

**Hardy took role of Venom for son**

Actor Tom Hardy says the impetus for playing the villain in "Venom" was to make a movie for his son. "My son is a massive Venom fan. I wanted to do something my son could watch," Hardy said, noting he is often aggressive and violent in his films. **P16**

# THE DAILY **tribune**



**Controversy surrounds Qatari Emir's UK visit**  
London

Qatar's Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani arrived in the United Kingdom yesterday for a visit that is already mired in controversy, with activists planning to demonstrate outside Parliament on Monday against Qatar's continued support for terrorism across the Middle East region.

Meanwhile, banners over prominent roads in London, with the hashtag #OpposeQatarVisit, asked: "If a country was accused of paying \$1 billion in a ransom to terrorist groups... then why is the UK government rolling out the red carpet for the Qatar Emir?"

**High-tech scanning at airport launched**  
Manama

A highly-advanced scanning system has been launched at the Bahrain International Airport.

President of Customs Affairs, Shaikh Ahmed bin Hamad Al Khalifa, yesterday visited BIA to inspect the newly-introduced advanced scanning system.

The Customs Affairs announced earlier the supply of six devices in the first phase to replace the old ones at all customs ports.

TDT|Manama

The consumer price index (CPI) increased by 0.6 per cent in June 2018 as it reached 132.8 points, compared with May 2018, said a release on the economy issued by the Information and eGovernment Authority.

The inflation rate in consumer prices for the first six months of 2018 was 2.7pc compared with the same period of 2017, it said, adding that the CPI increased by 0.8pc in the second quarter of 2018, compared with the first quarter of 2017.

The CPI and inflation rate - issued by the Information

Main Group	June 2018 (Point)	May 2018 (Point)	Percentage Change (%)	June 2017 (Point)	Percentage Change (%)
Clothing & Footwear	106.4	111.2	-4.3	111.2	-4.3
Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas & other Fuels	118.6	118.6	0.0	116.7	1.6
Furnishing, Household Equipment & Routine Household Maintenance	137.3	137.3	0.0	133.8	2.6
Health Care Services	123.3	123.3	0.0	117.3	5.1
Transportation	135.7	134.9	0.6	124.9	8.6
Communication	86.4	86.5	-0.1	87.0	-0.7

A table showing CPI break-up figures.

and eGovernment Authority follows a precise methodology and relies on the basket of goods and services out-of-

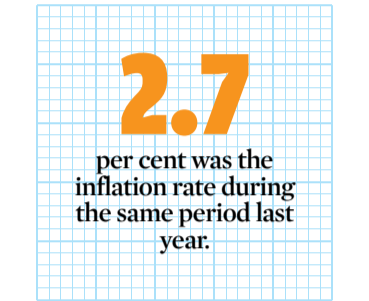
which their prices are regularly collected allowing comprehensive calculation of the price indices with the demanded

accuracy.

Such technical specifications and methodologies are the only authorised sources to monitor price developments and inflation rates in the Kingdom.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has welcomed the Kingdom authorities' commitment to continue with subsidy reforms, cut non-productive spending, and raise non-oil revenues by introducing a Value Added Tax as early as 2019.

Bahrain's gross domestic product, adjusted for inflation, shrank 1.2pc from a year earlier in the first quarter of 2018 as oil production sagged, Reuters



reported citing data from the official statistics agency.

The oil sector of the economy shrank 14.7pc from a year ago, while the non-oil sector expanded 1.9pc, the news agency stated.

# Iran's flimsy warning

Tehran faces increased pressure as US begins measures to corner the regime

● **Iran's oil exports could fall as much as two-thirds by the end of the year because of new US sanctions, putting oil markets under huge strain amid supply outages elsewhere.**

Tehran

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani yesterday cautioned US President Donald Trump about pursuing hostile policies against Tehran, saying "America should know ... war with Iran is the moth-

er of all wars".

Iran faces increased US pressure and looming sanctions after Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from a 2015 international deal over Iran's nuclear programme.

Addressing a gathering of Iranian diplomats, Rouhani said: "Mr Trump, don't play with the lion's tail, this would only lead to regret," the state-news agency IRNA reported.

More than half a dozen current and former officials said the campaign, supported by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and national security adviser John Bolton, is meant to work in concert with US President Donald Trump's push to



Rouhani

economically throttle Iran by re-imposing tough sanctions.

The drive has intensified since Trump withdrew on May 8 from a 2015 seven-nation deal to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

The White House declined comment on the campaign. The State Department also declined to comment on the campaign specifically, including on Pompeo's role.

A review of the State Department's Farsi-language Twitter account and its ShareAmerica website - which describes itself as a platform to spark debate on democracy and other issues - shows a number of posts critical of Tehran over the last month.

Iran is the subject of four of the top five items on the website's "Countering Violent Extremism" section. They include headlines such as "This Iranian airline helps spread violence and terror."

WOMEN POWER

## In a first, two women appointed municipality director-generals

TDT|Manama  
Harpreet Kaur

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has issued a royal decree appointing two Bahraini women as the director-generals of

the Capital Municipality and the Northern Municipality respectively.

Shawqiya Ibrahim Humaidan and Lamia Yousef Al Fadhala have become the first women to assume this position in the history of the Kingdom. They will be responsible for promoting municipal work in the governorates.

The appointment of two women in senior administrative positions in the field of municipal work is a great step towards the empowerment of women in the Kingdom, which already has 40 per cent women presence in the leadership and decision-making wings of the executive authority.



Ms Lamia



Ms Shawqiya

The Kingdom has a woman minister and many women undersecretaries and assistant undersecretaries. The participation of women in the legislative authority is 15pc.

There also a good number of women holding key judicial posts including the Constitutional Court and Supreme Judicial Council in addition to public prosecution. Bahrain has also

produced many women diplomats.

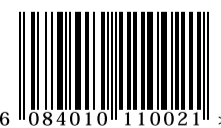
Speaking to Tribune, Ms Shawqiya thanked His Majesty for appointing her to a prominent position.

"I am also thankful to HRH the Premier, HRH the Crown Prince and HRH Princess Sabeeka for constantly promoting the role of women in this country."

She said Bahraini women always were the first achievers when compared to the women of other Gulf countries. "The appointment will definitely serve an impetus to Bahraini women who are all set to accomplish greater goals in the days to come."



- 03** Likely candidate to parliament arrested for 'tweeting trouble'
- 04** Saudi 'main pillar of GCC march'
- 05** Two diabetes medicines withdrawn from market



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# BIG STORY

## big story

# Likely candidate to parliament arrested for 'tweeting trouble'

Accused to be remanded for seven days pending further investigations

● **MP Jamal Buhassan had complained against Mr Al Aradi for posting tweets that were considered sectarian and insulting.**

● **Mr Al Aradi removed the insulting tweets on Thursday and said, "I have removed a number of tweets that may be misunderstood by some, especially in the scientific evaluation of history and some of the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH)."**

**TDI|Manama**  
**Muhannad Mansour**

**A** potential candidate for the parliamentary elections was arrested yesterday after an MP lodged a complaint against him over sectarian tweets.

Mohammed Al Aradi, 54, a religious scholar who recently announced his intention to compete in the upcoming parliamentary elections was summoned on Friday by the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security.

This came few days after MP Jamal Buhassan complained against Mr Al Aradi for posting tweets that were considered sectarian and insulting.

Northern Governorate Chief Prosecutor Mohammed Salah confirmed this in a statement released yesterday, saying, "The Public Prosecution was notified by the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security, with regards to an individual who posted abusive tweets on his social media account. The Prosecution initiated its investigations into the incident and interrogated the accused."



**Such actions will not be tolerated as it undermine the civil peace and disturb the coexistence of citizens.**

MR BUHASSAN

Mr Salah added, "The accused was ordered to be remanded for seven days pending further investigation after being accused of insulting a symbol or a person glorified or considered sacred by the members of a particular sect. Legal procedures are continued to refer the case to the concerned court."

Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security Director-General Lieutenant Colonel Bassam Al Miraj announced on Friday that Mr Al Aradi was summoned for posting tweets insulting a particular sect in Bahrain.

He said that Article 310 of the Penal Code states that "a jail term of up to one year or a fine of up to BD100 shall be imposed on any person who publicly insults a symbol or a person glorified or considered sacred by the members of a particular sect".

Mr Al Aradi insulted the companions of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in a series of tweets while discussing a religious topic online. An act that offended many who called for holding him accountable for such remarks.

This includes MP Buhassan, who criticised Al Aradi and lodged a complaint against him to the General Directorate of Anti-Corruption and Economic and Electronic Security.

Mr Buhassan said, "Al Aradi's remarks are rejected and unacceptable. Such actions will not be tolerated as it undermine the civil peace and disturb the coexistence of citizens in the Kingdom of Bahrain."

He also thanked Interior Ministry for arresting Al Aradi and added that "such sectarian behaviours are penalised by the law".

Mr Al Aradi who's known for making controversial remarks recently called for shrinking the Cabinet to three ministries only to reduce government spending. He removed the insulting tweets on Thursday and said, "I have removed a number of

tweets that may be misunderstood by some, especially in the scientific evaluation of history and some of the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH)."

However, the man had to face a wave of angry comments and remarks over his tweets.

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**Mr Al Aradi who's known for making controversial remarks recently called for shrinking the Cabinet to three ministries only to reduce government spending.**

## Saudi 'main pillar of GCC march'

● While the GCC is the all-inclusive home for its member countries, Saudi Arabia is the main pillar of this home and all its members, and it has always supported the blessed GCC march, the Premier said.

Manama

His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa has affirmed that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was established for the sake of GCC peoples.

HRH the Premier stressed that the needs and aspirations of GCC citizens require stepping up efforts to strengthen solidarity and collaboration, expressing confidence that GCC leaders will spare no effort in order to fulfill the aspirations of their peoples for preserving the gains and achievements attained under the GCC in many fields of joint cooperation.



HRH the Premier receives Dr Al Zayani.

The Prime Minister made the statements while receiving GCC Secretary-General, Dr Abdullatif Al Zayani, at the Gudaibiya Palace yesterday.

HRH the Premier underlined Bah-

rain's keenness to support initiatives that consolidate the GCC march and maintain its unity and peoples' cohesion to attain more accomplished for the best interests of everybody, noting that under the leadership of His Maj-

esty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the kingdom is always keen to ensure that its relations with brotherly countries are strong at all levels.

While the GCC is the all-inclusive home for its member countries, Saudi

Arabia is the main pillar of this home and all its members, and it has always supported the blessed GCC march, the Premier said.

HRH the Prime Minister emphasised the importance of initiatives that back the GCC entity and increase its regional and international influence, being the safety valve for the region's security and stability and the platform that strengthens ties among its countries and peoples.

HRH the Premier praised the role played by the GCC secretary-general and his aids at the Secretariat-General in following up on cooperation aspects among member states, and keenness to implement resolutions that boost cooperation in various economic, social, political and security fields.

The GCC secretary-general extended thanks and appreciation to HRH Premier for his stances in support of every joint GCC action.

Dr Al Zayani affirmed that the Prime Minister's supportive stances towards the GCC, and constant directives to the government to expedite the implementation of GCC resolutions have contributed to deepening GCC cooperation and coordination.



His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa underlined close relation between the Bahraini leadership and people, describing it as deep-rooted and the catalyst for national achievements. He was speaking as he received members of Al Bouri and Hujair families who extended to him heartfelt thanks and respect for his condolences on the demise of the family's female member.

# Five injured in worksite accident

Injured rushed to SMC; probe on to find the reason behind accident



The accident site in Jannusan.



The remnants of the structure that collapsed.

● The workers, all of whom are Asians, were injured while working at an under-construction building.

TDI|Manama  
Mohammed Zafran

Five people were injured in a worksite accident after the first floor ceiling of a building collapsed on them in Jannusan yesterday.

The workers, all of whom are Asians, were injured while working at an under-construction building.

According to sources, it happened at around 8am. "Soon after the men began their work, the accident took place. It is not clear as to what caused it. They have been injured. However, no fatalities," a source said.

"Civil Defence personnel arrived at the scene quickly to deal with the situation. The ambulance also arrived soon as well. Various other ministry officials also came to the scene," the source added.

The Ministry of Interior confirmed the accident in a tweet yesterday morning stating, "Civil Defence

deals with the ceiling collapse at an under construction building in Jannusan area. Five workers injured and were taken to hospital for treatment. Relevant procedures are being taken."

The men suffered injuries on their neck, back and the chest. They were soon rushed to Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC).

A spokesperson from the Ministry of Health confirmed to Tribune that SMC received the five men yesterday morning.

"The treatment of the five men injured in a work site accident in Jannusan is ongoing," the ministry said in a statement yesterday.

Dr Mohammed Amin Al Awadhi, assistant undersecretary for hospital affairs at the Ministry of Health, said that the medical team treating the men are doing their best to ensure their recovery.

When contacted, a senior official from the inspection department of the Ministry of Labour said that the ministry is investigating the case.

He said that the cause of the mishap is yet to be determined.

"We cannot comment on the cause of the accident as we are yet to finalise the report. It is not clear what caused the accident, we can determine this when we finalise the report," he said.

# Two diabetes medicines withdrawn from market

TDT|Manama  
Mohammed Zafran

Measures are being taken to withdraw two blood sugar control medicines from the market, it was learnt.

Authorities have urged consumers not to purchase Glynase 5mg and Diatab 5mg tablets because of health concerns.

Both medications are used for the treatment of type 2 diabetes. Concerns over the composition of the medicine is the reason for the withdrawal, sources said.

Saudi food and drug authority recently started pulling the product from the market and warned consumers against purchasing the products.

Yesterday, the National Health Regulatory Authority came up with a similar alert. The authority said that it received an alert from the Saudi counterparts.

“National Health Regulatory Au-

## Glynase

Oral Antidiabetic Agent

30 Tablets



## Mini-Glynase

Oral Antidiabetic Agent

30 Tablets



Authorities have urged consumers not to purchase Glynase 5mg and Diatab 5mg tablets.



The possible side effects from Glibenclamide include, nausea, heart burn, pruritus, erythema, urticaria.

pancreas.

The possible side effects from Glibenclamide include, nausea, heart burn, pruritus, erythema, urticaria.

## Addressing shortage

The issue regarding the shortage of ‘Dewax’, a medication used to treat earwax build up, which was reportedly unavailable in some health centre pharmacies is being resolved, according to authorities.

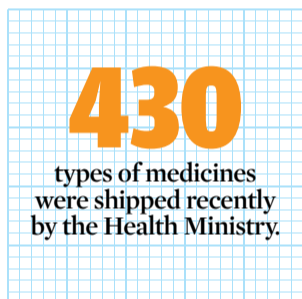
According to sources, the citizens were recently tuned away from the health centre pharmacies stating that it was not available there and that it will need to be purchased from private pharmacies.

