

Manama secure BBA Cup

Manama clinched the first-ever Bahrain Basketball Association (BBA) Cup last night following a 95-85 victory over Riffa in the tournament final played at Zain Basketball Arena in Um Al Hassam.

P16

OP-ED 8

Trump administration continues gifting stolen land to Netanyahu

THE DAILY **tribune**



Katie Price declared bankrupt after blowing £45m fortune

14 CELEBS

WORLD 7

Police hunt suspects in Dresden jewellery heist

Hariri 'not in PM race'
Beirut

Caretaker Prime Minister Saad Hariri yesterday again ruled himself out as Lebanon's next head of government as the month-long protest movement faced threats of violence.

Mr Hariri resigned on October 29 in the face of nationwide protests against Lebanon's ruling elite. His decision toppled a coalition government including the powerful, Iran-backed Shiite Hezbollah, which opposed the decision.

Since then, Lebanon's main parties have been locked in talks and unable to agree on a new government despite the worst economic crisis since the 1975-90 civil war.

"I am sticking by the rule 'not me, rather someone else' to form a government that addresses the aspirations of the young men and women," Mr Hariri, Lebanon's leading Sunni Muslim politician, said in a statement.

Housing infra push

'Governmental services geared towards achieving citizens' aspirations'

● HRH the Crown Prince expressed his appreciation for the efforts exerted in enhancing citizens' confidence in the government's ability to introduce housing developments.

● HRH the Crown Prince was briefed by the Minister of Housing on the final plans detailing the development of infrastructure services in Salman City.



Mr Al Hamer briefs HRH the Crown Prince on infra projects within Salman City in the presence of Shaikh Khalid and Shaikh Salman.

Manama

HRH the Crown Prince yesterday highlighted the need to swiftly implement the housing and related infrastructure projects to the betterment of the beneficiaries.

This came as His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, along with the Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Development Projects and Infrastructure, Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, and the Minister of Finance and National Economy, Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, yesterday received the Minister of Housing, Bassim Alhamer, at Gudaibiya Palace.

HRH the Crown Prince affirmed that the Kingdom's government services are geared towards achieving citizens' aspirations, highlighting the importance of delivering housing units with high standards, in line with the aspirations of HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

HRH the Crown Prince emphasised the importance of further strengthening coordination among all concerned government entities in order to enhance productivity and expedite the delivery of infrastructure services in Salman City, East Sitra City, and all new housing cities to ensure citizens benefit from the facilities

25,000
housing units are being constructed as per the government plans.

within the specified housing areas.

A brief was then given by the Minister of Housing on the final plans detailing the development of infrastructure services in Salman City, in addition to new housing cities, in line with HRH the Crown Prince's directives issued at the

2019 Government Forum.

HRH the Crown Prince expressed his appreciation for the efforts exerted in enhancing citizens' confidence in the government's ability to introduce housing developments, reserving special praise for the Ministry of Housing for their efforts in particular.

The Cabinet has already hailed the high implementation rates of the national projects included in the Government Action Plan 2015-2018, which exceeded 90 per cent.

A presentation by the Cabinet Affairs Minister last year on the progress of the implementation of the main themes of the Government Action Plan 2015-2018, revealed that a total 321 projects,

related to the basic services provided to citizens in the housing, educational, health and youth sectors, as well as in infrastructure, such as roads, had been fully implemented by 35 ministries and government departments, and that the remaining ones will be completed soon.

The report showed that the government had succeeded in honouring its pledges in the various themes and priorities.

In housing, the government pledged to build 25,000 units, and has already distributed 17,639 units, the minister said, adding that 3,095 housing units are being built and 5,043 ones are being prepared so as to be handed over to beneficiaries soon.



02 Key meeting mulls strategies to 'transform into digital economy'

03 House nod to keep check on increase of school fee

04 OIC support for Islamic nations lauded at Golden Jubilee event

210 fills (includes VAT)



PEACE DEAL

Arab coalition releases 200 Houthi prisoners

Riyadh

The Arab coalition supporting Yemen's internationally recognised government has released 200 Houthi prisoners, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Tuesday, citing coalition spokesman Col Turki Al Maliki.

Its aim is to support a UN-brokered deal aimed at ending the nearly five-year war in Yemen, said a statement, adding that the purpose is to pave the way for a larger and long-delayed prisoner swap agreed upon last year.

The coalition is also conducting flights in cooperation with the World Health Organisation to transport patients from Sanaa to



The release is considered as a trust-building measure.

countries where they can receive appropriate medical treatment, he added.

The coalition has been battling the Iran-backed Houthis on behalf of Yemen's inter-



The prisoner swap was part of a UN-negotiated agreement reached in Sweden last December.

nationally recognised government since 2015. The two sides signed a UN peace deal in Sweden last December but have yet to implement it.

Manama

Key meeting mulls strategies to 'transform into digital economy'

igA's role in enhancing cybersecurity stressed at the meeting

Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Committee for Information and Communication Technology, HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, chaired the 14th meeting of the committee yesterday.

In light of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's directives regarding digital economy and artificial intelligence (AI), the committee reviewed a report on the requirements of the readiness index, laws, policies, strategies, procedures, infrastructure and human resources.

The committee also reviewed e-Government and Committee for Information suggestions to develop a national strategy and establish frameworks for governance of this important area, in addition to reviewing proposals in the field of developing legislation, training, and academic programmes to support emerging institutions to invest in the field of AI.

The committee highlighted the role played by the Information and eGovernment Authority in enhancing cybersecurity and implementing the relevant decisions.

The committee was provided with a detailed explanation of the national system project for jobseekers, which is implemented by the authority in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Development. The project aims to develop a portal to facilitates all services of recruitment.

They were briefed on the



HH Shaikh Mohammed chairs the meeting.

new digital services in the Electricity and Water Authority (EWA), including services related to requests for reconnecting and moving to a new address without the need of personal presence of the beneficiaries of these services.

The committee reviewed key projects undertaken by the Information and e-Gov-

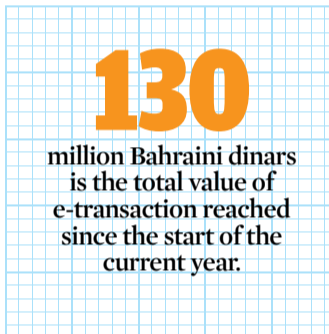
ernment Authority in cooperation with Bahrain national e-transactions network (BENEFIT) aimed to develop the banking services including important services and the provision of electronic mechanism to verify identity and check the veracity of information to financial service providers which is the first of its type in

readiness index as well as key recommendations to boost the Kingdom's position in this important international index.

The committee also reviewed most significant statistics in the field of government transactions. The total number of financial transactions across the electronic channels since the start of the year reached circa BD130 million that is an increase of 32 per cent compared with the same period last year.

The statistics showed that the total number of e-transactions exceeded 1300,000.

