

**Depp denies Amber's domestic violence charge**

Superstar John Depp has filed legal documents supporting his claim that he never physically assaulted his former wife Amber Heard. **P14**

OP-ED **8** Hold a second brexit referendum

THE DAILY **tribune**



Kate Middleton shares her motherhood struggles **14** CELEBS

WORLD **7** After a month of shutdown, US workers turn to food banks



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**Inmate swap terms in few days**

Aden

Yemen's warring parties are expected to agree on the terms of a prisoner exchange in around 10 days, a representative of the internationally recognised Yemeni government said on Wednesday. Talks between the two sides took place in Jordan last week. Both parties need to agree on lists of prisoners to be swapped.

"We expect that in 10 days time the final signing will have happened," the head of the government delegation to the prisoner-exchange talks, Hadi Haig, told Reuters by telephone.

**Conspiracy case linked to Qatar**

London

Four former Barclays executives conspired to commit fraud by hiding £322 million of payments to Qatar in return for cash injections in 2008, a prosecutor alleged at the opening of one of London's most high-profile criminal trials.

Former chief executive John Varley and three former directors are the most senior bankers to be prosecuted in Britain over events during the financial crisis, when Barclays avoided a state bailout by raising more than £11 billion from mainly Gulf investors in two cash calls.



**02** Busaiten pays tribute to HRH Premier

**03** 'House, SCW co-operation vital'

**04** Bapco attains major milestone as modernisation programme starts



**Salaries ready for VRS first batch candidates**

Manama

The President of the Civil Service Bureau (CSB), Ahmed Al Zayed, yesterday announced that the CSB will efficiently transfer the salaries of the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS)'s 773 successful candidates who are transitioning to retirement on

January 31.

Mr Al Zayed went on noting that the salary transfer on January 24th will include additional purchased years of service, end of service entitlements, previous promotion differences, and the Periodic Annual Allowance in accordance with the Kingdom's 2019 Salaries and Benefits regulation.



**"The CBB is committed to efficiently carry out the retirement of successful VRS candidates."**

MR AL ZAYED

He concluded by reiterating CSB's commitment to efficiently transition the remaining VRS's successful candidates to retirement, and reminded all human resource directorates that fall under the CSB to continue uploading all successful candidates' information to the 'Horizon' portal in accordance with the scheme's time plan.

**Syria co-operation vow**

Erdogan and Putin vow closer co-operation on Syria at Moscow talks

● The two leaders are on opposite sides of the Syria conflict.

● Russia and Turkey have agreed to coordinate ground operations in Syria.

Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan at a meeting in Moscow yesterday vowed to co-ordinate their actions more closely in Syria.

"Co-operation between Russia and Turkey is a touchstone



Putin with Erdogan after talks in Moscow.

for Syrian peace and stability," Erdogan said in translated comments at a joint press conference after their talks, which lasted around three hours. "With our Russian friends we intend to strengthen our coordination even more."

**"We agreed how we'll coordinate our work in the near future."**

PUTIN

"We agreed how we'll coordinate our work in the near future," Putin said, calling the talks which included the countries' defence ministers "effective."

At the start of their meeting in the Kremlin, Putin addressed Erdogan as "dear friend," saying that their countries "work on issues of regional security and actively cooperate on Syria."

Erdogan used the same term for Putin and said "our solidarity makes a weighty contribution to the security of the region."

The two leaders are on opposite sides of the Syria conflict: Russia provides critical support to the Syrian government, while Turkey has backed rebel groups fighting President Bashar Assad's forces.

Despite this, they have worked closely to find a political solution to the seven-year conflict.

Russia and Turkey have agreed to co-ordinate ground operations in Syria following US President Donald Trump's shock announcement last month about pulling 2,000 American troops out of Syria.

Putin said that if carried out, the withdrawal of US troops from northeastern Syria "will be a positive step, it will help stabilise the situation in this restive area."

VEGAN ANGER

**Hindus urge top Aussie bank to print beef-free notes**

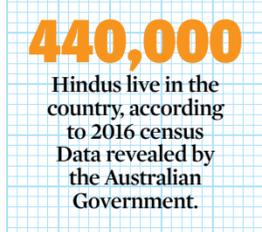
Canberra

The Hindu community is requesting the Reserve Bank of Australia print beef-free banknotes after it was revealed that cow fat is used in their production.

Newly designed banknotes are being introduced into the country, with the new \$5, \$10, and \$50 notes already in circulation.

The \$20 and \$100 notes will be introduced in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

This week, President of the Universal Society of Hinduism,



Rajan Zed, asked the RBA to 'show respect to the feelings of Hindus and come up with a banknote production process which did not use beef as an ingredient'.

Small amounts of tallow,

which is rendered from beef or mutton fat, are used in the production of polymer currency to provide anti-static properties.

Cows are sacred to Hindus and the consumption of beef is highly conflicting to Hindu beliefs. It is banned in Hindu religious centres.

Mr Zed has urged RBA Governor Philip Lowe to take the issue seriously and for Scott Morrison to step in because it is 'highly insensitive on the part of RBA to continue with reportedly beef-laced banknotes'.

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# Busaiteen pays tribute to HRH Premier

Citizens hail the contribution of HRH the Premier towards nation development



Many cultural activities were organised as part of the event.

**Manama**

A ceremony was held in Busaiteen, Muharraq, in tribute to His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, who recovered after undergoing

successful medical check-ups. Traditional Ardha shows, folkloric songs and other activities were staged at the celebration, in the presence of Busaiteen residents, lawmakers, municipal councils, dignitaries, businessmen, heads of majlis and

citizens. They all extended deepest congratulations to HRH the Premier, praying to Allah the Almighty to bless him with abundant health and happiness to continue the march of achievements for Bahrain and its loyal people.

They paid tribute to HRH the Premier, hailing his prolific achievements in different towns and villages across the Kingdom of Bahrain. They lauded HRH the Premier's stances in support of citizens and keenness on reaching out to loyal people.

Abdulaziz Buzabun, owner of Buzabun Majlis in Busaiteen congratulated the people of Bahrain on the safety of HRH the Premier, hailing his statesmanship and pivotal role as the architect of national development and progress.

Businessman and Chairman of Bahrain Society for Tolerance and Interfaith Co-existence Youssef Buzabun stressed Bahraini citizens' delight at the recovery of HRH the Premier, in recognition of his role in building the nation.

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## Social organisation in full efforts to tackle rising suicides among expats



Forum members during a photocall.

**TDT | Manama**

A social organisation based in the Kingdom has begun a drive to tackle rising number of suicides among the expatriates. Pravasi Guidance Forum, widely known as PGF, an association of trained counsellors working under the able guidance of Dr John Panackel, a renowned counsellor will work towards reaching out to the expatriate communities to address the

issues faced by them and thus tackle the rising suicides. "We have 120 trained professional counsellors to carry out the task." Other programmes undertaken by the organisation includes Youth Leadership Programmes for Teenagers, Diploma Courses in Counselling, Walk with a Civil servant Training for School-going students, Differential Aptitude Test and Career Counselling, Summer Camps and PSC Training.

The organisation will hold its tenth anniversary celebrations tomorrow at the VKL Auditorium from 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm. The Chief Guests of the event will be Mr James Joseph, former higher secondary director of Govt of Kerala and Dr Jancy James, former Vice Chancellor of MG University. "We will be giving away our prestigious Karmajyothi Award to Mr. Francis Kaitharathu, a well-known social worker in Bahrain and Chairman of IMAC

on this occasion. "The prodigy of PGF award will be shared this year by Ramesh Narayanan and Sheeba Manoj. "The other usual awards of Best Counsellor, Best Faculty and Best Coordinator will be given to Saji John, Amritha Ravi and Radhamoni Somarajan respectively. "A number of medals will also be given away to students in recognition to their outstanding performance in our events," organisation release said.

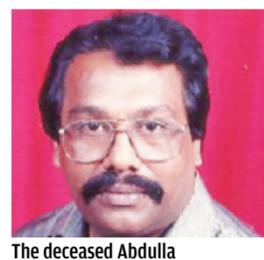
## Social worker dies in Chennai

**TDT | Manama**

Long-time Bahrain resident and Indian social worker T P Abdulla, 71, passed away in Chennai, India yesterday. He was working with Bahrain

Disabled Sports Federation as programme co-ordinator. Funeral will take place in Chennai today. He is survived by his wife Fatima and four children. He was active in Bahrain Kerala

Muslim Jamaath relief works, sources said. He had organised a lot of cultural programmes under the aegis of Kerala Arts and Cultural Association, sources added.



The deceased Abdulla

# 'House, SCW co-operation vital'

HRH Princess Sabeeka highlights legislative role to boost achievements of Bahraini women

Manama

**H**RH Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of HM the King, President of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW), yesterday received Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Fawzia Zainal, Chairman of the Shura Council, Ali Al Saleh, deputies, heads of committees and a number of members of the two councils.

HRH Princess Sabeeka highlighted maintaining co-operation with the SCW to promote various women and family issues, wishing the two councils to bring more successes to attain the set goals.

HRH Princess Sabeeka pointed out the support of HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, HRH Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and follow up of HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, to Bahraini women and family files, which clearly contributed to the addition of the National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini women to the agenda of the Government Action Programme (GAP).

HRH Princess Sabeeka praised the legislative branch's keenness to hold this periodic meeting to mark the launch of the beginning of a legislative term to discuss promoting cooperation and de-



HRH Princess Sabeeka receives the delegation led by Ms Zainal and Mr Al Saleh.

fining priorities for the next stage, including following up the inclusion of the National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini women in the Government's Action Programme.

HRH Princess Sabeeka noted the constant support of the SCW-Parliament Coordination Committee for women file, attaching significance to the role of the permanent committees to adopt women file in legislative branch's meeting, calling on the committees' members to accentuate, in their international participations, Bahrain's effort to

promote women's advancement and their participations in the national development process.

SCW Secretary-General Hala Al Ansari gave a brief on the work strategy (2019-2022) that focuses on the integration of Bahraini women in various development programmes and the national efforts to enhance women's advancement for sustaining family stability and raising women's contributions to the national economy by adding the National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini Women to the agenda of the GAP.

Ms Al Ansari emphasised on

**Including the National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini Women in the GAP is a key milestone.**

HRH PRINCESS SABEKA

the harmonisation of the requirements of the National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini Women 2013-2022 with the GAP and State Budget through five topics, including legislative, ser-

vice, financial an economic, infrastructure and environment, which were the result of the consultations between the SCW and government under the umbrella of following up the outcomes of the Government Forum overseen by HRH the Crown Prince.

The Speaker hailed the SCW President's effort to upgrade the Bahraini women's status, as an essential partner in the comprehensive development process, affirming readiness to boost parliament-SCW cooperation to achieve Bahraini women's advancement to assist them in tak-

ing on their national and family responsibilities.

The Shura Chairman pointed out the SCW President's role in supporting women's issues and promoting their active participations in the construction and development process, noting women's achievements and gains made during the prosperous era of HM the King. He stressed the Shura support for reinforcing the Bahraini women's status, saying the Shura-SCW co-operation would ensure turning the national strategies for the advancement of Bahraini women into reality.

## Autumn Fair 2019 kicks off in style



Mr Al Moayyed opens Autumn Fair 2019 at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre.

It is expected to attract large number of visitors and shoppers from inside and outside of Bahrain mainly from the Kingdom and GCC particularly Saudi Arabia.

TDT | Manama

Under the patronage of Zayed Al Zayani, the Minister of Industry,



Mr Al Moayyed along with other ministry officials tours the expo.

Commerce and Tourism, Undersecretary of Commerce Affairs Nader Al Moayyed opened Autumn Fair 2019 at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre.

The fair is organised by Arabian Exhibition Management and runs until January 31.

This year's 30th edition of Autumn Fair, spanning over 15,400 square meters of exhibition space, will bring together 650 exhibitors from 18 countries to display a wide-

range of products including arts and crafts, boutiques and fashion, electrical goods and appliances, furniture and furnishings, houseware and decors, kitchenware, leather goods, shoes, cosmetics, toys, textiles, specialty foods and many more.

This year's Bahraini business participants, as in the past, will be offering special deals to visitors.

The Autumn Fair is the biggest gathering of distributors, retailers and agents presenting the widest range of choices and competitive prices to shoppers.

It is expected to attract large number of visitors and shoppers from inside and outside of Bahrain mainly from the Kingdom and GCC particularly Saudi Arabia.

Counties participating this year includes: Bahrain, China, Egypt, India, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Tunisia, Turkey, UAE, Yemen and Zimbabwe.



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# Bapco attains major milestone as modernisation programme starts

BMP designed to optimise the refinery configuration to place Bapco amongst the most competitive refineries

TDT | Manama

The Oil Minister, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco) Shaikh Mohamed bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa has inaugurated the Bapco Modernisation Programme (BMP) groundbreaking ceremony at the site of the project.

Present at the event were senior officials of the oil and gas sector in the Kingdom.

On this occasion, the minister stressed that the oil sector of Bahrain adopts a clear strategy based on implementing key developmental projects, and that the National Oil and Gas Authority (NOGA) and companies under its umbrella exert utmost efforts in implementing vital projects which promote the national economy and bolster the sustainable growth of the Kingdom.

He further said that the progress attained in oil industry in the entire region has recently gone through recent technological trends and advanced applications in order to ensure the continued progress and improved results in the oil industry.