The Ministry of Health is now resolving the situation by ensuring that all health centre pharmacies have the medication.

Citizens and residents can contact the Ministry on 32220112 to report about any shortage of medicines.

The ministry has taken several steps recently to curb issues of shortage of medicines. Recently 430 types of medicines were received at the ministry’s main warehouse.

This follows recent directives from His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa to ensure adequate medicine stocks.



## Drug seller attacks cops in bid to escape arrest

● The 30-year-old man will be tried before the High Criminal Court over accusations of selling drugs and attacking police officers.

TDT|Manama  
Ali Tarif

A 30-year-old drug lord attacked anti-drug squad members in his attempt to resist arrest and flee the scene, it was learnt.

After receiving a tip-off, a special team from the police decided to arrest the accused who was allegedly possessing drugs with an intention to sell and use.

An undercover officer was

appointed to arrest the man and the officer contacted the man and gave him an offer, which he could not refuse.

“He (the undercover agent) offered me BD600 for a piece of hashish. And I accepted, asking him to meet me in Samaheej,” the 30-year-old man told prosecutors.

Anti-drug squad members jumped on the accused as soon as he received money after handing over hashish to the undercover officer.

However, the accused in his bid to resist arrest and escaped punched the police officers, causing injuries to one of them. He was eventually detained.

The 30-year-old man will be tried before the High Criminal Court over accusations of selling drugs and attacking police officers.

## Centre’s efforts hailed



Assistant Foreign Minister Abdulla Al Doseri yesterday received Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence, Dr Shaikh Khalid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa at his office in the Ministry’s General Court. During the meeting, the Assistant Foreign Minister welcomed Dr Shaikh Khalid and praised the great efforts exerted by the King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence in spreading the values of tolerance and coexistence and spreading dialogue among different cultures.

## Man sentenced for scratching on cars

Accused confesses to committing the crime; promises police to repair the car

TDT|Manama  
Ali Tarif

A man who had made scratching car bonnets and doors his habit was sentenced to two months behind bars.

The Bahraini, in his fifties, first scratched a woman’s car and also wrote some insulting phrases in Eng-

lish on it, the court files say.

Though he initially escaped from getting caught as no-one noticed his “special hobby”, luck did not favour him when the 56-year-old tried the same thing with the woman’s brother’s vehicle.

A camera installed inside the vehicle caught the man committing the crime.



After nine days, the cameras recorded someone doing the same act on my brother’s car.

CAR OWNER

He admitted to committing the crime when he was summoned by prosecutors, and offered to repair the cars.

However, he was put on trial.

“I go to work early morning every day, but one day I saw my car had scratches and abusive words written on it. I reported the case to police and my brother fixed cameras,” the

woman, whose car got damaged, told police officers.

“After nine days, the cameras recorded someone doing the same act on my brother’s car.”

The defendant was tried before the Lower Criminal Court, and he was sentenced to two months behind bars.

However, the court granted him bail for an amount of BD200.



His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister yesterday received Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), at Riffa Palace. HRH the Crown Prince commended the Commander-in-Chief's commitment to further developing the operational readiness of the BDF.

# 195 worksite accidents in first six months this year

Labour officials blame flouting of safety norms at construction sites for maximum number of accidents

TDT|Manama  
Harpreet Kaur

Labour inspection authorities have recorded 195 worksite incidents in the first six months of the year 2018.

According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the number of worksite accidents reported last year stood at 388, which was an increase, compared to 2016 statistics wherein 341 cases were recorded.

This year the authorities reported 195 incidents in the first six months of 2018 including eight deaths caused by accidents.

Speaking to Tribune, Ahmed Alhaiki, Director of Inspection and Labour Union at the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, said, "There are a total of 195 accidents that were reported, out of which 83 were minor accidents and 52 involved fall from heights.

"Out of the eight death cases, seven occurred at construction sites."



Many safety awareness programmes are being conducted by the Labour Ministry for workers.

Mr Alhaiki said that most accidents occurred because of the violation of safety norms. "We urge all the project managers, employers, the safety foreman, to be aware of safety measures and to further adhere to it strictly especially at construction sites."

Mr Alhaiki said that the Labour Ministry has been investigating into all worksite accidents to find out the reasons.

"There is a zero tolerance policy when it comes to deaths caused by accidents and a maximum penalty would

be applied to the person who is found guilty."

Khatib Zuhair, Head of Labour Safety and Welfare Committee at Migrant Workers Protection Society said safety awareness classes should be regularly conducted for labourers in different

languages. "Authorities should step up inspections at worksite to reduce violations at worksites. Safety officers should be given more power to force companies implement safety norms at worksites," he said.

Tribune reported a worksite accident in the last week of May in which Muhammed Nausar, a security guard lost his life. The family of the deceased alleges that the Indian expat lost his life only because the company flouted safety norms at the worksite.

"The company was using unskilled labourers to get the work done. It is because of their negligence we lost Muhammed," the family had said.



Authorities should step up inspections at worksites to reduce safety violations.

MR ZUHAIR



We urge all safety officers to strictly implement safety norms at construction sites.

MR ALHAIKI

## Six Bahrainis face trial over attempt to murder officers

TDT|Manama  
Ali Tarif

Six men burned tyres in a bid to lure police officers into an area in Nuwaidrat in order to kill them, court files revealed.

Aged between 16 and 26, the Bahrainis are said to have planted an explosive device before the police officers arrived, purposely to kill maximum police officers.

"We were called to go to Nuwaidrat because a riot broke out in the area. There were 20 to 25 masked rioters when we reached," an officer who was among the teams dispatched recounted the events occurred prior the explosion.

"Suddenly, a blast occurred and one officer was wounded, while our patrol car got damaged. The officer was taken to the hospital for treatment," he added.

According to court files, po-

lice officers combed the area and found eight firebombs and 22 bottles which were intended to be used as Molotov cocktails.

Police investigations established the involvement of the six men in plotting the attack.

The second defendant, however, admitted to taking part in the riot but ruled out the connection between him and the blast.

"When I met the third defendant I was told that they would attack police officers. And I met the other defendants one hour before the assault. We were given iron rods and firebombs. Then we headed to the area where we were expecting police officers to arrive," the second defendant said.

The six men will be tried before the High Criminal Court on charges of attempting to murder police officers, rioting, possessing firebombs as well as bombing.

## Revamp work on track at Muharraq Central Market

The revamped facility is part of a strategy drawn up by the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning to modernize and upgrade central markets across Bahrain.

Manama

The revamping of the Muharraq Central Market is nearing completion, said Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Minister Essam Khalaf.

He announced the progress of work on the project as he paid a field visit to the development site, accompanied by Undersecretary Dr Nabil Mohammed Abul Fateh, Muharraq Municipality director-general Ibrahim Al Jowder, Southern Municipality director-general Asem Abdullatif and other officials.

The minister said that the main construction work on the



Mr Khalaf along with other ministry officials review revamp work at Muharraq Central Market.

BD6.2 million-facility would be completed this month, adding that shops would be handed over at the beginning of September.

He announced that the project would be inaugurated officially in December as part of festivities marking Bahrain's national days.

The revamped market is part of development projects ordered by His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa to be carried out in Muharraq.

The three-storey development facility which covers 28,000 square metres features

a hypermarket covering 3,000 sqm and 106 outlets for the meat, fish and vegetables sections.

Khalaf underlined the ministry's keenness on fast-tracking work on the central market in Muharraq, in compliance with the directives of HRH the Premier to inaugurate the milestone before the third quarter of this year.

The revamped facility is part of a strategy drawn up by the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning to modernize and upgrade central markets across Bahrain.

## Corrigendum

Arianne Deseree Viardo was the winner of the second preliminary round of Mutya Ng Pilipinas Bahrain 2018 and not the title winner as reported by Tribune on Sunday. The contest is ongoing and the title winner will represent the Kingdom at the upcoming Mutya Ng Pilipinas. The Mutya Ng Pilipinas Pageantry is a Filipino foundation that organises the event every year.

# business

## Al Salam Bank inks MoU with Kingdom Properties

The bank will provide property financing in Janayin Al Hamala project

TDT | Manama

Al Salam Bank-Bahrain, one of the pioneering Shari'a-compliant banks in the Kingdom, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Kingdom Projects to facilitate property financing solutions for customers wishing to buy luxurious villas in the Janayin Al Hamala project. The project also includes residential villas that fits the criteria of Mazaya programme (formerly known as Social Housing Financing Program) from the Ministry of Housing.

The project comprises of 148 luxurious villas ready to deliver that are designed to meet the requirements of a modern Bahraini family and it offers customers with 5 different types of villas, ranging to 220m<sup>2</sup> that consists of 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, large majlis room, living room, kitchen, balconies, store, housekeeping room and 2 parking spaces.

Present at the signing ceremony held at the bank's head-quarter office in the Bahrain World Trade Center were: An-



Al Salam Bank and Kingdom Properties officials during the signing ceremony



The project comprises of 148 luxurious villas ready to deliver

war Murad, First Deputy CEO of Al Salam Bank-Bahrain and Kingdom Projects and senior

officials at the bank.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Anwar Murad, First Deputy CEO of Al Salam Bank-Bahrain said: "The partnership between the two institutions will enable to provide financing to all Mazaya beneficiaries, which includes competitive profit rates, flexible financing terms, without a down payment on the amount subsidized by the Government of Bahrain and they can also benefit from obtaining a top-up of the financing amount on their subsidized financing facilities. In addition, customers who are not eligible for Mazaya

program and who wish to purchase a villa in the Janayin Al Hamala project can also avail our Shari'a-compliant financing solutions.

The Janayin Al Hamala community will abound with approximately 1,000 affordable residential dwelling units on either side of the subdivision plus recreation parks in each locality and in parallel with the main township road. The Project is strategically situated in an area conducive for residential villas, apartment buildings and community development with its recreational parks.

## BBK, Orchid Developers join hands

● **BBK will provide mortgage financing to the customers of Orchid Plaza**

TDT | Manama

BBK, Bahrain's pioneer in retail and commercial banking, yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Orchid Developers, initiating a strategic partnership agreement, through which BBK will provide mortgage financing to the customers of Orchid Plaza.

Orchid Developers, a real-estate and development company, is one of the first in Bahrain to offer freehold commercial and residential projects with more



BBK and Orchid Developers after signing the MoU

than 175 units of residential and commercial properties already delivered to its customers. Under the terms of the agreement, Orchid Plaza customers who require funding in the form of mortgage loans will be advised to consider BBK being the end

user funding partner.

Announcing the strategic partnership, Reyadh Sater, BBK Chief Executive, said: "In our continuous efforts to provide our customers with the best services and to facilitate the sale of the Freehold Projects, we are

pleased to enter into a strategic partnership with Orchid Developers whereby customers from all nationalities residing in the GCC who wish to own a property in Orchid Plaza will enjoy excellent interest rates and loan terms from BBK.

## Discounted rates for Ithmaar Bank cardholders

TDT | Manama

Ithmaar Bank has renewed an agreement with the Kingdom's national carrier, Gulf Air, granting the bank's credit card and debit cardholders exclusive discounts on tickets purchased on the Gulf Air website, gulfair.com until March 31, 2019.

The offer is applicable to all Gulf Air's online fares for both Falcon Gold (business class) and economy class tickets. A discount code will be distributed



Ithmaar Bank and Gulf Air officials renewing the agreement

to all Ithmaar Bank cardholders. "In line with our customer-centric approach, we aim to give our customers the greatest value possible," said Ithmaar Bank Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Banking Group, Abdul Hakeem Al Mutawa.

"We are continuing this activity with one of the Kingdom's premier banking institutions for the third consecutive year," said Gulf Air Deputy Chief Executive Officer Captain Waleed Abdulhameed Al Alawi.

**Karak Break!**



MOHAMED ISA

## The 30-Minutes Promise!

In 2016, I moved my business email from Yahoo! to Microsoft Office 365. A friend of mine helped me set up the email including my email signature because I had no clue how to do it. After a while, I wanted to update my signature, so I went to the email settings to do so. I struggled and scrambled without any success. I searched the "Help" pages. I went to YouTube. I visited Unofficial Help Forums by 365 users. Again, no progress. I wasted so much time on this task. It was frustrating.

It was time to contact Microsoft Support Center. Using its App on my iPhone, I clicked on "Support" and then filled a simple form with two fields: "Tell us more about your problem here" and "Phone Number." When I clicked "Submit," this delightful message showed up: "Your support ticket has been created. An agent will call you within 30 minutes!" I was delighted because Microsoft will resolve my issue soon. A "real" person will speak to me to guide me through the process. How fantastic is that!

I received the call within only 17 minutes! Microsoft honored its promise of calling me within 30 minutes. This is what I call service speed and reliability. Can you imagine how many service tickets they receive globally? It must be in the thousands, and yet, they are successful in keeping this promise regardless of your time zone.

It was Rona on the line. She asked me to visit a website to begin the "Remote Assistance Support from Microsoft." And then she provided me with a password to download a small program to enable her to see my laptop screen. After that, I started seeing a big red dot on my screen, and with that dot, Rona was guiding me through the different menu screens to update my email signature. The process was seamless. I gave Rona a five-star rating in the Feedback Form after we finished.

Have you had such an excellent service before? Or are you among the many unhappy customers who waited and waited endlessly for your service providers' help when you needed their help the most? I hear you. I feel you. And I sympathize with you. Just like you, I waited for my plumber, electrician, carpenter, mechanic and the list of broken promises goes on and on. Unfortunately, it does not stop here; it goes on to include highly educated and qualified professionals including managers, directors and sometimes Chief Executive Officers!

Honoring your promises to your customers is at the heart of service excellence. It can spell the difference between retaining them for a lifetime and losing them to your competitors. Be like Microsoft. Keep your promises!

**Mohamed Isa is an Award-Winning Speaker & Best-Selling Author. Reach him at mohamed@3dspeaking.com.**



One of the winners of Kuwait Finance House-Bahrain's 'Libshara' draw for May 2018 at its headquarters at Bahrain World Trade Centre. The May 2018 winners included Rabab Husain Ahmed who won the grand prize of \$50,000; Ali Mohamed Burshaid and Mohamed Khalifa Albenjasim who each won a cash prize of \$10,000; Yusuf Ebrahim Aljasim and Abdulrahman Yusuf Albaloooshi, both won a cash prize of \$5,000 each. Eighty winners also received various other cash prizes for other categories and segments. The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism and in the presence of Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani, Deputy Head of Retail Banking Group at KFH-Bahrain along with several officials from the bank. The 'Libshara' campaign will reward winners with luxury apartments located at Marrasi Al Bahrain, a leading project in Diyar Al Muharraq. An additional 85 winners will benefit from monthly prizes worth \$140,000

## Big tech firms agree on 'data portability'

AFP | San Francisco

Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Twitter unveiled plans Friday to make it easier for users to take their personal data and leave one online service for another.