Following the discussion and review of the topics, HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, President of the Information and Telecommunication High Committee as well as the members of the committee expressed their appreciation of the Information and eGovernment Authority for its efforts in the achievements that contribute to the provision of e-services to the citizens and residents and facilitation of transactions in the various fields.



the Arab region, in addition to the credit service report which facilitates obtaining personal credit status report aimed to notify individuals about their financial obligations.

The committee also reviewed latest developments regarding preparations ahead of the upcoming UN assessment in the eGovernment



Kingdom of Bahrain مملكة البحرين
وزارة الصناعة والتجارة والسياحة
Ministry of Industry, Commerce & Tourism

Under the Patronage of H.E. Zayed R. Alzayani,
Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Kingdom of Bahrain



Bahrain Chapter of
The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India
(Affiliated to Bahrain Accountants Association)



CONQUERING NEW FRONTIERS

11TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

**DISRUPTION
A CATALYST
FOR GROWTH**

@ The Diplomat
Radisson BLU Hotel
Manama, Bahrain

**29TH & 30TH
NOVEMBER
2019**

Event managed by **convex**

'2019 Korea Movie Week' set

TDT | Manama

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea has announced the kick-off of the "2019 Korea Movie Weeks" film festival for the sixth year in a row.

This year's film festival will open on Thursday December 5th, 2019 and will continue its regular schedule every Wednesday of the month of December, 2019.

The annual film festival will celebrate yet again another group of cinema finery, opening with the Action - Comedy fame "Extreme Job", where a narcotics team work takes an unexpected turn when hidden

talents in culinary are revealed in the team's biggest mission. Extreme Job is the first movie seen by more than 10 million viewers in Korea in 2019.

On Wednesday, December 11, 2019, the action - thriller, "Train to Busan", will be shown, telling the story of father and a daughter battling for life against zombies on a train trip to Busan. Train to Busan is another box office hit which have earned more than 10 Mil viewers in Korea in its release year.

Third show movie will be "Keys to the heart" starring the international fame Lee Byung-hun in a comical drama of two brothers, one inflicted with au-

tism, uniting to find the right tunes for brotherhood.

Fourth and last attraction will have the historical comedy "Detective K: Secret of the Lost Island". An adventurous journey set in the 19th year of the King Jeongjo's reign of a detective and his sidekick investigating a deadly counterfeiting ring threatening the Joseon dynasty.

The 2019 Korea Movie Weeks will be open for public every Wednesday at 7pm, except the opening day on Thursday, December 5, 2019 in the Seef Mall Cineco Complex, theatre no. 13.

For further information contact the Korean Embassy on 17531120 from 8 am to 4 pm.

Indian Constitution Day



The Embassy of India in the Kingdom organised an event titled 'The Making of the Indian Constitution' to mark the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India yesterday at the Embassy Complex in Seef. Constitution Day (National Law Day), also known as Samvidhan Divas, is celebrated in India on 26 November every year to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India. On 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India, and it came into effect on 26 January 1950. Indian Ambassador Alok Kumar Sinha spoke at the event, which was attended by senior government officials, envoys and dignitaries. Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Dr Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa was the guest of honour while former minister Abdul Nabi Al Sho'ala delivered a speech on the occasion.



<p>Annual Sponsors</p>  	<p>Title Sponsors</p>  
<p>Event Sponsors</p>     	<p>Automotive Sponsor</p> 
<p>Day Sponsors</p>  	<p>ICT Sponsor</p> 

Foreign Ministry role stressed

National Security Adviser and Commander of the Royal Guard, His Highness Major-General Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday, where he met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa and senior officials at the Ministry. This meeting comes in light of His Highness Shaikh Nasser's visits to a number of ministries, institutions and government bodies, to meet with officials in charge of the latter entities, thus further supporting the Kingdom's developmental route that is led by His Majesty. His Highness Shaikh Nasser expressed his utmost appreciation for the pivotal national role played by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in implementing the visions and aspirations of His Majesty the King in enhancing the Kingdom of Bahrain's regional and international status at all levels, pointing out in this regard its tangible contributions to the Kingdom's national achievements.

Terror convicts' sentences upheld

TDT | Manama

The First High Criminal Court of Appeal yesterday upheld the ten years imprisonment sentence issued against two Bahrainis, who were earlier convicted of taking part in assaulting a civilian police vehicle in Eker and torching it.

However, the court revoked the citizenship cancellation sentence issued against the men earlier.

According to court files, both defendants joined others in intercepting a civilian police vehicle that entered East Eker village to arrest a wanted individual.

They blocked the roads around the car and attacked it using wooden planks and rocks before torching it.

They also stole the battery of the car as shown in the investigation.



Both defendants joined others in intercepting a civilian police vehicle that entered East Eker village to arrest a wanted individual.

PROSECUTORS

Eyewitnesses' testimonies proved that both defendants were responsible for the attack, which completely damaged the vehicle.

The investigation showed that the defendants' motive behind the crime was to target policemen, spreading chaos in the country, jeopardising and destabilising security serving terrorist purposes.

Some of the other defendants who were involved in the case were arrested and firearms and ammunition was found in their possession at the time of the arrest.

An arrestee also led the cops to a weapons warehouse in the area, where materials used in the manufacturing of explosives was also found.

On January 23, 2017, the Public Prosecution charged the suspects of torching property and risking people's lives and properties serving a terrorist purpose.

The other charges included illegal gathering, destabilising security, and possessing weapons and explosives.

House nod to keep check on increase of school fee

Lawmakers debated over the issue for more than two hours

The new fee readjustment procedures took effect at the beginning of the school year 2018/2019, in line with the ministerial edict dated August 27, 2017.

MPs argued that some private schools have increased fees so much that it has become unaffordable to many Bahrainis.

TDT | Manama

After a heated debate, MPs yesterday agreed to approve a law to restrict the increase of students' fee at schools, it is learnt.

Private schools will not be able to increase the school fee every year, according to a law passed by the parliament yesterday.

MPs voted in favour of restricting school fees to not more than three per cent every three years.

The conclusion was made after heated discussions between MPs in yesterday's parliament

session for more than two hours.

MPs argued that some private schools have increased fees so much that it has become unaffordable to many Bahrainis.

They said such increases are immoral especially in the education sector.

This comes after new performance based criteria was launched last year where only schools rated "Good" or "Excellent" will be authorised to increase students' fees by five per cent, pending board of directors' approval.

The new fee readjustment procedures took effect at the beginning of the school year 2018/2019, in line with the ministerial edict dated August 27, 2017.

According to the criteria, in case the increase in school fees exceeds the nominal 5pc benchmark, the approval of the school board and parent's council would be required for the hike to be endorsed.

Fourteen private schools are rated as high-performing, out of 73 privately-owned educational establishments.

The Education Ministry officials at the time said that any increase would be performance based, taking into account the review reports, periodically



The session in progress at House of Representatives.

100

Bahraini dinars in monthly fee on each expat student studying in public schools was proposed by a group of MPs earlier.

released by the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA).