The minister expressed



Shaikh Mohamed inaugurates the programme in the presence of top Bapco executives and senior government officials.

thanks and appreciation to HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, HRH the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and HRH the Crown Prince, the Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister

Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa for their continued support and guidance to the oil and gas sector of Bahrain.

During the event, Bapco's Board Director and BMP Project Sponsor Dr Dawood Nassif

gave a brief speech in which he expressed pride at this important occasion which marks an important milestone in Bapco and Bahrain's history.

He stated that this was a journey that started 12 years ago and

now we are realising the efforts of many who contributed to this achievement over the years.

He reiterated the four critical pillars of successful Project Execution (safety, quality, budget and schedule), and the six fun-

”

**The oil sector of Bahrain has adopted a clear strategy based on implementing key developmental projects.**

SHAIKH MOHAMED

damentals of refining, namely safety, training, maintenance, process engineering, reliability engineering and advanced process control.

Later, Bapco's Chief Executive, Dr Pete Bartlett gave a speech in which he expressed his privilege to be part of this major project and emphasised its importance to all employees.

Then, Mr Marco Villa gave a speech on behalf of TTSJV. He said: "We are pleased to see the progress of the project on land rather than on paper and expressed the contractors' commitment to the successful implementation of this project."

The BMP is designed to optimise the refinery configuration to place Bapco amongst the most competitive refineries beyond 2022.

## Appeals Court to hear fake prescription case

TDT | Manama

An appeals court will hear the case of a Bahraini accused of forging a medical prescription to obtain Morphine from a pharma shop.

He was sentenced to one year in jail after being found guilty in the case. According to Public Prosecutors, the man went to Jidhafs Medical Centre on the pretext that he was suffering from a severe headache.

"He asked the doctor to prescribe Morphine. But the doctor denied as it was not required to treat headache.

"The accused himself wrote Morphine in the prescription chart and gave it to a pharma shop salesman.

"After being suspicious, the pharma shop salesman rang up the doctor to verify whether he had prescribed Morphine for the patient."

The doctor denied and instantly police was alerted, the prosecutors added.

"In between, the accused also made an attempt to attack the pharma shop salesman. However, a team of police arrived at the scene on time and the man was rescued."

## Bahraini sentenced for forging maid recruitment application loses appeal

TDT | Manama

The First High Criminal Appellate Court has upheld the sentence handed down to a 62-year-old Bahraini convicted of forging application to recruit housemaid.

The convict was sentenced to three years in jail along with a fine of BD200.

According to Public Prosecution, the man had already recruited one maid and was ineligible to recruit another.

"The financial condition of the accused was also not in his favour as he had debts in the excess of BD40,000. He also had no proper sources of income."

The fraud was revealed when one of the officials at the concerned department became suspicious and verified the application.

"Upon proper verification, it was found that the accused had forged the application with the help of another Bahraini."

## 20 delegates from Bahrain attend PBD



Mr Thomas at the panel discussion chaired by India's Minister of State for External Affairs V K Singh.

TDT | Manama  
**Harpreet Kaur**

More than 20 delegates represented the Kingdom's Indian Community at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas that was held at the Indian City of Benares.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots.

The convention also honours Overseas Indians with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award to recognise their contributions to various fields both in India and abroad. Bahrain's Al Hilal Hospital Vice Chairman and leading businessman Dr V T Vinod was among those non-resident Indians who received the prestigious award.

The PBD convention this year was held under the banner of 'Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India'.

Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi inaugurated the plenary session of the 15th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas at Deendayal Hastkala Sankul.

Speaking about the welfare of Indians overseas, Mr Modi said passport and visa rules have been simplified and e visa had made it much easier for them to travel.

All Pravasi Bharatiya is now being linked



Mr Vinod receives the award from Indian President Ram Nath Kovind.

to Passport Sewa and efforts are in to issue chip-based E-passport, he added.

Speaking to Tribune, one of the delegates, Sudheer Thirunlath said: "In terms of Bahrain, two main points were discussed, one of which is the long pending cases of individuals who are above 60 years old and how they need to be given legal support and secondly how to provide medical assistance to workers in Bahrain especially for cases

like brain haemorrhage."

Aruldas Thomas, chairman of ICRF, said: "The panel discussion was a continuation of previous panel discussions conducted in May 2018 at Delhi and most of the points suggested by panel members were incorporated and taken for actions. We hope the results of government actions based on our suggestions will result in for the betterment of distressed Indians abroad."

# world

## Drone disrupts air traffic into Newark

New York, United States

A drone briefly disrupted air traffic Tuesday at Newark airport, one of New York's three major hubs for air traffic, US officials said.

There were no further drones sighted, and arrivals were allowed to resume after a short suspension, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman told AFP.

The FAA ordered a ground stop for other flights heading

to Newark, however, until the "backlog" of arrivals landing at the airport were cleared.

"Around 5:00 pm, we received two reports from incoming flights into Newark that a drone was sighted at about 3,500 feet (1,070 meters) above Teterboro," another nearby airport in New Jersey, the spokesman



## Tonga: Whole country cut off from Facebook, YouTube

Nuku'alofa, Tonga

Tonga has been plunged into virtual cyber darkness after an undersea cable broke, cutting off the Pacific island kingdom from almost all cell phone and Internet services.

While life without the Internet may be considered a paradise for many, Tonga relies heavily on links with the outside world for daily supplies and vital tourist earnings, and faced "an absolute disaster"



Representative picture

as officials struggled to fix the problem.

"We are all heavily tied to the Internet for doing business and for the government," Mary Fonua, editor of the online news

service Matangi Tonga said yesterday.

"There's no Facebook, which is how the Tongan diaspora communicate with each other, businesses can't get orders out, airlines can't take bookings for passengers or freight."

While the authorities look into the cause and struggle to find a solution, they have turned to a small, locally operated satellite connection as back-up.

In the meantime non-essential social media sites like Face-

book have been blocked to preserve much-needed bandwidth.

The restricted access also meant serious problems getting money transfers.

Tonga Cable, which administers the 827-kilometre (514-mile) cable between Tonga and Fiji, said Internet traffic had to be prioritised until repairs were completed, and in the meantime social media websites may be blocked while the country of 110,000 relies on makeshift connectivity.

## Two drowned Saudi sisters committed suicide: US medical examiner

New York, United States |

Two Saudi sisters whose bodies were found taped together on the banks of a New York river committed suicide, the city's medical examiner said on Tuesday.

Rotana Farea, 22, and her sister Tala, 16, were found beside the Hudson River in late October with no visible signs of trauma, dressed all in black with fur-trimmed coat collars.

They were tied together at the ankles and waist by duct tape.

"My office determined that the death of the Farea sisters was the result of suicide, in which the young women bound themselves together before descending into the Hudson River," Chief Medical Examiner Barbara Sampson said.

Fatimah Baeshen, spokeswoman for Saudi Arabia's US embassy in Washington, tweeted that "Reports that we ordered anyone related to the Saudi sisters, Tala and Rotana Farea, God rest their souls, (who recently died tragically in NY), to leave the US for seeking asylum, are absolutely false."

## Tunisia mother faces trial for racism against teacher

Tunis, Tunisia

A woman faces trial in the eastern Tunisian city of Sfax under a new anti-racism law for allegedly hurling insults at a teacher who threw her daughter out of class. They said the woman, who rushed to school after a phone call from the girl to say she was being expelled, had insulted the teacher over the colour of his skin.

She was detained on Tuesday, three days after the incident. The spokesman for the prosecutor's office, Murad Turki, said the woman was being held in custody pending trial next week on racism charges under the law passed in October 2018 and for insulting a public sector worker.

# Floods, landslides kill at least eight in Indonesia



Indonesian soldiers evacuate flood-affected residents in Makassar

Jakarta, Indonesia

At least eight people have been killed and thousands forced to evacuate their homes after heavy rain triggered devastating flash floods and landslides in Indonesia, authorities said yesterday.

Heavy rain and strong winds buffeted parts of Sulawesi island overnight, swelling rivers that burst their banks and inundated dozens of villages in nine southern districts, as well as parts of the provincial capital Makassar.

Five people were found dead

in Jenepono district, while three people were killed in Gowa, Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency said.

At least four people are missing but authorities say data is still being collected across hard-hit areas.

"Extreme rain that started to fall on (Tuesday) in several areas of South Sulawesi caused the flooding," agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said in a statement. Footage showed rivers overflowing with water spreading across vast swathes of land, flooding rice fields and submerging cars.

The flooding has forced thousands of residents to flee

their homes and destroyed two bridges.

"Boats and food assistance for evacuees is still needed," Nugroho said.

"(Rescuers) are still searching for the missing."

Heavy rains and the extent of flooding has hampered search efforts, authorities said.

Landslides and flooding are common in Indonesia, especially during the monsoon season between October and April, when rain lashes the vast tropical archipelago.

In October, flash floods and landslides killed at least 22 people in several districts across Sumatra island.



An aerial view of the flood situation in Gowa, Sulawesi.

## Hacker uses Nest camera to broadcast nuke alert

San Francisco, United States

Nest urged owners of its security cameras Tuesday to use enhanced authentication to thwart hackers, after one terrified a family with a hoax nuclear missile attack.

A couple living in a California town near San Francisco told local media they experienced "sheer terror" over the weekend when a Nest security camera atop their family's television issued a realistic-sounding warning of missiles heading to the United States from North Korea.

The couple and their frightened child eventually figured out they had been targeted by a hacker who got control of speakers built into the camera, which is equipped for two-way conversations.

Nest, which is owned by Google-parent Alphabet, told AFP that incidents of commandeered camera control in recent months were the result

of hackers using passwords stolen from other online venues.

"Nest was not breached," Google said in a statement.

"These recent reports are based on customers using compromised passwords - exposed through breaches on other websites."

Reported incidents involving Nest cameras in the US in the past three months include a hacker threatening to snatch a baby and a seemingly well-intended hacker telling someone that his data was exposed.

Nest camera users were urged to prevent such invasions by implementing two-factor verification, meaning that a second step such as entering a code sent via text message is needed along with a password to get into an account.

People can check online at sites such as [www.havebeenpwned.com](http://www.havebeenpwned.com) to see whether their email addresses have been found in troves of stolen data.



## Philippine lawmakers back bill to jail 12-year-olds

Manila, Philippines

Children as young as 12 years old could be incarcerated under a bill backed by Philippine lawmakers on Wednesday which has been attacked by the UN and rights monitors.

Duterte's allies had originally proposed lowering the "age of criminal liability" to nine, but after mounting out-

rage the lower House of Representatives raised it to 12 and passed the bill on the second reading.

The current age at which children are held criminally liable in the Philippines is 15.

If the Senate approves it the Philippines would join countries like Afghanistan which punish 12-year-old children for criminal acts.

**NOTICE** With regard to the cancellation of

the Investment Business Firm-Category 3 license of  
"Islamic Finance Consultants B.S.C. (c)"

With reference to the Resolution of the Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain No. (3) of 2019 pertaining to the cancellation of the Investment Business Firm-Category 3 license of "Islamic Finance Consultants B.S.C. (c)" issued on 7<sup>th</sup> Jumada I 1440H, corresponding to 13<sup>th</sup> January 2019, the Central Bank of Bahrain hereby provides notice that the Investment Business Firm-Category 3 license of "Islamic Finance Consultants B.S.C. (c)" issued on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1999, registered under commercial registration no.42850-1 has been cancelled, with effect from the date of issuing and publication of the above resolution in the Official Gazette.

## Nurse arrested in case of US woman who gave birth in vegetative state

Los Angeles, United States

A male nurse has been arrested in Arizona for the sexual assault of a woman who gave birth while in a long-term vegetative state, police in the US state said Wednesday.

The 29-year-old victim gave birth late last month to a baby boy, whose DNA was matched to that of the suspect, leading to the arrest, according to police.

The suspect -- identified as Nathan Sutherland, age 36 -- faces charges of one count of sexual assault and one count of vulnerable adult abuse, Phoenix police Sergeant Tommy Thomson told a news conference.

"The baby I am told is doing good," Thompson said.

The CEO of the nursing facility resigned following the scandal, according to a statement sent to media.

## Thai king signs decree approving first election since coup

Bangkok, Thailand

Thailand's king has issued a royal decree endorsing the first general election since a 2014 coup, with a date for the long-delayed poll expected later.

"It's a suitable time to hold an election of members of parliament," said the decree by 66-year-old King Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn, published in the Royal Gazette on



Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn

Wednesday and countersigned by junta leader Prayut Chan-O-Cha.

## Three arrested at US airport, charged with supporting IS



From left, Booking photos of Muse Abdikadir Muse, Mohamud Abdikadir Muse and Mohamed Salat Haji. (Courtesy of woodtv/kent Country Sheriff's office)

● The three men, all in their 20s and related to each other

Chicago, United States

Three American citizens of Kenyan descent have been charged with conspiring to support the Islamic State group after an arrest at a Michigan airport foiled their alleged plot, authorities announced Tuesday.

The three men, all in their 20s and related to each other, allegedly recorded videos pledging their allegiance to IS and discussed a potential car attack in the United States if one of them was unable to travel overseas to fight for the terror group.

FBI agents employed undercover agents to communicate with the suspects and multiple search warrants of their social media accounts to monitor the suspects' communications between each other, according to an affidavit filed in federal court.

The three were arrested Monday at Gerald Ford Airport in the city of Grand Rapids as Muse Abdikadir Muse, 23, also known as Muse Muse, was going through the TSA security screening process.

