

THE DAILY **tribune**

Lukaku says split from Man Utd was 'right decision'

Romelu Lukaku believes he made the right decision to leave Manchester United for a new challenge at Inter Milan, saying he had to "re-find" himself after a difficult time at Old Trafford. **P12**

Shakira, Jennifer getting fans all hyped with Super Bowl countdown videos

10 **CELEBS**



WORLD 5 China shuts down 13 cities

Trump attends anti-abortion rally
 Washington, DC

Donald Trump has become the first US president to attend America's largest annual anti-abortion rally.

He addressed thousands of protesters at the March for Life near the US Capitol where his impeachment trial is ongoing.

Mr Trump said: "We're here for a very simple reason: to defend the right of every child born and unborn to fulfill their God-given potential."

The annual demonstration first began in 1974 - a year after the US Supreme Court legalised abortion in Roe v Wade.

Until now no president had ever attended the march, which takes place just steps from the White House, though previous Republican presidents, including George W Bush and Ronald Reagan, have addressed the group remotely.

Traffic to be halted
 Manama

The General Directorate of Traffic has announced that it will temporarily stop its services at the Lulu Hypermarket in Hidd for 15 days, starting Sunday for development works.

The department called on the public to seek the services through the traffic application or the website www.bahrain.bh, services centres or its headquarters.



03 Gulf Air brought home '1,164 Bahrainis' from Iraq

04 2020 second bust: FS COURBET seizes 'three tonnes of narcotics'

05 Philippines' Duterte threatens to end US military pact

210 fils (includes VAT)



Indian man, Filipino woman die after 'breathing coal smoke'

TDT | Manama

Two Asians have been found dead in a home in Awali, the Interior Ministry said yesterday.

According to sources at Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) where the dead body is kept in mortuary, the deceased are from India and the Philippines.

Indian Mahmood Yusuf Mutam aged 47 and a Filipino national aged 39 whose identity is not yet known, died after inhaling smoke from a heating coal in Awali home.

Mahmood Yusuf was working as a driver while the Filipino woman was employed as a housemaid.

Interior Ministry tweeted that "the initial details indicated suffocation was the reason behind their death after inhaling smoke from the coal they used to keep warm".

They also said relevant procedures are being taken. Social



The deceased Mahmood Yusuf

worker Shafi Parakatta told Tribune that Mahmood Yusuf's body will be flown to his hometown in Kasargod district once the paper work is completed.

Philippine Ambassador Alfonso A Ver who confirmed the news said the embassy is trying to contact the deceased Filipino woman's family back home.

Last week a family of five Keralites who lived in Dubai were among the eight people who died after they fell unconscious probably due to a gas leak from a heater in their room at a mountainous resort in Nepal.

'Million man' march



Thousands of supporters of Shiite cleric Moqtada Al Sadr rallied in Baghdad on Friday for the populist leader's "million man march" against the US presence in Iraq. Yet the numbers fell well short of Mr Al Sadr's targeted million, and crowds had largely dispersed by early afternoon, with some heading to the capital's Tahrir Square, the site of months-long anti-government protests, and others taking buses home. In a speech read out to the crowd, Mr Al Sadr called for the abolition of all security agreements with the United States, adding that he would not accept anything short of a full US troop withdrawal from Iraq and the closing of American bases throughout the country. Supporters of the cleric, whose militia waged an insurgency against US and British troops following the US-led invasion in 2003, began arriving in Baghdad's Jadariyah neighbourhood from across the country on Thursday.

'Fake hack' story

RDIF chief praises Saudi reforms, says Bezos hacking story is 'fake news'

● **Davos remained in favour of the opportunities presented by Riyadh's Vision 2030 strategy.**

● **Bezos allegations dismissed by Saudi officials as "absolutely silly".**

Davos



American billionaire and Amazon founder Jeff Bezos

One of Saudi Arabia's biggest investment partners has reassured the global community about doing business in the Kingdom and ridiculed the Jeff Bezos accusations of phone hacking.

Speaking on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in Davos, Kirill Dmitriev, CEO of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), said that stories about the apparent hacking of Ama-

zon boss Jeff Bezos' phone did "not look plausible at all."

"This has all the signs of being fake news put about by enemies of the Kingdom."

Dmitriev, whose organisation has channelled investment into Saudi Arabia and partnered the Kingdom on billions of dollars-worth of joint ventures, said the people he had spoken to in Davos remained in favour of the opportunities presented by Riyadh's Vision 2030 strategy.

"Lots of people here are positive about the changes going on in Saudi Arabia, both from the West and Asia. They are interested in the business opportunities presented by tourism, the improved position of women and the youth demographic. I'm surprised the Western press



"This has all the signs of being fake news put about by enemies of the Kingdom."

DMITRIEV

does not give the full picture about what is happening in Saudi Arabia," he added.

While in Switzerland, the RDIF announced a deal to invest in an online tourism plat-

form that would benefit from increased Russian tourism, especially by members of Russia's big Muslim minority, as well as other potential visitors to Saudi Arabia.

The Bezos allegations, which have been dismissed by Saudi officials as "absolutely silly," were a hot topic of conversation at the WEF meeting.

A Western executive at a leading Gulf energy company, who declined to be named, said: "Phone hacking and cyber-security is a growing problem in the business world and is not confined to any one country."

"You have to take it all with a pinch of salt. If you're going to do business in Saudi Arabia you will look at all the pros and cons, and this (the Bezos allegation) is not likely to deter you."

TREMOR SHOCK

At least 14 dead after powerful earthquake hits Turkey

Istanbul

A powerful earthquake with a magnitude of 6.9 hit eastern Turkey yesterday, killing at least 14 people, injuring hundreds and causing buildings to collapse.

Eight people died in Elazig province and six others were killed in the neighbouring province of Malatya, the coun-

try's disaster and emergency management agency (AFAD) said.

At least 225 people were injured in Elazig and 90 in Malatya.

Around 400 rescue teams were being sent to the scene of the quake, which had its epicentre in the small lakeside town of Sivrice, about 550km east of the capital Ankara, in the eastern province of Elazig.



A screenshot image of a USGS map showing the earthquake in Turkey.

Turkish television showed images of people stuck in apartments rushing outside in panic, as well as a fire on the roof of one building.

Turkey's leading communications companies announced they would provide residents in the quake region with internet and that phone calls would be free of charge after phone lines and communications infrastructure sustained damage.



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa returned to Bahrain yesterday after a fraternal visit to Morocco, where he met His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco. HM King Hamad and HM King Mohammed VI held talks on the fraternal Bahraini-Moroccan relations, and ways to enhance and strengthen them in various fields. HM the King was welcomed mainly by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister.



Deputed by His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, Southern Governor His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to offer condolences on the death of late HRH Prince Bandar bin Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Faisal Al Saud. HH Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa was received on arrival by HRH Prince Khalid bin Fahd bin Khalid Al-Saud and other princes and officials. HH Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa conveyed condolences from His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, HRH the Premier and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince, Deputy Premier and Defence Minister HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, praying to Allah the Almighty to bless the deceased with mercy.



Minister of Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning Essam Khalaf yesterday received Bahraini Ambassador extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Egypt Hesham Al Jowder. He lauded his efforts in boosting relations between both countries, wishing him success in his work. Both sides discussed projects implemented by the Ministry of Works in Cairo. The Bahraini ambassador praised the efforts of the Ministry of Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning in improving the kingdom's infrastructure, wishing it further success.



Labour and Social Development Minister, Labour and Social Development Authority (LMRA) Chairman, Jameel Humaidan, commended fruitful co-operation with the Council of Representatives to pass laws in line with national legislations and international labour conventions. Receiving Human Rights Committee Chairman MP Dr Abdulla Khalifa Al Thawadi, he reiterated the Government's keenness on upgrading laws to protect the rights of workers and employers alike. The minister and the law maker discussed co-operation between the legislative and executive branches of government, hailing Bahrain's human rights strides and developed laws that protect workers, improve the work environment and preserve tripartite rights. The lawmaker commended joint work between the Government branch and the legislative branch pass developed labour legislations and improve the work environment.

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Promoting 'Saris'



Nearly 90 women took part in an event, which saw the celebration of 'great Indian women garment' Sari. It was held as part of Makar Sankranti Haladi Kumkum Event at Elite Crystal Hotel in Juffair. The event was organised by Pradnya Subandh and Sunanda Gaekwad along with members of 'Sari Speak', which is a group of ladies who promotes wearing the traditional Indian ethnic attire.

Gulf Air brought home '1,164 Bahrainis' from Iraq

TDT | Manama

Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, yesterday confirmed that it has completed its recovery flights from Najaf International Airport to Bahrain International Airport.

The airline brought home a total of 1,164 passengers on nine recovery flights between 16 to 21 January 2020.

"Gulf Air has worked closely with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain in the Republic

of Iraq, and the Consulate of the Kingdom of Bahrain in Najaf to communicate with Gulf Air passengers," the airline said.

"Gulf Air continues to monitor the situation in Iraq very closely. The safety of passengers and crews remain the airline's utmost priority," it added.

Bahraini parliamentarians last week said that citizens stranded in Iraq were struggling to come back.