The ministry urged representatives of the high-performing school to communicate with stu-

amount of not less than BD100 a month or BD600 a year on each non-Bahraini pupil studying in public schools in the Kingdom.

The new proposal also instructed to exclude students holding GCC nationalities from paying the fees.

The MPs quoted some of the statistics in their proposal, mentioning that the proposed fee is low, considering the fact that each expat student annually costs the government BD3,000.

The lawmakers also said the proposal aims to reduce the high costs on the Government of Bahrain and generate revenues, adding that expat students in public schools form a large percentage.

However, the proposal must go through a number of channels, including several committees of the council, before it could be referred to the 40-member council for voting.

A similar proposal was rejected by the government in 2017.

The previous proposal stipulated imposing annual fees of BD400 on non-Bahraini students studying in public schools.

The existing law stipulates that "fundamental (primary and intermediate) and secondary education should be free for all in public schools in the Kingdom".

King Fahad Causeway marks 33 years of operations

Manama

King Fahad Causeway, a series of bridges and causeways that link the island of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia mainland, yesterday marked its 33 years of operations.

The causeway, Bahrain's only terrestrial link with another country, is named after former king of Saudi Arabia Fahad bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud who ruled from June 1982 until August 2005.

Work on the 25-kilometre long and 23.2-metre-wide causeway was launched in 1981 following consultations and studies about numerous geographic and technical details, environmental factors and maritime currents.

The causeway, which became a particularly a big symbol of the deep-rooted and special relations between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia

was opened to the public on November 26, 1986 during a grand ceremony attended by the late Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa and the late King Fahad.

Cars, buses and trucks have been steadily using the link to go in both directions, boosting its significance to millions of people and the two countries.

Official figures indicate that close to 390 million people have used the Causeway since it was opened.

The numbers are steadily increasing and figures topping 100,000 a day on special occasions such as during Eids (religious celebrations) and school holidays are becoming regular.

Several Saudi Arabia-based Saudi nationals and foreigners who work or study in Bahrain commute daily while a large number of Bahrain-based expatriates and Bahrainis use the causeway daily to go to



The King Fahad Causeway

their work or universities.

Strong family links between Gulf citizens are a significant factor in the exchange of visits over the causeway.

Shopping experiences are also among the top reasons for trips

by Saudi families or Saudi Arabia-based foreigners to Manama.

As the causeway became one of the busiest links in the Arab world, drastic changes were introduced to ensure the smooth flow of traffic.

Plans to build a second causeway,

390

million people have used the Causeway since it was opened, according to official figures.

King Hamad Causeway, named after HM the king of Bahrain, are progressing.

The new causeway, to be funded by the private sector, will be used by passenger trains and freight trains besides vehicles.

The railway lines will be part of the wider Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) railway network.

The GCC, established in 1981, comprises Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman,

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The business community in Bahrain has welcomed the project as a much-needed boost for the local and Gulf economies.

Several business people said that it would boost trade and commercial exchanges between the two kingdoms and other countries in the region and beyond.

"The railway movement of products has become an urgent necessity, particularly as the region witnesses fast developing rates of commercial activities, urbanism and demography," they said.

"It will also greatly help with economic integration in several areas. The Bahraini market, much smaller than the Saudis, will benefit greatly while Saudi Arabia will benefit from the knowhow of Bahrainis who can commute every day between the two countries."

Jeddah

IOC support for Islamic nations lauded at Golden Jubilee event

Bahrain attends the event; stresses commitment to IOC charter

On behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, the Undersecretary for International Affairs, Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, participated in the Golden Jubilee ceremony of the establishment of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), which was held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Amongst the attendees were, HRH Prince Khaled Al Faisal, Advisor to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Governor of Makkah Province, Saudi Foreign Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan, and Shaikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, the UAE's Minister of Tolerance, as well as number of foreign ministers of the OIC Member States, and a number of diplomats, journalists and intellectuals.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla expressed his pleasure to represent the Kingdom of Bahrain in the Golden Jubilee ceremony of the OIC, which is considered the second largest intergovernmental organisation after the United Nations and has played a prominent and active role in serving the causes of the Islamic world and

supporting joint action for the rule of peace and development throughout the world.

The Undersecretary for International Affairs thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting this ceremony, which reflects its tireless efforts in serving Islamic issues, activating and enhancing the role of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in consolidating security and peace, and addressing various challenges.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla highlighted the achievements of OIC work, especially with regard to the fixed positions on the issues of the Islamic world, especially the Palestinian cause, and the crisis in many Member States, as well as combating extremism and terrorism and supporting the issues of Muslim minorities in the world in light of the Islamophobia epidemic, as Muslims constitute the highest proportion of



Dr Shaikh Abdulla along with OIC ministers at the OIC Golden Jubilee event.

displaced persons and refugees as a result of crises and conflicts.

The Undersecretary for International Affairs pointed out the importance of considering developing the mechanisms of

the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation as an urgent necessity to face regional and international challenges, remove false claims about the true religion, and achieve the aspirations of the

Islamic peoples in a more stable and prosperous future.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla expressed his pride in the consecutive praises of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in appre-

ciation of the comprehensive reform approach of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and the Organisation's appreciation of the initiatives of the Kingdom of Bahrain in various fields, including the promotion of Islamic values, such as tolerance, peaceful coexistence and the rejection of intolerance.

The Undersecretary for International Affairs reiterated Bahrain's commitment to the principles and objectives set forth in the Charter of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to strengthen unity and solidarity among the peoples of the Member States, to prevent interference in their internal affairs and to support sustainable development efforts.

The ceremony honoured prominent Islamic figures who have made a significant impact on the rise and development of the Muslim world.

LMRA 'solved over 1,100 passport retention cases this year'

TDT | Manama

Pradeep Puravankara

The Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) has solved over 1,100 passport retention cases this year, said its Chief Executive Officer Ausamah Al Absi yesterday.

This came as he spoke at the 'Monthly Talk' organised by the Bahrain India Society at Capital Club yesterday.

He said the companies are committing a big crime by retaining the passports of employees and it is against the labour laws of the Kingdom.

When asked about the possibility of providing a data registry on the availability of different flexi permit workers, the LMRA CEO said as a regulator it would be a strict deviation from its duties by performing the role of a placement agency.

"Companies are welcome to set a data registry on the availability of these workers. Our job is to regulate the labour market and not ensure the credentials of workers."

The official pointed out that all foreign companies starting



Mr Al Absi speaks at the 'Monthly Talk' session organised by the Bahrain India Society.

branches in the Kingdom should abide by the labour laws of the land when it comes to recruiting Bahraini citizens.

"It's a very simple logic. If someone is investing in the UK or France, he/she will have to abide by the laws drafted by their governments and same is the case here.

"All private companies, be it Bahraini or foreign will have to adhere to the labour laws implemented in the Kingdom."

He also urged the companies to prioritise hiring of Bahrainis if there are appropriate vacancies.

A few months ago MPs made

All private companies, be it Bahraini or foreign will have to adhere to the labour laws implemented in the Kingdom.