Authorities said he had checked in for a trip that would eventually take him to Mogadishu, Somalia, with the goal of joining IS.

In an online exchange with an undercover FBI agent, Muse allegedly said he wanted to join IS in Somalia and "fight in the front lines," according to the affidavit.

Police also arrested at the airport terminal the men said to be Muse's co-conspirators: his brother Mohamud Abdikadir Muse, 20, and another relative, Mohamed Salat Haji, 26.

The two are alleged to have purchased the airline ticket and driven Muse to the airport. All three men, who are naturalized US citizens from Kenya, were charged with conspiring to provide material support or resources to a designated foreign terrorist organization.

# "I'm on a plane that looks like it's going to fall apart"

Search resumes for missing plane of Cardiff striker Sala as his last words emerge

AFP | St Peter Port, United Kingdom

Police on the British island of Guernsey resumed the search yesterday for a missing plane carrying Premier League player Emiliano Sala, who is presumed dead after debris was found in the water.

The light aircraft carrying the Argentine striker, who signed for Cardiff City at the weekend, disappeared from radar around 20 kilometres (12 miles) north of Guernsey on Monday night.

"We have resumed searching," the police said.

"Two planes are taking off and will search a targeted area we believe has the highest likelihood of finding anything, based on review of the tides and weather since it (the plane) went missing.

"Coastal areas around (the nearby island of) Alderney and off-lying rocks and islands will also be searched from the air."

Sala, who signed on Saturday from French club Nantes for a reported fee of 17 million euros (\$19.3 million), was flying to Cardiff on a single-engine Piper PA-46 Malibu aircraft.

It has emerged he expressed concerns about the plane on the flight, according to an audio message sent to friends and relatives.

"I'm on a plane that looks like it's going to fall apart, and I'm leaving for Cardiff," Sala said in a WhatsApp audio message carried by Argentine media.

"If in an hour and a half you have no news from me, I don't know if they will send people



FC Nantes football club supporters gather in Nantes after it was announced that the plane Argentinian forward Emiliano Sala was flying on vanished during a flight from Nantes in western France to Cardiff in Wales

## Sala 'made own travel arrangements', says Cardiff chairman

London, United Kingdom

Emiliano Sala made his own arrangements to travel to Cardiff, the chairman of the Premier League club said yesterday as the search resumed for the player's missing plane.

The club told *Wales Online* that they had offered their new forward a commercial flight to

travel to Cardiff.

"We spoke to the player and asked him if he wanted us to make arrangements for his flight which, quite frankly, would have been commercial," Cardiff chairman Mehmet Dalman was quoted as saying. "He declined and made his own arrangements.

"I can't tell you who arranged the flight because I don't know

at this stage -- but it certainly wasn't Cardiff City."

"Cardiff City will be involved with the investigation," he said.

According to a separate report on the BBC, Dalman said there were no plans to rearrange the club's next Premier League match, against Arsenal at the Emirates on January 29.

to look for me, because they will not find me, you know. Dad, I'm so scared," he added.

A 15-hour search Tuesday covering a 1,155 square-mile (3,000 square-kilometre) area in

the Channel spotted "a number of floating objects in the water", Guernsey police said.

## Now you may buy a Robocop dog for home

Tokyo, Japan

Sony's puppy-sized robot dog Aibo, equipped with cameras, artificial intelligence and internet capability, can now remotely check up on family members, children or even pets, the Japanese electronics giant said yesterday.

The 30-centimetre (one-foot) robopup with flapping ears and cutting-edge LED eyes will roam around the home at pre-designated times looking for family members.

However, the latest canine tech does not come cheap, with a single dog costing nearly



Versions of Sony's puppy-sized robot dog "Aibo", including a 2019 limited special colour model (R), are displayed

\$3,000 for a three-year package, including software services

such as data storage.

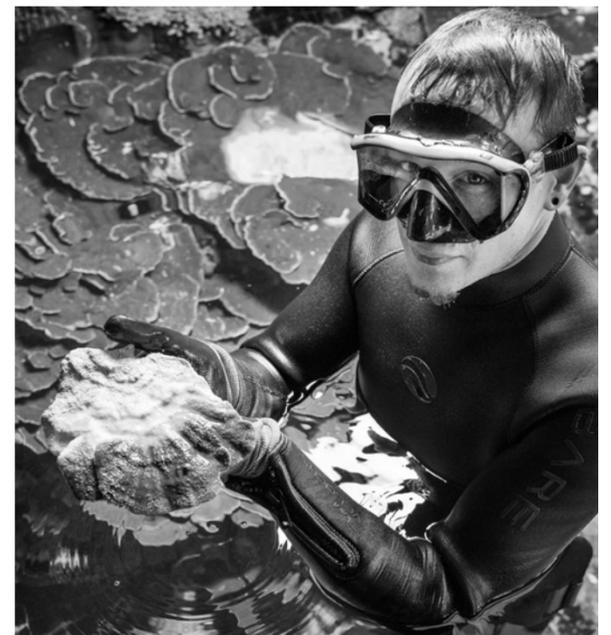
The owner will receive pro-

gress reports via smartphone in the service offered from next month in conjunction with home security company Secom.

"You will be able to check how remote family members are doing or what children are doing when they get home," project chief Izumi Kawanishi told reporters at the Sony headquarters in Tokyo.

"We aim to make you feel a bit more secure by living with aibo and having fun," added Kawanishi. The gadget will also be able to watch over real pets in the future thanks to image recognition and learning capabilities.

## Home Grown Coral



An employee of Burgers Zoo in Arnhem, removes coral from a growing basin on January 23, 2019. Over 300 home-grown coral, sea anemones and coral fish are shipped from the Burgers Zoo, supplying England's London Aquarium and Chester Zoo.

## Pope Francis announces Japan visit

On Board The Papal Plane, Italy

young Catholics.

The Argentine pontiff has repeatedly voiced a desire to visit Japan, home to some 450,000 Roman Catholics, including most recently in September last year.

Pope Francis announced yesterday he will visit Japan in November, becoming the first pontiff to do so since John Paul II nearly 40 years ago. "I will go to Japan in November," he said on board the Papal plane bringing him to Panama for a gathering of

Around 510,000 Protestants live in the largely Shinto Buddhist country, according to Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs.

# After a month of shutdown, US workers turn to food banks

New York, United States

Most never needed help from a food pantry. But a month since the US government shutdown began, dozens of federal employees have been lining up in Brooklyn for basics.

Customs, tax and emergency management officials are all among the crowd, having gone unemployed since December 22.

Others deemed "essential" like transportation workers or prison guards are forced to continue working without pay, taking advantage of their lunch breaks to stock up.

Volunteers are manning distribution tables in the lobby of the New York borough's Barclays Center, which usually hosts concerts or sporting events rather than charity drives.

Those in need first register and then fill plastic bags with canned goods, potatoes, chicken, grapes and basic toiletries.

"I came here to grab some goods, to be honest," said Antoinette Peek-Williams, an employee of the Homeland Security Department, who came an hour by subway from Harlem.

"Any way I can save money and put towards something else -- that's what I am trying to do."

Since the budget impasse began, the 62-year-old lives "day to day -- watching what I eat,



**Customs, tax and emergency management officials are all among the crowd, having gone unemployed since December 22**

watching what I spend, not spending."

"Praying that they make a decision sooner than later."

She hopes to return to work on February 1 -- an optimism of which she's no longer so certain.

"I am a person where the glass is always half-full," said the mother of a college student.

"I have to stay hopeful," she said. "If you don't have hope, you don't have anything."

It's a sentiment echoed by Chante Johnson, a tax administrator.

But "it's getting rough," the 48-year-old said. "It's coming, like, to the end of everything."

**'Unprecedented'**

She provides for a daughter



Furloughed federal workers gather bags of food and milk as the Food Bank For NYC holds food distribution for federal workers impacted by the government shutdown in Brooklyn, New York

along with her mother, and says she hasn't been able to sleep or eat healthy since being out of work.

"I just want them to open it up," she said. "Start talking and open up the government."

For those federal workers forced to work without pay, the situation is even more tense.

They can only testify anonymously, sworn to confidentiality. "It is very stressful," said

one 39-year-old single mother, who works as a prison guard at Brooklyn's federal detention facility.

She came to the food pantry on her lunch break seeking enough to prepare a few meals.

Her daughter is nearing the end of high school, and as students apply for universities, she laments being unable to pay her child's application fees.

She managed to postpone

the monthly bill for her cell phone -- which she needs for work -- albeit with a late penalty.

But she won't be able to make it after mid-February.

"After that I won't be able to go to work," she said, saying she won't have money to fill her car's gas tank.

The shutdown has exacerbated an already precarious situation in a city where soaring rents

are pushing more and more families into poverty, said Francisco Tezen, head of development at the Food Bank for New York City.

The non-profit, the city's largest food assistance organization, hosted the distribution along with corporate sponsors.

"Something like this is unprecedented, it's almost equivalent to times when we have had to activate response and services in response to a disaster," said Tezen.

"Just the length of period of time, and the volatility and the unknowns."

Organizations like his "can be of assistance and help," he said -- "but we are not an antidote to gridlock or just bad policy."

He refrained from pointing specific blame for the political stalemate, but many in New York, a Democratic stronghold, pin culpability on Donald Trump.

In Johnson's view, the border situation is not dire enough to require the \$5.7 billion the president has demanded to build a wall.

"What happened? Did a Mexican beat him up as a little boy so he is so gung-ho on this wall?" she asked. "Talk about it and get us back to work."



## Alone in a jungle

India's Modi recounts self-discovery solo jungle trips

New Delhi, India

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has claimed he used to spend days "reflecting" alone in the jungle, in a new interview.

Modi, who secured a landslide poll victory in 2014, has long touted his remarkable backstory that saw him rise from humble origins as the son of a tea seller to become India's leader.

Modi shared further details of his hardscrabble life on Tuesday, telling the popular Humans of Bombay Facebook page that he regularly left home to seek solitude during the Hindu festival Diwali.

"Not many people know this, but I would go away for the five days... somewhere in a jungle," Modi said. "I would pack enough food to last for those five days. I would reflect... People often asked me, 'Who are you going to meet?' And I would say, 'To meet myself.'"

Modi also spoke candidly about his early life, saying he grew up with "a great need to look sharp and groomed"

**"I would pack enough food to last for those five days. I would reflect... People often asked me, 'Who are you going to meet?' And I would say, 'To meet myself'"**

MODI

despite his family's meagre earnings.

"Even though we couldn't afford an iron, I would heat some coal, use an old 'lota' (rounded vessel)... This was the beginning of everything that I am today and I didn't even know it at the time," he said.

Modi has used his simple origins to contrast himself with Rahul Gandhi, the scion of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that has dominated Indian politics for decades, who is leading a resurgent opposition to polls expected by May.

The prime minister has been a champion of Hinduism and Indian culture, last year publicizing the yoga exercises he said were key to his fitness regimen.

## Gandhi family scion takes a plunge into India's political fray

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi names popular sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to party post

Reuters | New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi appointed his charismatic sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to a senior party position yesterday that officials say will energise the campaign to oust Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the national election expected in a few months.

Priyanka, 47, has campaigned for the Congress party in previous elections to help her brother, but largely stayed in the wings, letting her brother fully take the mantle of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that ruled India for most of its post-independence era.

Bearing a striking resemblance to her grandmother and former prime minister Indira Gandhi - who was known as "India's iron lady" - Priyanka will be a Congress general secretary for Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state and key to the national poll.

"We will play politics on the front foot," Rahul Gandhi told reporters. "I am very happy my sister, who is very capable, will work with me."

Priyanka will oversee the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, including the city of Varanasi, one of Modi's political constitu-



Priyanka Gandhi Vadra adjusts her flower garlands as she campaigns for her mother Sonia Gandhi during an election meeting in Uttar Pradesh (file)

encies, the Congress party said in a statement.

Priyanka is seen as a more natural campaigner and a bigger draw than her brother, who appeared wooden during the last election.

"We want to congratulate the Congress party on this move. Basically, they are saying Rahul has failed, now they need his sister," said BJP spokesman Sambit Patra.

The siblings' great grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru, was India's first prime minister following independence from Britain in 1947. Their grand-

mother, Indira Gandhi, succeeded him after a brief interval. After she was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards in 1984, her son, Rajiv Gandhi, took over as premier.

Rajiv was killed by an ethnic Tamil suicide bomber while campaigning for a general election in 1991.

His Italian-born widow, Sonia, initially resisted calls to enter politics before taking the plunge and lifting Congress' flagging fortunes under her family's brand name. Sonia Gandhi stepped back as her son took the reins of the party.

# Hold a second brexit referendum

*Other union countries, including Denmark and Ireland, have voted twice on European Union treaties and reversed the initial outcome*



May's plan B is quite similar to plan A.



ROGER COHEN

A democracy that cannot change its mind is not a democracy. The people may do that when presented with the whole picture after seeing only a partial or distorted one.

It has taken more than 30 months to shift from "Fantasy Brexit" to "Reality Brexit." The difference, after vitriolic debate that has consumed British politics virtually to the exclusion of all else, is stark.

The first was Britain's 2016 vote, fuelled by lies, to leave the European Union, trumpets blaring. The second, after a crash course in the facts of what membership brings for Britain, came Tuesday in the form of the crushing defeat by a 432-to-202 parliamentary vote of Prime Minister Theresa May's plan for British withdrawal on March 29.