The lawmakers said that there were many Bahrainis caught in unsafe places in Iraq and are un-

able to return to the Kingdom.

They urged the government to speed up efforts to send all Bahrainis home as Iraq is moving to more instability.

The MPs who submitted the proposal include Ahmed Al Damistani, Zainab Amir, Fadhel Al Sawad, Ahmed Al Saloom and Hamad Al Kooheji.

The MPs stated that they have been contacted by families who said that their relatives are in Iraq, struggling to come back.

Earlier last week, Bahrain Embassy in Iraq said that it has been

Gulf Air continues to monitor the situation in Iraq very closely. The safety of passengers and crews remain the airline's utmost priority.

GULF AIR

receiving calls from citizens, who wanted to return to the Kingdom following escalation of clashes in the country.

The embassy stated that it is working with an airlines to ensure their safe return to the Kingdom as soon as possible.

"All Bahraini citizens in Iraq will receive required attention and support," the embassy stated.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has warned citizens against travelling to Iraq amidst the recent developments.

"The Kingdom of Bahrain is following the development of events in the brotherly Republic of Iraq that came as a result of

the condemned terrorist acts which the Kingdom previously denounced, stressing the need to de-escalate in order to overcome this period, and to address all forms of violence, extremism and terrorism," the ministry stated.

"The Kingdom also stresses the importance of immediate action to be taken by the international community, affirming the need to take all necessary measures to ensure security and stability in the region because of its vital and strategic importance for the whole world," it added.

● A special team from the Civil Defence instantly rushed to the spot and doused the flames.

● Four people died after a building collapsed following a gas cylinder blast in Salmaniya area in October 2018.

TDT | Manama

Around ten employees at a local coffee shop have been injured, among which five are in critical condition, after two massive explosions occurred at the kitchen of the property on Friday.

None of the customers, who were inside the coffee shop, located in Maghaba, at the time of explosions were harmed, reported our sister newspaper Al Ayam.

Customers who were smoking or having their lunch at the property described the explosions as "severe" and one of them told The Daily Tribune that they were lucky to have escaped alive and well.

"We heard blasts downstairs and we immediately ran away. I was on the second floor of the coffee shop and I saw many victims were seriously bleeding while others were severely burned," he said.

Luckily, there were only a few customers at the time of the incident, according to a source.

Ten injured in Maghaba coffee shop explosions

Five victims in critical condition, say sources



Civil Defence vehicle parked near the coffee shop.

A special team from the Civil Defence instantly rushed to the spot and doused the flames.

"Civil defence extinguished a

fire in a restaurant in Maghaba at Budaiya highway with eight vehicles and 40 personnel," the Interior Ministry said in a Twitter

message.

"Initial details indicate that injuries were reported. Rescue operation continues. Relevant

Civil defence extinguished a fire in a restaurant in Maghaba at Budaiya highway with eight vehicles and 40 personnel.

INTERIOR MINISTRY

procedures are being taken," the ministry added.

Four people died after a building collapsed following a gas cylinder blast in Salmaniya area in October 2018. Three bodies were recovered from the rubbles while the fourth man died at SMC, where he was transported along with other injured.

Prime Minister His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa immediately ordered an investigation into the collapse of the building and reports were submitted by the ministries of Interior, Labour and Social Development, Health, Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning.

Human trafficking suspects sentenced

TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court has sentenced an Asian man and his girlfriend to five years behind bars each and ordered for them to be deported from the Kingdom after they were found guilty of human trafficking.

The defendants reportedly locked up a fellow national and forced her to have sex with strangers, although she came to Bahrain after she was offered an employment at a local restaurant.

They are said to have jailed her in a flat and told her that she would have to pay BD1,800 for her release.

According to prosecutors, the victim had no option, but to have sex with strangers.

"They threatened me that if I run away I will be killed," the woman told Prosecutors.

"I was told that I have to raise BD1800 if I want to be released, but I managed to contact my husband who directly got in touch with the embassy. Police officers then rescued me," she added.

The defendants were also fined BD3,000 each for their crime.

Kingdom to host conference on digital transformation

Manama

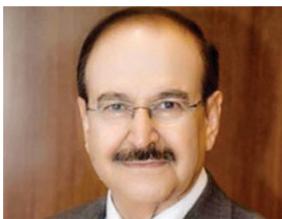
Under the patronage of the President of the Sustainable Energy Authority (SEA), Dr Abdulhussain Ali Mirza, Bahrain will host a conference on artificial intelligence, FinTech and VAT.

Themed 'The Second Digital Transformation', the event will be held at the Gulf Hotel on January 29, in partnership with the UAE-based Smart SMB.

Commenting, the conference chairman, Dr Jassim Haji, said that Dr Mirza will be the key speaker during the opening ceremony, adding that the conference will focus on artificial intelligence, future sciences and role of women in the field of artificial intelligence.

Dr Haji expressed thanks and appreciation to SEA President for his constant support for all workers in the field of future sciences, especially artificial intelligence.

He affirmed keenness to attract international conferences and events related to artificial



Dr Mirza

intelligence to promote the kingdom's status as a regional centre in this field.

More than 30 individuals and companies in Bahrain will be honoured for their distinguished achievements in their categories.

The conference will attract more than 20 speakers from the Supreme Council for Health, Women in FinTech Bahrain, University of Bahrain, Bahrain Polytechnic, Derasat, GARMCO, the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF), in addition to other experts.

The event is held annually in Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Kenya, and attracts a great number of participants and exhibitors from mega companies.

'Partnership in humanitarian action remains primary objective'

TDT | Manama

Bahrain Red Crescent Society (BRCS) paid a visit to the majlis of Al Awadhiya as part of the society's keenness to strengthen ties with charity bodies to boost Bahrain's presence in local and international relief assistance through the latest initiative "Bahraini Humanitarian Alliance" launched to share responsibility to take humanitarian action to the vulnerable and victims of disasters and conflicts in Bahrain and abroad.

In a view of partnership in humanitarian action, BRCS's General Secretary Dr Fawzi Amin, said that partnership in humanitarian action is a primary objective of the society.

He went on to note the partnership of Islamic associations that is involved in providing aids to the vulnerable Palestinians in Gaza, the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, as well as co-operating with Bahraini associations and volunteer teams to raise health and environmental awareness.



Dr Amin along with other members of the society at the majlis.

Dr Amin also stated that the society has undergone a noticeable evolution in developing its financial resources and seeking sustainable sources of income to fulfil society's responsibility in providing humanitarian services.

Currently, BRCS is distributing Ramadan aid for about 4,000 families and allocating monthly assistance to more than 400 families.

Dr Amin further pointed out that BRCS is committed to provide new volunteers to join the society and expand their skills, integrating them into human-

The society has undergone a noticeable evolution in developing its financial resources and seeking sustainable sources of income to fulfil its responsibility.

DR AMIN

participation in conferences, camps and related courses outside Bahrain.

The first humanitarian aid by the society was provided to Turkey in 1971.

"It also paid aid to Philippines and Pakistan, rebuilt schools after Tsunami in Indonesia and Thailand, provide medical equipment to 20 health centres in Sudan, built schools for Syrian refugees in Gaza and Zaatar refugee camp and established eye hospital in Somalia in cooperation with the Royal Charity Organisation," Dr Amin commented.

2020 second bust: FS COURBET seizes 'three tonnes of narcotics'

FS COURBET has been a key enabler in CTF 150's mission to disrupt terrorist organisations and their related illegal activities

● FS COURBET has conducted five boardings in the last six weeks, with three netting eight tonnes of hashish with an estimated regional wholesale value of \$4.1 million US dollars.

● CTF 150 is one of three task forces operating under Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), a multinational naval partnership that exists to promote regional security, stability and prosperity.

TDI | Manama

Less than two weeks after their first drug bust of 2020, French Ship (FS) COURBET made drug bust number two whilst operating in direct support of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150).

The narcotics find was a case of third time lucky for FS Courbet, who had conducted three boardings in 24 hours. Over 3,000 kg of hashish was discovered on the dhow in the Gulf of Oman, with an estimated regional wholesale value of over



FS COURBET team with seized drugs.

\$1500,000 US dollars.

Using their shipborne helicopter, FS COURBET identified and tracked a suspicious dhow sailing in their area of operations. A boarding team, including their drug detecting dog, was dispatched in COURBET's Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) to search the vessel, with significant results.

Since Australia assumed command of CTF 150 in December with a staff from the Royal Australian, Royal Canadian and Royal New Zealand navies, FS COURBET has been a key enabler in CTF 150's mission to disrupt terrorist organisations and their related illegal activities by restricting their freedom of ma-

noeuve in the maritime domain.

The activities of CTF 150 are a critical part of global counter-terrorism efforts, as terrorist organisations are denied a risk-free method of conducting operations or moving personnel, weapons or income-generating narcotics and charcoal.

Not every boarding results in a seizure, but CTF 150's persistent activity sends the message that there are forces in the Arabian Sea committed to protecting and promoting security and stability.

FS COURBET has conducted five boardings in the last six weeks, with three netting eight tonnes of hashish with an estimated regional wholesale value of \$4.1 million US dollars.



FS COURBET has been a key enabler in CTF 150's mission to disrupt terrorist organisations.