MR AL ABSI

a proposal, according to which fines up to BD20,000 could be imposed on companies that don't prioritise the hiring of Bahrainis.

The proposal has been made by MP Ghazi Al Rahma alongside

four other fellow lawmakers including Mohammed Al Abbasi, Ali Ishaqi, Ahmed Al Amer and Yousef Al Thawadi.

They aim to amend the labour law to add an article that states that all employer needs to give Bahrainis priority in the event of a job opening and failing to do so would result in fines.

The MPs stated that a fine of a minimum of BD5,000 and a maximum of BD20,000 must be imposed on violating companies.

They added that renewal of work permits of violating companies should also come under scrutiny.

Court reduces sentences of arson convicts

TDT | Manama

The First High Criminal Court of Appeal yesterday reduced the five years imprisonment sentence issued against two men, who burnt two tents that belonged to a municipal council candidate last year, to one year imprisonment and community service.

This came as the court accepted the men's appeal and amended the previously issued verdict.

The appellants were sentenced by the First High Criminal Court, which convicted them of burning the tents of Ali Saleh Hussain, who was a candidate for last year's municipal elections, and damaging private property.

The details of the case showed that the police was alerted about a fire that erupted at the candidate's tents in the seventh constituency in Northern Governorate, near Damistan village.

After dousing the fire, firefighters found a container disposed of near the tents with traces of gasoline in it. The DNA samples taken from the con-

The DNA samples taken from the containers led to the first defendant, who led the cops to his accomplice after being confronted with the crime.

PROSECUTORS

tainers led to the first defendant, who led the cops to his accomplice after being confronted with the crime, according to Prosecutors.

Both defendants informed prosecutors that they agreed to burn the candidate's tents by pouring gasoline on it and setting it ablaze using a lighter.

They also said that they panicked because of the quick spread of the fire and threw away the container near the tents.

In the report of the crime scene investigation team, it was mentioned that both tents were completely burnt, while the forensic laboratory report confirmed that the samples taken from the container belonged to the first defendant.

Anti-chemical weapon stances stressed



Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Head of the National Committee for the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Use, Stockpiling and Destruction of Chemical Weapons, Dr Shaikha Rana bint Isa bin Dajj Al Khalifa participated in the Twenty-Fourth Conference of the States Parties to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, held in The Hague. She affirmed the Kingdom of Bahrain's readiness to co-operate with and support the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in carrying out its tasks, which is in line with Bahrain's belief in the high level of expertise and wisdom enriched in the Organisation in fulfilling its tasks and responsibilities.

First Bahrain Health Regulatory Conference set

TDT | Manama

Pradeep Puravankara

The National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA) is organising the first edition of the Bahrain Health Regulatory Conference, under the slogan "Safe and High Quality Health Services" on November 28-30, 2019, at the Gulf Convention Centre.

Held under the patronage of the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Health, Lieutenant General Dr Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, the three-day conference is expected to witness the attendance of more than 700 participants from different health professions.

The conference will be attended by President of the Conference and NHRA CEO Dr Mariam Athbi Al Jalahma, Health Minister Faeqa Al Saleh, Labour and Social Development Minister Jameel Humaidan, representatives of the Supreme Council for Women, a number of stakeholders in the health sector in the King-



Dr Shaikh Mohammed

Dr Al Jalahma

dom of Bahrain and the GCC, chief guests and dignitaries.

The event will include panel discussions, lectures and workshops, where 37 select speakers will share their knowledge and insights about the different fields of health and its regulations.

Additionally, an exhibition will be held on the side-lines of the conference, and will continue for the three days of the conference, showcasing various stakeholders.

world

13 French soldiers killed in Mali helicopter collision

AFP | Paris

Thirteen French soldiers were killed in Mali when two helicopters collided while fighting insurgents in the country's restive north, officials said yesterday, the heaviest single loss for the French military in nearly four decades.

The accident occurred late Monday while the helicopters were reinforcing ground troops pursuing the insurgents in the Liptako region, near the borders of Burkina Faso and Niger, the armed forces ministry said.

Mali has been besieged by a wave of deadly strikes against army outposts and other targets in recent weeks, a flare-up of violence despite years of efforts to push back the Islamist extremists.

A Tiger attack helicopter collided with a Cougar military transport helicopter while engaging the insurgents fleeing on motorbikes and in pick-up trucks.



The mid-air collision involved a model of the Tiger helicopter, seen here in this 2017 file picture

Both aircraft crashed not far from each other, killing all on board, the ministry said.

'Goal to protect us'

One of the victims was the son of French Senator Jean-Marie Bockel, a centrist and former government minister who sits

on the senate's armed forces committee, the father confirmed.

"These 13 heroes had just one goal: To protect us. I bow my head in front of the pain of their families and comrades," President Emmanuel Macron said on Twitter.

Macron promised this month new measures "in the coming weeks" to bolster the fight against the Islamic insurgency in the Sahel, after receiving the presidents of Mali, Chad and Niger at the Elysee Palace.

France's 4,500-member Barkhane force in Mali and four other West African countries is tasked with building up and training local security forces but also participates in operations against the insurgents.

The accident, the deadliest since France intervened in Mali in 2013 to drive back an intense Islamic insurgency, brings to 38 the number of French soldiers killed in the country.

It was the heaviest loss for the French army since the 1983 attack on the Drakkar building in Beirut, claiming the lives of 58 paratroopers.

An inquiry has been opened into the cause of the mid-air collision, Defence Minister Florence Parly said.

Hong Kong leader offers mea culpa, but no concessions

Hong Kong

Hong Kong's unpopular leader Carrie Lam acknowledged yesterday that public dissatisfaction with her government fuelled a landslide win by pro-democracy candidates in local elections, but she drew fresh criticism by offering no new concessions to resolve months of violent protests.

In China, state media sought to downplay and discredit the weekend ballot that delivered a stinging rebuke to the financial hub's pro-Beijing establishment.

Lam admitted that the district council election result revealed public concern over "deficiencies in the government, including unhappiness with the time taken to deal with" the unrest.

In a rout that stunned the semi-autonomous territory, candidates opposing control by China seized an overwhelming majority of 452 elected seats in the city's 18 district councils, bodies historically dominated by a Beijing-aligned establishment.

It was a humiliating rebuke to Beijing and Lam, who has



The result -- the first vote held since protests engulfed the city -- was a humiliating rebuke to Beijing and Lam

dismissed calls for political reform and repeatedly suggested that a silent majority supported her administration.

Since the polls, pro-democracy politicians have stepped up calls for Lam to meet key demands such as direct popular elections for the city's leadership and legislature, and a probe into alleged police brutality against demonstrators.

But in her weekly press briefing, Lam sidestepped those calls, instead denouncing street violence and repeating earlier pledges to step up a cross-party dialogue on the root causes of the turmoil, proposals previously dismissed by her opponents as inadequate.

Four dead, several injured as powerful earthquake rocks Albania

Tirana

A 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck Albania early yesterday killing four people, according to officials and local media, and sparking panic in the capital Tirana and other cities.