This, of course, was not a vote to remain in the European Union after all. It reflected anger across ideological lines that united Conservative lawmakers who want a complete British break from Europe and representatives of other parties who want to remain in the 28-nation union. Above all, it reflected complete disarray, the incapacity of May or anyone to come up with an acceptable compromise deal to accomplish something so inherently undesirable as to defy prettification.

The vote, the most overwhelming defeat for a prime minister in recent British history, makes it more likely that the March 29 deadline will not be met. It also makes it more likely, if not yet probable, that a second referendum will be held.

As Timothy Garton Ash, the British historian and author, tweeted from Parliament: "This increases chances of #peoplesvote and Britain remaining where it belongs ... in Europe."

Resistance to a second vote is ferocious. We are told it would split Britain in two for

generations, leave blood on the streets, render the expression of the people's will meaningless, and even destroy British democracy.

But Britain is split one way or another and not about to heal. It voted in 2016 on make-believe shamelessly peddled by the likes of the former foreign secretary Boris Johnson. At stake is the country's direction for decades to come. It's worth voting on the facts, not some post-truth phantasmagoria, of a British exit. The unicorn of little English dreams turned out to be nonexistent. Recent polls suggest that British citizens now favour a second vote and that, if held, the decision to leave would likely be overturned.

Other union countries, including Denmark and Ireland, have voted twice on European Union treaties and reversed the initial outcome. They are still thriving democracies, as far as anyone can tell. People change their minds and survive.

The road from here to a second vote is no straight line but its trajectory is at least discernible.

**Dixon told me that a "Remain" campaign in a second referendum would need to focus on the real issues that caused the Brexit vote.**

Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour Party leader, called for a vote of no confidence in May's government, which May narrowly survived 325-306 on Wednesday. Then, later this week, the parliamentary maneuvering will begin under a 10-week deadline to March 29.

The backdrop to the maneuvering is this. The European Union has said the only deal is the one May tabled. That deal was a fudge in extremis leaving Britain in-

side the European single market until a new trade relationship is worked out; it reflected May's recognition that a no-deal Brexit would be an economic disaster. This compromise, in turn, infuriated many in her Conservative Party. Two Brexit secretaries quit last year over the agreement negotiations.

The bill for the divorce, which Britain agreed to under May's rejected plan, would be about \$50 billion, or about eight of Donald Trump's walls.

Corbyn's Labour Party, but not Corbyn himself, favours staying in the European Union; presumably Corbyn will eventually come around, in the absence of any viable alternative.

Britain is a parliamentary democracy. As Hugo Dixon, the deputy chair of the People's Vote, a grass-roots movement for a second referendum, wrote in the French daily Le Monde: "Parliament will need to pass a new law to authorise this referendum. It can do this either the easy way, with prime minister's support; or the hard way, by forcing it

through against her wishes."

Dixon told me that a "Remain" campaign in a second referendum would need to focus on the real issues that caused the Brexit vote: immigration, the areas of Britain starved of investment and left behind, a deficient National Health Service. None of these problematic issues were caused by the European Union. "In fact," he said, "they are best addressed in Europe, with an economy given a boost by a decision to remain and a political agenda no longer consumed by Brexit."

There are no good solutions to the current impasse but a second referendum is the least bad. All the debate has come up against a stubborn fact: Brexit is damaging to the British national interest. No deal can make it look good. May tried and failed. The British, and particularly British youth, deserve the right to determine their long-term future on the basis of reality.

(Roger Cohen is a columnist with The New York Times.)

(In collaboration with New York Times)

## CIVILIAN'S TRIBUNE



# Ban Jallikattu with immediate effect

Jallikattu should be immediately banned by the Indian Government as it is an inhuman and dangerous sport. I do not know how many of the youngsters who a few years ago protested on Marina Beach actually witnessed Jallikattu. Thirty years ago, I saw the cruel game with bulls being driven out of an enclosure. They were totally in a state of panic seeing the frenzied crowd. Tens of people set upon

them, twisted their tails and tried to hang onto them. It is considered to be a fun, frenzy and enjoyment for the men but fear and pain for the bulls.

Jallikattu may have drawn the attention of animal rights activists for the innumerable accounts of cruelty to bulls, but the deaths fall mostly on the human side of the ledger.

The animals suffer but general-

ly survive the ordeal, while a few youth lose their lives.

A tragedy as in Viralmalai in Pudukottai district of Tamil Nadu, where two men were gored to death by bulls, was waiting to happen. Whatever the precautions taken, and there were many, one cannot prepare for the behaviour of a rampaging bull.

T S Narayanan

1972

Japanese Sgt. **Shoichi Yokoi** is found hiding in a Guam jungle, where he had been since the end of World War II.



1977

**Atocha massacre** occurs in Madrid during the Spanish transition to democracy.

1984

**Apple Computer** places the Macintosh personal computer on sale in the United States.

1989

Notorious serial killer **Ted Bundy**, with over 30 known victims, is executed by the electric chair at the Florida State Prison.

# The US should get tough on timber with Peru

*A poorly enforced trade agreement continues to damage the environment and the economy*



A chainsaw operator stands on the cut roots of a Shiwawaco tree during a forest management project in Peru.



**RICHARD CONNIFF**

When the trade deal between the United States and Peru went into effect in 2009, proponents touted it as a shining example of environmental good sense. It was the first time the main text of any trade deal included detailed protections for the environment and for labor. That mattered — and still matters — both as a model for other trade deals and also because the environment ostensibly being protected includes a large chunk of the Amazon rainforest.

As part of the deal's Forest Sector's Annex, the United States provided \$90 million in technical assistance to beef up enforcement by Peru's forest service and to create an electronic system intended to track every log from stump to export. (That system does not appear to be working so far, because of software issues, according to rumours.) Peru in turn agreed, among other things, to ensure the independent status of its forest watchdog agency, called Osinfor, which sends its agents into the field to check that loggers have actually harvested the trees reported in their export

documents. (That system works all too well, repeatedly demonstrating that logging companies lie.) On passage, then-Sen. Max Baucus assured skeptics that enforcement of the treaty's added provision would "have real teeth."

Sadly, the US-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement is now slouching toward its 10th anniversary on Feb. 1 in shambles, brought on this time by the Peruvian government's latest attempt to hobble, cripple or otherwise rid itself of this meddling Osinfor.

From the start, the Peru deal has served as a cover for almost laughably rampant illegal logging. The Environmental Investigation Agency, a nonprofit group, laid out detailed evidence in 2012 that Peru's timber industry was a "laundering machine," mass-producing "legal" paperwork for stolen timber. Stolen, that is, from national parks, protected areas and the lands of indigenous communities, whose leaders risked assassination if they resisted. So not laughable, after all, especially since much of the stolen timber has routinely been making its way from the Amazon port of Iquitos to American lumber yards and DIY-do-it-yourself stores.

The Office of the United States Trade Representative, which has traditionally focused on promoting trade, has been toothless in response. It waited

until 2016 to ask the Peruvian government to verify the legality of a timber shipment — and even then, did so only after the Department of Homeland Security, acting on information from Osinfor, had already impounded the timber in Houston. It was the first time the USTR had ever issued an environmental verification request in any trade deal. When Osinfor inspectors subsequently demonstrated that 93 per cent of the impounded timber was illegal, the USTR responded by suspending a single Peruvian timber exporter from the United States market for up to three years. Peru's response was to fire the head of Osinfor, who fled the country after death threats and a firebombing of one of Osinfor's regional offices.

The Peruvian government, which rates a 37 out of 100 on the Transparency International scale of perceived corruption (with 100 being "very clean"), has been maneuvering ever since to bring Osinfor under its thumb. In mid-December, when many people were distracted by pre-Christmas doings, the government's council of ministers decided on short notice and without consulting the affected agencies to bury Osinfor within the environmental ministry.

Rep. Richard Neal, Democrat of Massachusetts, as incoming chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, fired

**From the start, the Peru deal has served as a cover for almost laughably rampant illegal logging.**

off a letter to the USTR, angrily protesting this "brazen, bad faith decision" as "a flagrant attack on the heart of the forestry annex." The surprise came when the trade representative, Robert Lighthizer, appointed by a Trump administration that is otherwise outspokenly contemptuous of environmental concerns, wrote back just two days later, "in complete agreement with you and your colleagues that this development is unacceptable."

One possible explanation is that the USTR has finally become fed up after 10 years of being lied to and laughed off by Peru. Also possible: Lighthizer may simply be making a show of force on past environmental commitments to help ease the revised North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA —

the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement — through forthcoming congressional hearings. (Happily for the USTR, the environmental provisions of the unpronounceable USMCA are largely too weak to require much enforcement.)

For now, Lighthizer has "requested consultations with Peru under the Environment Chapter" of the trade agreement, another first for the USTR, with the possibility of sanctions still ahead. In Lima, government ministers are taking a this-too-will-pass attitude.

It should not pass. Tolerating stolen timber imports costs the jobs of thousands of Americans in the legal timber industry. It lends an eager hand to deforestation even as an intact Amazon forest is increasingly seen as a critical factor in fighting climate change. It implicates everyone who buys or sells lumber, or who lives in a wood house, in a global pattern of corruption, murder and devastation. And it turns all trade agreements into thinly veiled invitations to crime.

If in fact the Office of the US Trade Representative has overcome its teething pains, that's good news. Now when trade partners prove false, it should learn how to bite.

(Richard Conniff is the author of "The Species Seekers: Heroes, Fools and the Mad Pursuit of Life on Earth" and a contributing opinion writer.)



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



The Chinese government has granted Ivanka Trump's company preliminary approval for another 5 trademarks this month, as her father's admin pushes ahead on trade negotiations with China.

@kylegriffin1

02



Self proclaimed hacker Syed Shuja was never on ECIL's rolls as a regular employee nor was he involved in EVM designing & development between 2009 & 2014. @KapilSibal and the Congress have much to answer!!

@MrsGandhi

03



The last WH briefing was more than a month ago, before the shutdown began. Sanders has not taken one question from the podium about a shutdown that has impacted millions of Americans. We have to catch her in the driveway after her hits on Fox. So the briefing room sits empty.

@Acosta

04



Having botched Brexit and created a deadlock in Parliament, it's shocking that a third of the Cabinet have the audacity to run off to sip champagne with the world's elite.

@jeremycorbyn

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

# business

## Bank of Japan lowers inflation forecasts again



BoJ governor Haruhiko Kuroda

Tokyo, Japan

Japan's central bank again revised down its inflation forecasts yesterday, a further sign that authorities are losing the battle to boost prices in the world's third-largest economy.

After a two-day meeting, the Bank of Japan's policy board left its mammoth monetary easing programme in place, as expected, and lowered the inflation forecast for the fiscal year ending March next year to 0.9 percent from 1.4 percent.

BoJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said the decision to revise down the forecast was "due primarily to the decline in crude oil prices", but added it would only be temporary.

"It is true that it will take some time for us to achieve the two-percent target," he told reporters, referring to the bank's long-held goal.

The downward revision follows a previous downgrade in late October.

## Sony to shift UK HQ

Tokyo, Japan

Sony will shift its European headquarters from Britain to the Netherlands to avoid Brexit-related customs issues, but operations at its current UK company will remain unchanged, a company spokesman said Wednesday.

"We are moving the location of our European headquarters' registration to the Netherlands" by the end of March, company spokesman Takashi Iida said.

## Viacom buys streaming service for \$340 mn

San Francisco, United States

US media group Viacom announced Tuesday a deal to buy free streaming television service Pluto TV for \$340 million in cash to better compete as lifestyles shift to online entertainment. Pluto streams content through Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Apple TV and Sony PlayStation video game consoles.

# China blasts US 'bullying'

● The United States faces a January 30 deadline to file an extradition request

● Meng, the daughter of Huawei's founder, was arrested at Vancouver airport on December 1

AFP | Beijing, China

China yesterday accused the United States of "bullying behaviour" after US authorities confirmed plans to seek the extradition of a top Chinese telecom executive detained in Canada.

The United States faces a January 30 deadline to file an extradition request for Huawei chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou, whose arrest last month sparked diplomatic tensions.

"We will continue to pursue the extradition of defendant Ms Meng Wanzhou, and will meet all deadlines set by the US/Canada Extradition Treaty," said US Justice Department spokesman Marc Raimondi on Tuesday.

Meng, the daughter of Huawei's founder, was arrested at Vancouver airport on December 1 at the request of the United States, which says she violated American sanctions on Iran.

She has since been freed on Can\$10 million (US\$7.5 million) bail and is awaiting a hearing on her extradition.

According to the agreement



In this file photo taken on December 12, 2018 individuals with flowers exiting from a vehicle with consular plates arrive at the residence of Huawei Technologies Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou(R) after she was released on bail in Vancouver, British Columbia.

between the two countries, the United States has 60 days after an arrest made at its request in Canada to formalise an extradition request.

Once a request has been submitted, the Canadian justice

ministry has 30 days to begin official extradition proceedings, though the process can take months or years.

China, which has defended both Huawei and Meng since the CFO's arrest, criticised the

“We will continue to pursue the extradition of defendant Ms Meng Wanzhou, and will meet all deadlines set by the US/Canada Extradition Treaty”

MARC RAIMONDI  
US JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN

US extradition request as without "legitimate reason" and "not in conformity with international law".

