Andrew Lincoln, who has appeared as Sheriff Rick Grimes in almost every episode since the 2010 pilot, has been an open secret since May, confirmed inadvertently by executive producer Robert Kirkman.

But the official announcement was reserved for Comic-Con, an annual pop culture celebration that attracts more than 100,000 devotees to southern California, many in elaborate costumes, every July.

"There seems to be an elephant in the room. This will be my last season playing the part of Rick Grimes," Lincoln, 44, told the packed 6,500-seat Hall H, prompting a dismayed murmur that spread throughout the arena.

"I love this show. It means everything to me. I love the people who make this show. I promise not to cry. I've done enough crying on screen," Lincoln promised.

Based on a comic book of the same name by a trio of writers including one of the show's executive producers Robert Kirkman, the post-apocalyptic zombie-ridden vision of the United States

portrayed in "The Walking Dead" has proved uniquely resonant.

Dwarfing competition like HBO's "Game of Thrones" in the US, it has the highest total viewership in cable history and, crucially, the highest audience of 18-49s for any kind of US television between 2013 and 2017.

### 'Tensions rising'

The show centers on Lincoln's Grimes, who wakes up in a hospital bed after getting shot, only to find he is alone in a world of vicious, flesh-eating reanimated corpses -- known as "walkers" on the show.

"I got kind of choked up. It's been nine years of coming here," Lincoln told reporters after what will be his last sojourn to San Diego on behalf of "The

Walking Dead."

"I love this place and I love seeing the fans, and you've been such a vital part of this experience. But my relationship with Mr Grimes is far from over."

It was unclear if he was talking about the current shoot for his final episodes, the possibility of appearing in one of the franchise's numerous side projects, or something else entirely.

The ninth season, coming in October, takes place two years after the "All Out War" saga of the previous two, with story editor Angela Kang taking over from veteran showrunner Scott Gimple.

AMC dropped a trailer lasting almost six minutes at Comic-Con which shows Rick in more peaceful times as the leader of a sprawling settlement of survivors -- but with tensions rising among

his lieutenants.

"Fear the Walking Dead" kicked off the two-hour zombocalypse earlier with a presentation that critics agreed seemed to be drawing a line under all storylines past and presenting an almost entirely new show.

### 'Fermentation process'

Aired since 2015, "FtWD" doesn't get the history-making numbers of the main show -- but is still one of the top-rated US cable series with just under two million viewers per episode.

"Fear" shocked its legion of ardent fans by presaging its parent show and killing its protagonist -- Kim Dickens's Madison Clark -- just before the half-way break of season four.

The remaining cast -- including established stars Colman Domingo, Alycia Debnam-Carey, Danay Garcia and newcomers Lennie James, Garret Dillahunt, Maggie Grace and Jenna Elfman -- spoke passionately about their work.

But it wasn't long before the conversation with journalists descended into a conversation about whether zombies were able to "poop," as well as snarling and shuffling.

The tone was lowered as Gimple mentioned in passing that James's character Morgan, a crossover from the main show, is seen on the toilet in an upcoming episode and was asked if zombies "poop."

"What did I say? It's going to be the next thing people want to know! It's exactly what I said!" grandstanded a faux-exasperated James.

"I think there's a fermentation process that could result in projectiles," offered a wry Gimple, clearly amused



Actress Lauren Cohan arrives at Comic-Con



Cosplayer Lady Corvid poses at Comic-Con in San Diego

by the prospect.

Grace, most famous for ABC's "Lost" and the "Taken" movies, was disdainful, however, explaining that she didn't really go in for matters "scatological."

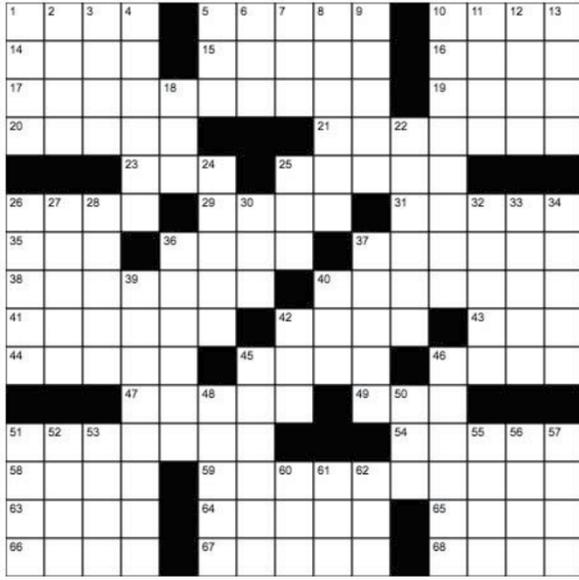
She was game enough to suggest, though, that we might already be witnessing the effect of many a zombie call-of-nature in every episode.

"That's why they walk so strangely," she said.

Season four of "Fear The Walking Dead" resumes on August 12.

# entertainment

## CROSSWORD



### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



59- Covering; 63- Female child; 64- Vive \_\_\_!; 65- Opponent; 66- Grab hold of; 67- Dadaist Max; 68- Fall faller;

### Down

1- Rules; 2- Dies \_\_\_; 3- \_\_\_'acte (intermission); 4- Frail; 5- Cutting tool; 6- Volcanic fallout; 7- Canonized Mlle.; 8- Sacred place; 9- Senator Specter; 10- Learned; 11- Light air; 12- Jester Jay; 13- Jewish month; 18- Future fish; 22- Worships; 24- Merits; 25- Bounce on one foot; 26- Small moneybag; 27- Omega's opposite; 28- Sidewalk eateries; 30- Emeritus; Abbr.; 32- Now; 33- Tickle pink; 34- Harder to find; 36- Doorkeeper; 37- In the lead; 39- Legible; 40- Dancer Charisse; 42- \_\_\_ Angeles; 45- Less fresh; 46- Pertaining to the teeth; 48- Christian writings; 50- Actress Ruby; 51- High-ranking NCO; 52- Inter \_\_\_; 53- Carefree adventure; 55- Take a meal; 56- Architectural pier; 57- End-of-workweek shout; 60- Prince Valiant's son; 61- Refusals; 62- Hobby shop buy;