The "Data Transfer Project" revealed by the companies responds to concerns about the growing influence of internet platforms and internet user concerns about control of their personal information shared online.

"Users should be in control of their data on the web, part of this is the ability to move their data," the companies said on the project website.

## Turkish bizman to face UK extradition hearing

Reuters | Ankara

Exiled Turkish businessman Akin Ipek will face an extradition hearing in Britain in September, the British interior ministry has said, following his arrest in relation to a Turkish request to extradite him.

Ipek built a multi-billion-dollar fortune in Turkey based on gold mining but left the country in 2015 after relations between the government and followers of US-based Islamic cleric Fethullah Gulen soured. Ankara now accuses Gulen, a former ally, of orchestrating a 2016 failed coup attempt and has carried out a widespread crackdown targeting his alleged followers.

# Dubai hits rough patch as markets slump

● Residential property prices have dropped by more than 15pc since late 2014 and are still falling

● The stock market is down 13pc this year, the worst performance in the region

Reuters | Dubai

In Dubai's posh Jumeirah Beach Residence district, luxury apartment rents are down about 15 percent from a year ago - a sign, some fear, that the wealthy emirate's recipe for economic success is getting stale.

For over two decades, Dubai prospered as one of the world's most international cities, attracting people and capital from across the globe.

Nine years ago, it needed a \$20 billion bailout from Abu Dhabi to escape a debt crisis caused by collapsing property prices. Dubai's economy roared back and has grown by a third since then, buoyed by foreign trade, tourism and its status as the main regional hub for business services.

Now, however, Dubai is hitting another rough patch. Residential property prices have dropped by more than 15 percent since late 2014 and are still falling. The stock market is down 13 percent this year, the worst



The property market falls may be temporary, the result of an economic slowdown in the Gulf caused by low oil prices

performance in the region. Dubai issued 4,722 new business licenses in the second quarter of 2018, down 26 percent from the same period in 2016, the year when new licenses peaked.

The falls may be temporary, the result of an economic slowdown in the Gulf caused by low oil prices. But other figures suggest some of Dubai's traditional growth engines are losing steam, which could mean a long-term slump.

Growth in passenger traffic through Dubai's international airport has fallen to near zero this year, after 15 years of strong increases. Increasingly long-range aircraft may loosen Dubai's dominance as a travel hub connecting Asia and Europe.

Official data shows Dubai's population continuing to expand, by 3.5 percent to 3.08 million in the first half of 2018. But most growth in recent years has been in lower-paid construction and services jobs, not in higher-paid white-collar posts.

"Perhaps the era when one could move to Dubai to make one's wealth is passing," said Hasnain Malik, Dubai-based global head of equity research and strategy at Exotix Capital.

He said the city was increasingly attractive as a base for rich people from around the world who wished to enjoy their wealth.

But it is not clear that Dubai's transport industries and business zones can continue grow-

ing fast enough to attract, and retain, the number of foreign white-collar workers needed to support demand in its real estate market, Malik said.

### Challenges

Economists see little risk of another financial crisis; after restructuring billions of dollars of debt, Dubai's state-linked companies are less leveraged than they were a decade ago.

Nor has headline economic growth slowed greatly. International Monetary Fund officials have estimated gross domestic product will expand over 3 percent this year.

"The emirate continues to attract businesses and investors as a competitive hub for sustaina-



For over two decades, Dubai prospered as one of the world's most international cities, attracting people and capital from across the globe

ble business development," Dubai's Department of Economic Development said in a statement this week, adding that licensing figures showed "continued investment in all vital economic sectors in Dubai".

But much of this year's growth is due to a big rise in state spending as Dubai builds infrastructure to host the Expo 2020 world's fair; its 2018 budget soared 19.5 percent from 2017 to a record 56.6 billion dirhams (\$15.4 billion). The government cannot keep boosting spending at that speed indefinitely.

Jim Krane, energy fellow at Rice University in Texas and author of "City of Gold: Dubai and the Dream of Capitalism", said the emirate faced structural challenges including an increasingly tough geopolitical environment.

## Islamic insurers net income falls but sector will stay profitable

TDI | Manama

Thought the net income of listed companies in the Islamic (takaful and Islamic cooperative tawuni) insurance sector in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), has nearly halved in 2017 to \$375 million, from \$674 million in 2016, the sector will stay profitable in 2018, S&P Global said in a report yesterday.

The decline in 2017 net income was mainly driven by weaker results in the Saudi Arabian insurance sector and follows an increase in earnings by about 151 per cent in 2016, indicating some considerable earnings volatility in the sector, the report said.

"The Islamic insurance sector continues to face secular challenges around relatively concentrated and undifferentiated business models and high expense ratios that leave them susceptible to adverse event risk related to solvency, governance, and accountancy. That said, we believe that medium-term growth prospects in the sector remain satisfactory given relatively low penetration levels, and we expect Islamic insurance to remain profitable overall in 2018," the report said.

### Earnings volatility

Earnings volatility remains a key challenge for Islamic insurers in the region, the report said.

The publicly listed Islamic insurers in the GCC generated an

estimated net income of \$375 million in 2017, compared with about \$674 million in 2016 and \$269 million in 2015, the report said.

The Saudi Arabian market, which contributes about 85 per cent of total GPW, has been the main source of earnings volatility in recent years.

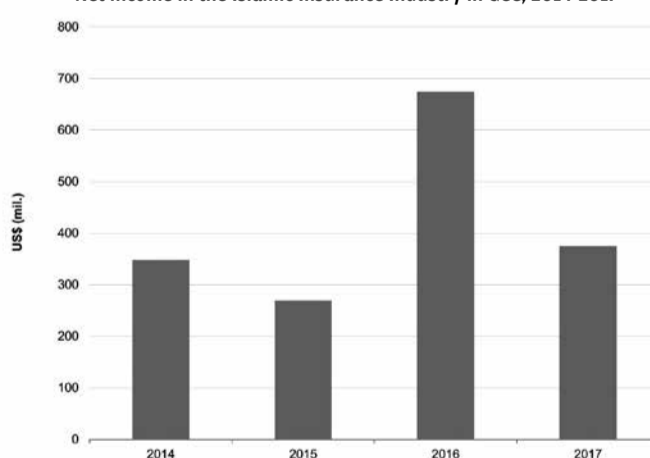
While net income in 2016 grew significantly due to rate increases as a result of stricter application of actuarial pricing, 2017 results dropped materially.

"This was because of additional reserving needs at the largest insurer, and high bad debt provisions at the fourth-largest insurer," the report said.

"First-quarter 2018 also shows a year-on-year drop in net income of 63 per cent, suggesting that this might be another challenging year. In contrast, the Islamic insurance industry in GCC countries outside Saudi Arabia recorded an increase in net income by about 832 per cent to \$82 million in 2017 from US\$9 million in 2016, and an increase of more than 60 per cent in first-quarter 2018 compared with the same period last year," the report said.

"This improvement was mainly driven by better results in the UAE (the second-largest Islamic insurance market in the GCC contributing about 8 per cent of total GPW), as Salama generated a net profit of US\$10 million in

Net income in the Islamic Insurance Industry in GCC, 2014-2017



Source: S&P Global Ratings

### Key takeaways

- Net income for the Islamic insurance sector in the GCC dropped by about 44% in 2017, with flat GPW growth and a small increase in shareholders' equity
- Overall, net income in 2017 and first-quarter 2018 declined mainly due to materially weaker results in the Saudi Arabian insurance sector
- The overall Islamic sector in the GCC to remain profitable this year, but pressure on rates as well as lower consumer spending and challenges to collect VAT for policies written in 2017 and extending into 2018 could result in a further decline in net earnings this year.
- Credit conditions in the industry may weaken, if slow premium growth persists

2017 against a net loss of US\$48 million in 2016. Year-on-year earnings of Islamic insurers in other GCC countries remained

broadly flat in 2017," the report said.

"While we expect the Islamic insurance sector in the GCC

to remain profitable overall in 2018, there are a number of factors that may affect insurers' profitability in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and therefore the overall results," the report said.

"First, underwriting profits are lower in Saudi Arabia and the UAE because insurers apply no claims and other discounts to motor policies to gain or maintain market share.

"Second, insurers in Saudi Arabia have been providing additional coverage under medical policies, which may lead to weaker earnings if this business is not priced adequately.

"Third, the challenge of collecting value-added tax (VAT) from retail clients for policies written in 2017 and into 2018, as well as new accounting standards leading to higher doubtful debt provisions, could see net earnings decline further this year," the report said.

### Growth prospects

GPW growth in the Islamic insurance sector has slowed considerably over the past two years, the report said.

"It stood at slightly below \$11 billion in 2017, having remained flat year-on-year. This was despite moderate growth in some markets outside of Saudi Arabia. For example, Islamic insurers in the UAE recorded premium growth of about 15% in 2017 on the back of higher motor rates and an expansion of basic med-

ical insurance coverage in Dubai.

Industry-wide, first-quarter 2018 saw an overall decline in GPW by about 3% compared with first-quarter 2017, driven by a 3.7% drop in GPW in Saudi Arabia during that period mainly because of pressure on rates as well as slower consumer spending following the introduction of VAT in January 2018. The departure of a large number of expats from Saudi Arabia over the past year has also resulted in lower premium income.

"We anticipate that the local authorities' efforts to tackle the large number of uninsured drivers, combined with the arrival of women drivers in mid-2018 and higher rates for medical business, following the introduction of additional benefits, will support a slight pick-up in premium growth in Saudi Arabia in the medium term," the report said.

However, this may be offset in the short term by the large number of foreign workers that have already left, or will be leaving in 2018, as Saudization policies are increasingly enforced.

### Credit conditions

Total shareholders' equity in the Islamic insurance sector in the GCC improved by about 3 per cent to \$4.8 billion in 2017, from \$4.6 billion in 2016, as a number of insurers retained parts of their profits or raised additional funds through rights issues, the report said.



**Strong dollar: Japan official urges caution**

Reuters | Buenos Aires

Japan should be careful about recent remarks by US President Donald Trump on currencies and might need to convince Washington its monetary easing is not aimed at weakening the yen but beating deflation, a finance ministry official has said.

The US dollar fell the most in three weeks on Friday against a basket of six major currencies after Trump complained again about the greenback's strength and about Federal Reserve interest rate rises.

The U.S. president also lamented the strength of the dollar and accused the European Union and China of manipulating their currencies.

**Jeep boss named Fiat Chrysler CEO**

Reuters | Milan

Fiat Chrysler has named its Jeep division boss Mike Manley to take over immediately from Chief Executive Sergio Marchionne, who is seriously ill after suffering major complications following surgery.

The carmaker said British-born Manley, who also takes responsibility for the North America region, will push ahead with the mid-term strategy outlined last month by Marchionne, who had been due to step down next April. Marchionne, 66, was credited with rescuing Fiat and Chrysler from bankruptcy after taking the Italian carmaker's wheel in 2004. On Saturday he was also replaced as chairman and CEO of Ferrari and chairman of tractor maker CNH Industrial. Ferrari named FCA Chairman and Agnelli family scion John Elkann as new chairman, while board member Louis Camilleri becomes chief executive.

**Gulf stock markets end sluggish**

Al Rajhi Bank gained 0.6pc; Jabal Omar Development rose 1.6pc as the main Saudi index rose 0.2pc

Reuters | Dubai

Gulf stock markets were sluggish yesterday, with Saudi Arabia the biggest mover as investors took positions before more companies report financial results this week.

Al Rajhi Bank gained 0.6 percent and Jabal Omar Development was up 1.6 percent as the main Saudi index rose by 0.2 percent. Dubai Investments slipped by 2.5 percent while Emirates Integrated Telecommunications Co(EITC), also known as du, edged down 0.6 percent. The company on Thursday posted a 1.3 percent rise in second-quarter net profit, buoyed by an increase in fixed-line revenue. Dubai's main index dipped by 0.2 percent. Abu Dhabi National Energy (TAQA) fell 6.6 percent, having been one of



Saudi stocks were the biggest movers yesterday as traders took positions ahead of the corporate earnings reports

**Closing Bell**

SAUDI	▲ 0.2 %	8,467
DUBAI	▼ 0.2 %	2,921
ABU DHABI	▲ 0.02 %	4,771
QATAR	▼ 0.6 %	9,362
KUWAIT	▼ 0.3 %	5,336
BAHRAIN	▼ 0.2 %	1,352
OMAN	▼ 0.3 %	4,434
EGYPT	▼ 0.7 %	15,304

the strongest gainers on the Abu Dhabi bourse this year by virtue of its price more than doubling. The Abu Dhabi index was virtually flat, rising by only 0.02 percent. In Qatar, Doha Bank slumped by 5.3 percent as investors shed the stock after it posting a 75 percent slump in second-quarter profit on Thursday. Bahrain index dipped 0.2 percent to 1,352 points.

**Xi offers fresh \$295m grant to Lanka in push for dominance**

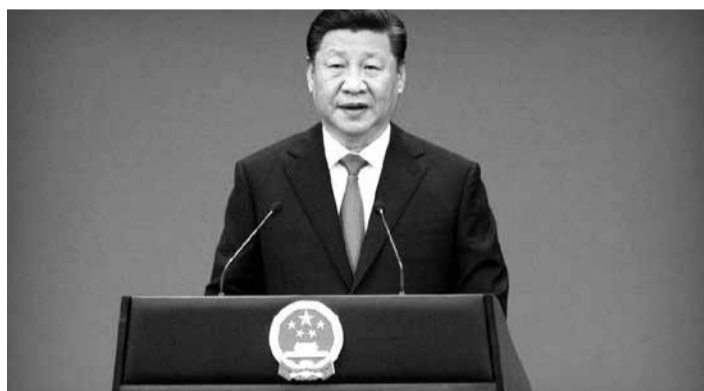
● The offer comes when a Chinese firm is facing heavy criticism for allegedly financing the last election campaign

Reuters | Colombo

Chinese President Xi Jinping has offered Sri Lanka a fresh grant of 2 billion yuan (\$295 million), as Beijing tries to expand its influence in the tiny island country off India's southern tip.

President Maithripala Sirisena of Sri Lanka, a partner in Beijing's multi-country Belt and Road infrastructure push, made the announcement on Saturday at a ceremony to mark the start of construction of a Chinese-funded kidney hospital in his home constituency of Polonnaruwa, 230 km (142.92 miles) from capital Colombo.

"When the Chinese ambassador visited my house to fix the date for this ceremony, he



Xi Jinping

said that Chinese President Xi Jinping sent me another gift," Sirisena told the gathering.

"He has gifted 2 billion yuan to be utilized for any project of my wish. I'm going to hand over a proposal to the Chinese ambassador to build houses in all the electorates in the country," he added.