"This is a type of technological bullying behaviour and everyone can clearly see the real purpose," said Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying at a regular press briefing.

The US "will stop at nothing to suppress Chinese high-tech enterprises and restrain China's legitimate development rights", she added.

Meng's arrest has sparked an escalating diplomatic crisis between Ottawa and Beijing.

Two Canadians have since been detained in China on national security grounds, in what is thought to be retaliation for the arrest.

A Chinese court also this month sentenced a Canadian man to death for drug trafficking following a retrial, a drastic increase of his previous 15-year prison sentence.

## IIFM, BAFT develop Shari'ah-Compliant MPAs

TDT | Manama

IIFM (International Islamic Financial Market) and BAFT (Bankers Association for Finance & Trade), yesterday announced a joint initiative for creating global master participation agreements to support the development of Islamic Trade Finance business.

The IIFM-BAFT Master Participation Agreements (IIFM-BAFT MPA's) consist of two separate standardized framework documentation to cater for Shari'ah-compliant Unfunded and Funded participation arrangements for Trade Finance transactions.

The standard master agreements are supplemented by a Structure Memorandum and an Operational Guidance Memorandum to provide a better understanding of the use of the documentation from Shari'ah, legal and operational aspects. In addition, there is a separate Shari'ah pronouncement for each master agreement.

According to Khalid Hamad, Chairman of IIFM, the IIFM-BAFT Master Participation Agreements, like previous IIFM Standards, will provide greater transparency, cost and time efficiency, legal certainty as well as Shari'ah harmonization which in turn will contribute in creating more active Islamic Trade Finance business.



Undersecretary of Commerce Affairs Nader Al Moayyed meeting Chairman of the Commercial Representation Authority Ahmed Antar, in presence of Assistant Undersecretary of Foreign Trade Eman Aldoseri and Director of Foreign Trade Relations Sheikh Hamad bin Salman Al Khalifa, on the sideline of Autumn Fair 2019. They reviewed bilateral economic relations between the Bahrain and Egypt



KFH-Bahrain announced the winners of the December Shop & Win promotional campaign for all KFH credit and prepaid cardholders. The winners of the month's cash-back prizes included Ahmed Ali AlBahdahi, Khawla Abdulatif Alfozan, Abdulrahman Aaref AlOmar, Abdulla Hamad AlThawadi, and Sh. Shaikha Sabah Al Khalifa with amounts of BD 1000, BD 800, BD 600, BD 400 and BD 200 respectively.

## VIVA offers 'Doubles Chances of Winning' during Shop Bahrain



Shaikh Khaled bin Humood & VIVA Acting CEO Mohammed Al Khushail

TDT | Manama

VIVA Bahrain announced launching a series of promotions and benefits as part of its partnership with the fifth-edition of Shop Bahrain.

As part, during the month-long partnership, VIVA Bahrain customers will receive six points for every BD1 spent at all participating malls and hotels. This is the maximum number of points that shoppers can collect through the festival's Loyalty System.

Also, VIVA Cash application users will be able to shop VAT free during this period and receive a 5pc cash back in their e-wallet. Visitors of Festival City will get a free ticket for every ticket purchased using the VIVA Cash app.

"We thank VIVA Bahrain for their continuous support of Shop Bahrain, one of the largest events held under BTEA's calendar," said the Chief Executive Officer of the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA), Shaikh Khaled bin Humood Al Khalifa.

## Japan logs first trade deficit since 2015



Representative picture (Courtesy of the Star)

### Tokyo, Japan

Japan logged a trade deficit last year for the first time since 2015, with export growth slowing amid tensions between the country's two biggest trading partners -- China and the United States.

Japan logged the deficit of 1,203 billion yen (\$11 billion) in 2018 after two years of surplus, with annual growth in exports slowing to 4.1 per cent from 11.8pc in 2017, according to finance ministry data released yesterday.

Exports to China increased 6.8pc, markedly slower than the previous year's 20.5pc growth.

Growth in shipments to the United States slowed to 2.3pc from 6.9pc.

"US-bound exports were not strong but still solid, whereas shipments to Asia, notably to China, slowed down," said Takeshi Minami, chief economist at Norinchukin Research Institute.

"US-China trade tensions should be blamed for that," he said.

The trade war negatively affected Japanese companies' exports of parts and devices for assembly of finished prod-

ucts at Chinese factories as well as exports from China by Japanese businesses operating there, he said.

"If the global economy carries on as it is now, we cannot expect growth in exports," Minami said.

He added that Japan's trade figures could worsen in the coming months.

Japan is to hike its sales tax from the current 8.0pc to 10pc in October, which could mean a spike in consumer demand before the new rate.

"This could boost imports until September, which could expand Japan's deficits," he said.

For the month of December, Japan logged a deficit of 55.3 billion yen, compared with a surplus of 356 billion a year earlier.

Exports for the month were down 3.8pc, while imports rose 1.9pc.

The data was published hours before the Bank of Japan was due to issue a policy statement after a two-day meeting.

The central bank is expected to revise down its forecasts for growth and inflation, despite an aggressive monetary policy intended to boost inflation to 2.0pc.

## French watchdog sounds alert over chemicals in diapers

### Paris, France

A French public health watchdog issued a warning yesterday about the risks of several chemicals found in disposable nappies, particularly artificial perfumes, leading the government to demand that manufacturers withdraw them from their products.

The Anses health body stressed there was no medical study which had proved health problems caused by disposable diapers.

But "we cannot exclude a risk... because we have recorded some substances that are above healthy limits," the deputy director of the Agency for Food, Environmental Health and Safety (Anses), Gerard Lasfargues said.

gues, said.

The chemicals identified in the study -- described as the first of its kind -- include two artificial perfumes as well as other complex aromatic products that are refined from oil, and potentially dangerous dioxins.

Scientists working for Anses tested 23 types of nappies in real-life conditions as they were worn by children, which it said was a world first.

"We calculated the amount (of chemicals) absorbed, calculated according to the time a nappy is worn, the number of nappies worn by babies, up to 36 months, and then we compared the results with toxicology standards," Lasfargues said.

Representative picture

# Trade meeting still on

White House denies reports of canceled trade meeting

● The Financial Times and CNBC reported that Washington had canceled a preliminary meeting

Washington, United States

The White House said high-level trade talks with Beijing were proceeding uninterrupted, quickly rebutting media reports that progress toward resolving their trade war had faltered.

Chinese Vice Premier Liu He is to meet his US counterparts in Washington next week as the two sides work to resolve their trade disagreements by March 1, when a 90-day truce is due to expire, allowing US import duties on Chinese goods to increase sharply.

Washington and Beijing imposed tit-for-tat tariffs on more than \$360 billion worth of goods in two-way trade last year.

Trump initiated the trade war because of complaints over unfair Chinese trade practices -- concerns shared by the European Union, Japan and others.

The Financial Times and CNBC both reported Tuesday afternoon that Washington had



US President Donald Trump (L) and China's President Xi Jinping leaving a business leaders event at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.



If both sides fail to reach a resolution to the trade war, US duty rates on \$200 billion in Chinese goods are due to rise to 25 percent from their current 10 percent, a prospect that has shaken markets in recent months.

canceled a preliminary meeting set for this week ahead of Liu's visit.

American officials had reportedly cited a lack of progress on the most difficult issues in the trade dispute -- including allegedly forced technology transfers and far-reaching structural reforms to China's economy.

The reports sent Wall Street even further into the red. US stocks had already opened lower on downgraded forecasts for global economic growth.

But, shortly before the close of trading in New York, top White House economic aide Larry Kudlow flatly denied the

reports during an appearance on CNBC.

"With respect, the story is not true," Kudlow said Tuesday.

"There was never a planned meeting that was canceled."

China's foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying concurred yesterday at a regular press briefing, adding that she had not heard of any changes and that "both sides remain in contact on China-US trade consultation issues".

Stock prices recovered some of their losses following Kudlow's remarks but still finished substantially lower for the day. Asian markets were mixed on Wednesday.

Kudlow said the United States continued to press the Chinese on the subject of intellectual property and state intervention in markets, among other matters.

He also said American officials were insisting that any agreement have teeth to ensure Beijing's compliance.

"Enforcement is absolutely crucial to the success of these talks," Kudlow said.

"Will it be solved at the end of the month? I don't know. I wouldn't dare predict and want to make sure people understand how important that is to put it on the table."

## Britain must pay EU bill even in 'no deal': Barnier

Brussels, Belgium

The British government will face a multibillion euro divorce settlement with the European Union even if it leaves the bloc without a deal, Brussels negotiator Michel Barnier warned yesterday.

Some anti-Europeans, opposed to a negotiated settlement with Brussels, balk at the idea of settling a bill that their own government estimates at £39 billion (44 billion euros) to cover outstanding obligations.

But Barnier, in interviews with several European newspapers, said the bill would still be settled at some point, even if London rejects the withdrawal agreement Britain signed in November.

crashes out on March 29.

"For the EU budget, we've always said one simple thing: the totality of the commitments made by the United Kingdom while still an EU member will be respected," the senior EU official said, according to Le Monde.

"It will be more difficult to make them respect them in the case of a 'no deal', but we will continue to insist: These commitments are legally binding under international law and I can not imagine that Britain would not respect its commitments."

Prime Minister Theresa May's government does not dispute that Britain owes budget contributions to cover EU spending

agreed between members while Britain remained in the bloc, and approved November's divorce deal.

But the British parliament -- divided between deal supporters, eurosceptics who want a 'no deal' departure and pro-Europeans seeking to halt Brexit -- rejected that accord and threw the process into limbo.

And some hardliners in London want to withhold the payment as leverage ahead of post-Brexit talks to agree a new trading relationship between Britain and the remaining 27 EU member states.

Separately in the interview, given to French daily Le Monde, the Luxemburger Wort and Poland's Rzeczpospolita, Barnier restated the consensus EU position that the withdrawal deal must stand and that it is up to May's government to find a way to save it.

"Things could start moving rapidly. This depends on the future relationship, like I already said. We are ready to be more ambitious if the British decide to shift their red lines, for example by remaining in a customs union, or participating in the single market," he said, according to the Luxemburger Wort.

"I believe there is a readiness in London for that."

## General Electric to cut up to 468 jobs in France: unions

Belfort, France

US energy giant General Electric plans to slash up to 468 jobs across France, union sources said Tuesday.

They said 229 jobs would be cut from the staff at Alstom Power Systems (APS), including 146 at GE Energy's European headquarters in Belfort, eastern France.

Another 149 jobs are on the chopping block at GE Energy Power Conversion France and 90 at GE Grid, they said.

## Dutch say 250 firms interested in Brexit move

The Hague, Netherlands

Dutch officials are in contact with more than 250 companies about a possible post-Brexit move, the government said Wednesday, after Sony revealed it would shift its base to the Netherlands.

The Dutch government will announce a final figure in Feb but "every new arrival of a business, big or small, is a success," Michiel Bakhuizen, a spokesman for the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency, said.

Japanese electronics giant Sony is following Panasonic in moving its European HQ across the North Sea to the Netherlands ahead of Britain's scheduled departure from the EU in March.



European Union's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier gestures as he speaks during a debate on the Britain's withdrawal from the EU during a plenary session at the European Parliament

Parliament

## France is world champion in social spending: Study



Tourists stand under umbrellas as they look at the Eiffel Tower from the Trocadero Plaza

Paris, France

France's social spending is the highest in the developed world relative to the size of its economy, an OECD study found yesterday, as the government weighs how to respond to "yellow vest" protests.

Expenditure on healthcare, pensions and other social services was the equivalent of 31.2 per cent of GDP last year, said the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, a Paris-based inter-governmental research institution.

Outlays have risen sharply since 1990, when they represented just under 25pc of GDP, and are nearly triple the level of roughly 12 percent of GDP in 1960.

That trend is broadly in line with other developed countries, reflecting the development of more comprehensive welfare states and higher pension spending as more people live longer.

But France's outlays are well above the average of 20.1pc of GDP for the 36 OECD member countries, with pensions making up a large chunk of the cash benefits paid out every month.

In neighbouring Germany, social spending was just 25pc of GDP last year, while in the US it made up just 19pc.

And when taking all public spending into account, such as police and defence, France leads Europe with government outlays the equivalent of 56.5pc of GDP in 2017, according to the most recent data available.

## Gulf markets gain

● Dubai breaks three day losing streak

● Nasdaq-listed DP World gains after stake purchase

● 9 of 10 banks rise in Saudi

● Egypt exchange resets SODIC, MNHD after merger called off

Reuters

The Dubai stock market snapped a three day losing streak yesterday, boosted by its financial and property shares, while Saudi Arabia rose on the back of its banks.

The Dubai index was up 0.9 per cent higher with Emirates NBD, its largest bank, adding 2.1pc and its largest listed developer Emaar Properties gaining 2.2pc.

Gulf Arab economies are expected to grow at a slower pace than previously forecast, a quarterly Reuters poll of economists found, as oil output cuts, lower crude prices and weaker global growth put pressure on

### Closing Bell

SAUDI	▲ 0.8 pc	» 8,466 pts
DUBAI	▲ 0.9 pc	» 2,517 pts
QATAR	▼ 0.4 pc	» 10,650 pts
ABU DHABI	▲ 0.3 pc	» 4,971 pts
EGYPT	▲ 0.2 pc	» 13,507 pts
KUWAIT	▼ 0.4 pc	» 5,482 pts
OMAN	▼ 0.4 pc	» 4,166 pts
BAHRAIN	▲ 0.7 pc	» 1,362 pts

regional economies.