### Across

1- Willingly; 5- "Peter and the Wolf" bird; 10- Fitzgerald of jazz; 14- "Judith" composer; 15- Moving; 16- Conked out; 17- Paddle wheel; 19- Humerus neighbor; 20- \_\_\_-Croatian; 21- Nuclear-fission apparatus; 23- Golfer Trevino; 25- Accord maker; 26- Step; 29- Elvis's middle name; 31- Playful swimmer; 35- Pay stub?; 36- Type of school or cook; 37- Ring of color; 38- Candid; 40- Cheese; 41- Applauds; 42- Caustic substances; 43- Dug in; 44- Attacks; 45- Fizzy drink; 46- Textile worker; 47- Sums owing; 49- HST's successor; 51- Swampfever; 54- Conclude by; 58- Thick piece;

## BEETLE BAILEY



## WORD OF THE DAY

### Acolyte

#### Definition:

1 : one who assists a member of the clergy in a liturgical service by performing minor duties  
2 : one who attends or assists a leader : follower

#### Did You Know?

Follow the etymological path of acolyte back far enough and you'll arrive at *kéleuthos*, a Greek noun that means "path" and that is itself the parent of *akólouthos*, an adjective that means "following." *Akólouthos* traveled from Greek, leaving offspring in Medieval Latin and Anglo-French; its English

descendant, acolyte, emerged in the 14th century. Originally, acolyte was exclusively a term for a person who assisted a priest at Mass, but by the 19th century, the word had acquired additional meanings, among them "attendant body, satellite" (a meaning used in astronomy) and "attendant insect" (a zoological sense), as well as the general meaning "assistant" or "sidekick."

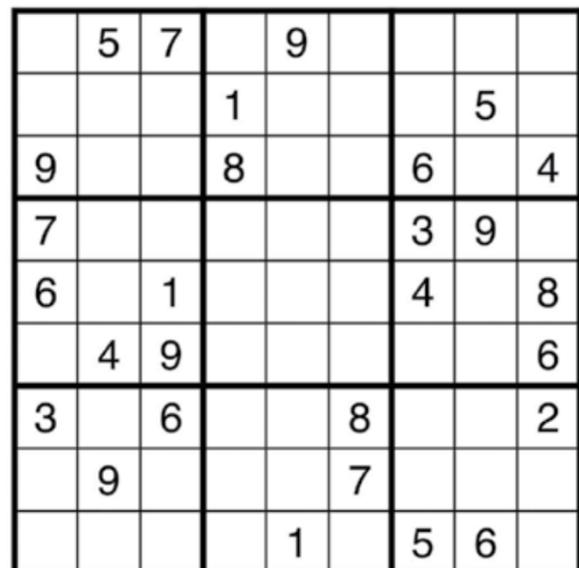
## SUDOKU

### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



#### How to play

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



## YOUR STAR TODAY



### Aries

Things may roll along nicely in love and romance and then suddenly run into a snag, Aries. Perhaps you failed to recognize an important birthday or anniversary. Perhaps you were expected to act a certain way or do something you failed to do. Approach the person you hurt honestly and apologetically.



### Taurus

Here's a reminder that it's OK to be you. You may feel more centered than usual, which encourages you to stand up for yourself and say the things you must to people who need to hear them. There may have been recent arguments with a partner, but those should subside now, thanks to today's serene feelings.



### Gemini

You may have that awful feeling that you really need to get down to work yet something seems to stand square in the way of progress. Perhaps you feel like you're at a four-way stop with three other cars. Everyone is anxious to go first. You can't all go at once, yet no one knows whose turn it is.



### Cancer

You're anxious to take action, Cancer, especially when it comes to matters of the heart. Be careful about acting too hastily. It's important that you and your loved one be on the same page first. You're probably ready to jump to the end of the book where everyone lives happily ever after.



### Leo

It may feel as if something or someone is trying to keep you from moving ahead with your ambitious goals and aggressive nature, Leo. At first you may resent this ball and chain attached to your ankle, but on closer examination, you'll see that this hindrance is actually a help.



### Virgo

You're apt to feel more talkative than usual, Virgo. There are many times when you may shrink from a situation in disgust or perhaps boredom. You're usually anxious to move from one scene and get on with the next. Feel free to call the shots and speak your mind.



### Libra

You may be anxious to try an uncharted path that speaks to your sense of risk and adventure, Libra. It's important to temper these actions with realistic planning. You're much more likely to get a flat tire when you don't carry a spare. Make sure you have the proper resources to pull yourself out of any jam along the way.



### Scorpio

Other people are likely to be anxious to get up and moving with their plans, Scorpio. It might be better for you to hang back a bit and see how things pan out before you take action. Let others go across the river first to learn the best way. Do you take a boat, wade, or look for a bridge?



### Sagittarius

Your heart has been active, Sagittarius, and you're probably feeling the need to take charge of a certain relationship. Instead of being too hasty in your pursuit of this romance, you should probably do more planning. Look at the situation from a long-term perspective and see if the partnership is heading the way you want it to, based on how things are moving now.



### Capricorn

There is solid grounding to your emotions right now that is helping you stabilize your sensitive feelings, Capricorn. As you become more attuned to your internal needs, you may discover that recent actions in romance and love may not have been particularly appropriate.



### Aquarius

Your relationships are going well from an intellectual perspective, Aquarius, but from an emotional one, you might feel like they aren't as fulfilling as you'd like. Perhaps you're letting your brain do too much of the driving. It's time to let your heart take over and have its needs be tended to for a while.



### Pisces

Concentrate on nurturing your needs right now instead of trying to accommodate the needs of others, Pisces. There is a difficult tension that arises when you try to comfort someone who really doesn't want to be comforted. The best way to handle the situation is to leave the person alone and tend to your own emotions.

# SHOW

## MAMMA MIA: HERE WE GO AGAIN

(ROMANTIC/COMEDY/DRAMA/MUSICAL) NEW  
 LILY JAMES, AMANDA SEYFRIED, MERYL STREEP  
**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

DAILY AT (VIP I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

**SEEF (I)** DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM.

**SAAR** DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM.

**WADI AL SAIL** DAILY AT: 11.00AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM.

## DHADAK

(HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA) NEW  
 ISHAAN KHATTAR, JHANVI KAPOOR, ASHUTOSH

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: FROM FRIDAY 20TH: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN.