1.5

million American dollars is the regional wholesale value of seized narcotics.

In December 2019, Her Majesty's Ship (HMS) DEFENDER of the United Kingdom's Royal Navy, working in direct support of CTF 150, also seized 131 kg of crystal methamphetamine.

The haul had an estimated regional wholesale value of over

\$280,000 US dollars, the largest seizure of crystal meth in the Combined Maritime Forces' history.

Of course, the regional wholesale value is small by comparison to the street value of these drugs should they reach the streets of Europe.

"COURBET continues to impress," said Commodore Ray Leggett, Royal Australian Navy, Commander of CTF 150. "With this seizure, we are again demonstrating to organised criminals and terrorists that they cannot manoeuvre freely here, they cannot conduct their illegitimate trade without considerable risk, and that CTF 150 will continue its mission to promote security

and stability in this region."

CTF 150 is one of three task forces operating under Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), a multinational naval partnership that exists to promote security, stability and prosperity across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters encompassing some of the world's most important shipping lanes. The 33 nations that comprise CMF share intelligence, assets and capabilities.

Commodore Ray Leggett concluded "FS COURBET's action is a continuation of relationships built in Combined Maritime Forces and a demonstration of how many nations, working together, can make an impact."

Agreement signed to train Saudis in construction

Riyadh

The Saudi Human Resources Development Fund (Hadaf) has signed a co-operation agreement for nationals to be trained for jobs in the construction sector, the Saudi Press Agency reported.

The memorandum of understanding, between Hadaf and Saudi Abyat Academy for

Building Materials, is aimed at preparing nationals for the labor market through electronic training courses on the Dorob platform.

It was signed at Hadaf's headquarters in Riyadh and will allow the academy to publish courses on Dorob.

Hadaf will also put in place enrolment standards for the Dorob courses and coordinate their development in line with

the needs of the labor market. Dorob comes within the training and qualification programs offered by Hadaf.

It seeks to support Saudis who want professional advancement in their chosen field, as well as increasing the participation level of the national workforce in the private sector and helping job seekers to get better career opportunities.

'8,000 steps' campaign launched

TDI | Manama

The Ministry of Health has launched a national walking campaign to promote exercise in the Kingdom.

The campaign, #walk30, will last for four months and is in its first stage.

The ministry's director general of marketing and awareness, Anas Al Hamid, said that many schools and universities were taking part in the campaign, and that there was an app to calculate the number of steps taken.

There will also be an event in all Saudi regions to coincide

One of the best pieces of advice I always give my clients is to walk for at least 25 to 30 minutes three times a week.

CERTIFIED TRAINER

with National Day for Walking, scheduled for March 5, he added.

A walking challenge was one of the campaign's many activities, he said, with participants trying to walk no fewer than

8,000 steps.

Winners will be rewarded at the end of the competition and those interested were encouraged to download the app and register.

Certified personal trainer Atif Adnan Bashawri, who owns a fitness studio, was quoted by Arab News: "I deal with people on a daily basis and the most common question is 'How can I increase my fitness level?'"

"One of the best pieces of advice I always give my clients is to walk for at least 25 to 30 minutes three times a week."

Workshop held



Works, Municipalities and Urban Planning Affairs Ministry held an awareness workshop for its inspectors on safety laws. Many senior officials from the ministry attended the workshop.

world

Large explosion rocks Houston, houses damaged



Firefighters and emergency services arrive at a scene of a reported explosion in Houston, Texas

AFP | Houston

A large explosion shook the US city of Houston, Texas, early on Friday morning, with shocked residents woken before dawn as houses were badly damaged and glass windows blown in.

The Houston Fire Department said one person had been taken to hospital as firefighters, emergency services and police rushed to the scene.

Police described the incident as a "building explosion" and warned all traffic to avoid the area in the northwest of the city.

CNN said that the blast erupted at about 4:15 am, adding that it had reportedly occurred at a grinding and manufacturing business 18 miles (29 kilometers) northwest of downtown Houston.

Security camera video footage appeared to show a huge blast and a fireball rising into the air.

Details about what exploded, the cause and whether anyone was seriously injured were not immediately confirmed.

"This is still an active scene. Avoid the area. No evacuation order given at this time," city fire chief Samuel Pena tweeted.

"We will advise of the possible cause of the explosion as soon as we have concrete info."

Nearly every house in the area had extensive damage,

including shattered windows and damaged garage doors, the local KPRC 2 TV news channel reported on its website.

'It's a warzone'

"(The explosion) knocked us all out of our bed, it was so strong," resident Mark Brady told KPRC.

"It busted out every window in our house. It busted everybody's garage door in around here... and closer toward the explosion over here, it busted people's roofs in and walls in and we don't know what it is... It's a warzone over here."

Brady said the explosion was extremely loud.

"This is a disaster," he said. "This is a big disaster. I really don't know what happened... Houston we could use your prayers."

Another resident named only as Kim said: "The whole house is ruined."

"The whole ceiling crashed down on all of us. We were all trapped in there and a nice family came and helped us out. It's trashed. It's just trashed."

"Every house was devastated."

One resident told CNN affiliate KTRK that "the whole ceiling fell in" at her home.

"I thought maybe the house had gotten hit by lightning. And then I realized there was no storm," the resident told KTRK. "No one can figure out what happened."

China shuts down 13 cities

China shuts part of Great Wall, Forbidden City and Disneyland as virus toll hits 26

AFP | Beijing

Chinese authorities rapidly expanded a mammoth quarantine effort aimed at containing a deadly contagion on Friday to 13 cities and a staggering 41 million people, as nervous residents were checked for fevers and the death toll climbed to 26.

While the World Health Organization (WHO) held off on declaring a global emergency despite confirmed cases in half a dozen other countries, China expanded its lockdown to cover an area with a total population greater than Canada's.

A range of Lunar New Year festivities have been cancelled, while temporary closures of Beijing's Forbidden City, Shanghai's Disneyland and a section of the Great Wall were announced to prevent the disease from spreading further.

The previously unknown virus has caused alarm because of its similarity to SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), which killed hundreds across mainland China and Hong Kong in 2002-2003.

The WHO said China faced a national emergency but stopped short of making a declaration that would have prompted greater global cooperation.

The outbreak emerged in late December in Wuhan, an industrial and transport hub of 11 million people in China's centre, spreading to several other countries including the United States.

China is in the midst of its Lunar New Year holiday, a typically joyous time of family gatherings and public festivities.

But on Friday Wuhan was a ghost town, its streets deserted and stores shuttered.

Worried patients

Hospitals visited by journalists bustled with worried patients being screened by staff wearing full-body protective suits.

At a temperature-check station, a medical staffer in bodysuit, face mask and goggles took a thermometer from a



Passengers wearing protective facemasks are checked by security personnel wearing hazardous material suits at the entrance to the underground train station in Beijing



Authorities in Beijing have cancelled massive gatherings that usually attract throngs during the New Year holiday

middle-aged woman, pausing to examine the reading before quickly turning back to the patient.

"Have you registered? Then go and see the doctor," the staffer said.

One 35-year-old man surnamed Li voiced the fears of many.

"I have a fever and cough, so I'm worried that I'm infected," he said.

"I don't know the results yet." With hundreds of millions of people on the move across

China for the holiday, the government has halted all travel out of Wuhan, shut down its public transport and told residents to stay home. Deepening the isolation, there were few flights available to the city.

"This year we have a very scary Chinese New Year. People are not going outside because of the virus," a taxi driver in the city, who asked not to be named, told AFP.

But he said a prolonged shutdown should not pose food-shortage problems because many Chinese had stocked up for the holiday.

Besides Wuhan, 12 other smaller cities nearby have battened down the hatches, with most of them going public on Friday with various measures ranging from closing public venues and restricting large gatherings to halting public transportation and asking citizens not to leave their cities.

Several of the cities have populations numbering several million, led by Huanggang, which has 7.5 million.

The pathogen -- 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) -- has

caused many outlets in Shanghai, Beijing and other cities to sell out their stocks of face masks.

As reports surfaced of bed shortages in Wuhan hospitals, state media said authorities were rushing to build a new facility devoted to the outbreak in a mind-blowing 10 days.

The Wuhan hospital is targeted to be ready by February 3. Dozens of excavators and trucks were filmed working on the site by state television.

State broadcaster CCTV also reported that 40 medical doctors from the military were being brought in to help with intensive care.

In addition, 405 medical workers were being sent to Wuhan from Shanghai, said state news agency Xinhua, with the first set of 135 flying in Friday night.

On Friday, staff in full body protective suits were seen checking the temperatures of people entering a subway station in Beijing.

Thermal cameras scanned passengers arriving at Beijing's West Railway Station.

Philippines' Duterte threatens to end US military pact

AFP | Manila

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has threatened to end a pact key to annual war games with American troops if the US does not restore the travel visa of an official who oversaw his drug war.

It is the latest in a long line of Duterte's threats to shrink or sever ties with historical ally Washington, which have periodically followed criticism of his deadly narcotics crackdown.

Duterte spoke after Ronald Dela Rosa, the former national police chief who is now a senator, said the US had cancelled his visa but did not tell him why.

Dela Rosa was the first enforcer of Duterte's internationally condemned campaign, in which police say they have killed just over 5,500 alleged dealers and users.