Reuters could not immediately contact officials from the Chinese embassy in Sri Lanka for comment.

The grant offer comes at a time when a Chinese firm is facing heavy criticism for allegedly financing the last election campaign of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Last month, the New York Times reported that China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd (CHEC) gave \$7.6 million for Rajapaksa's re-election bid, which he lost to Sirisena in early 2015.

Rajapaksa, the Chinese embassy in Colombo and state-

When the Chinese ambassador visited my house to fix the date for this ceremony, he said that Chinese President Xi Jinping sent me another gift

MAITHRIPALA SIRISENA

owned CHEC have all denied the allegation, but Sirisena's coalition government held a parliament debate on Thursday over the report and called for an investigation into the alleged funding.

Sirisena had at the start of his term suspended most of the Chinese-backed infrastructure projects started under Rajapaksa over suspected corruption, overpricing and for flouting government procedures.

But more than a year later, the

Sirisena government allowed Chinese projects to resume after a few changes in some of them.

China was among the first countries that stepped in to help the reconstruction of Sri Lanka after a 26-year-long civil war ended in 2009.

Many of Beijing's projects, backed by loans from the Chinese government and initiated by Rajapaksa government, have faced opposition in Sri Lanka amid concerns raised by the United States, India and Japan that China might use Sri Lanka as a military base.

The 2014 docking of a Chinese navy submarine in Colombo raised an alarm in New Delhi, prompting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to boost ties with Sri Lanka and claw back influence in the Indian Ocean region.

Both the Sri Lankan government and Chinese embassy in Colombo have denied any plans to use a southern port now handled by a Chinese firm for military purpose.

**G20 calls for greater dialogue on trade tensions**

Reuters | Buenos Aires

Finance ministers and central bankers from the world's largest economies meeting in Argentina said heightened trade and geopolitical tensions risk derailing global growth and called for greater dialogue, according to a draft communique.

The weekend talks in Buenos Aires come amid an escalation in rhetoric in the trade conflict between the United States and China, the world's largest economies, which have so far slapped tariffs on \$34 billion worth of each other's goods.

U.S. President Donald Trump raised the stakes on Friday with a threat to impose tariffs on all \$500 billion of Chinese exports to the United States unless Beijing agrees to major structural changes to its technology transfer, industrial subsidy and joint venture policies.

The draft reviewed by Reuters, which is subject to revisions, noted that the global economy was growing and unemploy-



Japanese Minister of Finance Taro Aso (L) and IMF Director Christine Lagarde, pose for the family picture of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting in Buenos Aires yesterday

ment was at a decade low but warned that growth was becoming less synchronized among major economies and downside risks over the short- and medium-term had increased.

"These include rising finan-

cial vulnerabilities, heightened trade and geopolitical tensions, global imbalances, inequality and structurally weak growth, particularly in some advanced economies," the draft said.

A spokesman for Argentina's

Treasury Ministry, which coordinates the country's G20 presidency, said the ministers were still debating the communique.

The ministers reaffirmed the conclusions from G20 leaders at their most recent summit in



The weekend talks in Buenos Aires come amid an escalation in rhetoric in the trade conflict between the United States and China, the world's largest economies, which have so far slapped tariffs on \$34 billion worth of each other's goods

Hamburg last July, when they emphasized that trade was an engine of global growth and that multilateral trade agreements are important.

"We...recognise the need to step up dialogue and actions to mitigate risks and enhance confidence," the draft said. "We are working to strengthen the contribution of trade to our economies."

The draft language marked an incremental toughening from the communique issued at the previous ministerial meeting in March, which had only noted that the leaders "recognise the need for further dialogue."

EU finance chief Pierre Moscovici fired a barb at US President Donald Trump as he called on both sides of an ongoing global trade dispute to "act as allies."

The US and EU have been at loggerheads since Trump angered European allies by announcing tariffs on steel and aluminum as he launched trade restrictions targeting China in particular.

**UK to refuse Brexit bill sans trade deal**

AFP | London

Britain will only pay its EU divorce bill if the bloc agrees the framework for a future trade deal, the new Brexit Secretary warned in an interview published yesterday.

Dominic Raab, who replaced David Davis after he quit the role earlier this month in protest over the government's Brexit strategy, said "some conditionality between the two" was needed.

He added that the Article 50 mechanism used to trigger Britain's imminent exit from the European Union provided for new deal details.

"Article 50 requires, as we negotiate the withdrawal agreement, that there's a future framework for our new relationship going forward, so the two are linked," Raab told the Sunday Telegraph.

# Is rupture in Russia-Greece t...



NIKOS KONSTANDARAS

For centuries, even when Athens was a bastion of the West during the Cold War, Greece and Russia have seen themselves as natural allies. Both are Christian Orthodox nations; even as a NATO member, Greece tried to maintain channels of communication with the Soviet Union. Yet a sudden dispute over alleged Russian meddling in Greek affairs has escalated rapidly. This could have long-term consequences for Greek-Russian ties and for the Western Balkans.

This month, Athens informed Moscow that it was expelling two Russian diplomats and refusing entry to two others. Among the accusations: the four were trying stoke opposition to a recent agreement signed by Greece and a northern neighbour, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, ending a 27-year dispute over the latter's name.

Ratification by both countries would open the way for a renamed Republic of North Macedonia to join NATO and the European Union. Greek opponents of the deal object to their neighbors' use of "Macedonia" in any form, saying this implies claims on the Greek province of the same name; Macedonian nationalists object to adding a qualifier to their country's name.

It is easy to see how Russia, which is opposed to Macedonia joining NATO, could be tempted to exploit this volatile mix to encourage hard-liners on both sides. Macedonia's prime minister, Zoran Zaev, claimed in an interview with Buzz-Feed News that Greek businessmen "sympathetic to the Russian cause" paid large sums of money to foes of the deal in his country to commit acts of violence before a referendum on the agreement is held.

The Russian Foreign Ministry issued a stern protest to the Greek ambassador over the expulsions and has threatened to respond further. On July 18, a ministry spokeswoman, Maria Zakharova, declared that Greece was acting under pressure from its allies and warned that "such actions do not remain without consequences."

The Greek government reacted angrily. The Foreign Ministry in Athens declared these statements "a characteristic example of disrespect for a third country and a lack of understanding of today's world, in which states, regardless of their size, are independent and can exercise an independent, multidimensional and democratic foreign policy." It added, "In any case, the Russian authorities themselves are very well aware of what their people do."

A few days earlier, a State Department spokeswoman, Heather Nauert, tweeted: "We support Greece defending its sovereignty. Russia must end its destabilizing behavior." In Moscow's view, this alignment between Athens and Washington confirmed its suspicions of collu-

sion. Until now, Russian officials had been full of praise for Greece. In 2015, Foreign Minister Sergey V Lavrov noted Greece's opposition to sanctions against Russia. "We appreciate the stance of the Greek government, which understands the complete counterproductivity of attempts to speak this language with Russia," he said after a meeting in Moscow with his Greek counterpart, Nikos Kotzias. On July 20, the Russian Ambassador in Athens, Andrey Maslov, tweeted: "The past years were a time of an unprecedented boom in Russian-Greek relations." But, he added, "The actions of the Greek side ... have become a disappointment for us."

The Greek move was unexpected. Not only has Athens has always been careful in its dealings with Moscow, but this sudden rupture was executed by what is considered to be the most pro-Russian government Greece has had - a government that in March refused to join its Western allies in expelling Russian diplomats in retaliation for Moscow's alleged involvement in the poisoning of a former Russian double agent and his daughter in Britain.

The coalition government is dominated by the radical-left Syriza party, which opposed international sanctions imposed on Russia after its invasion of Ukraine. Its leader, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, visited Moscow for support in 2015, while threatening the European Union, the International Monetary Fund and other creditors that Greece would walk away from its



Tsipras and Putin once enjoyed a one-to-one working relationship.

Greeks and Russians have long seen themselves as natural allies. That changed this month

CIVILIAN'S TRIBUNE

## On a growth path



With the addition of 12 new routes, no doubt Bahrain International Airport will emerge one of the best airports in the region. Established as early as in 1927, in fact the first airport in the Arabian Gulf, Bahrain International Airport (BIA) has been a significant aviation hub. However, due to various reasons it could not rise to the levels of Dubai or Istanbul airports.

What makes it special is the airport's strategic location in the heart of the Gulf. Until now, BIA has served as an ideal gateway linking East and West.

Apart from the increase in the passenger numbers, the growth in cargo traffic also hints at the future economic potentials.

Abdulla Hameed



TIM BALE

Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative government in Britain is in turmoil. But the resignations that have rocked it in recent days - even that of Boris Johnson, who was until recently her obsessively ambitious foreign secretary - risk blinding us to a simple truth: The big reason May's party is in so much trouble over Brexit is that it is determined at all costs to end "the free movement of people" that, even for those European countries outside the European Union, is a condition of belonging to the bloc's single market.

Why are Britain's Conservatives so set on that course, despite the fact that access to that market is vital to the prosperity of the country they govern? Because promising to "take back control" of their country's borders gradually became the party's default response to a challenge that so many of Europe's center-right parties have been trying to deal with for a decade or more.

The rise of anti-immigrant nationalist insurgencies claiming to represent "the people" against a corrupt and uncaring political establishment has deep economic, political, social and cultural roots. Yet the reaction of the Continent's mainstream conservative, market-liberal and Christian democratic parties can be boiled down to four fairly shallow, and equally ineffective, approaches. Only if the center-right fully faces up to the fact that they are all dead ends can it begin to come up with better, more creative and probably more combative ways to deal with the challenge it's facing.

The first approach is to try to ignore the populist radical right - and even treat it as some kind of pariah. That's essentially what the Christian Democratic Union of Germany and the Moderates in Sweden did for years. In the end, it hasn't worked.

The far-right, anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany took a remarkable 13 per cent of the vote in last year's federal election. The party's rising popularity has so spooked Chancellor Angela Merkel's junior partner, Bavaria's Christian Social Union, that its leader, Horst Seehofer, recently came perilously close to resigning in protest of her sup-

posed failure to act on the matter - a resignation that might easily have brought down her government.

Meanwhile, the fact that the Sweden Democrats originated in that country's white supremacist underground didn't prevent them from gaining 13pc in the 2014 general election. Many predict they will do even better this year, even in the wake of attempts by the Swedish government to strengthen border controls.

The second approach taken by the center-right is to toughen its stance on migration and multiculturalism, promising to make life more difficult both for those who want to come to the country and for those who've already made it. Countries where the center-right has tried this include the France, the Netherlands, Denmark - and Britain.

Again, though, the results haven't exactly been impressive: The far-right National Front made it into the runoff in the 2017 French presidential election. The equally extreme Dutch Party for Freedom hasn't gone away. The Danish People's Party became Denmark's second-biggest party when it took 21% of the vote in the 2015 general election - at which point it resumed a role it had

dependent Greece nationalist party.

bailout commitments. The junior coalition partner, Independent Greece nationalist party.

# Gaining the whole w...

Just look around Europe: It's clear that ac...



May at a local school in...

already played be 2011, namely guar vival of a minority by the center-right

In Britain, the C ty's decision to try the right the UK In ty, the populist ra that under Nigel F Donald Trump) he

1803

Irish patriots throughout the country rebel against Union with Great Britain.

1829

William A. Burt patents his "typographer," an early typewriter.

1885

Ulysses S. Grant dies of throat cancer at the age of 63.



1995

Two astronomers, Alan Hale in New Mexico and Thomas Bopp in Arizona, almost simultaneously discover a comet.

# Does a good news for Balkans?



has also worked closely with United States military officials; his political contortions include denouncing the Macedonia deal while remaining in the government.

The United States has been Greece's major ally since 1947, when Washington stepped to help a right-wing government defeat Communist forces in a civil war in 1946-49. In the years after, the Greek left opposed the United States while supporting closer ties with the Soviet Union. Russia is now, by default, the antithesis to the "imperialist alliance," as Greece's small but unbending Communist Party calls the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The Communists, echoing Russian officials, saw the expulsions as Tsipras' "gift" to NATO, timed to coincide with the recent NATO summit.

Support for Russia's positions goes beyond any effort to embarrass the government or oppose the Macedonia deal. President Vladimir Putin enjoys broad support among Greeks, more than in any other European country. Greece (along with Vietnam, the Philippines and Tanzania) was one of only four countries among 37 surveyed by the Pew Research Center last year in which Putin got more than 50 per cent approval for his international performance.

This could be because he projects the image of a powerful leader who is proud of his Eastern Orthodox heritage, visiting the monastic community of Mount Athos in northern Greece and playing on deep-rooted feelings in his own country and here. During the nearly four centuries of

**Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, visited Moscow for support in 2015, while threatening the European Union, the International Monetary Fund and other creditors that Greece would walk away from its bailout commitments.**

subjugation to Ottoman rule, Greeks yearned for liberation and many saw Russia as their salvation. Although these expectations were usually disappointed, Russia has often played a crucial role in Greek history.

Major milestones included a 1774 treaty under which Russia assumed the right to protect all Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. This allowed Greek merchants and shipowners to fly the Russian flag, thus escaping Ottoman taxes and expanding their wealth and influence. In 1821, when the Greek War of Independence broke out, the Greek Orthodox patriarch was hanged by the Turks and his body thrown into the Bosphorus; when it resurfaced unexpectedly, Greeks took it to Russia, to the city of Odessa, where it was afforded a grand funeral in the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1827, a combined British, French and Russian fleet destroyed an Ot-

toman-Egyptian fleet at Navarino, leading to the declaration of an independent Greece after years of struggle.

More recently, the relationship has been more complicated — with Soviet support and then abandonment of Communist forces in the civil war, with Russia's intricate economic and political relationship with Cyprus, with the current marriage of convenience between Moscow and Ankara. There is also a strong ethnic-religious current that influences politics in both Greece and Russia.

The question now is, what prompted a Greek government with pro-Moscow sympathies to take such drastic action? Was it because of fears of violence over the Macedonia issue, as suggested by the claims of Zaev, the Macedonian prime minister? Was it because foreign meddling with the fires of nationalism in Greece could harm the government's prospects in elections that must be held by autumn 2019? Were the expulsions a way of declaring allegiance to the United States?

In any case, this unexpected turn of events could lead — despite Athens's protestations to the contrary — to a re-evaluation of Greece's relations with Russia. The result could be Athens playing a more prominent role in stabilizing the western Balkans, and aligning itself more fully with European Union policies rather than deferring to Russia's concerns and interests.

(Nikos Konstandaras, a columnist at the newspaper Kathimerini, is a contributing opinion writer.)

ts, is a hard-right Minister Panos Kammenos, while its leader, Defense an outspoken supporter of Moscow,

# World while losing one's soul

Accommodating radical nationalists is a losing proposition



London...the government in turmoil.

disagreements within her own party, even that might not be enough.