**SEEF (I)** DAILY AT: FROM FRIDAY 20TH: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM.

**SAAR** DAILY AT: FROM FRIDAY 20TH: 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM.

**WADI AL SAIL** DAILY AT: FROM FRIDAY 20TH: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM.

## GOTTI

(15+) (CRIME/DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY) NEW  
 JOHN TRAVOLTA, SPENCER ROCCO LOFRANCO,

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM

**SAAR** DAILY AT: 9.15 + 11.30 PM.

## THE DOMESTICS

(ACTION/CRIME/HORROR) NEW  
 KATE BOSWORTH, TYLER HOECHLIN

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 10.45AM + 3.00 + 7.15 + 11.30 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 2.30 + 7.00 + 11.30 PM.

**WADI AL SAIL** DAILY AT: 2.30 + 7.00 + 11.30 PM.

## A PRAYER BEFORE DAWN

(ACTION/CRIME/BIOGRAPHY) NEW  
 JOE COLE (VII), VITHAYA PANSRINGARM

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 12.45 + 5.00 + 9.15 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM.

## IN DARKNESS

(18+) (THRILLER/CRIME) NEW  
 NATALIE DORMER, EMILY RATAJKOWSKI

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 12.30 + 4.30 + 8.30 PM + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 6.00 + 11.00 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

**WADI AL SAIL** DAILY AT: 1.45 + 5.45 + 9.45 PM.

## 7-STILL/BORN

(15+) (HORROR/THRILLER) NEW  
 CHRISTIE BURKE, JESSE MOSS, REBECCA OLSON

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 2.30 + 6.30 + 10.30 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 2.15 + 6.45 + 11.15 PM.

**WADI AL SAIL** DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 3.45 + 7.45 + 11.45 PM.

## BILLIONAIRE BOYS CLUB

(15+) (THRILLER/CRIME/BIOGRAPY) NEW  
 TARON EGERTON, EMMA ROBERTS

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 6.45 + 12.00 MN.

## SKYSCRAPER

(PG-13) (ACTION/THRILLER/DRAMA)  
 DWAYNE JOHNSON, NEVE CAMPBELL

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM.

DAILY AT (VIP II): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM.

DAILY AT (ATMOS): 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 + 12.00 MN.

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 PM + 12.00 MN + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

**SEEF (I)** DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM.

**SAAR** DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM.

**WADI AL SAIL** DAILY AT: 12 + 3.0 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM.

## HOTELTRANSYLVANIA 3: SUMMER

(PG) (ANIMATION/COMEDY/DRAMA)  
 ADAM SANDLER, ANDY SAMBERG

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 + 6.00 + 8.15 + 10.30 PM.

DAILY AT (DUBBED IN ARABIC): 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM.

**SAAR** DAILY AT: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 PM.

**WADI AL SAIL** DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM

## ANT-MAN AND THE WASP

(PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)  
 PAUL RUDD, EVANGELINE LILLY, MICHAEL PENA

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 + 12.00 MN.

**WADI AL SAIL** DAILY AT: 12.00 + 4.30 + 9.00 PM.

## OCEAN'S EIGHT

(PG-15) (COMEDY/CRIME)  
 SANDRA BULLOCK, CATE BLANCHETT

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM.

## THE FIRST PURGE

(18+) (ACTION/CRIME/HORROR)  
 MARISA TOMEI, LEX SCOTT DAVIS

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.45 + 4.45 + 6.45 + 8.45 + 10.45 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 + 9.00 + 11.00 PM.

## THE ESCAPE PLAN 2: HADES

(PG-15) (ACTION/THRILLER)  
 SYLVESTER STALLONE, DAVE BAUTISTA

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 + 12.00 MN.

## JURASSIC WORLD: FALLEN KINGDOM

(ACTION/ADVENTURE/THRILLER/SCI-FICTION)  
 BRYCE DALLAS HOWARD, CHRIS PRATT

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM.

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 12.00 + 4.30 + 9.00 PM.

## THE INCREDIBLES 2

(PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)  
 CRAIG T. NELSON, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 3.45 + 8.15 PM.

## DEADPOOL 2

(15+) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)  
 RYAN REYNOLDS, JOSH BROLIN, MORENA

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM.

## AL ABLA TAMTAM

(PG-13) (ARABIC/COMEDY)  
 YASMIN ABDULAZIZ, HAMD ALMIRGHANI,

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 1.45 + 6.15 + 10.45 PM.

## TAXI 5

(PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)  
 MALIK BENTALHA, BERNARD FARCY, RAMZY

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.30 + 11.30 PM.

## AVENGERS: INFINITY WAR

(PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)  
 KAREN GILLAN, ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

**CINECO (20)** DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.30 + 8.30 PM.

## AMERICAN ANIMALS

(PG-15) (CRIME/DRAMA/COMEDY) NEW  
 ANN DOWN, EVAN PETERS, BARRY KEOGHAN

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM.

## THE SHONKU DIARIES: A UNICORN ADVENTURE

(PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.15 + 2.00 PM.

## TEEFA IN TROUBLE

(PG-15) (URDU/ACTION/COMEDY/ROMANTIC) NEW  
 ALI ZAFAR, MAYA ALI, MEHMOOD ASLAM

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 3.45 + 9.00 PM.

## 17-SANJU

(PG-15) (HINDI/DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY)  
 RANBIR KAPOOR, SONAM KAPOOR

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.00 PM.

## THE INCREDIBLES 2

(PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)  
 CRAIG T. NELSON, SAMUEL L. JACKSON, CATHERINE KEENER

**SEEF (II)** DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 4.15 + 8.45 PM.

## NIRAALI

(MALAYALAM) NEW  
 MOHANLAL, PARVATI NAIR, SURAJ

**SEEF (I)** DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM.

**AL HAMRA** DAILY AT: 12.00 + 3.00 + 6.00 + 9.00 PM + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)

## TAMIZH PADAM 2

(TAMIL)  
 SHIVA ISHWARYA MENON, DISHA PANDEY

**SEEF (I)** DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM.

# Disney fires Gunn over rude tweets

AFP | Los Angeles

“Guardians of the Galaxy” franchise director James Gunn has been axed from the third movie over a series of offensive messages posted on Twitter several years ago. The tweets, mainly from 2008 and 2011, joked about taboo topics such as rape and paedophilia.