Human rights advocates say the true toll is four times higher, and could amount to crimes against humanity.

The US State Department and the embassy in Manila have not responded to requests for comment about Dela Rosa's visa.

Duterte went on the attack in a speech late Thursday.

"Now, they won't let Bato go to America", he said, using Dela Rosa's nickname.

"If you do not make a cor-



Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte holds a Galil sniper rifle with outgoing Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Ronald dela Rosa (L)

rection there, one, I will terminate the bases -- Visiting Forces Agreement," Duterte added.

"I'm giving... the American government one month from now." The Visiting Forces Agree-

"If you do not make a correction there, one, I will terminate the bases -- Visiting Forces Agreement"

RODRIGO DUTERTE

ment (VFA) outlines the rules governing conduct of US troops participating in joint military exercises in the Philippines.

The pact gave legal cover for the resumption of large-scale war games between the two al-

lies after the US military closed its Philippine bases in the 1990s amid rising anti-US sentiment.

Duterte also threatened in 2016 to cancel the agreement, but has generally attacked ties with the US, including an announced "separation" from its former colonial master.

Until now the president has not made good on those threats, some of which came after then US president Barack Obama was critical of Duterte's crackdown in 2016.

Relations between Washington and Manila under President Donald Trump, who has voiced support for Duterte, are on a stronger footing.

SOCIETY



In co-operation with Bahrain Red Crescent Society, Southern Governorate organised an awareness campaign to educate the public on the importance of first aid.



The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland - Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain) recently welcomed high school students to its Busaiteen campus for the latest edition of the Future Doctors programme. Now in its fifth year, the programme aims to introduce students to the life of a doctor by engaging them in a host of academic and social activities.



The New Millennium School, DPS Bahrain celebrated its 15th Annual Day, with great flair and splendour. Dr Ebrahim Al Dossery, Assistant Under Secretary, Information and Follow up, Prime Minister's Court, Dr Jaffer Ali Al Shaikh, Assistant Under Secretary of Education, Ministry of Education, and principal Arun Kumar Sharma.

Society



The Rotary Club of Sulmaniya held its regular lunch meeting on Wednesday at the Golden Tulip Hotel. Guest speakers were rotary member Amal Kooheji from the Rotary Club of Adliya and Sajeda Al Asfoor who spoke about 'Multigenerational Gaps - Aligning Perceptions'.



Introduce attendees to the life of a medical



The New Millennium School - DPS Bahrain, celebrated the "71st Republic Day" of India with special assemblies arranged in the school campus. Arun Kumar Sharma, Principal addressed the students and motivated them to imbibe the true meaning of patriotism. Dr Ravi Pillai, Chairman and Geetha Pillai, Managing Director extended their good wishes to one and all on the occasion of Republic Day.



Discover Islam in association with Blood Donors Kerala, Bahrain Chapter and All Kerala Driver Freakers-Bahrain Chapter, conducted blood donation camp at Salmaniya Medical Complex.



Minister of Private and Continuous Education, Minister of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain, Dr Jassim Hajji, President, Artificial Intelligence Society and Abdul Rahman Hussain Darraj, Public Relation Specialist, Ministry of Education were the guests of honour. The

business

Siemens buys Indian electrification company

● **Siemens acquires C&S Electric in \$296 million deal**

Reuters | Zurich

Siemens is buying Indian electrical equipment maker C&S Electric in a 267 million euro (\$296.21 million) deal, the German industrial group said yesterday.

The privately held New Delhi-based company makes low-voltage switchgear parts, metering devices and other products used to transmit and distribute electricity, Siemens said.

The C&S deal comes as Siemens reorganises itself around its smart infrastructure and industrial automation businesses when it spins off its energy business this year.

C&S, which employs 5,000 people, had estimated sales of around 150 million euros in 2019,



The logo of Siemens AG is seen at its headquarters in Munich

with an operating profit margin of 10 percent to 15pc, Siemens said.

Andreas Matthe, chief executive of the low-voltage products business at Siemens's Smart In-

frastructure division, said buying C&S would help Siemens provide products for the Indian

267m
euros were spent by Siemens to acquire the Indian company

low-voltage market, which has been growing at around 6pc per year.

Siemens wants to boost its presence in India's home-building, construction and infrastructure sectors like airports, Matthe said.

"India is one of the fastest growing markets in the world, and there is so much to do in terms of infrastructure and improving the energy supply," Matthe said.

But to tap into the trend, Siemens needed to provide locally produced, cheaper products, he added.

The acquisition will also provide a launchpad to export products to other Asian countries, a strategy identified by Siemens as a growth driver for its Smart Industries unit.

"Safe, intelligent and reliable electrification is the backbone of economic and societal development," said Siemens managing board member Cedrik Neike, who is responsible for Asia and leads the Smart Infrastructure business.

"Joining forces with C&S Electric allows us to bring a more comprehensive portfolio that addresses the needs of a very important market."

Siemens will buy around 99pc of the equity share capital under the agreement, which is subject to regulatory approvals.

The trains to industrial software maker, which is due to report its first-quarter earnings on Feb. 5, said it was also looking to set up a design and manufacturing hub in India following the completion of the acquisition.

Bayer mediator dismisses report of \$8 billion Roundup settlement

Reuters | New York

Bayer AG has not offered to pay billions of dollars to settle claims in the United States related to the Roundup herbicide, mediator Ken Feinberg said, dismissing a report to that effect which drove its shares as much as 11 percent higher.

"Bayer has not proposed paying \$8 billion to settle all the U.S. Roundup cancer claims. Such a statement is pure fiction," Feinberg said in an email yesterday. "Compensation has not even been discussed in the global mediation discussions."

Bayer shares, which had shed some of their gains before Feinberg's statement, retreated further and closed up 1.7pc at 64.63 euros.

Bayer, which acquired Roundup and other glyphosate-based weedkillers as part of its \$63 billion takeover of Monsanto last year, declined comment on the initial Bloomberg news report and on Feinberg's response.

Bayer Chief Executive Werner Baumann last week said the company would consider settling with U.S. plaintiffs only on reasonable terms, and if it "achieves finality of the overall litigation".

He added at the time the group was "constructively engaging" in a court-ordered process with mediator Feinberg on the cases heard in federal court. Most of the pending cases, however, have been filed with U.S.



Logo of Bayer AG is seen outside a plant

The problem is, how do you get the plaintiffs to climb down from their very high expectations? None of the jury verdicts so far have been favorable for Bayer

SOURCE

state courts.

Feinberg added that any efforts by Bayer toward a comprehensive settlement were tied in with the mediation proceedings overseen by him. "These are all part of the same mediation process."

Bayer shares have lost more than a third of their value, or roughly 30 billion euros (\$34 billion), since last August when a California jury in the first such lawsuit found Monsanto should have warned of the alleged cancer risks from Roundup.

High Expectations

The German drugs and pesticides company has engaged in negotiations with plaintiffs' lawyers, two sources familiar with the matter said.

"The problem is, how do you get the plaintiffs to climb down from their very high expectations? None of the jury verdicts

so far have been favorable for Bayer," one of the sources said, adding that talks were focused on basic questions such as how to handle potential future claims.

Bayer said yesterday that the next U.S. glyphosate lawsuit initially scheduled to be heard in St. Louis, Missouri, this month would be postponed to Jan. 27, 2020, and that a following St. Louis case slated for September had also been postponed.

The German company may benefit from having cases heard in the city where Monsanto was headquartered and where Bayer manages its global seeds business. But Missouri is also known for juries that often hit companies with huge damages.

Bloomberg said the delays had been pursued by Bayer to allow for undisturbed settlement talks.

The initial unfavorable court rulings in the first three glyphosate cases, heard in California, have at times dragged Bayer's market value below what it paid for Monsanto, although the shares are now trading above that level.

Ericsson hit by costs and weaker market

Reuters | Stockholm

Sweden's Ericsson warned it faced higher costs this year as it rolls out new 5G networks and was also hit by a temporary slowdown in its US market, sending its shares 7 percent lower yesterday. After a number of lean years, Ericsson has been boosted by the roll-out of 5G, particularly in the United States, and analysts hope it can benefit from a US campaign to shut out Chinese rival Huawei from supplying 5G equipment.

But while the new technology has helped sales, it has increased costs. Ericsson has also opted to take on major new clients to gain market share, betting a hit on margins in the short term will help to deliver longer-term profitability.

It recently bought the antenna and filter business of Germany's Kathrein to boost its 5G portfolio and said costs and investments related to the deal would weigh on margins in 2020.

Increased investments in digitalization and more spending on compliance - after a \$1 billion payment to resolve probes by US authorities into corruption - are also expected to mean somewhat higher operating costs in 2020.

In October, rival Nokia shocked investors by slashing its profit outlook for 2019 and 2020 and pausing dividend payments to allow for heavier investments in 5G, leading its shares to drop by a fifth.

However, Ericsson CEO Borje Ekholm said the Swedish firm was on track to deliver its 2020 targets of an adjusted operating margin of over 10pc



Ericsson logo is seen at their headquarters in Stockholm

and sales of 230-240 billion Swedish crowns.