The epicentre of the quake, the strongest in the region in decades, was about 34 kilometres (about 20 miles) north-west of Tirana, according to the European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre.

"There is considerable damage," defence ministry Albana Qajahaj said.



Residents gathered outdoors in Tirana

A man in his fifties died after jumping several storeys from a building in Kurbin in the north-west of the country, the defence ministry said.

A three-storey hotel in the port town of Durres collapsed while another building in the city centre was badly damaged.

Damage was also reported in Thumana, 30 kilometres north-west of Tirana.

Around 50 people with light injuries were being treated in hospital in the capital, Health Minister Ogerta Manasterliu said.

Other reports said 150 people were treated for light injuries.

The quake was felt across the Balkans, from Sarajevo to

Bosnia and even in the Serbian city of Novi Sad almost 700 kilometres away, according to reports in local media and on social networks.

It was followed by several aftershocks, including one of magnitude 5.3, the European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre.

Pakistan top court challenges military over army chief extension

Reuters | Islamabad

Pakistan's Supreme Court yesterday suspended the government's extension of the term of office of army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, putting it on a possible collision course with the powerful military.

Prime Minister Imran Khan's cabinet later issued a notification reaffirming the extension, saying it had amended certain rules to tackle the court's objections.

Sri Lanka airports on alert after top police detective flees

Colombo

The Sri Lankan government has put airports on alert to stop police detectives leaving without permission after a top officer who had reportedly received death threats fled the island, police said Tuesday.

The alleged threats against inspector Nishantha Silva came after the November 16 election of Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who was also under investigation by him.

Police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekera said the names of 704 Criminal Investigation Division (CID) officers had been sent to immigration authorities.

"The move is to ensure that no officer leaves the country without following the proper procedure of obtaining permission for overseas travel,"



The alleged threats against inspector Nishantha Silva came after the November 16 election of Gotabaya Rajapaksa

he said.

The directive came after Silva left Sri Lanka on Sunday, reportedly seeking asylum in Switzerland.

Police have launched an inquiry into his departure.

Silva's investigations included high profile killings and

corruption involving administration members under former president Mahinda Rajapaksa, brother of the new president, who ruled for a decade until 2015.

Among the cases was the 2009 assassination of editor Lasantha Wickrematunge by an alleged hit squad.

Mahinda Rajapaksa has returned to power as prime minister after leading his younger brother's successful election campaign.

Police said Monday there were allegations Silva had conducted biased investigations in the past four and a half years.

He was removed from his CID post last year after Mahinda Rajapaksa briefly served as prime minister, but he was restored after that administration collapsed.

Kingdom of Bahrain



The Bahrain Petroleum Company BSC (Closed) hereby invites tender for the following:

TENDER TITLE	TENDER NO.	INITIAL BOND (BD)	TENDER FEES (BD)	TENDER SUBMISSION		
				DAY	DATE	TIME
CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR SITE PREPARATORY WORKS AT FISHERMAN PORTS TO INSTALL PORTABLE PETROL STATIONS	T190085 (43) (RE-TENDER)	100/-	15/-	December 24, 2019		3:00 pm

Interested Vendors with proven experience in providing the above services may contact Bapco Procurement Department at the Refinery on Telephone 17755845, 17757054 or 17757044 to obtain the appropriate tender documents after depositing the non-refundable tender fees as specified above in Bapco's bank account. Tender Documents can be collected from old **BBK Building** (Procurement Department - Tendering Unit) located outside the Refinery near North Gate on **Wednesday November 27, 2019 to Wednesday December 18, 2019** between 10:00 am and 11:00 am on Mondays & Wednesdays only. Vendors should deposit full contact details with the Procurement Department. An Initial Bond should be enclosed for the amount specified above (BD 100/-), payable by a Certified Cheque, Cash, Manager cheque, letter of guarantee or insurance policy. The bond shall remain valid throughout the tender period specified in the relevant tender documents.

- Quotation should be deposited in the tender box provided at the **Bapco Refinery North Gate Security Office Reception**, before 03.00 pm on the tender submission date.
- This tender is subject to the provisions of Legislative Decree No.36 of 2002 with respect to Regulating Government Tenders & Purchases and the Legislative Decree No.37 of 2002 with respect to the Tender Law's implementing regulations.
- The following conditions shall be complied with:
 1. Enclose a copy of the Commercial Registration Certificate valid for the current year, and be in conformity with the subject tender.
 2. Submit quotations on Form No.Bapco 3499/2(5/99).
 3. Enclose a copy of Certificate of Compliance with the Employment Percentage for Bahraini Manpower issued by the Ministry of Labour.
 4. Ensure to stamp with the official seal on all the original documents and copies thereof, which form part of the offer.
 5. Award of Purchase Agreement to a Contractor who is not on Bapco's Approved List of Contractors will be subject to successful pre-qualification.
- **This announcement is to be read as part of the Tender Documents.**

In Mali, dreams and sadness for the Sahel express

The beloved green train carriages -- once Mali's lifeblood -- lie rusting and abandoned, their toilets taken over by beggars.

AFP | Bamako

The sign above the station entrance declares that this is the Dakar-Niger Railway: the start of a trek from the arid Sahel to the tropical Atlantic, 1,300 kilometres (800 miles) away.

But for those hoping to buy a ticket for a legendary journey, disappointment awaits.

Not a single train has travelled on the line connecting the capitals of Mali and Senegal since May 17, 2018.

Today, knee-high weeds grow on the track at Bamako station.

The beloved green train carriages -- once Mali's lifeblood -- lie rusting and abandoned, their toilets taken over by beggars.

Nevertheless many of the railway's workers -- unpaid but still technically employed -- continue to show up at the station, a colonial-era bijou in ochre stone, complete with clock and signs for the ticket office.

There, they while away the hours playing cards, snoozing on a bench or chatting in the now deserted offices, where talk inevitably turns to the glory days.

The almost 100-year-old rail line connecting the capitals of Mali and Senegal has laid quiet and out-of-use since May last year



Employees while away the hours in now deserted offices, where talk turns to the railway's glory days



Many of the railway's workers, unpaid but still technically employed, continue to show up at the station

Halcyon times

"It was non-stop partying," recalls driver Moussa Keita, who for 38 years would take the train on its long haul to the Mali-Senegal border, where drivers would change over.

Every village along the track would fete the arrival of the train, which brought in fresh fish from the coast or a precious package from Europe, as well as freight, its mainstay.

The platforms would be swirling with colour and charged with emotions as families greeted loved ones or bade them farewell.

The Dakar-Bamako line was conceived in the late 19th century in the heyday of France's colonial era as a means to haul valuable commodities from the heart of its African possessions and link Mali -- then called French Sudan -- to the distant coast.