Amlak Finance rose 2.2pc after announcing a renegotiation of restructuring terms with its financiers to allow more flexibility in adapting to "current market conditions".

Nasdaq-listed DP World increased 0.7pc after increasing its stake in its Australia unit. The port operator will spend at least \$250 million buying back some shares in its Australian port terminals unit.

Saudi Arabia's index rose 0.8pc, with nine out of 10 banks rising. Al Rajhi Bank was up 0.6pc and Samba Financial Group closed 1.7pc higher.

Petrochemical investor Alujain added 1.5pc after an update on the fire at its affiliate's plant. The company said it now expects the NATPET plant to start operating all units by the end of

September.

The Egyptian blue-chip index was up 0.2pc with its largest listed bank Commercial International Bank gaining 4.2pc.

The Egyptian Exchange yesterday cancelled all transactions made the previous day in local firms Sixth of October Development and Investment Company (SODIC) and Madinet Nasr for Housing and Development (MNHD).

The move followed SODIC's decision against a takeover of MNHD and involved their shares being suspended yesterday as the bourse reset prices.

Global Telecom Holding jumped 10pc before trading on its shares were suspended, pending a statement from the company after VEON Ltd, a major shareholder in the firm, said it was considering taking it private.

But Alexandria Mineral Oils Co plunged 7.8pc in active trade after posting a 62.6pc drop in its half-year net profit.

Qatar's index lost 0.4pc with Industries Qatar and Qatar Gas Transport (Nakilat) both shedding 1.6pc.

Abu Dhabi's index added 0.3pc, with First Abu Dhabi Bank the largest lender in the United Arab Emirates gaining 0.6pc.

## China to pass US in retail sales this year: forecast

New York, United States

Chinese consumers should outspend their American counterparts in 2019, with retail sales in the Asian giant continuing to grow in the coming years, according to an industry forecast.

Retail sales in China are expected to hit \$5.64 trillion, an increase of 7.5 per cent over 2018, while Americans are likely to spend \$5.53 trillion, a 3.3pc increase, according to the market research firm eMarketer. Growth in China's retail sector has been driven by online sales, which should expand by 30pc this year, reaching \$1.99 trillion.

This would mean more than 35pc of all Chinese retail sales will occur online, by far the highest proportion for e-commerce in the world. By comparison, online sales in the US represented only 10.9pc of the overall market in 2019, according to eMarketer.

China's online retail sales are already greater in value than in the US and should represent 55.8pc of global online e-commerce by the end of this year, rising to 63pc by 2022 -- when Americans will account for only 15pc.



Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Dr Abdulhussain Mirza receiving Nathalie Martin from economic organisation Global Insight. Martin is currently in Bahrain to prepare a special economic report on the kingdom in cooperation with The Japan Times. The minister reviewed the details of the next issue of the foundation's report and presented a comprehensive explanation of the achievements and projects in the electricity, water and sustainable energy sectors as well as the most important plans in the next five years.

## Uber threatens to pull back from Barcelona

Barcelona, Spain

Uber yesterday threatened to pull back from Barcelona after the regional government unveiled new regulations which will severely restrict ride-hailing services, as taxis upped the pressure with a restive strike.

The US giant, which has seen conflicts in other European countries as taxis complain of threats to their livelihoods, said that if the rules are approved as planned next week, "We will not be able to continue providing our UberX service in Barcelona".

That is the cheapest Uber ride and commonly-used



Representative picture

in Spain where UberOne, a more expensive premium service, also operates. The news comes as taxis strike in Madrid and Barcelona against tourism vehicles with chauffeur or VTCs such as Uber or Cabify.

## Volvo recalls 219,000 cars to check for fuel leaks

Stockholm, Sweden

Volvo Cars, owned by the Chinese group Geely, has recalled 219,000 diesel-engine cars to fix potential fuel leaks in the engine compartment, a spokesman said yesterday.

"Volvo preventative-ly recalls the cars to avert any possible future problems," the spokesman told AFP. "There are no reports alleging injuries or damages related to this issue."

The action concerns 11 models, including the upscale XC60 and XC90, that were sold in 2015 and 2016, he added.

## GPIC and BANAGAS chiefs receive top ROSPA recognition

TDT | Manama

Bahrain National Gas Company (BANAGAS) Chief Executive Dr Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa and Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC) President Dr Abdulrahman Jawahery were elected to receive Global Award by the British Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) in recognition of their companies' success in the fields of gas and petrochemicals.

ROSPA Chief Executive Officer Errol Taylor spoke of the success of Dr Sheikh Mohammed and Dr Jawahery and their commitment to the highest standards of safety, health and environmental protection. He said these principles are among the most important, noting the success of BANAGAS and GPIC deserve pres-



The award ceremony

tigious ROSPA awards, including the Sir George Earl Trophy.

"Since joining ROSPA 25 years ago, I have been aware of the

inspirational leadership of BANAGAS and GPIC," said Taylor. "These are not just two of the world's leading industrial en-

terprises in terms of their industrial and commercial activities but are also exemplary in their approach to safety, the environ-

ment and community service.' He said ROSPA has now decided to invite the two to become their Award Ambassadors.

ROSPA Vice President Lord Jordan of Bournville invited Dr Sheikh Mohammed and Dr Jawahery to attend a ceremony at Dubai's Ritz Carlton Hotel, where a reception was organised in conjunction with the National Occupational Safety and Health Examination Board (NEBOSH).

Dr Sheikh Mohammed and Dr Jawahery said that they were delighted at the recognition, which is a tribute not only to their companies but also to the Bahraini industry.

They said ROSPA selecting them as Ambassadors was an honour and a source of pride and are determined to move forward with plans to raise performance in the field of safety, health, environment and accident prevention.

# SHOW

## OASIS JUFFAIR

### 1-SERENITY (18+) (DRAMA/THRILLER) NEW

Ⓢ MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY, ANNE HATHAWAY, DIANE LANE

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 4.00 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM  
DAILY AT (VIP I): 1.00 + 5.45 + 10.30 PM

### 2-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) NEW

Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 6.00 + 11.15 PM

### 3-THE KID WHO WOULD BE KING (PG) (ADVENTURE/ACTION/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ LOUIS ASHBOURNE SERKIS, PATRICK STEWART, REBECCA FERGUSON

DAILY AT: 11.45 AM + 5.15 + 10.45 PM

### 4-MANIKARNIKA: THE QUEEN OF JHANSI (PG-15) (DRAMA/ACTION/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ KANGANA RANAUT, DANNY DENZONGPA, SURESH OBEROI

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM

### 5-VICE (15+) (DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ CHRISTIAN BALE, AMY ADAMS, STEVE CARELL

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 5.45 + 11.00 PM

### 6-DRAGON BALL SUPER: BROLY (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ SEAN SCHEMMELE, CHRISTOPHER SABAT, CHRIS AYRES

DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 7.00 + 11.00 PM

### 7-WHEELY FAST & HILARIOUS! (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 PM

### 8-21ST NOOTTAANDU PG-13 (MALAYALAM) NEW

Ⓢ PRANAV MOHANLAL, RACHEL DAVID, GOKUL SURESH

FROM FRIDAY 25TH: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM

### 9-VIJAYSUPERUM POURNAMAYIYUM (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW

Ⓢ ASIF ALI, AISHWARYA LAKSHMI

DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.15 PM

### 10-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER)

Ⓢ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 5.45 + 11.15 PM  
DAILY AT (VIP): 10.30 AM + 3.15 + 8.00 PM

### 11-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)

Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.15 PM

### 12-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER

DAILY AT (KIDS CINEMA): 5.00 + 9.00 PM

### 13-SIMMBA (PG-15) (HINDI/ACTION/COMEDY/DRAMA/ROMANTIC)

Ⓢ RANVEER SINGH, AJAY DEVGN, SARA ALI KHAN

DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.15 PM

### 14-URI: THE SURGICAL STRIKE (15+) (HINDI/ACTION/DRAMA)

Ⓢ VICKY KAUSHAL, KIRTI KULHARI, PARESH RAWAL

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM

### 15-VISWASAM (PG-15) (TAMIL)

Ⓢ AJITH KUMAR, NAYANTHARA

DAILY AT: 2.15 + 7.45 PM

### 16-MIKHAEL (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)

Ⓢ NIVIN PAULY, UNNI MUKAUDAN, MANJIMA MOHAN

DAILY AT: 2.45 + 8.15 PM

## CITY CENTRE

### 1-SERENITY (18+) (DRAMA/THRILLER) NEW

Ⓢ MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY, ANNE HATHAWAY, DIANE LANE

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 PM + 12.00 MN + 12.45 MN THURS/FRI  
DAILY AT (VIP I): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM

### 2-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) NEW

Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 + 6.00 + 8.15 + 10.30 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)

### 3-THE KID WHO WOULD BE KING (PG) (ADVENTURE/ACTION/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ LOUIS ASHBOURNE SERKIS, PATRICK STEWART, REBECCA FERGUSON

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM

### 4-MANIKARNIKA: THE QUEEN OF JHANSI (PG-15) (DRAMA/ACTION/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ KANGANA RANAUT, DANNY DENZONGPA, SURESH OBEROI

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

### 5-VICE (15+) (DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ CHRISTIAN BALE, AMY ADAMS, STEVE CARELL

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM

### 6-CLOSE (PG-15) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW

Ⓢ NOOMI RAPACE, INDIRA VARMA, EGIN MACKEN

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.00 + 7.30 PM + 12.00 MN

### 7-ON THE BASIS OF SEX (PG-15) (DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ FELICITY JONES, ARMIE HAMMER, JUSTIN THEROUX

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 5.00 + 9.30 PM

### 8-MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (15+) (DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY)

Ⓢ SAOIRSE RONAN, MARGOT ROBBIE, JACK LOWDEN

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 4.00 + 9.00 PM

### 9-DRAGON BALL SUPER: BROLY (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ SEAN SCHEMMELE, CHRISTOPHER SABAT, CHRIS AYRES

DAILY AT (JAPANESE): 5.00 + 9.00 PM

DAILY AT (ENGLISH): 7.00 + 11.00 PM

### 10-WHEELY FAST & HILARIOUS! (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 PM

### 11-BTS WORLD TOUR LOVE (PG) (MUSICAL/CONCERT) NEW

Ⓢ J-HOPE, JEONG-GUK JEON

ONLY ON SATURDAY 26TH: 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM

### 12-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER)

Ⓢ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

DAILY AT (IMAX 2D): 6.30 + 9.15 PM + 12.00 MN

DAILY AT (VIP II): 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM

### 13-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)

Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 PM + 12.00 MN

### 14-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

### 15-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 + 6.00 + 8.15 + 10.30 PM

DAILY AT (IMAX 3D): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 PM

### 16-THE MULE (PG-15) (CRIME/DRAMA/THRILLER)

Ⓢ CLINT EASTWOOD, BRADLEY COOPER, TAISSA FARMIGA

DAILY AT: 1.30 + 6.30 + 11.30 PM

### 17-JOHNNY ENGLISH STRIKES AGAIN (PG) (COMEDY/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ ROWAN ATKINSON, OLGA KURYLENKO, EMMA THOMPSON

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 PM + 12.00 MN

### 18-RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)



Ⓢ JOHN C. REILLY, SARAH SILVERMAN, GAL GADOT

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM

### 19-SPIDER MAN INTO THE SPIDER VERSE (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ HAILEE STEINFELD, NICOLAS CAGE, MAHERSHALA ALI

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 4.15 + 9.00 PM

### 20-MARY POPPINS RETURNS (G) (ADVENTURE/MUSICAL/FAMILY)

Ⓢ EMILY BLUNT, LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA, BEN WHISHAW

DAILY AT: 1.45 + 6.30 + 11.15 PM

## SEEF (I)

### 1-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) NEW

Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 PM + 12.00 MN

### 2-MANIKARNIKA: THE QUEEN OF JHANSI (PG-15) (DRAMA/ACTION/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ KANGANA RANAUT, DANNY DENZONGPA, SURESH OBEROI

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 3.00 + 6.00 + 9.00 PM + 12.00 MN

### 3-CHARLIE CHAPLIN 2 (PG-15) (TAMIL) NEW

Ⓢ PRABHU DEVA, NIKKI GALRANI, PRABHU, ADAH SHARMA

FROM FRIDAY 25TH: 12.30 + 6.15 PM + 12.00 MN

### 4-VIJAYSUPERUM POURNAMAYIYUM (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW

Ⓢ ASIF ALI, AISHWARYA LAKSHMI

DAILY AT: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM

### 5-21ST NOOTTAANDU (PG-13) (MALAYALAM) NEW

Ⓢ PRANAV MOHANLAL, RACHEL DAVID, GOKUL SURESH

FROM FRIDAY 25TH: 11.15 AM + 2.15 + 5.15 + 8.15 + 11.15 PM

### 6-MR. MAJNU (PG-13) (TELUGU) NEW

Ⓢ AKHIL AKKINENI, NIDHI AGERWAL, IZABELLE LEITE, VVIJAYA PRAKESH

FROM FRIDAY 25TH: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM

### 7-PETTA (PG-15) (TAMIL/ACTION/THRILLER)

Ⓢ RAJINIKANTH, VIJAY SETHUPATHI, SIMRAN, TRISHA

DAILY AT: 3.00 + 8.45 PM

## SEEF (II)

### 1-SERENITY (18+) (DRAMA/THRILLER) NEW

Ⓢ MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY, ANNE HATHAWAY, DIANE LANE