The company also hiked its dividend by 50pc to 1.50 crowns per share, which Christer Gardell, managing partner at Ericsson's top shareholder Cevian Capital, said showed its confidence in the future.

"We are convinced that Borje Ekholm will surpass the targets and show the doubters that they are wrong", Gardell said.

Ericsson is fighting Nokia and Huawei to take the lead in the roll out of 5G networks, which are expected to host critical functions from driverless vehicles to smart electric grids and military communications.

That has led the United States to blacklist Huawei and launch a worldwide campaign to try to persuade allies to ban it from their 5G networks, alleging its equipment could be used by Beijing for spying - which Huawei denies.

UK 'to decide on Huawei 5G next week'

AFP | London

Britain is expected to announce next week whether to allow China's Huawei to develop its 5G network, an official said yesterday, setting out reasons for agreeing despite US opposition.

The official said the decision had not yet been taken but it was likely to be next week.

There had been speculation that Britain would allow Huawei into "non-core" elements of the next-generation 5G mobile networks, such as antennae and base stations attached to masts



A Huawei logo is seen in a shop

and roofs.

The United States has banned Huawei from the rollout of its 5G network because of concerns -- strongly denied -- that the firm could be under the control of Beijing.

It has been lobbying Britain to do the same, even threaten-

ing to limit intelligence sharing between the two allies if the UK goes its own way.

British Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom said this week that a decision would be made "soon", adding that many factors were being considered.

These included "the availability of other providers" and "the work that Huawei has already done in the United Kingdom", she said.

The senior official said Britain -- unlike the United States -- had been using Huawei technology in its systems for the past 15 years.

SHOW



THE GENTLEMEN (15+)(CRIME/ACTION)
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
 OASIS JUFFAIR (VIP): 12.30 + 5.45 + 11.00 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 + 12.00 MN + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
 CITY CENTRE (VIP I): 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (I): 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (II): (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
 WADI AL SAIL: 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY, CHARLIE HUNNAM, HENRY GOLDING

THE TURNING (15+)(HORROR/THRILLER)
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 1.45 + 6.45 + 11.45 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 + 12.00 MN + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
 SEEF (I): 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
 WADI AL SAIL: 10.30 AM + 3.00 + 7.30 + 12.00 MN
MACKENZIE DAVIS, FINN WOLFHARD, BROOKLYNN PRINCE

JUST MERCY (PG-13)(DRAMA)
 CITY CENTRE: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (I): 12.15 + 5.45 + 11.15 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 2.30 + 8.00 PM
BRIE LARSON, MICHAEL B. JORDAN, JAMIE FOXX

THE LAST FULL MEASURE (PG-15)(DRAMA/WAR)
 CITY CENTRE: 12.30 + 3.00 + 5.30 + 8.00 + 10.30 PM
 SEEF (I): 3.15 + 8.45 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.00 + 5.30 + 11.00 PM
CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER, SAMUEL L. JACKSON, SEBASTIAN STAN

PANGA (PG-13)(HINDI/ROMANTIC/DRAMA/SPORT)
 From Thursday 23rd 7.00 PM onwards
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM
 SEEF (I): 12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.00 + 5.45 + 11.30 PM
KANGANA RANAUT, JASSIE GILL, RICHA CHADHA

STREET DANCER 3 (PG-15)(HINDI/DANCE/MUSIC/COMEDY)
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 2.15 + 5.15 + 8.15 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (I): 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 2.45 + 8.30 PM
VARUN DHAWAN, SHRADDHA KAPOOR, RAGHAV JUJAL

TOY GUARDIANS (G)(ANIMATION/ACTION/ADVENTURE)
 CITY CENTRE: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 PM
 SEEF (I): 10.30 AM + 12.30 + 2.30 + 4.30 PM
MITCH SANDRINGHAM, JULIA NOBLES, CATIA NATHANSON

AL NIHAYA (PG)(KUWAITI/ACTION/COMEDY)
 SEEF (I): 6.30 + 8.30 + 10.30 PM
EBRAHIM AL-SHEAKHLI, MESHAAL ALFARHAN, MOHAMMED ALHMLY

BAD BOYS FOR LIFE (PG-15)(ACTION/COMEDY/CRIME)
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
 OASIS JUFFAIR (VIP): 3.00 + 8.15 PM
 CITY CENTRE (IMAX 2D): 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 2.00 + 4.45 + 7.30 + 10.15 PM + (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
 CITY CENTRE (ATMOS): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN
 CITY CENTRE (VIP II): 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM
 SEEF (I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN + (12.30 MN THURS/FRI)
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM
WILL SMITH, MARTIN LAWRENCE, VANESSA HUDGENS



DOLITTLE (PG)(ADVENTURE/COMEDY/FAMILY)
 OASIS JUFFAIR (KIDS CINEMA): 10.45 AM + 1.00 + 5.30 + 7.45 + 10.00 PM
 CITY CENTRE (IMAX 2D): 11.00 AM + 1.00 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (I): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.45 + 5.15 + 9.45 PM
ROBERT DOWNEY JR., ANTONIO BANDERAS, MICHAEL SHEEN

1917 (PG-15)(WAR/ACTION/DRAMA) 1917
 CITY CENTRE: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.30 + 6.00 + 8.30 + 11.00 PM
GEORGE MACKAY, DEAN-CHARLES CHAPMAN, MARK STRONG



JUMANJI THE NEXT LEVEL (PG-15)
 CITY CENTRE: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
 SEEF (I): 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
DWAYNE JOHNSON, JACK BLACK, KEVIN HART

AL FELOUS (THE MONEY) (PG-15)
 CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
 SEEF (I): 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 3.45 + 6.15 + 8.45 + 11.15 PM
TAMER HOSNY, ZEINA, KHALID EL-SAWI

FROZEN 2 (PG)(ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)
 CITY CENTRE: 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM
 SEEF (I): 11.00 AM + 3.30 + 8.00 PM
KRISTEN BELL, IDINA MENZEL, JOSH GAD

SPIES IN DISGUISE (PG)
 OASIS JUFFAIR (KIDS CINEMA): 3.15 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 + 6.00 + 8.15 + 10.30 PM
 SEEF (I): 1.15 + 5.45 + 10.15 PM
WILL SMITH, TOM HOLLAND, KAREN GILLAN

UNDERWATER (PG-15)
 CITY CENTRE: 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
KRISTEN STEWART, T.J. MILLER, JESSICA HENWICK

MASAMEER: THE MOVIE (PG)(ANIMATION/COMEDY)
 CITY CENTRE: 10.45 AM + 3.45 + 8.45 PM
ABDULAZIZ AL-MUZAINI, ABDULAZIZ AL-SHEHRI, MAZROA AL-MAZROA

MALEFICENT 2: MISTRESS OF EVIL
 CITY CENTRE: 1.15 + 6.15 + 11.15 PM
ANGELINA JOLIE, TERESA MAHONEY, MICHELLE PFEIFFER

CHHAPAAK (PG-15)(HINDI/DRAMA)
 SEEF (I): 10.45 AM + 1.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
DEEPIKA PADUKONE, VIKRANT MASSEY, MADHURJEET SARGHI

TANHAJI: THE UNSUNG WARRIOR
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 11.00 AM + 4.00 + 9.00 PM
 SEEF (I): 3.00 + 8.30 PM
AJAY DEVGN, SAIF ALI KHAN, KAJOL

BIG BROTHER (PG-15)(MALAYALAM)
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 10.45 AM + 4.45 + 10.45 PM
MOHANLAL, ARBAAZ KHAN, ANOOP MENON, SARJANO KHALID, HONEY ROSE, SIDDIQUE

ALA VAIKUNTHAPURRAMLLOO (PG-15)(TELUGU)
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 1.45 + 7.45 PM
 SEEF (I): 12.00 + 5.30 + 11.00 PM
ALLU ARAVIND, S. RADHA KRISHNA, ALLU ARJUN, POOJA HEGDE, TABU, NIVETHA PETHURAJ

DISCO RAJA (TELUGU)
 From Friday 24th
 SEEF (I): 3.45 PM
RAVI TEJA, PAYAL RAJPUT, SATYA

ANJAAM PATHIRA (PG-15)(MALAYALAM)
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM
 SEEF (I): 12.00 + 5.30 + 11.00 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 3.15 + 8.30 PM
AL HAMRA: 12.00 + 6.00 + (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)

KUNCHACKO BOBAN, SHARAFUDHEEN, INDRANS



SHYLOCK (PG-15)(MALAYALAM)
 OASIS JUFFAIR: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (I): 11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 + 12.00 MN
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.45 + 6.00 + 11.15 PM
AL HAMRA: 3.00 + 9.00 PM
MAMMOOTTY, MEENA, SIDDIQUE, RAJKIRANA

MOVIE REVIEW

The Last Full Measure: remembering a fallen war hero

This fact-based story follows the quest to get a Medal of Honour for a pararescue medic who died in Vietnam

More of a two-hour ceremony than a movie, *The Last Full Measure* recounts strenuous real-life efforts to secure a very belated, posthumous Medal Of Honour for William H. Pitsenbarger, an Air Force pararescueman who was killed in Vietnam while saving fellow soldiers' lives. It's a full-throated, misty-eyed celebration of heroism—"Thank you for your service" writ large—and only a churl would point out that watching it isn't far removed from attending a military funeral, inspiring the same suite of emotions. Hagiography doesn't magically become less tedious simply because its subject made the ultimate sacrifice for his country, however, and this stolid, mournful drama does little more than solicit the viewer's respect and admiration for Pitsenbarger, whose entire life gets reduced to a single act of uncomplicated nobility.