The third approach takes this kind of support arrangement to the next level. Since the turn of the century, center-right parties in Italy and Austria have been periodically involved in full-blown coalition with populist radical-right parties, at least partly in the hope that doing so would expose the latter as blowhards incapable of delivering on their ramped-up rhetoric. The results? Policies on migration and multiculturalism have grown ever tougher without doing much — at least in the long term — to dent the standing of the populists.

Last year saw the Austrian People's Party, nominally Christian democrats, obliged to invite their radical competitors, the Freedom Party, into government for the second time. And the policy consequences are now becoming clear: The state has been empowered to seize cash and cellphones from asylum-seekers and is planning to reduce welfare benefits to migrants who don't pass language tests and to ban girls under 10 from wearing headscarves. In Italy, Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia finished this year's general election behind La Lega, whose leader, Matteo Salvini, is now the country's interior

**The rise of anti-immigrant nationalist insurgencies claiming to represent "the people" against a corrupt and uncaring political establishment has deep economic, political, social and cultural roots.**

minister and the man responsible for Italy's recent refusal to allow boats carrying desperate asylum-seekers to dock in its ports.

The fourth and last approach is the most radical of all. Rather than trying to isolate, borrow from or govern together with a populist radical-right insurgency, a center-right party actually turns itself into one. This is effectively what has happened in Hungary, where Viktor Orbán's Fidesz has over the past decade transmogrified from an apparently market-friendly mainstream party into an ultranationalist cham-

pion of closed borders and "illiberal democracy."

Has it worked? Well, only up to a point. In Hungary, in spite of Orbán's efforts (or who knows, partly because it has shifted the system's center of gravity so far to the right) Jobbik, which is still very much a far-right party notwithstanding recent attempts to render itself more respectable, nonetheless took 19% of the vote in 2018 — down just 1% from its best ever showing four years previously. And there has been a pretty high price to pay.

So, trying to beat a radical right-wing populist insurgency by becoming one — or for that matter, by adopting its agenda and even inviting it into government — turns out to be a fool's errand. Just as important, it also has a huge ethical, as well as economic, cost. As the Bible puts it, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" That's a question that Europe's center-right politicians (and maybe their Republican counterparts in the United States, too) seriously need to ask themselves, and soon.

(Tim Bale is a professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London.)



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



I wish I could describe this feeling right now... What a day, true proof that you should never give up!! The team did such a great job as they always do, I can't thank them enough! I kept the belief and it came true. A big, big thanks to God.

@LewisHamilton

02



Democrats demand to read 1-7 MILLION pages of Kavanaugh's past documents before a hearing, but felt no need to read a few thousand pages before passing Obamacare? Logical? No, laughable.

@GovMikeHuckabee

03



While I am glad that the Regional Cancer Centre in Thiruvananthapuram will be upgraded to a State Cancer Institute, the Govt failed to respond to my query on converting the RCC into a National Cancer Institute

@ShashiTharoor

04



We bet on the heavy rain that never came. Still good fun and battles on the first part of the race and now full focus on Budapest next week. Thanks Germany! Always a special GP

@alo\_oficial

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

WORLD  
world**Pakistan candidate gets life term in drug case days before poll**

AFP | Islamabad

A candidate for the party of Pakistan's ousted former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has been jailed for life by an anti-narcotics court, just days before a general election.

Hanif Abbasi, seen as a strong candidate for the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) in Wednesday's poll, was sentenced in a rare late-night session Saturday.

**Japan heatwave kills over a dozen, 12,000 rushed to hospital**

AFP | Tokyo

Japan's severe heatwave killed at least 15 people and sent more than 12,000 to hospital in the first two weeks of July, official figures show as the temperature neared 40 degrees C (104 F) in many cities on Sunday.

Twelve people died of heatstroke in the week ending July 15 after three perished in the preceding week, according to latest data.

More than 9,900 people were rushed to hospital during the week to mid-July, jumping from 2,700 in the previous week, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency said.

**Death toll in Vietnam flooding rises to 19**

AFP | Hanoi

Flash floods in Vietnam have now claimed at least 19 lives, the government said Sunday, as residents in affected areas sought safety in higher ground.

Boasting a long coastline, tropical Vietnam is battered by floods and storms every year, with hundreds of lives lost from the annual monsoon barrage.

**25 injured in Iran earthquakes**

AFP | Tehran

A series of moderate earthquakes in southern and western Iran injured an estimated 25 people, state television said.

Two quakes struck a remote region near the town of Lar in the southern Hormozgan province shortly after 0500 GMT, according to the US Geological Survey.

**Kabul airport attack leaves 14 dead**

VP Abdul Rashid Dostum was unharmed after blast hits an area near the airport shortly after his arrival

AFP | Kabul

A suicide bomber killed at least 14 people and wounded 60 at the entrance to Kabul international airport on Sunday, officials said, as scores gathered to welcome home Afghan Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum from exile.

Senior government officials, political leaders and supporters were leaving the airport after greeting the powerful ethnic Uzbek leader and former warlord when the explosion happened.

"This is the first time I have seen a suicide attack," one witness told AFP.

"People were collecting human flesh with their hands," he said, shaking as he spoke. "What is going on in Afghanistan?"

Dostum, clad in a Western suit and sunglasses and travelling in an armoured vehicle, was unharmed, said his spokesman Bashir Ahmad Tayanj.

Kabul Police spokesman Hashmat Stanikzai said 14 people had been killed and 60 wounded, adding that nine members of the security forces and traffic police were among the dead.

The suicide bomber was on foot, interior ministry spokesman Najib Danish said, adding



Afghan security forces help an injured colleague after a suicide attack in Kabul

that civilians, including a child, and security force members were among the casualties.

Dostum, who is linked to a catalogue of human rights abuses in Afghanistan, was mobbed like a celebrity as he left the chartered plane from Turkey, where he has lived since May 2017.

His return, which has been the subject of much speculation, comes amid violent protests in several provinces across northern Afghanistan, his traditional power base.

Thousands of Dostum's supporters have taken to the streets in recent weeks, shuttering election and government offices and blocking sections of highways to demand the release of a pro-government militia leader and call for Dostum's return.

Expectations of the return did little to quell the unrest, with protesters vowing Sunday to continue demonstrating until the burly leader of the Uzbek ethnic minority tells them otherwise.

"We don't trust the government. We will continue our protests unless General Dostum tells us to stop," Ehsanullah Qowanch, a protest leader in Faryab province, told AFP.

Qowanch also repeated calls for the release of Nezamuddin Qaisari -- a district police chief and Dostum's provincial representative in Faryab -- whose arrest earlier this month ignited the protests.

Another protester, Massoud Khan, said: "We have been on

the streets for 20 days now. We are not going to stop our protests unless our demands are met."

Observers say President Ashraf Ghani, an ethnic Pashtun, gave the green light for Dostum to come home to stabilise the north and secure Uzbek support before next year's presidential election, which he is widely expected to contest.

Dostum left Afghanistan in May 2017 after he was accused of organising the rape and torture of a political rival.



A survivor of Afghanistan's 30 years of war and known for making and breaking alliances, Dostum is the self-styled leader of the Uzbek minority in a country where ethnic loyalty has become a key force

**Israel evacuates 800 White Helmets**

White Helmet volunteers have rescued thousands of civilians caught up in fighting in the Syrian conflict

AFP | Amman

Israel has evacuated 800 White Helmets rescuers and their family members threatened by advancing Syrian regime forces to Jordan for resettlement in Britain, Canada and Germany, Amman said yesterday.

Founded in 2013, the Syria Civil Defence, or White Helmets, is a network of first responders which rescues the wounded in the aftermath of air strikes, shelling or explosions in rebel-held territory.

Jordan "authorised the United Nations to organise the passage of 800 Syrian citizens through Jordan to be resettled in western countries," foreign ministry spokesman Mohammed al-Kayed said.

"The government gave the permission after Britain, Germany and Canada made a legally binding undertaking to resettle them within a specified period of time due to 'a risk to their lives'."

An Israeli government source confirmed Israel's military had rescued 800 people who were taken to Jordan.

**Thai boys rescued from cave to be ordained in Buddhist ceremony**

AFP | Mae Sai, Thailand

Most members of the Thai youth football team rescued from a flooded cave will have their heads shaved, don robes and be ordained in a Buddhist ceremony this week, officials said yesterday.

The "Wild Boars" are enjoying their first few days home after being discharged from hospital and speaking to the media about their harrowing ordeal inside the Tham Luang cave near the Myanmar border.

The 12 boys, aged 11 to 16, and their coach went into the cave complex on June 23 after practice and were trapped by floods from monsoon rains.

They survived on water dripping from rocks for nine days before being found emaciated on a muddy ledge by rescue divers, who helped extract the team a week later in a risky mission.

All made a speedy and surprising recovery after a week in hospital, and on their first day out they prayed for good fortune in a traditional ceremony and mourned a former Thai navy SEAL who died during the rescue efforts.



Some of the 12 Thai boys who were dramatically rescued from deep inside a cave after being trapped for more than a fortnight, bow before novice Buddhist monks during a religious ceremony at a temple in Chiang Rai

Now they will go a step further and spend time living in a monastery before returning to normal life, a common practice in Buddhist-majority countries like Thailand.

"They will ordain for nine days," Prachon Pratsakul, the Chiang Rai governor, told reporters in a briefing at the Mae Sai district office.

"There will be about 11 boys ordained as novices and one ordained as a monk which is Coach Ek," he said, referring to Ekkapol Chantawong, who has

already been in the monkhood and was said to have helped keep the boys calm inside the cave.

Praphun Khomjoi, Chiang Rai's Buddhist office chief, said that the "Wild Boars" will have their heads shaved on July 24 and attend a robe ceremony the next day.

They will then stay in different monasteries until leaving August 4.

One of the children, Adul Sam-on, will not join them as he is Christian, the governor said.

# One dead in LA hostage drama

Gunman surrendered after a woman was killed in the supermarket shooting

AFP | Los Angeles

A gunman took hostages inside a supermarket in Los Angeles on Saturday after a gun battle with police, leaving a store employee dead before the suspect handcuffed himself and surrendered, police said.

The drama began at another location when a man became "involved in a family dispute which resulted in him shooting his grandmother and a female," Sergeant Barry Montgomery told journalists.

"That suspect fled the location in his grandmother's vehicle, taking that female victim with him," and eventually entered a Trader Joe's supermarket in the Silver Lake neighbourhood, he said.

While police chased him, the suspect "fired on officers multiple times" before an "additional gun battle" outside the Trader Joe's, Los Angeles Police Chief Michel Moore told reporters.

"Inside the store a young woman was shot and killed,"



Police officers and members of the Los Angeles Fire Department escort a woman on a stretcher after a suspect barricaded inside a Trader Joe's supermarket in Silverlake, Los Angeles

Moore said, adding that officers rescued her but she could not be revived.

There were contradictory reports about whether the victim, whom US media identified as store employee Melyda Corado, was shot by the gunman or in the crossfire with the police.

The gunman took "numerous victims, of citizens as well as store employees, hostage," the chief said.

Officers freed some workers and customers, while the hostage-taker released others himself.

About three hours after the ordeal began, negotiations led to the man "handcuffing himself and coming outside and surrendering to SWAT officers," the police chief said.

During the earlier shootout the suspect was wounded in the arm, Mayor Eric Garcetti said.

The incident injected chaos -- and scores of police and fire vehicles -- into the busy commercial area of shops and apartment buildings.

'Bullets flying everywhere'

Don Kohles was standing outside the store when the suspect's car slammed into a pole.

Then Kohles heard two shots. He ran into the exit door of the Trader Joe's, looked back at the street and saw two police officers shooting at a man, he said.

## Trump aide's 'Russia ties' alleged in secret US documents

AFP | Washington

The FBI believed that a former Trump campaign advisor had ties to Russia as it sought to influence the 2016 US presidential election, top secret documents released to US news organizations revealed on Saturday.

The October, 2016 application to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court named Carter Page, a former foreign policy advisor to the campaign of Donald Trump, according to the documents which The New York Times published.

## Dozens injured in police clashes at Nepal healthcare protest

AFP | Kathmandu

Dozens of protesters in Nepal have been injured in clashes with police at a demonstration in support of a hunger-striking doctor seeking better healthcare in the impoverished Himalayan country.

Thousands took to the streets in solidarity with Dr Govinda KC, who has been on a hunger strike for nearly a month demanding reforms in the medical sector and education.

Protestors from Nepal Tarun Dal, the youth wing of the opposition party Nepali Congress, were injured when police fired multiple rounds of teargas and used batons as they entered a restricted area near the parliament in capital Kathmandu.

# Thousands swim between continents in famed Istanbul race

AFP | Istanbul

Thousands of people, some serious racers but others plucky amateurs, swam from Asia to Europe across the Bosphorus Strait in Istanbul yesterday in Turkey's most iconic swimming race.

About 2,400 swimmers took part in the Samsung Bosphorus Cross-Continental Swim, organised by the Turkish Olympic Committee, for the 30th race since the tradition began in 1989.

The event is hugely popular, with only a limited quota for international swimmers, who snatched up all their available places in less than half an hour after registration opened, organisers said. Swimmers came from 55 different countries.

The competitors were taken by one of Istanbul's famous ferries to the start of the race on the Asian side of the city in the shoreside district of Kalinka.

When the race began they moved off the ferry onto a pontoon to dive -- or for the more nervous jump -- into the waters of the Bosphorus that divides Europe and Asia.

From there it was a tough 6.5-kilometre (four-mile) swim in the direction of the Sea of



Known in Turkish as Bogazici (the Strait), it links the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara and, with the Dardanelles Strait (in Canakkale), separates Europe from Asia. It is a former river valley which was drowned by the sea at the end of the Tertiary period

Marmara to Kurucesme on the European side of the city, close to the first bridge to span the Strait which is now named after the victims of the July 15, 2016 failed coup.

### Navigating the current

The Bosphorus is usually thronged with oil tankers, cargo ships and ferries making it one of the most choked shipping lanes in the world.



Swimmers jump in the Bosphorous river as they take part in the Bosphorus Cross Continental Swim event

But the Strait was closed to traffic for the duration of the race, allowing swimmers an uninhibited passage across the waters, which were dotted with individual swimmers and the white crests in their wake.

The current pushes swimmers towards their destination, but good navigation is key because if they lose their way the swimmers risk being swept away and missing the finish.

A team of rescue boats kept a careful eye on the progress of the swimmers.

"The hardest thing is the current," said swimmer Viktoria Reshetilova, one of many from Russia, which formed the largest foreign contingent.

"The toughest part is not to be swept away and miss the finish. The best is being part of a movement."

Osman Sirin, a Turkish

46-year-old, expressed pride at the finish.