DAILY AT: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 PM + 11.45 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)

### 2-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) NEW

Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI

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

### 3-THE KID WHO WOULD BE KING (PG) (ADVENTURE/ACTION/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ LOUIS ASHBOURNE SERKIS, PATRICK STEWART, REBECCA FERGUSON

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

### 4-VICE (15+) (DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ CHRISTIAN BALE, AMY ADAMS, STEVE CARELL

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 5.15 + 11.00 PM

### 5-CLOSE (PG-15) (ACTION/THRILLER) NEW

Ⓢ NOOMI RAPACE, INDIRA VARMA, EGIN MACKEN

DAILY AT: 1.00 + 5.30 + 10.00 PM

### 6-ON THE BASIS OF SEX (PG-15) (DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ FELICITY JONES, ARMIE HAMMER, JUSTIN THEROUX

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 3.00 + 7.30 PM + 12.00 MN

### 7-MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (15+) (DRAMA/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ SAOIRSE RONAN, MARGOT ROBBIE, JACK LOWDEN

DAILY AT: 12.15 + 4.45 + 9.15 PM

### 8-DRAGON BALL SUPER: BROLY (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE/FANTASY) NEW

Ⓢ SEAN SCHEMMELE, CHRISTOPHER SABAT, CHRIS AYRES

DAILY AT (ENGLISH): 4.45 + 8.45 PM

DAILY AT (JAPANESE): 6.45 + 10.45 PM

### 9-WHEELY FAST & HILARIOUS! (PG) (ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY) NEW

DAILY AT: 10.45 AM + 12.45 + 2.45 PM

### 10-GLASS (PG-15) (THRILLER)

Ⓢ JAMES MCAVOY, BRUCE WILLIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM

### 11-BTS WORLD TOUR LOVE (PG) (MUSICAL/CONCERT) NEW

Ⓢ J-HOPE, JEONG-GUK JEON

ONLY ON SATURDAY 26TH: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM

### 12-THE UPSIDE (PG-15) (COMEDY/DRAMA)

Ⓢ KEVIN HART, BRYAN CRANSTON, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM

### 13-HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD (PG) (ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ CATE BLANCHETT, JONAH HILL, GERARD BUTLER

DAILY AT: 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM

### 14-AQUAMAN (PG-15) (ACTION/ADVENTURE)

Ⓢ JASON MOMOA, AMBER HEARD, NICOLE KIDMAN

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM

### 15-SA'AT REDA (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY)

Ⓢ HALA FAKHER, AHMED FATHY, DINA FOUAD

DAILY AT: 2.45 + 7.15 + 11.45 PM

### 16-MIKHAEL (PG-15) (MALAYALAM)

Ⓢ NIVIN PAULY, UNNI MUKAUDAN, MANJIMA MOHAN

DAILY AT: 2.15 + 8.00 PM

## SEEF (I)

### 1-NADI ELREGAL EL SERI (PG-15) (ARABIC/COMEDY) NEW

Ⓢ KARIM ABDULAZIZ, GHADA ADEL, MAJDE ALKIDDAWI

DAILY AT: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 PM + 12.00 MN

### 2-MANIKARNIKA: THE QUEEN OF JHANSI (PG-15) (DRAMA/ACTION/BIOGRAPHY) NEW

Ⓢ KANGANA RANAUT, DANNY DENZONGPA, SURESH OBEROI

DAILY AT: 12.00 + 3.00 + 6.00 + 9.00 PM + 12.00 MN

### 3-CHARLIE CHAPLIN 2 (PG-15) (TAMIL) NEW

Ⓢ PRABHU DEVA, NIKKI GALRANI, PRAB

celebs

## Kate Middleton shares her motherhood struggles

London

Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton opened up about the struggles that follow motherhood and pointed some relatable issues that mothers around the world would attest to.

The mother of three started off by admitting that it is hard to be a mother. "You get a lot of support with the baby as a mother particularly in the early days, but after the age of 1, it falls away. After that, there isn't a huge amount of books to read," she told US Weekly.



**The Duchess of Cambridge's charity works focus mainly on issues surrounding young children, addiction, and art.**

band Prince William, revealed that she suffered from a severe form of morning sickness called hyperemesis gravidarum during her pregnancies.

"Everybody experiences the same struggle," Kate asserted.

Kate, who shares Prince George (5), Princess Charlotte (3), and Prince Louis (8) months, with her husband



Kate Middleton

## Drake, Odell Beckham Jr. sued over nightclub attack

Los Angeles

Rapper Drake and footballer Odell Beckham Jr. have been sued over an alleged nightclub attack.

According to TMZ.com, a man named Bennett Sipes has claimed that Drake and Beckham assaulted him at the Delilah nightclub here on March 24, 2018.

Sipes said he was there to see his girlfriend Sommer Ray, who was in the VIP section of the club, talking to Drake, OBJ and Kourtney Kardashian's ex, Younes Bendjima.

As he was attempting to enter the restroom, he said he was attacked by Younes Bendjima, along with members of Drake and Beckham's entourage.

The complainant told the publication that he was suffering from "extreme mental anguish and physical pain" and continues to pay medical bills.



Hathaway

## Anne Hathaway quits drinking

Los Angeles

Actress Anne Hathaway says she has quit drinking for the next 18 years because she does not want to drink around her two-year-old son Jonathan.

During an appearance on "The Ellen Degeneres Show", Hathaway said: "I quit drinking back in October, for 18 years. I'm going to stop drinking while my son is in my house just because I don't totally love the way I do it and he's getting to an age where he really does need me all the time in the morning."

## Depp denies Amber's domestic violence charge



Depp

Los Angeles

Superstar Johny Depp has filed legal documents supporting his claim that he never physically assaulted his former wife Amber Heard. Depp is in the midst of a defamation case which he slapped on a British publication for calling him a "wife-beater" in an article. The actor has claimed that he has an evidence which will prove that he never beat Heard, reports eonline.com.

The "Pirates of the Caribbean" star's lawyer Adam Waldman said: "We filed a partial list of evidence that we will use to disprove the fraudulent underlying allegations against Depp." The lawyer said they have "dozens of video security tapes" as well as "eyewitness statements" which will prove the allegations wrong.

"We continue to take profound witness statements in this matter," Waldman added.

The lawsuit refers to an alleged fight between Heard and Depp that took place on May 21, 2016. Heard previously accused her then husband of throwing a cell phone at her, which struck her in the eye and cheek.



Heard

## Sophie Turner terrible at keeping secrets

Los Angeles

Actress Sophie Turner can't keep a secret and has already leaked the ending of "Game of Thrones" to a few people.

In an interview with W magazine, Turner said she is "terrible" at keeping secrets, reports eonline.com.

"I'm so bad at keeping secrets. I don't think people tell me things anymore because they know that I can't keep them. I've already told the ending of Game of Thrones to a few people," Turner said.

"I was like, 'Hey, if you want to know, I'll tell you.' But it's people that I know, not random people. It's people that I know will keep the secret," she added.

The eighth and final season of the hit series will bow out in April 2019. It airs in India on Star World.



Sophie

## Ariana Grande announces tracklist for 'Thank U, Next'



Ariana

Los Angeles

Ariana Grande took to Instagram and released the tracklist for her fifth studio album, "Thank U, Next."

According to an Instagram post, the tracklist for the upcoming album, to be released February 8, includes songs named 'Imagine,' 'Needy,' 'NASA,' 'Bloodline,' 'Fake Smile,' 'Bad Idea,' 'Make Up,' 'Ghostin,' 'In My Head,' '7 Rings,' 'Thank U,' 'Next' and 'Break Up With Your Girlfriend, I'm Bored.'

According to Variety, the title track "Thank U, Next" was released as the lead single on November 3 and Grande dropped an accompanying music video that referenced classic films like 'Mean Girls,' '13 Going on 30' and 'Legally Blonde' on November 30.

"Thank U, Next" became Grande's first song to debut at No. 1. The album's second single, '7 Rings,' hit platforms January 18 along with a music video.

The release of her latest album comes pretty quickly with her fourth album 'Sweetener' releasing in August 2018.

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## Brown freed after rape allegations in France

Los Angeles

American singer-songwriter Chris Brown was released on his own recognizance on Tuesday, a day after being arrested by French police following rape accusations, the Paris prosecutor's office said.



Brown

The prosecutor's office told Efe that Brown's personal body-

guard and a friend, whom the accuser also claimed had abused her, has also been released.

The Parisian prosecutor's office will continue to pursue the investigation.

Gossip magazine Closer reported the arrests and the assault accusations in an exclusive that was later independently confirmed by several news agencies, reports Efe.

# Spin twins set up victory for India

● **Kuldeep Yadav took 4/39 as New Zealand were bundled out for 157 in 38 overs**

● **Opener Shikhar Dhawan led India's chase with 75 not out while Kohli made 45**

AFP | Napier, New Zealand

A match billed as a runfest was turned upside-down by India's spin twins Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal yesterday, as New Zealand were crushed by eight wickets in the first one-day international in Napier.

India arrived at the ground with captain Virat Kohli expecting 300-plus to be par but when his bowlers rolled New Zealand for 157 the outcome became a formality.

"When I lost the toss I thought it's going to be 300 plus but the way the guys bowled and created pressure turned out to be absolutely opposite," he said. "You know, 150 on that kind



India's Shikhar Dhawan drives through the off side

of a wicket was quite an easy total to chase down and it all boils down to the effort of the bowlers."

Yadav and Chahal delivered a spin bowling masterclass, mesmerising New Zealand with six wickets between them, while Mohammed Shami claimed three as New Zealand folded for a mere 157 with 12 overs to spare.

The target was reduced by two runs and one over for India following a 30-minute break when the setting sun blinded the eyes of players and umpires.

But the interruption made no difference to Shikhar Dhawan, who was unbeaten on 75 after leading India to mow down the target in 34.5 overs.

A disappointed New Zealand captain Kane Williamson blamed his side's effort on an inability to handle the precision Indian attack.

"Usually you come here and you're thinking 300-plus, sometimes mid 300s, but it certainly

wasn't that and required a bit more graft," he said.

"Judging by some of the dismissals it showed we didn't adjust as quickly as we would like to."

Coming off a series win against Australia, India showed they are building nicely as a well-balanced unit four months out from the World Cup, while for New Zealand there is work to be done.

The New Zealand innings folded so quickly that India had time to bat for nine overs before the scheduled break, reaching 41 with Dhawan on 29 and Sharma on 11.

Sharma went on the second ball after the interval, with Doug Bracewell making the breakthrough, before the players left the field again when the setting sun reached a dangerously low angle.

When India's innings restarted again, Dhawan on 31 was dropped by wicketkeeper Tom Latham.

It was a costly error for

New Zealand as the left-hander, who passed 5,000 ODI runs in the course of the innings, went on to make his 26th half century.

New Zealand	
M. Guptill b Shami	5
C. Munro b Shami	8
K. Williamson c Shankar b Yadav	64
R. Taylor c&b Chahal	24
T. Latham c&b Chahal	11
H. Nicholls c Yadav b Jadhav	12
M. Santner lbw Shami	14
D. Bracewell b Yadav	7
T. Southee not out	9
L. Ferguson st Dhoni b Yadav	0
T. Boult c Sharma b Yadav	1
Extras (wd 2)	2
<b>Total (all out; 38 overs)</b>	<b>157</b>
India	
R. Sharma c Guptill b Bracewell	11
S. Dhawan not out	75
V. Kohli c Latham b Ferguson	45
A. Rayudu not out	13
Extras (lb 5, wd 7)	12
<b>Total (for 2 wickets; 34.5 overs)</b>	<b>156</b>
Result: India won by eight wickets.	
Target reduced to 156 after 30 minutes lost because of sun in players' eyes	

## Enduro karting set for intense action at BIKC



Action from a previous karting race at BIKC

TDT | Manama

The stage is set for another gruelling test of motor racing prowess as the second round of the 2018/2019 Bahrain Karting Enduro Championship (BKEC) takes place Saturday at Bahrain International Karting Circuit (BIKC) in Sakhir.

A grid of no less than 11 entrants is set to compete in the highly anticipated six-hour event. They will be battling it out for placing in four classes, including the Overall, Pro, Corporate and Nations.

Racing will take place along BIKC's 1.414-kilometre Commission Internationale de Karting (CIK) Track. The drivers will be behind the wheel of identical 390cc Sodi GT4R go karts.

Sign-in for competitors on

Saturday is scheduled to be held from 7.30am to 9am. A Drivers' Briefing will then be held at 9.05am, after which the on-track action begins with Qualifying Practice at 9.50am.

Final Qualifying follows at 10.45am, setting the stage for the six-hour race, which is scheduled to flag off at 11.30am.

The podium ceremony is scheduled to take place at around 6pm. The 2018/2019 BKEC is set to be a hotly contested series featuring four hugely exciting rounds.

The season-opening meeting was held in October of last year as a three-hour race. Round three will be a 12-hour event, while the year's ultimate challenge, the championship finale and the most highly anticipated event of the season: the 24-hour fourth round.

## Federations attend sports day workshop organised by BOC

TDT | Manama

Information Technology Directorate of the Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) organized a workshop for national sports federations to announce how the website of the 2019 Bahrain Sports Day.