In theory, the film's complex figure is Scott Huffman (Sebastian Stan), a Defence Department staffer who's tasked



A scene from 'The Last Full Measure'

with handling the decoration upgrade request. (Pitsenbarger was originally awarded the Air Force Cross—quite an honour in its own right, but still less distinguished than the rarely given Medal Of Honour.) Ambitious and distracted, Huffman initially perceives this assignment as annoying busywork, but becomes more invested after speaking

with Pitsenbarger's friend and fellow pararescueman, Thomas Tully (William Hurt). What follows is a more inspiring riff on Citizen Kane, as Huffman travels the world interviewing other Vietnam vets (played by such aging powerhouses as Samuel L. Jackson, Ed Harris, John Savage, and—in his final screen appearance—the late Peter Fon-

da), hearing nothing but praise for the man's courage and guilt at having survived the war when he did not. We also meet Pitsenbarger's parents (Diane Ladd and Christopher Plummer), one of whom has terminal cancer and hopes to see justice done before he dies.

There's no questioning *The Last Full Measure's* good in-



There's star power but no drama in feature-length salute to sacrifice 'The Last Full Measure'

tentions. (Hell, its title comes from the Gettysburg Address.) Writer-director Todd Robinson, whose previous films include the submarine thriller *Phantom*, clearly wants to instil or reactivate Americans' feeling of pride in our military and gratitude for those who serve; the movie ends with everyone on screen—and, implicitly, the viewer—being urged to stand and pay tribute. Making that sentiment compelling for two hours, however, is a tall order. Recurring flashbacks to the rescue mission in which

Pitsenbarger (Jeremy Irvine) was killed look as if they were shot on a backlot, and depict him practically as an angel of mercy. Present-tense scenes (which take place in the late '90s; Pitsenbarger received his Medal Of Honour in 2000) lean heavily on weepy speeches, with Hurt even getting a full-bore "It's not your fault" meltdown staged in front of the Vietnam Memorial wall.

By far the film's most effective element is Huffman's gradual realization that he was given this assignment in the expectation that he'd bury it, thereby preserving the reputation of a U.S. Senator and likely future secretary of defence. The politicking involved is straight out of *The West Wing* (which is probably why Bradley Whitford was cast as Huffman's superior), but it occupies only about the same 10 or 15 minutes that it would have been allotted as the C plot in a post-Sorkin *West Wing* episode. Ultimately, we're just meant to recognize bravery and salute. The movie's not strictly necessary for that.

celebs

Jennifer Lopez and Shakira



Aishwarya Rai, Abhishek and Aaradhya Bachchan



Oscars 2020: Elton John, Idina Menzel set to perform live



Elton John and Idina Menzel
Los Angeles

Stars Elton John, Cynthia Erivo, Idina Menzel, Chrissy Metz and Randy Newman will be performing their Oscar-nominated songs at the upcoming 92nd Academy Awards ceremony.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has announced that all five of this year's Oscar-nominated original songs will be performed at the award gala.

Music legend Elton John is gearing up to sing his track "(I'm gonna) love me again" from "Rocketman", the biopic about his life, reports deadline.com.

"We're excited to have an incredible group of nominees and performers who will deliver one-of-a-kind music moments you will only see on the Oscars," said show producers Lynette Howell Taylor and Stephanie Allain.

Renee Zellweger: Didn't try to emulate Judy Garland



Renee Zellweger
Los Angeles

Actress Renee Zellweger said singing for 'Judy' wasn't easy, but she didn't have time to think about being judged.

The film traces the journey of an iconic star Judy Garland and her career during the last year of her life when she relocated her stage career to Britain. It captures her initial success and what happens when her progress worsens due to health issues. Zellweger is seen as Garland.

"I've never been asked to sing several belters in a row, let alone do a live performance anywhere," said Zellweger.

Shakira, Jennifer getting fans all hyped with Super Bowl countdown videos

Los Angeles

The two popstars Shakira and Jennifer Lopez, who seem to be gearing up for their performance at Super Bowl, are getting all the fans hyped up with their countdown videos.

The two, who will co-headline the Super Bowl LIV half-time show in Miami on February 2, took to Instagram to officially begin the 10-day countdown until the big day.

Shakira posted a Tik-Tok video of herself in the gym and captioned it: "Ten days until Super Bowl. Stepping

up our preparations! #sbliv #superbowl@nfl."

J Lo, on the other hand, was seen preparing on the field.

"Waiting for my cue like ... Only days until #SuperBowlLIV! The countdown is on. Are you ready? #Pepsi-Halftime #SBLIV @guess @niyamasol" read the caption of the post.

The two would be performing at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida, where the Kansas City Chiefs will play with San Francisco 49ers, reported Page Six.

Is Aishwarya Rai pregnant? fans wonder after Abhishek Bachchan promises 'surprise'

Mumbai

Fans of Aishwarya Rai Bachchan are speculating if she is pregnant for the second time, and it's all because of Abhishek Bachchan's tweet that he has a surprise announcement in store for fans!

Abhishek recently tweeted: "Hey guys! Have a surprise for all of you. Stay tuned!!"

Netizens began to speculate a variety of possibilities, including Aishwarya's pregnancy.

Commenting on Abhishek's post, a user wrote: "2nd baby?"

Another commented: "Sibbling for your daughter?"

Another user wrote: "One more junior bachchan on the way?"

Not just Aish's pregnancy, netizens also came up with weird speculations reacting to Abhishek's tweet.

While one fan guessed he might be talking about Dhoom 5, another thought the actor is planning a retirement from his Bollywood career. Still another guessed he was talking about Amazon Prime's Breathe season 2 while another user felt Abhishek was probably coming up with a sequel to his debut film Refugee.

Topping the chart of weird speculations is a user who commented: "Are you going to host the next season of KBC on @SonyTV in place of your father @SrBachchan? by the way how is his health now?"

Pierce Brosnan, wife step out for a musical



Keely and Pierce Brosnan
Los Angeles

Los Angeles

Hollywood star Pierce Brosnan rarely makes a red carpet appearance without his wife Keely. This time, they were spotted together at the opening night of "The Last Ship" musical here.

The 66-year-old actor looked suave in a grey tweed three-piece suit which he wore with a cravat. The "Mamma Mia!" actor sported his signature silver goat-ee and teamed his ensemble with a crisp white shirt and a pair of brown suede shoes, reports dailymail.co.uk.

Keely, on the other hand, wore a plunging black dress which showcased her sun-kissed tan as she posed next to her husband at the event.

Brad Pitt reacts to reunion with Jennifer Aniston at SAG 2020

Los Angeles

American actor Brad Pitt has responded to the attention his reunion with ex-wife Jennifer Aniston received at the 2020 Screen Actors Guild Awards.

In an interview with Entertainment Tonight, the 56-year-old actor revealed that he hadn't read any headlines about the viral moment and stated, "I don't know, I'm blissfully naive and I'm gonna stay that way," report-



Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston

ed Us Weekly.

On January 19, Pitt and Aniston prompted a social frenzy when they were spotted celebrating their respective SAG wins backstage.

Brad took home an award for his Outstanding Performance

by a Male Actor in a Supporting Role while Aniston received the Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Drama Series award. The 'Once Upon a Time in Hollywood' actor was spotted watching the Friends alum's speech from backstage, which Aniston later told Extra was a "sweet" gesture.

According to an eyewitness, the 'Murder Mystery' actor was happy, thrilled and surprised while explaining how she felt

excited and overwhelmed" about her win in the press room. At the same time, Pitt was spotted saying "Oh, wow," as he smiled while watching her acceptance speech.

In an Instagram post, photographer Vivien Killilea Best, who captured the run-in, detailed the encounter and wrote, "The reunion you've all been waiting for happened tonight. And it was captured for you to see by Vivien Best Photography," she wrote on Sunday.

Jacqueline and John bond over fitness and workouts



John and Jacqueline
Mumbai

Mumbai

Jacqueline Fernandez and John Abraham have been bonding big time over food, fitness and workouts, on the sets of their upcoming film "Attack".

"He (John) is someone who is super fit and we bond on everything - be it food, fitness, workouts and all that stuff. I think he is doing amazingly well. It's my fourth film with him, so we come on set and we just have a great time. We continuously laugh. 'Attack' is an action-heavy film so there is a lot of hard work going into it," said Jacqueline Fernandez at the 3rd edition of Pilates Festival of India hosted by celebrity fitness trainer Yasmin Karachiwala in Mumbai.

Jacqueline and John have co-starred in "Housefull 2", "Race 2", and "Dishoom" in the past.

Kangana Ranaut : Virat Kohli and I have a controversy link

Mumbai

Actress Kangana Ranaut has found a quirky connection with Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli.

"A lot of people tell me that Virat and I share a lot of similarities. He is from a different background and he made a name for himself, and made people fall in love with him," Kangana said when asked what she thought was common between Virat and her.