A quarter of a century went by

The Dakar-Bamako line was conceived in the late 19th century in the heyday of France's colonial era



By the end, we had to have speed limits of 30 kilometres (18 miles) per hour -- before, the trains used to race along at 80 kph

MAHAMANE THIENTA, WHO WORKED AS AN INSPECTOR FOR 37 YEARS.

as engineers and armies of colonial workers carved out the track from scorched terrain, before the line was inaugurated in 1924.

Its trains became a source of deep national pride.

"You can't imagine how this station looked when the train arrived and the whistle blew," said Keita.

"We were stars, we had girlfriends in every station on the line."

Musical tracks

In 1970, the station cafeteria became the unlikely starting point of what grew into the legendary group, the Rail Band, formed by some of the cream of Mali's musicians.

"It all began here!" recalls the group's drummer and co-founder, Mamadou Bakayoko, his eyes twinkling as he recalled the band's lineup and all-night parties that would draw "hundreds" of revellers.

"Over there, we had Salif Keita on the mic, here we had Tidjani Kone on sax and Mory Kante on balafon," a local xylophone, he said.

But that was a bygone era.

For about 10 years Mali has been battling a deadly conflict which began with a jihadist insurgency in the north, spreading to the centre and into neighbouring countries.

Bamako has seen a number of attacks but has largely escaped the wider conflict.

Like elsewhere however, the rail line has been overtaken by road transport, albeit blighted in Mali by frequent bus crashes.

So poor a state is the road between Bamako and the border that it has prompted huge protests in recent months.

As revenues bled away, Mali and Senegal no longer had the money to subsidise the cherished rail line.

In 2003, the railway was privatised. One after another, Canadian, US and French interests all chanced their arm.

That, too, failed, and in 2015 came the last roll of the dice --

dual state control.

But the stratospheric cost of renovating the line was too much.

"By the end, we had to have speed limits of 30 kilometres (18 miles) per hour -- before, the trains used to race along at 80 kph," said Mahamane Thienta, who worked as an inspector for 37 years.

'Nation's memory'

The Dakar-Bamako Ferrovi-aire company still technically employs 428 workers, but none has been paid for 10 months.

In an old hangar, working without computer or light -- the electricity was cut off several years ago -- Moussa Traore is deep in piles of dusty boxes.

He is the railway's official archivist, taking care of 14 tonnes of photos and documents.

"A lot of the managers don't understand why I keep these documents," Traore, clad in traditional robes, said, as he showed off old photo albums dating from 1956.

"This railway is the nation's memory -- in its operations, its economic value, its history and culture. We must not forget it."

The problems of the Bamako-Dakar line mirror those of other great lines in West Africa, from Benin to Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast.

A renovation plan is being discussed for it, with the World Bank as one of the partners.

And last year, Senegal and Mali each promised 10 billion CFA francs (\$17 million, 15 million euros) to get operations going again.

The Malian government last month also earmarked another 10 billion francs, according to spokesman Yaya Sangare.

Hopes have risen, but only up to a point.

"If the money is stumped up, then we can start believing," said Keita.

"We have to hear that train whistle once more!"

Moussa Traore is the Dakar-Bamako rail company's official archivist, taking care of 14 tonnes of photos and documents



The platforms would be swirling with colour and charged with emotions as trains passed through, some bringing fresh fish from the coast or carrying freight, the line's mainstay

Freed British hostage and wife say chained, threatened in Philippines

Zamboanga | Philippines

A British man and his wife rescued this week from captors in the Philippines' south say they were chained and threatened with beheading if they didn't deliver a ransom.

The couple, shaken but unharmed, told their nearly two-month ordeal to reporters after escaping during a firefight Monday between Philippine troops and the Islamic State-linked Abu Sayyaf group.

The husband, named by British authorities as Alan Hyrons, painted a "very humiliating and degrading" life in captivity, with little to eat in a haze of constant fear.

"They chained our legs... It was very difficult, but we endured because we believe in God," his wife Wilma Hyrons said.

"One of them treated us well, but then he told me he would be the one assigned to cut off my head if the money does not arrive on time," she added.

Armed men abducted the couple on October 4 at the beach resort they run on the southern island of Mindanao, which makes up the southern third of the Philippines.

They were taken to Jolo island, which is the stronghold of the kidnap-for-ransom gang



British national Allan Arthur Hyrons, left, and his Filipino wife Wilma Paglinawan-Hyrons walk together in a military base in Zamboanga City, southern Philippines. This image was taken hours after the couple were rescued by military troops from Abu Sayyaf bandits in Parang town of Sulu province (Courtesy of Daily Mail)



Allan Hyrons, pictured yesterday with his wife Wilma



The couple before their ordeal

Abu Sayyaf, which has carried out some of the Philippines' worst attacks.

"We tried to scream but no one comes because they have

the guns," the wife, who has Philippine origins, said.

She said the men pointed guns at her face, ordering her to call her brother so he would sell all

their assets to raise their ransom, which the couple did not state.

Their chance for escape came after several days of firefights between the military and the kidnapers, which saw at least five of the gunmen killed.

"It's something you see on films and you take it to be a film. But in real life it's terrifying," the husband said, describing the final gun battle.

"There were only 10 of them when we escaped... It was the commander who got hit first so I told Alan, let us run. We should not wait here to be killed," the wife added.

The separatists have led a decades-long insurgency in the south of the Catholic-majority Philippines, which has led to the death of tens of thousands of people.

While the government has negotiated peace with the largest group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, hardline factions allied with the Islamic State group are not part of the accord.

Abu Sayyaf has previously kidnapped foreign missionaries, businessmen, Western tourists and merchant seamen.

Dutch birdwatcher Ewold Horn, who was kidnapped in 2012 in the southern Philippines, was killed in May during a firefight between his Abu Sayyaf captors and the military.

Police hunt suspects in Dresden jewellery heist



The stolen pieces include a diamond bow with 662 stones

AFP | Berlin

Police in Germany were yesterday hunting robbers who snatched priceless 18th-century jewellery from a state museum in Dresden in what local media have called the biggest art heist in modern history. Authorities across eastern Germany have been put on alert after thieves made off with treasures from the Green Vault at Dresden's Royal Palace in an astonishing smash-and-grab raid early Monday morning.

Police have called for witnesses to step forward and released images of the stolen items, which were taken from a collection of jewellery of 18th-century Saxony ruler Augustus the Strong and which experts say may never be recovered.

They include a sword whose hilt is encrusted with nine large and 770 smaller diamonds, and a diamond bow decorated with 662 brilliants.

Extraordinary CCTV footage of the two robbers going about their raid has also been released by investigators.

In the black-and-white clip, one of the two suspects was seen using an axe to smash the display case.

'Criminal gang'

The thieves launched their brazen raid after having set off a fire in an electrical panel near the museum in the early hours of Monday, deactivating

its alarm as well as street lighting, police said.

Despite the power cut, a surveillance camera kept working and filmed the pair breaking in.

"The whole act lasted only a few minutes," police said in a statement.

The suspects then fled in an Audi A6 and remain on the run.

The apparent getaway car was found on fire later elsewhere in the city, said police, adding that the vehicle was being examined for clues.