The third edition of the Bahrain Sports Day is scheduled for February 12, as the organizing committee create a dedicated website to be used as part of a comprehensive plan to make this event a success.

During the workshop, held at the BOC premises in Seef,

PC systems analyst specialist Zainab Hussain provided a comprehensive overview of the website and the ability to take advantage of the website with all its accessible date.

She also explained how the "torch of Bahrain" application is used on mobile phones, specifically Apple devices. This application is aimed to present the sporting events in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

A similar workshop will be held for the ministries as well as other governmental authorities, private institutions, clubs and youth centers in the coming weeks.

## Bale close to Real return from injury, says Solari

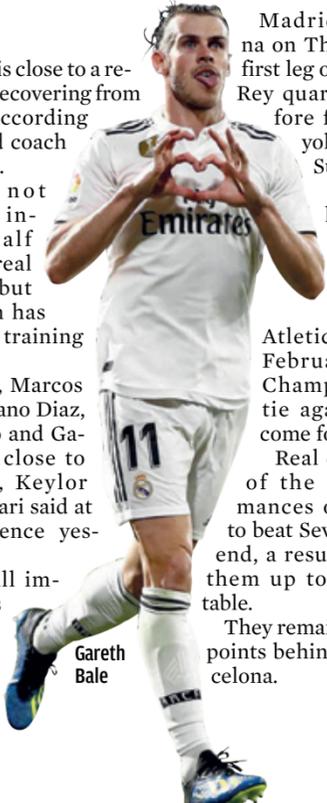
AFP | Madrid

Gareth Bale is close to a return after recovering from a calf strain, according to Real Madrid coach Santiago Solari.

Bale has not played since injuring his calf against Villarreal on January 3 but the Welshman has resumed light training this week.

"Toni Kroos, Marcos Llorente, Mariano Diaz, Marco Asensio and Gareth Bale are close to coming back, Keylor Navas too," Solari said at a press conference yesterday.

"They are all important players for the squad so we are happy."



Gareth Bale

Madrid play Girona on Thursday in the first leg of the Copa del Rey quarter-finals before facing Espanyol in La Liga on Sunday.

Solari will hope to have Bale at full fitness again for the city derby against Atletico Madrid on February 9, with a Champions League tie against Ajax to come four days later.

Real delivered one of the best performances of the season to beat Sevilla last weekend, a result that moved them up to third in the table.

They remain, however, 10 points behind leaders Barcelona.

## Kooheji ease past Bharath Legends

TDT | Manama

Kooheji Contractors beat Bharath Legends by 129 runs in a CBA Division D 25 overs League match.

Kooheji won the toss and elected to bat first. Openers Irfan (63) and Waseem (60) put a century run stand for first wicket that helped them to score 208 runs at the end of 25 overs. Nabeel took two wickets for Legends.

In second innings Kooheji bowler's tidy spells restricted Legends for 79 runs and won the match by a huge margin of 129 runs. Sahar took three wicket.

Brief Score: Kooheji Contractors 208/5 in 25 overs (Irfan 63, Waseem 60, Nabeel 2/36) beat Bharath Legends 79/8 (Salman 23, Sahar 3/9) by 129 runs

**Other Team scores**

Matrix 176/3 (Shyju 68, Danushke 57) beat Suha Travels 166/10 Usman 21, Danushke



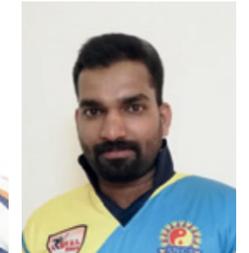
Imran kooheji Contractors



Shyju - Matrix



Waseem - Kooheji



Vishnu - SNCS TransFast

3/53) by 10 runs  
SNCS Transfast 182/5 (Vishnu 121, Lexman 2/24) beat CEBARCO 65/10 (Ajay 13, Jerin 3/17) by 117 runs

Hempel Paints 110/8 in 18.4 overs (Suresh 17, Iman 2/14) beat Bahrain Hawks 108/10 (Rajshakhar 28, Rajesh 27, Ahsan 3/9) by 2 wickets.

RUCT 143/10 (Arjun 36, Rayab 3/16) beat Karnataka Strikers 126/9 (Rajesh 34, Mithun 2/11) by 17 runs

NDC Bahrain 143/10 (Balaji 39, Sunil 2/21) beat Bulls 119/9

(Rijo 22, Ajeesh 3/27) by 24 runs

Alpha Fire Bahrain 170/4 in 20.5 overs (Amila 38, Dilhara 33, Ruvin 30) beat Lantern Lions 167/4 (Dhaval 85 85, Anup 48) by 6 wickets

Indian Super Kings 124/6 in 22 overs (Prashant 66, Zarawar 2/18) beat Superb 123/8 (Dilawar 29, Prashant 2/19)

Falcon 157/9 in 25 overs (Renil 40, Preeth 2/2) beat Black Feather 119/10 (Sam 33, Deepaak 4/37, Prashob 3/14) by 38 runs

NIA Kerala XI 237/7 in 25

overs (Sajeer 87, Shyam 40) beat ETS 71/10 (Rizwan 27, Atul 4/11, Abilash 3/18) by 166 runs  
Shafiq Glass 169/10 (Mohammed 37, Juzer 36, Askhar 5/33) beat Challengers 131/10 (Shan 26, Mohammed .S 2/14) by 38 runs

Pak Panthers 178/9 (Naqeeb 46, Usman 32, Adnan 2/26) beat Fateh Curtain 116/10 (Zaid 26, Noman 5/12) by 62 runs

Tornado A 168/7 in 25 overs (Nidhin 30, Chandran 28, Nwaf 2/10) beat Modest 147/10 (Jaseer 30, Kingsly 4/22) by 21 runs

# Pliskova slays Serena

World number one Novak Djokovic eased through to the semi-finals at the Australian Open as Kei Nishikori retired injured

● **Karolina Pliskova's reward for beating Serena Williams is a clash against Japan's Naomi Osaka for a place in the final**

● **Osaka saw off Svitolina in their quarter-final match on day ten**

● **Lucas Pouille tops Milos Raonic to make semis**

AFP | Melbourne



Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova hits a return against Serena Williams of the US

Serena Williams's bid for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title was brought to a halt in sensational style at the Australian Open yesterday by Karolina Pliskova, but fellow former champion Novak Djokovic cruised into the semi-finals.

The American great had beaten world number one Simona Halep in the fourth round but folded against the tall Czech seventh seed, who saved four match points before winning 6-4, 4-6, 7-5 under the hot Melbourne sun.

Her reward is a clash against Japan's Naomi Osaka for a place in the final, after the Japanese fourth seed brutally swatted aside the injured Elina Svitolina 6-4, 6-1.

World number one Djokovic enjoyed an early night when

courageous Kei Nishikori retired with a thigh strain when losing 6-1, 4-1 after going through three five-set epics during the tournament.

It kept the Serb's bid for a record seventh Australian title on track and he will now meet French 28th seed Lucas Pouille, who beat power-serving Canadian Milos Raonic 7-6 (7/4), 6-3, 6-7 (2/7), 6-4 to make his first Slam semi.

It was a gut-wrenching defeat for Williams, who battled back from a set down and was leading 5-1 in the third and serving for the match, only to throw it away with some wild shots as frustrations bubbled to the surface.

"There's nothing I did wrong on those match points. I stayed aggressive. She just literally hit

the lines on some of them," said the dumbfounded 37-year-old, who rolled an ankle but refused to blame it for the defeat.

Since returning last year from giving birth, Williams has made four unsuccessful attempts to match Margaret Court's long-time standing 24 Grand Slam titles, and the wait continues with the French Open in May her next chance.

"The big picture for me is always winning," she added. "I'm not going to sit here and lie about that. It hasn't happened yet, but I feel like it's going to happen."

For Pliskova, it is only her third semi-final at a major.

She made the last four at Roland Garros in 2017 and the US Open a year earlier, where she beat Williams before losing the

final to Angelique Kerber.

"I was almost in the locker-room but now I am standing here as a winner. It is a very good feeling," she said after depriving Williams of a US Open final rematch with Osaka.

## Calm Osaka

Asked about facing Osaka next, Pliskova replied: "She's dangerous but nobody is more dangerous than Serena."

A focused Osaka rolled past Ukraine's Svitolina, who was troubled by neck and shoulder problems.

Despite the Ukrainian suffering, it was nevertheless a serious statement from the steely-eyed Osaka, who was playing the sort of tennis which drove her to the US Open title.



**Naomi Osaka became the first Japanese woman in the final four at Melbourne Park since Kimiko Date in 1994**

"I tried to be consistent, it's unfortunate that she got injured but playing against her even when she was injured was still really tough," said the 21-year-old.

"I just had one goal, to try as hard I can and not get angry. I didn't do that really well in the last two rounds and I did that today so I'm really happy with the way I played."

The win ensured she became

the first Japanese woman in the final four since Kimiko Date in 1994.

Djokovic, who is targeting a 15th Grand Slam title, endured his own tough fourth round showdown with Daniil Medvedev and said he was glad to get off court early.

"As they say, this is exactly what the doctor ordered for me after the match two nights ago," he said. "Not to spend too much time on the court."

"I've had plenty of matches so far this year and I am in another semi-final and I will do everything to get ready for that one."

Pouille had never won a match in Melbourne before this year but has recruited 2006 Australian Open champion Amelie Mauresmo to his team and said it was paying off.

"I started a new adventure with my team, with Amelie. I enjoy being on the court again and that is the most important," he said.



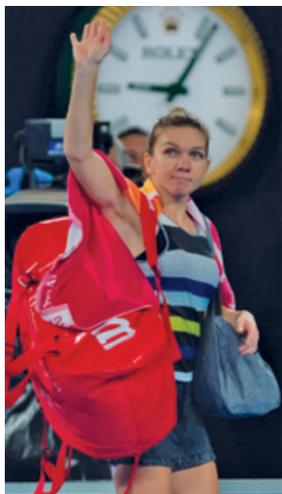
Novak Djokovic in action during the match against Kei Nishikori

## Halep's reign as world number one over

AFP | Melbourne

Petra Kvitova's surging win over Ashleigh Barty to make the Australian Open semi-finals ensured Simona Halep's reign as world number one is over, not that the Romanian is bothered.

The Czech star overtook Halep's points total, while Naomi Osaka and Karolina Pliskova also have a mathematical shot at assuming the mantle when the new rankings come out next week.



Simona Halep of Romania walks off court after defeat in her fourth round match against Serena Williams of the United States

Entering the opening Grand Slam of the year, 11 players had a chance to hold the top spot, but that has now been whittled down.

Of the three in the running, only Pliskova has been there before, in 2017 when she became the first Czech woman to do so.

To do so again she must win the title on Saturday.

Halep held the number one ranking for 48 weeks, but after her loss to Serena Williams in round four, she said it wasn't her priority.

"The main goal is just to play as good as I can every match, to win every match I play, so the ranking doesn't really matter," she said.

"End of the year is more important, the ranking, so I will not stress myself about this."

Halep also suggested there was a difference between being the world number one and the best player in the world, given Williams was only seeded 16 at Melbourne Park.

"In my opinion, to be No. 1 in the world and to be the best player in the world, it's a little bit different," she said.

"For sure she (Williams) is the best player in the world because she won so many Grand Slams. She's been number one a lot. I cannot compare my results to her."

## Serena hails Pliskova's 'crazy' comeback

AFP | Melbourne

Serena Williams denied choking after falling victim to one of the greatest ever comebacks yesterday, saying she was powerless as Czech foe Karolina Pliskova "just went crazy" and stormed into the Australian Open semi-finals.

"She just played lights out on match point, literally hitting lines," Williams said. "Just went for it, just went crazy on match point. She just played unbelievable."

The 37-year-old made a slow start and conceded the first set but had recovered and looked set for a hard-fought win before a desperate Pliskova went on the six-game rampage.

"She was killing me... I was almost in the locker room, now I'm standing here as the winner. It's a great feeling," an exhausted Pliskova said after the two hour 10 minute epic.

"My mind was in the locker room. I wasn't playing very well in the third set but I thought



**She just played lights out on match point, literally hitting lines. Just went for it, just went crazy on match point. She just played unbelievable**

SERENA WILLIAMS



Serena Williams of the US reacts after a point against Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova

let's try, this game (will make it) 5-2. She got a little bit shaky in the end so I took my chances and I won."

Pliskova, who will play Japan's Naomi Osaka in the semis, was on the brink until Williams double faulted with the end in sight after appearing to roll her ankle.

Williams, a seven-time Australian champion, then failed to win a point on serve for the rest of the match.

She refused to blame the injury for the loss, saying her ankle "seems to be fine".

The elated Czech rated it the

best comeback of her life and said she always believed she could beat the American legend. "I know she's the greatest ever, but I don't want to put her somewhere where I would not have a chance to beat her," she said in explaining how she approached the match.

"I beat her before. She was No.1 at that time. I knew I'm going to have my chances. But I had to play well."

Williams said there was nothing she could do against an opponent in such form.

"I can't say that I choked on those match points, said the

American, who made a comeback last year after having a baby. "She literally played her best tennis ever on those shots."

Williams, seeded 16, had blazed through the early stages of the tournament, seeing off world number one Simona Halep in the fourth round.

But against Pliskova she lacked the intensity she had previously displayed and was soon trailing for the first time during her campaign after a slew of uncharacteristic errors.

The American said it was a lesson to not take anything for granted on match point.