"The most difficult were the waves, especially during the last two kilometres. The best thing is being here now!"

The fastest swimmer was Turkish Cypriot Dogukan Ulac, who swam the 6.5 kilometres in just 46 minutes and 58 seconds.

The fastest woman was Hilal Zeynep Sarac, who finished in 50 minutes and 30 seconds.

# Inflatable 'Trump Chicken' to sail off coast of San Francisco

The Hill | Washington

A 33-foot tall inflatable blimp depicting President Trump as a chicken will set sail on Sunday off the coast of San Francisco.

The chicken is dressed in black-and-white prison strips and labeled "Prisoner 45," the Bay Area KRON 4 News reported Saturday.

The Trump Chicken reportedly first made its debut last year during the San Francisco Tax March and even came to the



The inflatable 'Trump Chicken' dressed as a prisoner

White House in February.

Most recently the Trump Chicken was spotted on an "Alcatraz Prison Transport" boat floating around the infamous prison island complex.

A GoFundMe page was established to help raise money for the chicken's adventures and cover the cost of rental boats.

Earlier this month, a 20-foot inflatable "Trump Baby Blimp" made its debut in the United Kingdom during Trump's visit.

The orange diaper-clad baby holding a cell phone flew over

London and Edinburgh.

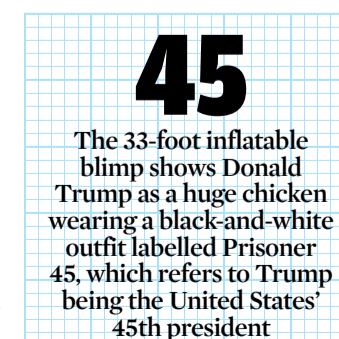
British museums are now bat-

ling over which will get to add the blimp to its collection.

New Jersey activist Didier Jimenez-Castro has raised more than \$23,000 in an effort to fly the "Trump baby" blimp over Trump's Bedminster, N.J., golf course, where he regularly spends his weekends.

Another fundraiser was launched to bring the "Baby Blimp" to Washington, D.C., during Trump's military parade.

A 15-foot inflatable "Trump Rat" also appeared in Washington in 2017.



# WORLD

## features

# Young, rich and ambitious: Nigeria's 'gentleman farmers'



Co-founder Olisaeloka Peter Okocha Jr stands inside a screen house used for aeroponics agriculture at the PS Nutrac Farm in Wasinmi, near Abeokuta. -AFP photo

*Okocha cut his teeth in his family's shipping and logistics business, then decided to forge his own path. He identified Nigeria's agricultural sector as one of enormous potential where he can make the most impact. Today, he is a pioneer in hydroponics*

AFP| Abeokuta, Nigeria

“Come, I’ll show you what a potential billion dollars looks like,” said P.J. Okocha, opening the door of a small, modern house in southern Nigeria to reveal a thousand yam seedlings.

“These thousand plants can make three million seeds,” he said, with a broad smile.

At just 34, Peter Okocha Junior -- also known as P.J. -- is a high achiever.

Okocha cut his teeth in his family's shipping and logistics business, then decided to forge his own path.

He identified Nigeria's agricultural sector as one of enormous potential where he can make the most impact. Today, he is a pioneer in hydroponics.

“I always knew I wanted to invest in agriculture but I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do,” he told AFP.

“One day, I saw an agro-researcher on Twitter. I contacted him, and said, ‘Hey bro, let's change the world together.’”

His pitch hit home. In a few months, their company PS Nutrac was born.

Two years later, tens of thousands of yam plants grow without soil, suspended in water in special greenhouses -- a cutting-edge agricultural technique rarely seen in developing countries.

One afternoon in June, young PS Nutrac employees were training a group of old local farmers on a new organic variety of yam.

Farming communities have been gutted by an exodus of



**Nigeria, which is home to more than 180 million people, is under pressure to produce more food. By 2050, it is expected to become the third most populous country in the world**

young people for big cities to carve out a living, said Chief Awufe Ademola, who is in his 60s and owns eight acres (3.2 hectares) of land.

In rows before him, the old farmers sat with curved backs and calloused hands.

“With the average age of the African farmer hovering just above 60 years of age, it's imperative for the new generation to delve into farming,” said Okocha.

“Nobody wants to do the conventional standing in the hot sun, and sweating and labour that comes out with that, therefore to combine it with data, technology and automatization, it makes it more attractive.”

### Food challenge

Nigeria, which is home to more than 180 million people, is under pressure to produce more food. By 2050, it is expected to become the third most populous country in the world.

After the discovery of oil in

commercial quantities in the 1950s, Nigeria's prosperous agricultural sector suffered a precipitous decline as successive leaders and investors switched focus entirely.

Decades have passed and with the collapse of the railway network, agricultural goods now have to be transported by truck on crumbling roads.

There are not enough storage sheds; those that exist are mostly not refrigerated; and there are few processing plants.

That means huge amounts of produce go to waste in a country so fertile it can grow everything from avocados to cashews to corn.

For example, about four million tonnes of citrus fruits are

produced annually, according to US Department of Agriculture figures for 2009.

But up to 60 percent goes to waste before getting to the final consumers in urban centres.

Meanwhile, Nigeria imports 315 million dollars (270 million euros) of orange concentrate a year, the bulk of national consumption.

“Opportunities in agriculture are beyond the imagination,” said Buffy Okeke-Ojiudu, the proud owner of a 200-hectare (495-acre) palm oil plantation in the southeast.

“The future billionaires in Nigeria will be people investing in agriculture, tech and renewable energy, which are sectors that can create employment,

not like the oil sector,” said the 34-year-old, whose grandfather was Nigeria's first minister of agriculture.

### Starting from scratch

Making farming profitable is not easy, though.

The main problem for businesses is access to bank loans, which attract high rates of interest compared to other countries in the region.

“Access to finance is a big issue,” Okeke-Ojiudu said, adding that banks ask for large amounts of collateral and charge double-digit interest rates for agriculture ventures.

“So today, the people who are investing in this sector are already wealthy, already con-

nected.”

Okeke-Ojiudu was educated in the United States and England. Seyi Oyenuga also spent most of his life between Chicago and Washington before coming to his father's homeland.

Three years ago, he swapped life in the construction sector to settle in Oyo, southwest Nigeria, and started a farm.

On the four-hour drive from Okocha's farm, women pound dried cassava along the road.

Nearly all the farms surrounding the sleepy villages have been abandoned.

### Farming revival

But a farming revival is taking place at Oyenuga's Atman Farm, where he is busy repairing tractors to plough the cassava fields.

“We have to use old-generation tractors because people here only know how to operate them,” he said, dressed in a John Deere cap, blue gingham shirt and a keffiyeh around his neck.

Oyenuga learned everything from scratch, including how to negotiate with local leaders to acquire property deeds, to teach employees the metric system and how to use tractors.

“We learned the hard way,” he said, speaking under a relentless sun after fixing up the tractors side by side with his staff.

This year, he hopes to plant cassava on 400 hectares -- five times the area of his first harvest last year.

It is just the start. Ultimately, he wants to cultivate 2,000 hectares within 10 years.

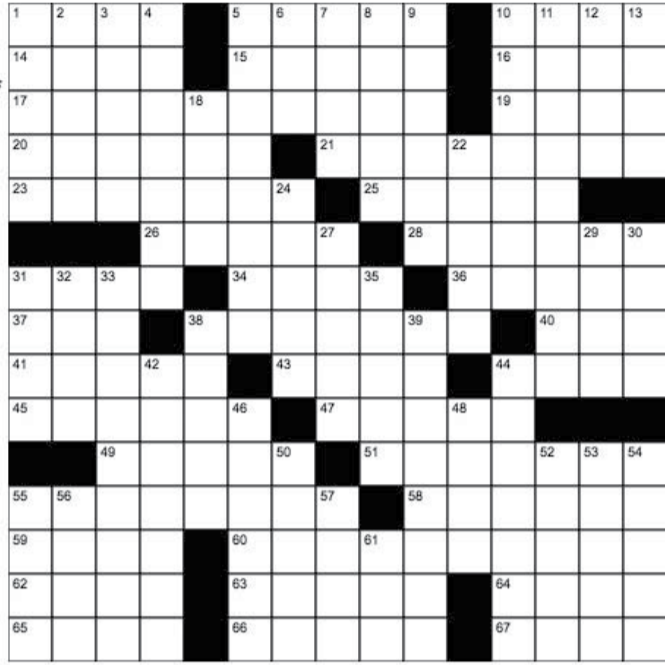
“It's really been exciting, I've been able to do things that I've never imagined or thought were possible,” he added.



Co-founder Olisaeloka Peter Okocha Jr (R) and Chief Agronomist Gbolahan Folarin (L) are seen investigating newly cultivated yam seedlings at the PS Nutrac Farm, in Wasinmi, near Abeokuta. - AFP photo

# entertainment

## CROSSWORD



### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



62- Put \_\_\_ on it!; 63- "Oklahoma!" aunt; 64- Enter; 65- Neat; 66- Stony gray; 67- Ballpark figs.;

### Across

1- Latin love; 5- Quick and active; 10- Auto loan figs.; 14- Hawaii's state bird; 15- Dog-\_\_\_ (like some used books); 16- Period; 17- Paddle wheel; 19- "Star Trek" role; 20- Title of reverence for God; 21- Surprised; 23- Snake; 25- \_\_\_ a time; 26- Provide; 28- Feel deep sadness; 31- Fly like an eagle; 34- Building wings; 36- How some losses are shown; 37- Belief; 38- Soon; 40- "\_\_\_ tu" (Verdi aria); 41- Dens; 43- Travel on; 44- Highland hillside; 45- Potentate; 47- Bird of prey; 49- Curved moldings; 51- Wurst; 55- Stop progressing; 58- Followed; 59- Step; 60- Outline;

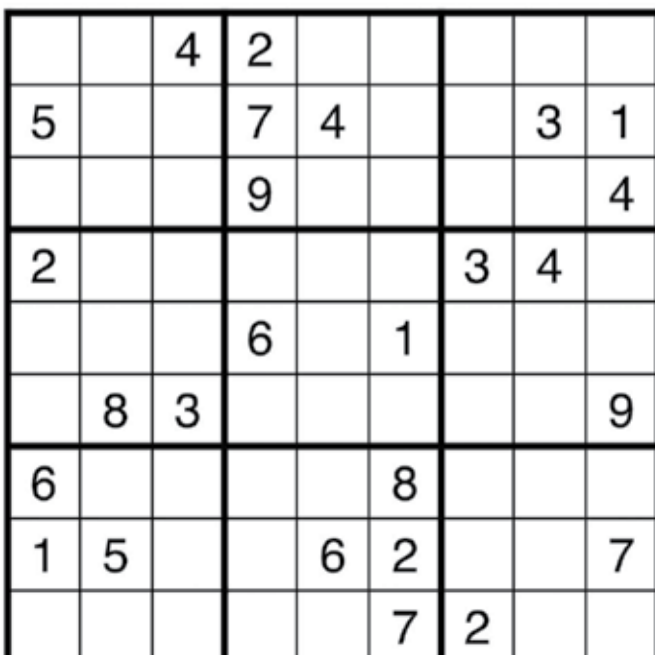
### Down

1- Nobelist Sadat; 2- Gettysburg general; 3- Successful; 4- Go in again; 5- Perplex; 6- College cheer; 7- Angers; 8- Take care of; 9- "Constant Craving" singer; 10- Refrain voluntarily; 11- Poultryman; 12- Dominion; 13- Poker variety; 18- Shower; 22- Outfit anew; 24- Swiss mathematician; 27- "Dallas" matriarch; 29- Aloe \_\_\_; 30- "What I Am" singer Brickell; 31- Immature herring; 32- Anthem opener; 33- Protein building block; 35- Fountain treats; 38- Ruhr Valley city; 39- Denying; 42- Shaggy; 44- Assail; 46- Tantalizes; 48- Island feast; 50- Motionless; 52- Choir section; 53- Understand?; 54- Utopias; 55- Petty quarrel; 56- Anklebones; 57- Ms. Fitzgerald; 61- Worked (up);

## BEETLE BAILEY



## 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

You may end up scaring people with your dramatic, emotional outbursts, Aries. Your behaviour is likely to be erratic. The smallest things could set you off on a crazy tirade. The root of these issues probably has to do with a need to be loved, and you feel like others don't give you the attention you think you deserve.



### Taurus

You might surprise a few people with your words and actions, which could seem out of character for you, Taurus. Don't be surprised if you don't think or act like your normal self. There is a streak of the oddball inside you that wants to have its day in the spotlight.



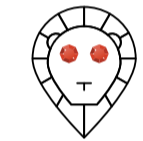
### Gemini

You could feel like a giant wrecking ball that's anxious to break down existing structures. Perhaps you're upset about a new development in your town, the country's political system, or the power structure within your home. Regardless of the exact reason, you're certain that change needs to happen in order to make progress.



### Cancer

Keep pen and paper close by, Cancer, and have the number of the patent office on hand. You're apt to come up with some original ideas that could be revolutionary. You're likely to be more intrigued by gadgets and electronic devices than usual. You have the power to make cunning observations about how things work.



### Leo

You may have endless ideas streaming through your head but little patience to see any of them through to the end, Leo. Perhaps you're so busy jumping from one thought to the next that you don't take any of them far enough to know whether or not they're worth pursuing.



### Virgo

It's OK to change your opinion, Virgo. You may pride yourself on being the solid one who always has an answer or knows exactly where to go. You may look upon others as flaky, indecisive, or fickle. It's important that you not shut down your thinking after making a decision about something.



### Libra

You may feel a strong need to express your individuality, Libra. You don't want to blend into the herd, unseen as you walk down the street. You want to be the sheep with the blue wool, the person skipping instead of walking. Find a place or group that lets you be yourself and not worry about what other people think about your style.



### Scorpio

Going with the flow may not necessarily appeal to you today, Scorpio. This is one time when you may want to be the fish swimming upstream while the school heads downstream. Feel free to go your own way regardless of what others have to say about it. You may get pressured by your loved ones to act a certain way or go somewhere special.



### Sagittarius

There are a few emotional surprises coming your way, Sagittarius. You might act a certain way under normal circumstances, but today you're apt to take a completely different route. Perhaps you don't know why you suddenly feel comfortable about a situation that you'd normally be quite skeptical about. Nevertheless, this feeling is possible.



### Capricorn

You're apt to need emotional freedom, Capricorn. Perhaps you sense that you're being coerced or manipulated into feeling a certain way and feel trapped in the situation. If you can distance yourself, you're likely to see that you're indeed getting caught up in someone else's drama.



### Aquarius

Take inventory of your habits and behaviours, Aquarius. Look for certain patterns and note the ones that do and don't work for you. You'll more than likely feel an urge to break free from repetition and create new paths that allow for other opportunities to come along.