On Monday evening, Dresden police chief Joerg Kubies-sa told broadcaster ZDF that a "criminal gang" may be behind the robbery.

Dresden police said they were also in contact with colleagues in Berlin to explore possible connections to a similar heist in the capital two years ago.

In 2017, a 100-kilogramme (220-pound), 24-karat giant gold coin was stolen from Berlin's Bode Museum. Four men with links to a notorious Berlin gang were later arrested and put on trial.

The coin has never been recovered, and fears are growing that the Dresden haul will also remain lost forever.

Speaking yesterday, managing director of diamond retailer 77Diamonds Tobias Korrmind said that, if the thieves were not caught, the probability of finding the diamonds was "virtually nil".

Pope leaves Japan after nuclear-dominated trip



Pope Francis leaves Japan, bringing to an end a long-desired visit marked by messages on atomic power and weapons as he comforted survivors of nuclear bombings and accidents

Dead deer found in Thailand with 7kg of plastic in stomach

AFP | Bangkok

A wild deer was found dead after swallowing 7 kilograms (15 pounds) of plastic bags and other trash in Thailand, an official said yesterday, raising the alarm on waste littering the country's waters and forests.

The Southeast Asian country is one of the world's largest consumers of plastic, with Thais using up to 3,000 single-use plastic bags each per year, whether for wrapping street food, takeaway coffee or packing groceries.

Marine animals like turtles and dugongs have died in its waste-choked waters, and autopsies have found that plastic in the stomach lining contributed to their deaths.

Now the scourge of plastic waste is affecting Thailand's animals on land.

Officials said a 10-year-old deer was found dead in a national park in Nan province, around 630 kilometres (390 miles) north of capital Bangkok.

An autopsy discovered "plastic bags in the stomach, which is one of the causes of his death", said Kriangsak Thanompun, di-



Officials said the 10-year-old deer was found dead in a national park in Nan province, around 630 kms (390 miles) north of capital Bangkok

rector of the protected region in the Khun Sathan National Park.

The bags contained coffee grounds, instant noodle packaging, garbage bags, towels and also underwear, according to photos provided by the national park.

The discovery of the deer comes months after a sick baby dugong won hearts in Thailand as she fought for recovery, only to pass away from an infection exacerbated by plastic bits lining her stomach.

The demise of Mariam in Au-

gust w a s wide-ly mourned on social media, reviving public debate



on Thailand's urgent need to tackle its plastic addiction.

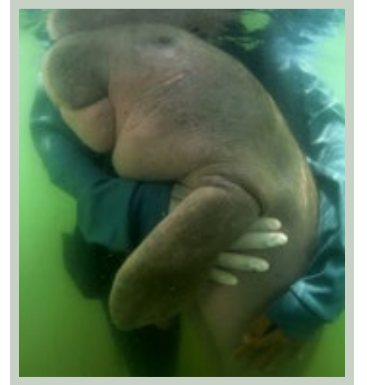
The loss of the wild deer is "another tragedy", Kriangsak said.

"It shows we have to take seriously and reduce... single-use plastic," he said, calling for "nature-friendly products" to be used instead.

Several major retailers -- including the operator of the ubiquitous 7-Eleven convenience stores -- have pledged to stop handing out single-use plastic bags by January next year.



The discovery of the deer comes months after a sick baby dugong won hearts in Thailand as she fought for recovery, only to pass away from an infection exacerbated by plastic bits lining her stomach



Trump administration continues gifting stolen land to Netanyahu

The settlement enterprise was never just about increased living space, but rather plunging a poisoned dagger into aspirations for Palestinian statehood



BARIA ALAMUDDIN

In a week dominated by US impeachment and mass protests in Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Bolivia and Hong Kong, one earth-shattering development gained infinitely less attention than it deserved: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's announcement that the US no longer regards Israeli settlements on Palestinian land as illegal.

Even prior to this, the rate of announcements that fundamentally prejudice the Palestinian question has been dizzying: US President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem, and later the Golan Heights, as Israeli; Israel's plan to retrospectively legalize settlements; proposals from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Cabinet allies to annex much of the rural West Bank; US decisions to halt funding and deny Palestinian refugees' right of return; and Netanyahu's election pledge to annex the entire Jordan Valley.

In parallel, there has been a rapid upsurge in settlement construction and expansion. Benefiting from cheap house prices and state subsidies, 620,000 Israelis now live on occupied land – 10 percent of Israel's Jewish population.

Whereas settlers were once a crackpot messianic fringe move-

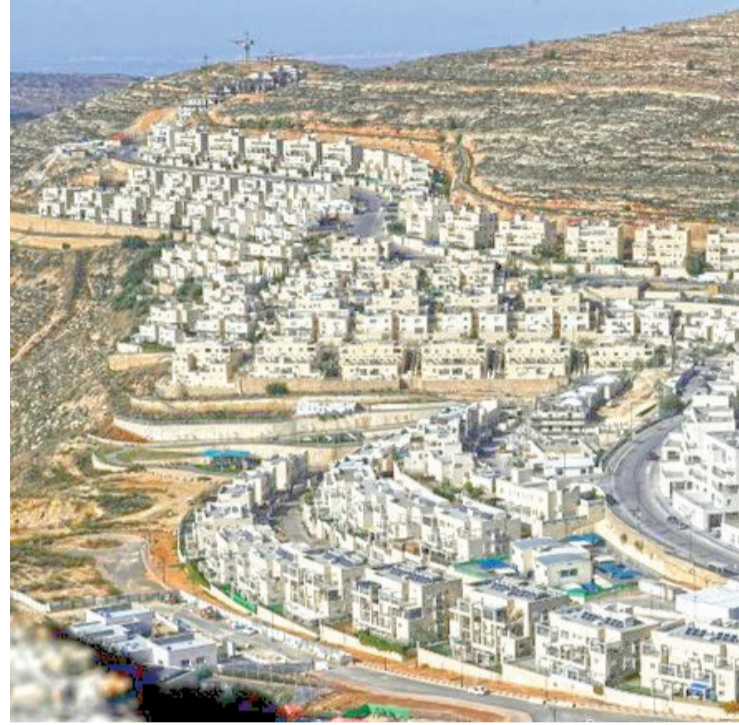
ment, a succession of right-wing leaders since September 2000 (when the West Bank settler population, excluding East Jerusalem, was around 170,000) have succeeded in making the settlement enterprise synonymous with the Israeli state. With settlement blocs becoming a normalized, quasi-permanent part of Israel's commuter belt, bank mortgages are now easily available.

Israel is meanwhile in an advanced state of political meltdown, heading toward its third inconclusive round of parliamentary elections. This is largely because Netanyahu has blocked any configuration in which he does not continue as prime minister; because he is determined to hold the country hostage to avoid stepping down over corruption charges.

This is against a backdrop of intensifying skirmishes with Iranian proxies. As well as the Syria and Lebanon borders being increasingly fissile, the recent escalation in Gaza is a reminder of how easily all-out conflict can erupt with little prior warning.