Disney, which owns the franchise as the parent company of Marvel Studios, sent AFP a statement confirming the studio was parting ways with one of its biggest stars.

“The offensive attitudes and statements discovered on James’ Twitter feed are indefensible and inconsistent with our studio’s values, and we have severed our business relationship with him,” said Alan Horn, chairman of Walt Disney Studios.

Gunn has been an outspoken critic of President Donald Trump and has drawn the ire of conservative critics, who went back through his timeline and dug up the tweets.



James Gunn

“The offensive attitudes and statements discovered on James’ Twitter feed are indefensible and inconsistent with our values

ALAN HORN

Jack Posobiec of The Daily Caller and right-wing commentator Mike Cernovich are among those who unearthed the messages.

“Many people who have followed my career know when I started, I viewed myself as a provocateur, making movies and telling jokes that were outrageous and taboo,” Gunn wrote on Twitter after the offensive tweets resurfaced late Thursday.

# Taylor Swift in all-star film version

AFP | Los Angeles

Pop superstar Taylor Swift will take to the silver screen alongside Jennifer Hudson in a film adaptation of the popular hit musical “Cats,” reports said Friday.

The movie is the latest project for British filmmaker Tom Hooper, who brought novel-turned-musical “Les Miserables” to the big

screen and won an Oscar for directing “The King’s Speech.”

“Cats,” composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber and featuring the classic musical ballad “Memory,” opened in London in 1981 and originally was staged on Broadway from 1982 to 2000.

Based on poems by T.S. Eliot, “Cats” tells of a feline tribe -- in human form on stage -- called the Jellicles who decide who among them will make a fateful ascent into a new life.

Variety said that Hudson, who won an Oscar for the 2006 film musical “Dreamgirls,” would play Grizabella, a formerly glamorous cat who longs for acceptance.

Variety and several other film sites said that “Cats” would also star, in roles to be determined, Swift, actor turned late-night comedian James Corden and veteran British actor Ian McKellen.



# Robin Williams possessions up for sale

AFP | San Diego

Art work, film memorabilia and personal items owned by the late actor Robin Williams will go under the hammer in New York this October, more than four years after his death, Sotheby’s announced

Friday.

The Oscar-winner, movie veteran, stand-up comedian and television star was one of Hollywood’s most popular entertainers whose tragic death in August 2014 triggered an outpouring of emotion the world over.

Items owned by Williams and his second wife, film producer and philanthropist Marsha Garces Williams, will go on sale on October 4 with proceeds going to charities they championed, Sotheby’s said.

The dedicated sale will include autographed scripts, awards, props, street art by Banksy, more than 40 watches, bicycles and sports memorabilia, furniture and art, the auction house said.

Lots include a Hogwarts school robe worn by Daniel Radcliffe in the 2001 movie “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone,” valued between \$10,000 to \$15,000, and Williams’ Hollywood Walk of Fame award valued at \$3,000 to \$5,000.

The collection will go on public view at Sotheby’s on September 29 and the organizations to benefit include The Juilliard School in New York, the Wounded Warrior Project and the Challenged Athletes Foundation.



A scene from the movie ‘Flubber’ starring Robin Williams



Taylor Swift is obsessed with “Disney everything.” She even appeared in the Disney feature movie Hannah Montana

# Tom Felton in new YouTube show

AFP | Los Angeles

YouTube has offered the first glimpse of its new sci-fi thriller series fronted by “Harry Potter” star Tom Felton -- revealing it is an “Alien”-like horror story on an isolated ship.

“Resident Evil” director Paul W.S. Anderson is to helm “Origin,” which brings together an international roster of talent alongside Felton, the boy wizard’s conniving nemesis Draco



Tom Felton

Malfoy in all eight “Harry Potter” movies.

A teaser trailer for the 10-episode show made by Left Bank Pictures and Sony Pictures Television screened at a panel at San Diego Comic-Con given by the creators and cast on Thursday.

The show follows a group of outsiders who find themselves abandoned on a ship bound for a distant land. The show will air on YouTube Premium.

SPORTS  
sports

## Undefeated fighter from Dagestan returns at Brave 14

TDT | Manama

**I**kram Aliskerov who is leading the Middleweight division of Brave Combat Federation with three straight wins and an undefeated professional record will make a return at Brave 14.

The event will take place at the Omnisports indoor club of Tangier, Morocco on 18th August 2018.

The event marks the sixth professional bout for the twenty five year old from Dagestan. Ikram is a Combat Sambo world champion and had defeated three major athletes in his past bouts including Ruffat Asadov, Jeremy Smith and Chad Hanekom.

Ikram is currently a part of Champion Fight Team based on Derbent. He is the first fighter from Dagestan to enter the growing Middleweight



Ikram Aliskerov

division of Brave Combat Federation. The event marks his fourth appearance with Brave. He will face the veteran Diego Gonzalez who has 33 fights in his career with a record of 20 wins, 12 losses and a no-contest. Gonzalez is from Sweden and trains at the Pan-crase gym, Stockholm.

## Brave 14: first step for further events in Africa

TDT | Manama

**B**rave 14 hosted in the Omnisports indoor club of Tangier, Morocco on 18th August 2018 marks the first global martial arts event hosted in Africa with the largest broadcast coverage in the history of the sport till date.

Abu Dhabi Sports will broadcast the event live across MENA region, StarSat and VodaCom will cover the rest of African continent, Combate will focus on the South American markets, FloCombat and Fite TV will focus on the remaining global territories. Brave Combat Federation has stated that further expansion is expected during the days leading to the event.

The event will be held as the first step for the further events that will be hosted in the continent of Africa by Brave Combat Federation. Mohammed Shahid has recently hinted the possibility of South Africa among future destinations for the global promotion. The Kingdom of Bahrain will host the Brave International Combat Week 2018, in the month of

November which will feature a premium edition of Brave Combat Federation alongside the 2018 IMMAF World Championships of Amateur MMA.

The event will become the first Bahraini overseas event held under the patronage of the King, Mohammed VI, King of Morocco.