### Pisces

You may feel smothered by certain individuals and loved ones who hang on you like barnacles on a rock, Pisces. You're a big part of their emotional support system and they rely on you for strength. Today, however, you could get frustrated by this extra weight.





# SPORTS

## sports

# Woods takes prime position at Open

Reuters | Carnoustie, Scotland

**A** charging Tiger Woods was leading the British Open with nine holes to play yesterday as defending champion and overnight co-leader

Jordan Spieth began to feel the strain.

Woods, the 14-times major champion began the day four shots adrift of fellow Americans Spieth, Xander Schauffele and Kevin Kisner but was leading as he reached the turn on seven



Tiger Woods reacts during the final round of The 147th Open Championship in Carnoustie

under.

The 42-year-old, who won the last of his 14 majors a decade ago, has rolled back the clock at Carnoustie and after a sizzling third-round 66 he was at it again.

With the strong westerly breeze causing havoc at the top of the leaderboard, Woods played the opening nine holes in 34 strokes, sinking birdies at the fourth and sixth.

Spieth and Schauffele had begun steadily but both came to grief with bogeys on the fifth.

When Spieth double-bogeyed the next after needing a penalty drop out of a gorse bush and Schauffele followed suit with a double on the seventh, Woods found himself leading a major yesterday for the first time since 2011.

He was one stroke ahead of playing partner Francesco Molinari who began his final round with 10 straight pars.

The predicted winds materialised on cue to add an extra ingredient to what was already looking like a thrilling climax.

Only three of the first 42 players to complete their rounds yesterday scored in the 60s.

Kisner, who had begun the day on nine-under with Spieth and Schauffele, suffered a dreadful start with a double bogey at the second and a bogey at the third to slip back, although he responded with a chip-in birdie at the fifth.

Two more bogeys followed but a birdie at the 10th kept him in the hunt at six under.

### Parched hoylake

Woods, playing at his first British Open since 2015, rolled back the clock on Saturday with a sparkling 66 — his best round at an Open since winning at a similarly parched Hoylake in 2006.

He won the last of his 14 majors a decade ago since when he has been written off after a battle with injuries and personal problems.

But in his traditional last-day red shirt he continued where he left off the previous day to turn the screws.

A deafening roar reverberated around the course when he sunk a long birdie putt on the fourth. Then at the sixth he rolled in an eight-footer.

England's Eddie Pepperell was the clubhouse leader after a superb round of 67 took him to five-under.

# Athletes from eleven nations confirmed at Brave 14

TDT | Manama

**B**rave 14 will feature athletes from 11 nations in the first ever global mixed martial arts event hosted in the continent of Africa.

The event will be hosted in the Omnisports indoor club of Tangier, Morocco on 18th August 2018.

The athletes are featured from Italy, Canada, Brazil, France, Philippines, USA, Russia, Netherlands, Sweden, Mexico and Syria.

The initiative marks the first between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Kingdom of Morocco in the field of sports.

Brave 14 is the upcoming edition after the immensely edition of the promotion hosted in Belfast, United Kingdom.

The main event will be headed by Jeremy Kennedy from Canada facing Danyel Pilo from Italy in a featherweight bout.

The fight card is also of the most diverse fight card for the season. Other fighters confirmed for the event includes Felipe Efrain, Arnold Quero,



Felipe Efrain

Sidney Wheeler, Abdoul Abouraguimov and more.

Brave 14 will be broadcasted live through Abu Dhabi Sports, StarSat, VodaComm, Fite TV, Combate and FloCombat.

# Brave CF set to expand Middleweight division

TDT | Manama

**A**thlete relations department of Brave Combat Federation has confirmed that the promotion will focus on roster expansion in the Middleweight division.

The Bahrain based global promotion had been active in signing multiple global athletes during 2018 including top prospects from Africa, Europe, North America and South East Asia.

Globally middleweight division has the right combination of world's top strikers, some of its best wrestlers and some of the highest caliber Jiu-Jitsu players.

They combine for exciting stylistic matchups and unpredictable finishes. Currently the promotion have one among the most competitive welterweight divisions in the MMA world and a rapidly growing lightweight division.

The focus on developing the Middleweight division will add more athletes to the roster.

Ikram Aliskerov from Dagestan, Russia is leading the division with three straight wins in the promotion. He is also undefeated in his career with five straight wins. Aliskerov has secured wins over Rufat Asadov, Jeremy Smith and Chad Hanekom at Brave.

Brave Combat Federation had made multiple signings in the flyweight and featherweight divisions during July

2018. With more middleweight prospects added to the roster, it is highly probable that a championship could be soon introduced.

"We are always looking to sign the best up and coming prospects and established veterans. Once we have built a good pool of middleweights we can then certainly look at introducing a title in the division. This won't happen immediately however but it is certainly something we have got our eye on", said Yousef Nasser, Head of Athlete Relations.

# AVC president praises Bahrain's efforts

TDT | Manama

**A**sian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) President Saleh bin Nasser praised Bahrain for its efforts in organising the ongoing 19th Asian Men's U20 Volleyball Championship.

His comments came in a meeting with Bahrain Volleyball Association (BVA) President Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Al Khalifa on the evening of the opening day of the competition, being held at Isa Sports City in Riffa.

Bin Nasser and Shaikh Ali exchanged commemorative shields as tokens of appreciation from both the AVC and BVA.

Also attending the presentation were AVC General Secretary Chang Chin Jong and BVA Vice-President and Local Organising Committee Executive Director Jehad Khalfan.

Bin Nasser said that he is pleased with how the tournament has been run so far, with the warm welcome from the airport and the abrupt assistance conveyed to each of the participating nations.



CBA Division C Knockout cup winner RKCT receives the trophy

# RKCT wins CBA Division C T-20 final

TDT | Manama

**R**KCT has defeated Union Group to win CBA Division C T-20 Knockout Tournament Final.

RKCT won the toss and elected to bat First. Union Group bowlers removed the RKCT top order batsman for cheap runs.

RKCT skipper Guru stood on one end and played a man winning innings. He scored 62 runs in 29 balls that helped RKCT to put a decent total of 152 runs for 6 wickets at

### BRIEF SCORE

RKCT 152/6 in 20 overs (Guru 62, Gitesh 19, Touseef 2/37) beat Union Group 106/7 (Tapasum 29, Bharat 3/26, Harpreet 2/25) by 46 runs

### Awards

Winning Team RKCT bagged \$300 cash prize and individual trophies  
 Runner-up Team Union Group bagged \$200 cash prize and individual trophies  
 Man of the Match award - \$50 and individual trophy awarded to Guru Prasad from RKCT CC

the end 20 overs. Touseef took two wickets for Union.

In second innings, RKCT bowler's narrow spells never allowed Union batsman to score big runs.

Tapasum became the top scorer for Union with 29 runs, Bharat took three wickets for RKCT in his 4 over spell and well supported by Harpreeth who took two wickets.

At the end of 20 overs RKCT restricted Union for 106 runs and won the match by 46 runs.



# Hami wins dramatic German GP

Lewis Hamilton won from 14th on the grid, taking advantage of an error from Sebastian Vettel, who crashed out

AFP | Hockenheim, Germany

Lewis Hamilton regained the lead in the world drivers' championship on Sunday when he claimed one of the most memorable victories of his career by winning a rain-hit German Grand Prix for Mercedes after starting from 14th on the grid.

The defending four-time champion took full advantage of a heavy downpour during which title rival and fellow-four-time champion Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari crashed out of contention to produce a master-class of technical and tactical racing in treacherous conditions.

His team-mate Valtteri Bottas came home second, 4.5 seconds behind the Englishman, ahead of fellow-Finn Kimi Raikkonen of Ferrari to deliver Mercedes' first one-two finish at a German Grand Prix.

It was Hamilton's fourth win this year and the 66th of his ca-

reer, the triumph lifting him to the top of the drivers' title race and putting Mercedes back on top of the constructors' championship – no wonder Mercedes chairman Dieter Zetsche embraced him.

"Get in there, Lewis," said Mercedes on team radio. "Miracles do happen mate." Hamilton said: "What an amazing job by you guys. Love conquers all."

"That was highly unlikely, but you've got to believe," Hamilton added. "I said a long prayer before the start...I kept pushing, kept believing and I manifested my dream. So, thanks to God."

Dutchman Max Verstappen finished fourth for Red Bull ahead of German Nico Hulkenberg of Renault, Romain Grosjean of Haas, Sergio Perez and his Force India team-mate Esteban Ocon.

Marcus Ericsson was ninth for Sauber and New Zealander Brendon Hartley 10th for Toro Rosso.



Lewis Hamilton won the German Grand Prix after starting in 14th

## Rainclouds looming

The race began in sweltering conditions with an air temperature of 27 degrees Celsius, or 80 Fahrenheit, and the track at 43 with humidity at 50 per cent and

rainclouds looming all around.

Vettel made a clean start from his 55th pole position and resisted Bottas as Raikkonen fought off Verstappen, but most attention was on Hamilton.

The Englishman was swiftly

“It's obviously very difficult from that position and highly unlikely but you've got to believe. I did a long prayer before the race. I wanted to stay collected, stay calm and the team did such a great job today. When it rained, I knew I would have a good position. You never knew what was going to happen after the safety car

LEWIS HAMILTON

up to 12th from 14th and then reeled off a series of measured passes to climb to sixth by lap 11, when he passed Hulkenberg.

At the front, Vettel was content to stay 3.8 seconds clear of the chasing Bottas before Raikkonen was first to pit, on lap 15, switching to softs and rejoining fourth.

Ricciardo, who had started at the back of the grid, climbed as high as sixth before engine failure on lap 29 ended his race. A series of pit stops saw the lead pass from Vettel to Bottas to Verstappen and finally to Raikkonen, at which point Vettel was second.

With dark clouds swirling around, Mercedes told Hamilton they were extending his first

stint "as much as we can."

Vettel, trapped behind Raikkonen, complained to his team.

"This is just silly – I'm losing time and destroying my tyres," he told Ferrari. "I'm losing everything I got in the first stint."

Eventually, the team asked the Finn to allow Vettel to retake the lead.

Ultra-soft Mercedes, finally, pitted for ultra-soft tyres on lap 43 – Mercedes guessing that the rain would not be too heavy – and rejoined in fifth.

"You'll have the best chance on this tyre, you've got the best rubber," they told Hamilton.

When the patchy rain started it created mayhem, Vettel losing part of his front wing after hitting a kerb, but hanging on in the lead ahead of Raikkonen.

Hamilton then reported heavier rain as Bottas passed his fellow-Finn for second.

After 52 laps, Vettel crashed, sliding straight into the barriers.

A safety car came out and while his rivals pitted for fresh tyres, Hamilton inherited lead, albeit with tyres 10 laps old.

When racing resumed on lap 57, Bottas attacking his Mercedes team-mate, but Hamilton held on.

On lap 60, Hamilton posted a near-phenomenal lap in 1:15.7, nine-tenths quicker than Bottas.

"Valtteri, it's James, please hold position, I'm sorry," Mercedes strategist James Vowles told Bottas. "Copy, James," he replied.

## Hamilton's victory under threat

AFP | Hockenheim, Germany

Lewis Hamilton's spectacular victory was under threat Sunday when he was summoned to the stewards for an aborted pit stop during the safety car period of the German Grand Prix.

The stewards summoned him to investigate a possible breach of the Interna-

tional Motoring Federation (FIA) Sporting Code when he crossed a line between the pit entry lane and the race circuit.

Hamilton chose to stay out on his ultra-soft tyres during the safety car period that followed Vettel's accident, swerving away from pitting and crossing a patch of grass to re-join the straight.

## Sri Lanka close in on whitewash of South Africa

AFP | Colombo

Sri Lanka closed in on a series whitewash against South Africa yesterday, with the visitors five down and with a mountain to climb after the third day of the second Test.

By stumps, spinners had ripped their way through the Proteas batsmen yet again to leave them reeling on 139 for 5 in pursuit of an impossible-looking 490 victory target in Colombo.

Against batsmen who clearly decided that attack was the best form of defence, off-spinner Akila Dananjaya and left-arm spinner Rangana Herath took two wickets apiece, and off-spinner Dilruwan Perera dismissed Dean Elgar.

The wickets fell despite a comedy of repeated errors from Sri Lanka, who dropped two catches, wasted both their reviews -- on successive balls -- and could have had Elgar out twice beforehand had Perera not overstepped.

He was reprieved on six when Perera bowled him, and later on 23 when caught behind. On the second occasion, he had even gone right back into the dressing room before being recalled to the middle.

"I was quite happy with that. That's never happened in my career," Elgar said afterwards.

But Perera finally got his



Sri Lanka's Angelo Mathews (R) plays a shot as South Africa's Quinton de Kock watches

## BRIEF SCORE

**South Africa** 139 for 5 (de Bruyn 45\*, Bavuma 14\*) and 124 trail **Sri Lanka** 338 and 275 for 5 dec (Karunaratne 85, Maharaj 3-154) by 351 runs

man for 37, leaving South Africa 80 for two, from which they quickly slipped to 113 for five as Hashim Amla went for six, Faf du Plessis for seven and Keshav Maharaj first ball.

Amla had his off stump levelled by a straightening Herath delivery. Du Plessis was the

first victim in Dananjaya's late double strike, when a ball he had inside-edged on to his pad popped up for a catch to slip.

By stumps, number-three batsman Theunis de Bruyn, who survived two very close lbw shouts early in his innings, was 45 not out, with a chance of recording his team's first half-century of the series.

Temba Bavuma, who came to the crease with Dananjaya on a hat-trick, remained 14 not out.

But the South Africans are still staring down the barrel of their first series defeat by Sri Lanka since 2006, when they also suffered a whitewash -- the last time the Proteas faced such a humiliation anywhere.

## Zaman sets records as Pakistan thrash Zimbabwe for ODI sweep

AFP | Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Captain Sarfraz Ahmed hailed "a great team effort" as Pakistan completed a series whitewash over Zimbabwe with a 131-run win in the fifth and final match on Sunday.

On another record setting day in Bulawayo for the visitors, Fakhar Zaman became the fastest player in history to reach 1,000 career runs in one-day international cricket as Pakistan amassed 364 for 4.

"It was a great team effort to win 5-0 against Zimbabwe," said Ahmed. "Everyone wanted to bat...but at the same time it's really good to see young players performing like this, like Fakhar Zaman and Imam-ul-Haq have been doing, which is good for the team."

Ahmed looked ahead to the six-team Asia Cup in Abu Dhabi and Dubai in September.

"We learned lots of things here, and hopefully we'll take that to the Asia Cup," he said. "We definitely need some rest now, so we'll go home for a bit before returning to training to prepare for the Asia Cup."