"The one thing we have in common is that the more controversies we have, the more popular we get. He got a lot of criticism



Kangana Ranaut and Virat Kohli

for his aggressive nature and I have always said that I am also too aggressive," she added.

Kangana continued: "The life of a sports person isn't easy, there are multiple struggles involved. They put in a lot of effort and hard work. From not being in shape to getting into shape is a huge task and is challenging for any sports person."

Kim Kardashian West sued over an Instagram picture

Los Angeles

American media personality Kim Kardashian West to face a lawsuit for stealing a picture of herself with husband Kanye West which she posted on Instagram.

According to TMZ, the picture featured the couple sharing a romantic moment at Nas' album release party back in October 2018.

The snap got more than 2.2 million likes however, a professional photographer named Saeed Bolden claimed that Kim used his professional picture, which he owns on her Instagram account without his permission. In a lawsuit, obtained by TMZ, the photographer mentioned that he never gave the TV star permission to use the picture on her social media account neither did she pay him to use it.



Kim Kardashian

SUDOKU

		6	3		9			
				4	7		3	
1			7		6			
	8	7	5		2			
4		2			3		5	
		6			2	8	7	
	7		2					4
8		1	7					
		9		8	1			

Yesterday's solution

1	4	9	6	3	8	7	2	5
6	7	8	9	2	5	4	3	1
5	2	3	1	7	4	6	9	8
9	3	4	2	5	6	8	1	7
8	6	5	3	1	7	9	4	2
7	1	2	8	4	9	5	6	3
2	5	7	4	9	1	3	8	6
3	9	6	5	8	2	1	7	4
4	8	1	7	6	3	2	5	9

How to play

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

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1- Novelist Calvino; 6- One tenth, usually; 11- Banned spray; 14- Blathered; 15- Dostoyevsky novel, with "The"; 16- Shoebox letters; 17- Hangs on to; 18- Home on the range; 19- Call ... day; 20- Light ring; 22- Kitchen gadget; 24- Polish remover; 28- Season between autumn and spring; 30- Prance; 31- Balls; 32- Line in a play directed to the audience; 33- Hollow-horned ruminants; 37- VCR button; 38- Make into a statute; 39- ... Maria; 40- Institute; 43- Seductively beautiful woman; 45- Strap; 46- Furry swimmers; 47- Bicycle seat; 49- Sleep; 50- Reserved; 51- Soccer star Mia; 52- Aries or Taurus; 53- Prospero's servant; 56- Sanctify; 61- ... for tat; 62- Pelvic bones; 63- Smallest; 64- One-million link; 65- Next after the second; 66- Diary bit;

DOWN

1- Nettle; 2- ... kwon do; 3- Hydrocarbon suffix; 4- Cut (off); 5- Like lighthouses; 6- Name; 7- Logical beginning; 8- Apex; 9- Garden tool; 10- Endless; 11- Thaw before takeoff; 12- Discourage; 13- Drop of water expelled by the eye; 21- Tiny toiler; 23- Wishing won't make ...; 24- Without ... in the world; 25- Lawsuits; 26- Kick out; 27- Director Browning; 28- Look attentively; 29- Belinda Carlisle's "Should ... You In?"; 31- Grind together; 33- Licorice-like flavoring; 34- European capital, in song; 35- Each partner; 36- Have a feeling; 38- Airline to Tel Aviv; 41- Designer Gucci; 42- Confined to the berth; 43- Walk unsteadily; 44- "The Addams Family" cousin; 46- Unit of electrical resistance; 47- Killed; 48- Main artery; 49- Dish of raw vegetables; 50- Broadway opening; 51- German Mister; 54- It's a bit of cheer; 55- Henri's here; 57- Spy novelist Deighton; 58- Grab a bite; 59- Georgia, once; Abbr.; 60- Hog's home;

Yesterday's solution

H	A	V	O	C	A	D	A	R	N	S	A	D
E	L	I	S	E	R	A	T	I	O	T	R	Y
R	E	P	E	L	I	B	E	A	M	A	R	E
S	E	S	S	I	L	E	S	S	P	E	N	U
T	E	E	N	S	Y	F	U	S	E	S		
A	L	L	O	T		F	A	L	S	E	H	O
T	E	L		C	A	U	S	E		L	I	E
H	E	R	S	T	W	H	I	L	E		T	U
H	E	A	R	T		E	A	S	I	E	R	
G	R	E	E	A	R		S	I	N	C	E	R
T	I	O	E	K		T	A	S	K			
T	I	O	C	E	L	T	H	A	S	A	P	H
S	P	A		S	E	V	E	N		R	E	E
T	S	P		T	E	E	N	A		D	I	M

SPORTS

Federer survives five-set epic

● Williams, Osaka out as surprises rock Australian Open

● Djokovic breezes through

● Tsitsipas sent packing

AFP | Melbourne

Serena Williams crashed out, 15-year-old Coco Gauff stunned Naomi Osaka and Roger Federer survived a five-set thriller as the form book went flying out of the window at the Australian Open yesterday.

Men's title-holder Novak Djokovic eased into the last 16 but elsewhere there were surprises all over Melbourne Park with Williams the biggest victim and Federer fighting back from 4-8 down in a fifth-set tie-break with John Millman.

Williams' bid for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam was shattered by the unlikely figure of China's Wang Qiang, who triumphed in three tough sets -- after winning just one game when they played at the US Open in September.

Gauff then stepped up her giant-killing Melbourne debut as she ousted Japanese defending champion Osaka, 22, in dismissive style, winning 6-3, 6-4 in just 67 minutes to reach round four.

"Oh my gosh. Two years ago I lost first round in the juniors and now I'm here -- this is



Roger Federer clinch his 100th win at the Australian Open

crazy," said the teenager, who shocked Venus Williams in the first round.

Federer came within a whisker of repeating his 2018 US Open upset by Millman as he was taken to five punishing sets by the tough Australian.

The 20-time Grand Slam champion was facing defeat in the super tie-breaker but he clawed back from 4-8 down to clinch his 100th win at the Australian Open.

"Oh God, it was tough," said Federer. "Thank God it was a super tie-breaker (10 points), otherwise I would have lost this one."

"It came down to the wire in the end."

'I made it happen'

With Williams now 38, 23 years older than Gauff, the two

players are at opposite ends of their careers.

And with Williams' close friend Caroline Wozniacki retiring yesterday, after defeat to Ons Jabeur, it looked like a changing of the guard in women's tennis.

But Williams, who has now had eight winless Grand Slams since returning from childbirth, said she hadn't given up hope of matching Margaret Court's 47-year-old record for Grand Slam titles.

"I definitely do believe (I can equal it) or I wouldn't be on tour," said Williams.

Williams was the bookies' favourite to lift the trophy for the eighth time but she came unstuck against a determined Wang, who won 6-4, 6/7 (2/7), 7-5.

Her defeat came just minutes after Denmark's Wozniacki was

knocked out by Tunisia's Jabeur, bringing a tearful end to the former world number one's final tournament before retiring.

"I had a dream when I was a kid. I wanted to win a Grand Slam. I wanted to be number one in the world," said Wozniacki, the Melbourne winner in 2018. "People thought that I was crazy being from a small country. But I made it happen."

Williams' exit removes a major hurdle for Australia's world number one Ashleigh Barty, 23, who had been on course to meet her in the semi-finals.

Barty, bidding to become the first Australian champion since 1978, hit form in a 6-3, 6-2 demolition of Elena Rybakina, saying she had played her best tennis so far this year.

Gauff, who trained with Serena Williams in the off-season,

Arsenal boss Arteta urges Ceballos to prove his worth

AFP | London

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta has urged Dani Ceballos to prove he is worth keeping after the on-loan Real Madrid midfielder was linked with a return to Spain.

Ceballos joined Arsenal in August on a season-long loan, but he has struggled to make an impact and is reportedly keen to leave.

The 23-year-old played in Spain's most recent internationals but is said to be concerned about his chances of making the national squad for Euro 2020.

Ceballos, who has scored just once in 17 appearances for Arsenal, was sidelined by a hamstring injury in November and is yet to feature since Arteta took charge.

Speaking ahead of Monday's FA Cup fourth round tie at Bournemouth, Arteta made it clear Ceballos will have to show his quality and desire on a consistent basis to get back in the team.

"I had a conversation with Dani. When I joined the club he wasn't here. He was in Madrid because he was doing his rehab for over a month with the team that owns him," Arteta told reporters yesterday.

"I haven't seen much of him because he only trained with us for a week or 10 days.

Lampard concerned by Abraham injury

AFP | London

Chelsea manager Frank Lampard is facing an anxious wait to learn how long England striker Tammy Abraham will be sidelined with his ankle injury.

Lampard revealed Abraham will miss Saturday's FA Cup fourth round tie at Hull after suffering the injury when he crashed into an advertising board during Tuesday's 2-2 draw against Arsenal.

The Blues face Leicester, Manchester United and Tottenham in a pivotal Premier League schedule in February.

So Lampard is keeping his fingers crossed that Abraham, who has scored 15 goals in his breakthrough season, is back to fitness as quickly as possible.