**”**  
The way Brave Combat Federation brings together nations, cultures and development in sports is an example for the world. Apart from being the fastest growing global promotion, the venture is also creating milestones with each of its editions

PRESIDENT OF BRAVE CF MOHAMMED SHAHID

# Girls futsal league gets thrilling opening

TDT | Manama

**G**irls League which is held as part of the 6th Khalid bin Hamad Futsal League began on Friday.

The event witnessed a special women's presence with the attendance of several female celebrities.

The first match of the league saw Al Ataa and Al Quwah share the spoils in a six-goal thriller in Group 1.

Alataa's player Mariam Al Tamimi's fine display during the match earned the best player of the match award.

Al Esrar had a perfect start to their campaign in the league, thrashing Al Theqa 15-0 in Group 2. Fatima Mohammed Bu Shehri contributed five goals to the winners en route to being named the best player of the match award.

In another match Al Amal secured a well-earned 5-2 win against Al Azeema.

Muneera Al Hamdan scored a brace for the winners to win the best player of the game award.

In the last match of the day, Al Tahadi tore Al Erada's net with



Al Ataa team's game against Al Quwah

16 goals, but the latter scored a consolation goal. Their broad win was made possible thanks to Eman Al Khatal who found the net on five occasions. She was named the best player of the game.

### Generous Initiative

Dr. Shaikha Yousef Al Jeeb, Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Services and Student

Activities, who was present at the event, branded holding a girls league as part of the Futsal League as a unique gesture extended by HH Shaikh Khalid to provide girls with an opportunity to show their talents. She said that holding such an event for girls "serves an important segment of Bahrain's society, confirmed that this initiative has many benefits, most nota-



All of the top clubs in the world (Barcelona, Real Madrid, Chelsea, Manchester United, etc.) have their youth players playing futsal! In fact, most junior players in Brazil don't play outdoor soccer until around age 13. Instead, they play futsal!

bly supporting and encouraging young people to practice sports as a lifestyle."

Fatima Al Tattan, futsal referee in the Kuwait Football Association, expressed her admiration for HH Shaikh Khalid's initiative to embrace the girls, noting that he has harnessed all possibilities and created the ideal conditions for their support in all fields, especially sports.

## Athletes celebrate Olympic Day

TDT | Manama

**B**ahrain joined other parts of the globe as they celebrated the 2018 Olympic Day at Isa Sports City's track in Riffa City, with hundreds of participants turning up for the 3km social race.

More than 300 athletes of different ages and nationalities took part in this day-long festivities, organised by Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) in cooperation with the Bahrain Athletics Association's Bahrain Road Runners (BRR).

The event featured a 3km race, which started from the sports halls of Shaikh Isa Sports City in Riffa as all participants received t-shirts with a printed 'Olympic Day' logo, while the organizing committee provided water enroute. All the participants also received certificates of recognition at the end of the race.

Supreme Council for Youth and Sports assistant secretary general and Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) secretary general Abdulrahman Askar led the participants



Participants at the walk/run event

at the run.

"We hope to build on the excitement and interest generated by Olympic Day to really promote the Olympic values and encourage people to adopt sport into their everyday lives," said Askar after the event.

Askar added that this occasion observes

the Olympic values of fair play, perseverance, respect and sportsmanship.

He also extended his gratitude to all those who contribute to making this event possible, including the Ministry of Information Affairs, the Ministry of Health and national sports federations.



Supreme Council for Youth and Sports Second Deputy Chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee Honorary President Shaikh Isa bin Rashid Al Khalifa during a group photo session with Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) President Saleh bin Nasser, on the sidelines of the 19th Asian Men's U20 Volleyball Championship being held in Bahrain. Joining them in the visit were AVC General Secretary Chang Chin Jong and GCC Volleyball Federation Chairman and Kuwait Volleyball Association President Waleed Aman. Others present at the gathering were Bahrain Volleyball Association (BVA) President Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, BVA Vice-President and Local Organising Committee Executive Director Jehad Khalfan, and BVA General Secretary Feras Halwachi.



# Vettel celebrates home pole

## Hamilton limps out of German qualifying

AFP | Hockenheim, Germany

Sebastian Vettel surged to pole for his home German Grand Prix yesterday as Lewis Hamilton suffered a setback when his Mercedes broke down to leave him at the back of the grid.

Vettel topped qualifying with a devastating final lap in his Ferrari to pip Valtteri Bottas in the second Mercedes.

A distraught Hamilton limped out in the first qualifying session when his car broke down with a hydraulics failure.

Vettel rubbed salt in the British defending world champion's wounds by outpacing Bottas by two-tenths of a second.

In front of a huge crowd of flag-waving Germans at the track near his Heppenheim birthplace, Vettel delivered a lap record in one minute and 11.212 seconds to top the Finn's 1:11.416.

"Thanks to those fans," said Vettel. "It was amazing to see so many Ferrari and Germany flags.

"It just kept getting better and I knew for the last lap I had a little bit more – I



Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel on his way to pole at Hockenheim

full of adrenaline, but feel so happy."

It is his second pole for a German Grand Prix and the 55th of his career.

Vettel's qualifying success makes him favourite to land his first Formula One victory at Hockenheim and only his second Grand Prix win in Germany as he seeks to extend his eight-point advantage over Hamilton.

Kimi Raikkonen was third in the second Ferrari ahead of Max Verstappen of Red Bull and the two Ferrari-powered Haas cars of Kevin Magnussen and Romain Grosjean.

Another home hope Nico Hulkenberg was seventh ahead of his Renault team-mate Carlos Sainz, rising Monegasque star Charles Leclerc of Sauber and Sergio Perez of Force India.

## Airborne

Hamilton, who had attempted to push his car to stay in contention, said: "It was definitely a tough one, but these things happen and all you can do is try and gather your thoughts and live to fight another day.

"I'll give everything tomorrow to see how high I can get up, but its not going to be like



The most successful driver in the German Grand Prix is local pilot Rudolf Caracciola, who won six times between 1926-1939. Michael Schumacher recorded 4 wins in his home Grand Prix, all at the Hockenheimring. Ferrari is the most successful constructor with 22 wins

Silverstone."