## BRIEF SCORE

**Pakistan** 364 for 4 (Imam 110, Babar 106\*, Fakhar 85) beat **Zimbabwe** 233 for 4 (Murray 47, Moor 44, Nawaz 2-47) by 131 runs



Pakistan's batsman Imam-ul-Haq plays a shot

Zaman and opening partner ul-Haq were in the runs once again, the pair adding their fourth century stand of the series.

They had reached 168 in the 25th over when Zaman was caught behind for 85.

While he missed out on what would have been his third hundred of the series, he set a string of records.

Zaman passed 1,000 ODI runs in just his 18th innings, breaking the record of 21 innings held by five players, including Viv Richards and team-mate Babar Azam.

He claimed the record for most runs by a Pakistan batsman in a five-match bilateral series with 515, passing Salman Butt's total against Bangladesh in 2008. Only Virat Kohli, who

**1,000**  
Fakhar Zaman became the fastest player in history to reach 1,000 career runs in one-day international cricket

hit 558 for India in South Africa last winter, has scored more.

Zaman also broke the record for most runs between dismissals in ODIs, with 455, passing the 405 set by another Pakistani, Mohammad Yousuf, also against Zimbabwe, in 2002-3.

"I really enjoyed my time in Zimbabwe," said Zaman, who was named Player of the Series.

# Nielsen wins 15th stage

Geraint Thomas kept hold of his yellow jersey for another day

AFP | Carcassonne, France

Danish race debutant Magnus Cort Nielsen handed Astana their second consecutive victory when he won the 15th stage of the Tour de France in Carcassonne on Sunday.

Welshman Geraint Thomas, of Sky, maintained his 1min 39sec race lead over teammate and compatriot Chris Froome after a 181.5km ride from Millau in which the yellow jersey holder's rivals tried, but failed to launch a challenge.

Thomas and the main peloton soaked up futile attacks from Irishman Dan Martin (UAE) and Rafa Majka (Bora) before crossing the finish line just over 13 minutes in arrears on what, for them, was a comparatively easy stage ahead of Monday's rest day.

"I've been feeling pretty good. Days like today are always a bit funny because you don't really want to push. You want to recover as much as possible," said Thomas.

The 32-year-old Welshman, however, refused to speculate on whether he, and not Froome, will lead their charge over the following, decisive stages into the Pyrenees mountains.

"No honestly, I'm not thinking about that," added Thomas.

"I'm taking each day as it comes. I'm looking forward to the rest day, then the next stage, the next climb, and just keep on doing what we're doing."

Astana, meanwhile, took full advantage of what was set to be a transition stage ahead of three



Magnus Cort Nielsen sprinted to victory after being part of a breakaway

tough days in the Pyrenees starting from Tuesday.

Nielsen was one two Astana riders who fought hard to get in a breakaway group of 29 riders, along with compatriot Michael Valgren.

And when it came to the final kilometres, the race debutant seized the day.

Nielsen first underlined his ambitions 8km from the finish when he quickly countered Italian Domenico Pozzovivo's effort to break clear.

And two kilometres further on, Nielsen was quick to join Dutchman Bauke Mollema (Trek) and Jon Izagirre (Bahrain) when they left five of their breakaway companions behind.

A lack of cooperation in their

## Nibali begins rehabilitation

AFP | Paris

Vincenzo Nibali is recovering from his Tour de France crash at home in Lugano, Switzerland, confident his fractured vertebrae will heal in time for him to line up at the Vuelta a Espana on August 25 and so target the world road race championships in Innsbruck on September 30.

Nibali collected a special orthopaedic corset on Saturday, which he will wear when standing, to ensure his vertebrae are held in the correct position.

The Vuelta a Espana starts in 35 days and Nibali hopes to recover in time for the final Grand Tour of the season.

"I've come back from worse injuries. Fortunately what happened doesn't seem to have compromised the final part of my season, the Vuelta and the world championships," Nibali confirmed to La Gazzetta dello Sport after returning home to Lugano from the Tour de France.

"I first need to rest up for quite a few days because there's nothing I can do while I'm still in pain."

Class standings from the 15th stage of the Tour de France, a 181.5km ride from Millau to Carcassonne:

Points:

1. Peter Sagan (SVK/BOR) 452 pts
2. Alexander Kristoff (NOR/EAU) 170
3. Arnaud Dømare (FRA/FDJ) 133
4. John Degenkolb (GER/TRE) 128
5. Greg Van Avermaet (BEL/BMC) 115
6. Andrea Pasqualon (ITA/WGG) 100
7. Julian Alaphilippe (FRA/QST) 89
8. Philippe Gilbert (BEL/QST) 84
9. Sonny Colbrelli (ITA/BAH) 76
10. Thomas De Gendt (BEL/LOT) 71

Team overall:

1. Movistar 188 h 47:32.
2. Bahrain at 7:10.
3. Sky 42:22.
4. Astana 47:43.
5. LottoNL 52:00.
6. Giant 1 h 17:38.
7. BMC 1 h 18:04.
8. Mitchelton 1 h 22:31.
9. AG2R La Mondiale 1 h 29:19.
10. Etixx 1 h 35:25.

wake meant the trio were allowed to build an insurmountable advantage over the closing kilometres.

But Nielsen, 25, was simply unbeatable after launching his sprint just under 300m from the finish, where Izagirre finished second and Mollema third.

"I knew I had the legs to win, and that I would be fastest at the line, but I still kept some powder dry in case," said the 25-year-old Dane.

It is Astana's second consecutive win on the race after Spaniard Omar Fraile capped an audacious attack on the final climb of stage 14 to triumph in Mende.



Andres Iniesta

## Iniesta, Torres make J League debuts

Reuters | Kobe, Japan

Andres Iniesta and Fernando Torres made their much-anticipated debuts in Japanese soccer on Sunday, but both ended up on the losing side.

The Spanish pair recently joined J.League teams following illustrious careers in Europe.

Iniesta's signing for Vissel Kobe has been met with understandable excitement in Japan and the home crowd were given their first sight of the former Barcelona great when he came on as a second-half substitute against Shonan Bellmare.

Iniesta, in his first appearance since Spain's disappointing World Cup campaign, failed to make an impact, however, as Kobe lost 3-0.

The defeat means Kobe are in sixth place in the table, just past the halfway point in the Japanese league season.

Compatriot Torres, who left Atletico Madrid at the end of the Spanish season, also started on the bench for new club Sagan Tosu.



Left to right: Sreehas Ayyam Parambil with his brother Sreenkath, Eyad Alalawi with his daughters Fatima and Yara, and Mahmoud Mostafa Elsaby with his father Mostafa Elsaby

## Coke brought world cup dreams to life

Manama

The winners of the Coca-Cola Company's 2018 FIFA World Cup promotion, who travelled to Russia to attend one of the matches, got together at the Coca-Cola Bottling Company to share their experiences.

Under the Cap World Cup promotion on Coke cans was launched on April 1st and ran until May 12th 2018. It offered fans and consumers the chance to win a number of instant gifts, or the opportunity to participate in an online raffle for a chance to win a trip for two to the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia, on a weekly basis. Promotion embodied the Company's commitment to-

wards bringing people together through sport.

Football, one of the most popular games in sport unites global citizens, and the FIFA World Cup is an event that brings nations together in a celebration of sporting prowess and a beautiful game. As a long-term supporter of football on all levels, the Coca-Cola Company has had a long-standing relationship with FIFA since 1976 and has been an official sponsor of the FIFA World Cup since 1978, sharing in fans' passion and enthusiasm for the game.

Mohamed Akeel, Managing Director, The Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Bahrain, said of the promotion: "To be able to bring that joy and excitement

to fans and help their dreams come to fruition is incredibly important and rewarding for us."

Eyad Alalawi, one of the winners, said: "It was a great opportunity for my wife and myself to be part of the Coca-Cola delegation. We attended the match alongside 80'000 football fans and for a big football fan like myself, this was truly a remarkable experience."

Moustafa Alsaby, father of the winner Mahmoud Alsaby, said: "My son and I, couldn't be more grateful to the Coca-Cola Company for this once in a life time experience. We were well taken care of during the full trip, from the moment we departed and arrived back to Bahrain."

## Neymar couldn't look at football after WC

AFP | Praia Grande, Brazil

Brazil superstar Neymar admits that after his nation's quarter-final defeat to Belgium at the World Cup he couldn't look at a ball and didn't want to see any of the remaining matches.

"I wouldn't go as far as to say I didn't want to play again but, I didn't want to see a ball, or to see any more football played," 26-year-old Neymar told AFP in an exclusive interview on Saturday.

The Paris Saint Germain forward was talking at his Neymar Praia Grande institute where the Red Bull Neymar Jr 5's (five-a-side-soccer) tournament was being played.

Dressed in a sleeveless t-shirt, with his six-year-old son Davi Lucca sat upon his knee, the striker was however in a relaxed mood as he explained his post-World Cup blues.

"I was in mourning, I was really sad about it, but sadness passes, I have my son, my family, my friends and they don't want to see me moping around. I've got more reason to be happy than sad," said Neymar, reflecting on his team's 2-1 quarter-final defeat to Belgium.

Asked about reports in Spain linking him with a transfer to Real Madrid the forward said "that's all speculation from the press."

"The guys who come up with these stories seem to know more about my life than I do.



Neymar



**Neymar played futsal and street pickup games growing up in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and began his career playing for Santos's junior team when he was 11**

I won't respond to this type of question because nothing happened," he scoffed.

The Brazilian superstar, who moved to PSG for a world record 222 million euros (\$264 million) last year, insists that the burden of expectation on his shoulders -- whether with

his club or country -- does not weigh heavily.

"No, all the great players feel pressure," he said.

"It's true that when it comes to me, there are double standards. I have been aware of this responsibility, not only for Brazil, but also in club football, since I was 17, 18 years old.

"I have prepared myself to handle this pressure and I know that when the results are not what they should be then that pressure increases."

Neymar has been hit by a barrage of criticism for theatrical rolling around after being fouled at the World Cup, but says he should have been better protected.

"People were faster to criticise the one being fouled than the one doing the fouling," he insisted.

# Hosts thrash Qatar

TDT | Manama

Bahrain capped their Preliminary Round campaign this evening with a dazzling victory while Korea followed suit with their first win to highlight an action-packed second day in the 19th Asian Men's U20 Volleyball Championship.

The host Bahrainis were once again fuelled by a massive home crowd that packed Isa Sports City in Riffa as they easily disposed of Gulf rivals Qatar 3-0 (25-15, 25-16, 25-10) in a match that lasted just a little over an hour.

Meanwhile, after not being in action on opening night, Korea made their presence felt with a hard-earned five-set (25-23, 25-22, 20-25, 22-25, 15-12) triumph over China.

Also yesterday, Taipei, India and Sri Lanka all joined Bahrain in claiming their second victories of this preliminary stage. Taipei beat Pakistan, India outplayed New Zealand and Sri Lanka battled past Australia.

Elsewhere, Thailand enjoyed their first win after beating Turkmenistan in a thrilling five-setter. They had to come back from a set down before securing the result. Macau were also winners for the first time after overpowering the Maldives, while Jordan bounced back from an opening day defeat with a win over the UAE.

The Preliminary Round continues on Monday 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.

At the end of this stage, all the participating nations will be ranked from one to 23, depending on where they finish in their respective Pools. From this ranking, the match-ups will be determined for the knockout stage, with teams ranked ninth to 23rd vying for eight places to join the overall top eight in a Round of 16.

The 23-nation Asian U20



Bahrain's players celebrate after scoring against Qatar

## Today's matches

(in order of Time, Court 1 game, Court 2 game)  
11.30am: Japan vs Turkmenistan,  
Uzbekistan vs New Zealand

2pm: Iran vs Korea, Hong Kong vs UAE

4.30pm: Iraq vs Qatar, Malaysia vs Macau

7pm: Saudi Arabia vs Pakistan,  
Kazakhstan vs Australia

”

We are very happy about this game, although I was a little surprised by how it turned out. We have reached our target of winning both games in this round, and things are just going to get more difficult from now

BAHRAIN HEAD COACH YUSUF KHALIFA

## YESTERDAY'S SCORES

Taipei beat Pakistan 3-1 (25-17, 25-15, 14-25, 25-18)

Macau beat Maldives 3-0 (25-9, 25-8, 25-11)

Korea beat China 3-2 (25-23, 25-22, 20-25, 22-25, 15-12)

India beat New Zealand 3-0 (25-22, 25-22, 25-16)

Thailand beat Turkmenistan 3-2 (25-20, 26-28, 22-25, 25-21, 15-10)

Sri Lanka beat Australia 3-1 (24-26, 25-13, 26-24, 25-21)

Bahrain beat Qatar 3-0 (25-15, 25-16, 25-10)

Jordan beat UAE 3-0 (29-27, 25-18, 25-23)

Championship is following this complicated competition format for the first time. The tournament 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



Bahrain's Husain Thamer looks to score against Qatar



Gajasinhage Silva of Sri Lanka tries to score against a pair of Australia's blockers

and Bahrain Olympic Committee President Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

Bahrain notched their second successive Pool D1 win with another dominant showing. They started off strong and never looked back.

Husain Thamer was their best scorer, posting 13 points overall including nine on attack. Sayed Alabbar had seven on attack while Hasan Haider had five. Mohamed Ahmed led Qatar with 13 points in the loss.

“We are very happy about this game, although I was a little surprised by how it turned out,” said Bahrain head coach Yusuf Khalifa. “We have reached our target of winning both games in this round, and things are just going to get more difficult from now.”

“We will play stronger teams in the next stage, but our guys are growing in confidence now

and I hope they can reach a higher level than what they have already showed.”

With the result, the Bahrainis have secured the 10th ranking for the Knockout Round, where they will face the 23rd-ranked team in a match scheduled for Tuesday. Qatar will be either 11th or 12th, depending on the result of their game with Iraq on Monday.

In Pool A1, Korea started their match against China on a high, and appeared to be headed to a straight-sets win after going up 2-0. But the Chinese turned the tables in the third and fourth sets, only for the Koreans to recover in the fifth behind the stellar play of Donghyeok Im, who scored an impressive 35 points overall, including 33 attacking points.

“We did not play our best, especially in the third set,” said Korea captain Ikje Choi. “After

the fourth set, we encouraged ourselves to get into the mood of the game and get the win in the fifth.”

“Whatever we did to overcome this game's challenges, we will do better as we move forward.”

Of their next game against Asian powerhouses Iran on Monday at 2pm, Choi commented: “We will do our best in the next game. We will follow what we have trained, and we will give everything we have.”

Sunho Kim and Sungjin Lim added 12 attacking points apiece for the Koreans, while Dejun Zhai had 24 points overall to pace China, who suffered their second straight loss.

With China's loss, they are now assured of the third ranking for the knockout stage. The top seeding will be taken by the winner of the Iran-Japan clash.