"The good news is he hasn't fractured anything, but the other news is we still have to see how he develops," Lampard told reporters yesterday.

"He's not fit for the weekend, but whether he'll be fit for Leicester I'm still not sure. It's still not clear at the moment."

Lampard last week refused to rule out a move for Paris Saint-Germain striker Edinson Cavani and he admitted Abra-

ham's injury has increased his desire to bring in a forward during the January transfer window.

"I think the impetus to bring in a striker, or players potentially that can get on the end of these chances we're creating, is there, we have to be honest," Lampard said.

"When you're creating 20 chances a game and not scoring enough goals that can be crucial. I don't think it absolutely changes it but Tammy has been our main source of goals, so yes, it's very relevant.

"I think there's choice (in the transfer market), but it's not the ideal window, history's proven that. I think it's about trying to get the choice right of the player we can bring in considering what's available.

"The club know, and the games are showing that, my thoughts on that. So we'll have to see how that goes between now and the end of the window."

Tammy Abraham

Newcastle sign Lazaro on loan from Inter Milan

AFP | London

Newcastle signed Austria winger Valentino Lazaro on loan for the rest of the season from Inter Milan yesterday.

Magpies boss Steve Bruce moved for Lazaro in a bid to bolster the Premier League club's misfiring attack.

The 23-year-old is unlikely to make his debut in the FA Cup fourth round clash with Oxford on Saturday due to a reported delay in processing the paperwork.

Instead, Lazaro's first appearance may come in next weekend's Premier League match against Norwich.

"I've only heard great things about the club. I've had good talks with the coach, so I feel very happy to be here. Those conversations convinced me this is the right place for me to come," Lazaro said.

Vardy's injury not as bad as first feared: Rodgers

AFP | London

Leicester manager Brendan Rodgers says Jamie Vardy's glute injury is not as bad as first feared and he expects the club's leading scorer to be back in action soon.

Vardy was forced off during the first half of Wednesday's Premier League win against West Ham after initially trying to continue playing after he suffered the injury.

Vardy has scored 17 goals for Leicester this term, mak-

ing him a key figure in the team's unexpected surge into the top four. It was feared the 33-year-old could be sidelined for several weeks in a blow to third-placed Leicester's hopes of securing a spot in next season's Champions League.

But while Vardy will not be involved in the FA Cup fourth round tie at Brentford on Saturday, Rodgers said there is an outside chance he could feature in Tuesday's League Cup semi-final second leg against Aston Villa.

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Nibras Bounty lifts Lexus Cup

Nibras Bounty triumphed in day's main race at REHC



Action from one of the races

TDT | Manama

Nibras Bounty lifted the Lexus Cup in the eighth and main race of the day yesterday at Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club (REHC) in Riffa.

Owned by Abbas Ahmed Yousif Abdulla and trained by Jaffar Marzooq, jockey Hasan Al Saffar steered Nibras Bounty to the win in the seven-furlong event for imported horses aged three and up. The victor triumphed in a time of one minute 26.891 seconds to take the lion's share of the BD3,000 total prize.

Finishing in second place two-and-a-half-lengths behind was Prince Bonnaire, who was competing for Al Afoo Racing Stable, Mohammed Saeed and Anas Al Siyabi. Third was Archaic for Hasan Mefareh Alajmi, Yousif Taher and Ebrahim Nader; while in fourth was Gold Spinner for Al Afoo Racing Stable, Mohammed Saeed and Lee Newman.

In the day's seventh race, also



Winners receive their Cups from yesterday's events

for a Lexus Cup and featuring imported three-year-olds, Inclination took the win for Al Afoo Racing Stable and Mohammed

Saeed. Jockey Lee Newman rode Inclination to first place in 1:54.283 over a distance of nine furlongs.

Pont Vert was the runner-up for Jassim Mohammed Asad, Ramzi Al Baqlawa and John Egan; while Bint Soghaan was



Nibras Bounty triumphed in a time of one minute 26.891 seconds to take the lion's share of the BD3,000 total prize

third for newcomers FF Racing, Khalid Hilal and Abdulla Faisal. Forward Thinker of Aradous Doyle was classified fourth to take the last share of the race's BD3,000 total prize.

There were three other races offering a Lexus Cup. In the fifth event of the day, covering six furlongs and offering a BD2,000 total prize, Light Angel of Al

Afoo Racing Stable claimed first place in 1:13.360.

The second race was over a straight of six furlongs with a BD2,000 prize, and it was claimed by Aryaaf, also of Al Afoo Racing Stable, in a time of 1:14.540. The first race over a five-furlong straight with a BD2,000 prize was clinched by Murjani, owned by His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Abdulla bin Isa Al Khalifa, in 1:03.587.

Meanwhile, Antar won the Royal Golf Club Cup, offered in race six over eight furlongs, in 1:41.935. The Haitham Salah Abdullatef-owned horse took home the biggest share of the BD2,500 prize.

In the third race of the day, Krayaan 1706 lifted the Fatees Al Hajeri Cup. It was over six furlongs with a BD1,500 total prize, with Krayaan 1706 winning in 1:25.362.

The fourth race of the day over six furlongs and a BD2,000 prize was won by Mohaayedah, owned by Victorious in 1:15.052.

Lukaku says split from Man Utd was 'right decision'

AFP | Milan

Romelu Lukaku believes he made the right decision to leave Manchester United for a new challenge at Inter Milan, saying he had to "re-find" himself after a difficult time at Old Trafford.

The Belgium striker joined United from Everton for 75 million euros (\$98 million) in July 2017, scoring 42 goals in his two seasons at the club before moving to Inter in August last year.

He has been in superb form for Antonio Conte's side, scoring 18 goals to help the club sustain a challenge for the Serie A title.

Those performances, and United's reported interest in signing a striker this month after Marcus Rashford's back injury, have raised questions as to the wisdom of allowing Lukaku to leave Old Trafford.

But, in an interview with Sky Sports News, the 26-year-old said the decision was his and it had worked out well for United as well.

"I think I had to re-find myself," he said. "Last year was difficult for me on the professional side because stuff was not going how I wanted and I was not performing as well... and I just came to the conclusion that it was time for me to change environment.

"I made my decision around March, and I went to the manager's office (Ole Gunnar Solskjaer) and I told him it was time for me to find something else."

"I think I made the right decision and I think Manchester United now has made space for the younger players to come through so I think it was a bit of a win-win situation for both of us," he added.

The Belgian was signed for United by Jose Mourinho and had an excellent first season, scoring 27 goals as United finished second in the Premier League.

But Mourinho was sacked in December 2018 after a disappointing start to the season, with Lukaku also unable to discover his best form.

Former Chelsea manager Conte has managed to bring the best out of Lukaku this season, pairing him with Argentine forward Lautaro Martinez to lethal effect.



Iyer fireworks give India win in T20 opener

Reuters | Wellington

Shreyas Iyer guided India to a six-wicket victory over New Zealand in the first Twenty20 international at Eden Park in Auckland yesterday as the tourists showed few signs of fatigue or jet lag.

Iyer scored his second Twenty20 international half century with 58 not out and finished the game with his third six as India reached 204-4 to chase down New Zealand's 203-5 with an over to spare.

KL Rahul and captain Virat Kohli put on 99 runs in 50 deliveries for the tourists, who only arrived in New Zealand on Tuesday after completing a 2-1 one-day series victory over Australia on Sunday.

Rahul was brilliantly caught by Tim Southee at midoff for 56 before Martin Guptill produced an even more spectacu-



Shreyas Iyer plays a shot

lar catch at deep midwicket to dismiss Kohli for 45 to give the hosts a sniff of an upset.

India's deep batting lineup, however, ensured that they cantered home with a measured run chase full of quality.

New Zealand's innings included half centuries for Colin

Munro, Ross Taylor and Kane Williamson.

After Munro put on 80 for the opening wicket with Guptill (30), the loss of the left hander for 59 and Colin de Grandhomme within the space of three deliveries stalled New Zealand's momentum.

58

runs were scored by Shreyas Iyer to mark his second Twenty20 international half century

Williamson (51) and Taylor (54 not out) however prospered after two fielding errors by Yuzvendra Chahal and the pair scored 61 runs in 28 deliveries to put their side in a strong position at 178-4 with three overs remaining.

Some superb death bowling by Jasprit Bumrah, who rolled his ankle badly when he stood on the seam of the drop-in pitch, and Mohammed Shami ensured they did not kick on.

Dier denies negative vibes at Spurs under Mourinho

AFP | London

Eric Dier has dismissed rumours that Tottenham's players are already growing tired of life under Jose Mourinho just two months into

his reign.

Reports have emerged that Spurs players believe they are regressing under the Portuguese while defender Danny Rose is said to have clashed with him after being left out of the match-day squad.

But England midfielder Dier has denied the claims and says

any unhappiness only stems from frustrating results on the pitch.

"Any club, when results aren't going well, is not a happy atmosphere," he said. "But it definitely isn't a negative atmosphere."

"I don't feel anything along those lines personally and I think everybody has been train-

ing very well, training hard, enjoying themselves in the same way as always."

When asked about the training methods, which were described in Wednesday's article in the Sun newspaper as "like lower-league sessions", Dier was quick to defend Mourinho and his staff.