Hamilton is expected to start 14th on the grid after his setback which saw him take a brief airborne excursion at Turn One and go off again at Turn Eight.

He lost use of his gearbox and was told by the team to stop to avoid further damage, following a hydraulics failure.

After trying to push the car, he crouched over it as if praying

before taking a motor-cycle ride back to the paddock.

It came two days after Mercedes confirmed he had signed a blockbuster two-year contract extension and followed other unexpected disappointments in Canada, Austria and Britain where Hamilton and his team had been unable to match expectations.

After heavy rain had washed out final practice in the morning, the session began in improved conditions and on a drying track, the two Saubers again setting the pace as they had in the rain.

The atmosphere was sultry with a track temperature of 27 degrees Celsius, air at 21 and humidity at 84 per cent.

The two Ferraris were soon on top of the times ahead of the Mercedes before Verstappen entered the fray, Vettel having set an early lap record in 1:12.538 that was soon trimmed by his team-mate's 1:12.505.

The Q1 segment ended with Ferrari on top and the elimination of Esteban Ocon of Force India, Pierre Gasly and Brendon Hartley of Toro Rosso, Lance Stroll of Williams and Stoffel Vandoorne of McLaren.

Hamilton clocked the fifth best time before his problems forced him to abandon.

# Justin Rose threaten leaders at Open

AFP | Carnoustie, United Kingdom

Justin Rose made the most of serene weather conditions to shoot his best ever round in a major and climb up the Brit-

No Englishman has won the Claret Jug since Nick Faldo at Muirfield in 1992, but whether Rose can be the man to end that long drought may depend on what the leaders do later.

## Woods charges into contention

Reuters | Carnoustie, United Kingdom

Tiger Woods turned back the clock and briefly tied for the lead en route to a five-under-par 66 as players plundered Carnoustie in perfect conditions in the third round of the British Open yesterday.

Woods posted a five-under 208 total that left him three strokes behind American on-course leader Kevin Kisner, who had completed six holes.

In scenes reminiscent of those in the prime of his career, waves of excitement rippled through the massive gallery as 14-times major champion Woods charged up the leaderboard.

Throwing caution aside after starting the day six strokes behind, Woods wielded his driver aggressively and was rewarded with six birdies in



Tiger Woods from the fifth tee

the first 14 holes.

A tap-in at the par-five 14th lifted him to the top of a major championship leaderboard for the first time since the second round at the 2013 Masters.

But no sooner had he done so than his six-iron to the par-three 16th trickled off the side of the green, from where he could not avoid dropping his first and only shot of the day.

He got a lucky break at the last, where his pulled tee shot came within inches of landing in the Barry Burn.

If the weather remains calm, Johnson and Kisner will also hope to score low. England's Fleetwood and American duo Pat Perez and Xander Schauffele are also right in the mix, starting the day on five under par.

Level with Rose at four-under before starting their rounds were Rory McIlroy, Erik van Rooyen, Zander Lombard, Tony Finau and Matt Kuchar, who finished runner-up to Jordan Spieth last year at Royal Birkdale.

Also impressive early on Saturday were Japan's Yusaku Miyazato, who had a bogey-free 65, and England's Chris Wood, who had a 66.

Both are now three-under for the championship, although it could have been better for Wood, who was sev-

en-under for his round after 13 holes.

However, he dropped shots at the long 14th and the 17th, before a sensational par save at the last after his approach ended up nestled against a fence.

"To be honest, it wouldn't have changed my mood an awful lot because the way I've played the first couple of days has been terrible," said the Englishman when asked how important that had been for his round.

"It was a good effort to get through and make the weekend really. So there's no way I expected to be seven-under on the day.

"So to shoot mid-60s today, regardless of how I finished, would have been a good effort," added Wood, who finished tied for third in The Open at Turnberry nine years ago.



South Africa's South Africa's Keshav Maharaj (L) stops a ball beside Sri Lankan cricketer Dimuth Karunaratne

## Sri Lanka reign despite Maharaj milestone

● Karunaratne builds lead after spinners rout South Africa again

Reuters | Colombo

Keshav Maharaj returned the second best figures by a South African bowler in a test innings but Sri Lanka took a firm step towards a 2-0 series sweep after thoroughly dominating day two of the second and final test on Saturday.

South Africa's spin frailties were laid bare once again as the tourists collapsed for 124 to concede a first innings lead of 214 runs at Colombo's Sin-

halese Sports Club Ground.

Sri Lanka, who made 338 in the first innings, were 151-3 at stumps after deciding not to impose follow-on against the tourists who now stare at the possibility of a second successive test defeat inside three days.

Dimuth Karunaratne was batting on 59 at stumps, his fourth successive 50-plus knock in the series, with Angelo Mathews on 12 at the other end.

For South Africa, left arm-spinner Maharaj took his match-haul to 11 wickets but his team were in dire straits.

Earlier resuming the day on 277 for nine, Akila Dananjaya and Rangana Herath frustrated South Africa with a dogged 74-run stand for the final wicket before Maharaj struck when the latter was caught behind for 35. Dananjaya remained unbeaten on 43.

Maharaj's 9-129 is the second best by a South African in tests, behind only Hugh Tayfield's 9-113 against England in 1957, but his success brought little cheer to a side battling their own spin vulnerabilities.

## BRIEF SCORE

Sri Lanka 338 (de Silva 60, Maharaj 9-129) and 151 for 3 (Gunathilaka 61, Karunaratne 59\*, Maharaj 2-90) lead South Africa 124 (du Plessis 48, Akila 5-52, Dilruwan 4-40) by 365 runs



England's Justin Rose

# Dortmund ease past Man City

Mario Gotze penalty saw The BVB down City in International Champions Cup opener

AFP | Chicago, United States

Pep Guardiola's start to his pre-season campaign ended in defeat as Borussia Dortmund captain Mario Gotze's first half penalty was enough to see off the Premier League champions Manchester City 1-0 at Soldier Field in Chicago on Friday.

Guardiola was able to call on the likes of new signing Riyad Mahrez and German Leroy Sané but his otherwise highly inexperienced, young team were unable to get the better of a Dortmund side who have already played one game this summer and looked far sharper in the opening match of this year's International Champions Cup tournament.

Gotze's winner came in the 28th minute when American international Christian Pulisic was hauled down in the box allowing the midfielder who famously scored the winning goal in the 2014 World Cup final to beat Claudio Bravo.

Mahrez showed flashes of his quality yet Guardiola will be disappointed about the lack of cutting edge on show.

With the bulk of his Premier League title-winning squad enjoying an extended break after their exertions at the World Cup, it was a vastly inexperienced side sent out by the Spaniard at



Borussia Dortmund midfielder Mario Gotze, right, scores a goal during the first half

Soldier Field.

Mahrez, the \$75 million signing from Leicester, made his debut while the precocious young English midfielder Phil Foden also started.

There was a healthy crowd of 34,629 inside Soldier Field and although a young City side held their own early on, Dortmund created the better chances with Gotze pulling the strings togeth-

er with Pulisic.

Mahrez was City's best player, who showcased his attacking threat with a decent run and cross midway through the first half.

## A satisfied coach

But on 28 minutes the Germans were ahead.

Alex Zinchenko, who is set to leave the club before the start

of the English domestic season, brought down the lively Pulisic in the box and Gotze beat Bravo from the spot before Alexander Isak almost made it two soon after.

Jack Harrison should have done better just before the interval when he miscued a shot from close range and then Mahrez forced a great save from Dortmund keeper Marwin Hitz.

Nevertheless, Guardiola would have been all too aware of his side's lack of killer instinct.

Jadon Sancho, who quit the Premier League club for Dortmund last August following a fall-out with Guardiola, was introduced in the second half and began promisingly.

Joe Hart, the former England keeper, was making his first City appearance since August 2016



For the first seven years of their history, Manchester City were known as Ardwick FC

but it was opposite number Hitz who was almost beaten on 55 minutes when another Mahrez set-piece flew just past the post. Guardiola said his team played well despite not having a lot of time to train together.

"It was really good for their futures because we played one of the best teams in Germany and we did many good things," he said. "The courage, intensity and desire to play was very good. I'm so satisfied."

The Algerian's cute pass set Lukas Nmecha through on 70 minutes but his finish was lacking before Hart produced an excellent point blank save to deny Mahmoud Dahoud.

Dortmund, however, held firm to seal a deserved win.

## Fraile ends Belgian hopes with first win

AFP | Mende, France

Spaniard Omar Fraile ended Belgian hopes of a Tour de France victory on their national holiday with a gutsy, maiden victory on the race on the 14th stage Saturday.

Britain's Geraint Thomas, of Team Sky, retained the race leader's yellow jersey after crossing the line with teammate Chris Froome and Dutch rival Tom Dumoulin (Sunweb) just over 18 minutes in arrears.

With four days of climbing in the Pyrenees yet to decide the outcome of the yellow jersey, the main peloton and all the race favourites were happy to allow an early breakaway escape in the opening kilometres.

Intentions seemed clear on Belgium's national holiday after seven Belgians got in among a group of 32 frontrunners in-



Astana rider Omar Fraile of Spain celebrates as he crosses the line to win stage 14

cluding Philippe Gilbert and yellow jersey holder Greg Van Avermaet.

But Astana rider Fraile, who claimed his maiden Giro d'Italia stage last year following a long breakaway, was desperate for a repeat.

"It was one of the stages I had marked and when I saw the breakaway go, I told myself that I had to get in it," he said. "It's a dream. Soloing over the finish line was incredible."

"I think when a cyclist wins on the Tour de France it's fabulous. It's the most important race in the world."

"I dedicate this victory to my girlfriend, to my family and to all those who have supported me."

When Jasper Stuyven (Trek) capitalised on a mid-race spat between Gilbert and Fraile to break away on his own with

over 30km to race, it looked like Belgium would have an extra reason to celebrate.

But Stuyven, a one-day classics specialist who finished in the top ten of Paris-Roubaix and the Tour of Flanders earlier this season, fell victim to his lack of climbing prowess.

He held a 1min 40sec lead on a group of chasers with 10km to race, with the main peloton and Thomas at over 20 minutes in arrears.

But on the final, 3km climb leading to the flat finish at Mende Fraile launched an audacious counter-attack.

The Spaniard dug deep on the climb, whose average gradient is a punishing 10.1 per cent, and soon had Stuyven in his sights.

When he overtook Stuyven with two kilometres to race, Fraile did not look back.

## Bayern dominate PSG 3-1 in International Champions Cup



Paris Saint-Germain's Timothy Weah (L) vies for the ball with Bayern Munich's Josip Stanisic

AFP | Klagenfurt, Austria

German champions Bayern Munich hit three second-half goals as they beat French titlists Paris Saint-Germain, 3-1, yesterday in International Champions Cup in Klagenfurt, Austria.

PSG were without their World Cup winners, but they did start Adrien Rabiot, who refused to serve as a reserve for the French squad. Bayern were without their legion of German internationals, despite the national team's early exit in Russia.

PSG had the best of the first half and took the lead with a 31st minute goal by American Timothy Weah, the 18-year-old son of African legend George Weah.

Bayern dominated the second half and struck three times in 18 minutes. Spaniard Javier Martinez opened the scoring past Gianluigi Buffon, the Italian veteran who joined PSG this summer.

Portuguese midfielder Renato Sanchez and 17-year-old Dutch striker Joshua Zirkzee added the other two, after Buffon had gone off.

## Bahrain-Merida considering legal action against organisers

Cycling News | Paris

The Bahrain-Merida team have confirmed to Cyclingnews that they are con-



Vincenzo Nibali

sidering legal action against the organisers of the Tour de France after team leader Vincenzo Nibali was brought down and fractured a vertebrae in a chaotic incident on the Alpe d'Huez.

Nibali was forced to quit the Tour de France, ending his and Bahrain-Merida's chances of overall victory.

The crash was not captured by live television coverage, and it was initially suspected that the incident had been caused by police motorbikes slowing in front of him.

## Kiwi Bevin abandons Tour

AFP | Mende, France

New Zealand's Patrick Bevin quit the Tour de France after struggling to keep pace with the peloton on the 14th stage from Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux to Mende.

Bevin, 27, was part of the BMC team that raced to victory in the team time trial on stage three. BMC then lost their team leader Richie Porte to injury following a crash on stage nine.

Bevin went on to help Belgian teammate Greg Van Avermaet defend the yellow jersey from stage three until he lost the race lead to Geraint Thom-

as on stage 11 to La Rosiere in the Alps.

Despite coming through Friday's mainly flat 13th stage to Valence, Bevin's efforts over three tough days in the Alps appeared to catch up with him.



Patrick Bevin

# Bahrain dominate

Japan and Iran post big wins opening day of Asian U20 volleyball

TDI | Manama

Hosts Bahrain joined Asian powerhouses Japan and Iran as big winners on day one of the 19th Asian Men's U20 Volleyball Championship, taking place at Isa Sports City in Riffa.

The Bahrainis put on an impressive show this evening in front of their home fans, appearing dominant against a tough Iraq side in a 3-0 (25-23, 28-26, 25-15) victory in Pool D1 of the competition's Preliminary Round.

Japan and Iran, meanwhile, looked just as imposing in their respective games, with each needing just over an hour-and-a-quarter to dispose of their opponents. Playing against Thailand in Pool B1, the Japanese enjoyed a 3-0 (25-19, 25-17, 27-25) result, while Iran followed suit with their own comfortable 3-0 (25-22, 25-13, 25-22) win.

All three teams are competing in Division One for the Preliminaries, as are Sri Lanka, who beat Kazakhstan 3-1 (23-25, 25-16, 29-27, 25-10) in Pool C1.

From Division Two on the tournament's opening day, Taipei beat Saudi Arabia, Malaysia beat the Maldives, Hong Kong won over Jordan and India had their game against Uzbekistan cancelled following the late withdrawal of the Uzbeks.

The now 23-nation Asian U20 Championship has been organised by the Asian Volleyball Confederation in cooperation with the Bahrain Volleyball Association. It is being held under the patronage of His Majesty the King's Charity Works and Youth Affairs Representative, Supreme Council for Youth and Sports Chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee President Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

Matches continue today at the same venue from 11.30am onwards. Games are being played simultaneously in two arenas. Entrance for spectators is free and all are welcome to watch.

In Bahrain's win in Pool D1, the nationals received a welcome boost from the vibrant singing and cheers from the massive group of local fans that turned up to support the team.

After a strong opening set, the Bahrainis found themselves trailing midway through the second but some brilliant blocking helped them rally and tie the proceedings at 22.

Their surge deflated their opponents and they took full advantage. The home side then carried over their momentum into the third set, while giving the Iraqis no chance at a comeback.

"This was our first game of the tournament so we played a little nervous today," said top talent Mohamed Abdulla after the match. "We had many mistakes in receiving and didn't do very well in our attack.

"But we hope to do better in every game and we are very happy we won today against a very strong team."

Hasan Abbas scored 11 points to lead the hosts, while Sayed Alabbar finished with seven. Abdulla had five blocks in the game. Ali Abushanan paced Iraq with 14 points in the losing effort.



Bahrain's Hasan Abbas goes for a spike in their match against Iraq

## SCORES

Taipei beat Saudi Arabia 3-0 (25-18, 25-19, 25-19)

India beat Uzbekistan (not held, Uzbekistan withdrew)

Japan beat Thailand 3-0 (25-19, 25-17, 27-25)

Malaysia beat Maldives 3-0 (25-9, 25-19, 25-10)

Iran beat China 3-0 (25-22, 25-13, 25-22)

Hong Kong beat Jordan 3-1 (20-25, 25-22, 26-24, 26-24)

Bahrain beat Iraq 3-0 (25-23, 28-26, 25-15)

Sri Lanka beat Kazakhstan 3-1 (23-25, 25-16, 29-27, 25-10)

Bahrain will now look to end their Preliminary Round campaign in Pool D1 with a win against Qatar tonight. Their contest is scheduled for a 7pm start.

In Japan's Pool B1 game with Thailand, they overcame a poor start to the third set when they faced a 3-6 deficit before bouncing back and rallying.

The Thais managed to make things interesting, building a 24-21 lead later on to almost certainly extend the contest to a fourth set.

But the Japanese came up with the big points from there, tying the proceedings at 24 before taking three of the next four points to close out the match in style.

"It is always important to begin a championship of this level with a win," Japanese head coach Kazushi Masunari said after their game. "Sometimes, we do not play to our best and we can only hold ourselves responsible. But the way we recovered in the third set, it shows you the mental strength of the Japanese team."

Japan captain Kento Miyaura had 13 points to lead his team. Ryuki Ban added 12 in the win, while Shunichiro Sato scored nine points. Both Miyaura and

Sato also had four blocks apiece in the game. Pipat Chansuksri paced Thailand in the loss with 11 points.

Japan next face Turkmenistan on Monday in their final Pool game.

In Iran's win in Pool A1, the world champions at the under-19 level were given their opponents China no chance.

After losing the first two sets, the Chinese put in a spirited fight to begin the third. But the Iranians eventually found their groove and did enough to close out the contest.

"Our main target here is to win all the matches," said Iran head coach Behrouz Ataei. "Our team is considered to be very strong but we cannot predict what will happen in any of our matches. We are just taking things one game at a time and we try to be better each time."

Morteza Sharifi was their top scorer with 14 points, while Porrya Yali added 10. Feyzemadoust added four points and four blocks. Jianfei Diao led China with 16 points.

Iran next play against Korea on Monday in what is expected to be a thrilling and hotly contested affair between two juggernauts.

## Today's matches

(in order of Time, Court 1 game, Court 2 game)  
11.30am: Pakistan vs Taipei, Macau vs Maldives

2pm: Korea vs China, New Zealand vs India

4.30pm: Turkmenistan vs Thailand, Australia vs Sri Lanka

7pm: Bahrain vs Qatar, UAE vs Jordan



This was our first game of the tournament so we played a little nervous today. We had many mistakes in receiving and didn't do very well in our attack. But we hope to do better in every game and we are very happy we won today against a very strong team

BAHRAIN'S MOHAMED ABDULLA



Japan captain Kento Miyaura tries to score against Thailand's Pipat Chansuksri and Saonram Chakkawat



Taipei captain Hsuan-Cheng Chiao attacks the net against Saudi Arabia