Jared Kushner's "deal to end all deals" was a bad joke before it was farcically voided of all content by Trump's lavish gifts to Netanyahu (what gifts are cheaper to give than those that are not yours in the first place?).

The settlement enterprise was never just about increased living space, but rather plunging a poisoned dagger into aspirations for Palestinian statehood.



The mushrooming of Israeli settlements in Palestinian land.

The geographical distribution of over 250 settlements and outposts calculatedly dissects Palestinian land into ribbons, chokes off Palestinian access to East Jerusalem, and isolates population centers from one another.

The Jordan Valley (around one-third of the West Bank) only has around 11,000 Jewish settlers. Yet the seizure of military zones and "nature reserves" has left Palestinian farmers with only 12 percent of the land, in an area that once generated most of Palestine's agricultural produce. Construction permits for Pales-

The Palestine issue was thus the Trojan horse that allowed both Sunni radicalism and Iran-backed Shiite militancy to take root, despite the ayatollahs and the late Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden having little sympathy for the Palestinians.

No one seems sure about where Europ

RASHMEE LALL

Tomorrow, European officials will vote to confirm the new European Commission. If all goes well, the executive arm of the European bloc will begin its five-year term by the end of the week, just a few days before Nato's 70th anniversary summit in London.

The sequence of events throws into relief three key policy challenges for Europe. Should aspirations for a European defence pillar still be strongly held within Nato rather than separate from it? Does European stability depend on further enlargement of the bloc, which has not had a new member since Croatia in 2013, and should that be towards the historically volatile western Balkans? And finally, with the US no longer reliable when it comes to diplomacy or values-based leadership, should Europe assume a greater role in the world, one that is consistent with its trade and economic power, its cultural heft and political principles?

There are no easy answers to any of these questions but it is worth getting the most obvious response out of the way, and that is profound disbelief – derision almost – at the very idea that Europe could ever seriously hope to rival the US.

Consider the comment last week by Larry Summers, a former

US treasury secretary and president of Harvard University. Mr Summers took part in a simulation of the White House situation room, carried out by Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. The make-believe situation discussed was dual national security crises which were as follows: the test of a North Korean missile that could potentially reach the US, and a Chinese digital currency that has dulled the effectiveness of the main US tool for responding to such provocations – that is, economic sanctions. Mr Summers was dismissive of the idea that a rival currency could replace the dollar, saying: "Europe's a museum, Japan's a nursing home and China's a jail".

The perception of Europe as a "museum" – a passive, possibly slightly musty institution that conserves and showcases cultural curiosities – is only slightly worse than the way the bloc was recently summed up by French President Emmanuel Macron. He said: "Europe has forgotten that it is a community by increasingly thinking of itself as a market."

It was a rather despairing comment from the politician who has strongly positioning himself to assume leadership of Europe now that Berlin is in a state of political paralysis, with German Chancellor Angela Merkel ending nearly two decades at the helm of her country and of the European bloc.



The European Commission headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

But Mr Macron's criticism is meant for Europe to, in his words, "think of itself as a global power" and "to equip ourselves with the grammar of today, which is a grammar of power and sovereignty".

This is the context of Europe's increasingly pointed attempts to

defend itself rather than rely on Nato. Ursula von der Leyen, president-elect of the European Commission, has publicly spoken of "bold steps in the next five years towards a genuine European Defence Union". Her commissioner for the single market, Frenchman Thierry Breton, will also oversee

the multi-billion euro European Defence Fund. A Eurodrone project is in the works. Earlier this month, the EU decided to invest heavily in the European Border and Coast Guard Agency to patrol its borders easily and efficiently. And Mr Macron last year launched his military project, the

With the international order in flux, security, defence and trade remain key obstacles to consensus

2004

Pope John Paul II returns the relics of Saint John Chrysostom to the Eastern Orthodox Church.



2006

The House of Commons of Canada approves a motion introduced by Prime Minister **Stephen Harper** recognizing the Québécois as a nation within Canada.

2008

XL Airways Germany Flight 888T: An Airbus A320 performing a flight test crashes near the French commune of Canet-en-Roussillon, killing all seven people on board.

2009

Nevsky Express bombing: A bomb explodes on the Nevsky Express train between Moscow and Saint Petersburg, derailling it and causing 28 deaths and 96 injuries.



the principal grievance fueling regional instability and radicalization. Palestine became a central element of Al-Qaeda recruitment propaganda, and provided the central justification for Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah taking up arms and accepting Iranian funding.

The Palestine issue was thus the Trojan horse that allowed both Sunni radicalism and Iran-backed Shiite militancy to take root, despite the ayatollahs and the late Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden having little sympathy for the Palestinians.

With or without Arab and international backing, at some point the Palestinians, pushed by dispossession and destitution, will erupt in a new intifada (uprising). This is likely what Netanyahu wants, as it would provide a pretext to militarily crack down, steal additional land and further restrict civil freedoms.

What Netanyahu would never be able to grapple with would be a peaceful intifada of all 4.5 million Palestinians under occupation, along with nearly two million Palestinians living in Israel.

Such a mass civil uprising would paralyse Israel's capacity to respond, and force the Palestinian question back onto the international agenda.

Unilateral attempts to dictate Palestine's status are further evidence that we no longer live in a global system rooted in international law. These measures violate so many UN resolutions,

which for decades adopted consistent positions on Jerusalem, occupied land, refugees and other questions.

If international law is not imposed consistently and rigorously, then it is nothing. Dictators and warmongers will base their own genocidal, expansionist schemes on what Israel and Iran have been allowed to get away with.

With a further 5 million Palestinians living just outside Palestine's borders, vacuous declarations of annexation are impotent against the time-bomb of demographics, necessitating that an Israeli state seeking to devour all of Palestine can never be a representative democracy, and may have to fully evolve into a military dictatorship in a doomed attempt to crush mass popular dissent.

Such a nakedly apartheid state would struggle to win public solidarity anywhere in the world, including among educated and conscientious Americans. With Israel wholly reliant on foreign funding and military aid, this drift toward pariah status erodes the fundamental tenets that ensure its very survival.

For their own ruthlessly partisan gain, Trump and Netanyahu boast that they have realized all of Zionism's most grandiose ambitions. Instead, they have guaranteed its long-term demise.

(Baria Alamuddin is an award-winning journalist and broadcaster in the Middle East and the UK. She is editor of the Media Services Syndicate and has interviewed numerous heads of state.)

tinians are almost impossible to obtain, and rudimentary shelters are routinely demolished.

Given that Trump's unilateral stances on Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and the West Bank are also illegal and nakedly seek to help Netanyahu avoid jail, why has the Trump administration not already been hauled before the courts to answer for its gratuitous sabotage of regional security, along with enabling Turkey's ethnic cleansing of Syrian Kurds?

Prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the 2011 Arab uprisings, for decades Palestine was

e should be heading



American trade bloc, is awaiting ratification by European governments. There are plans for some sort of an agreement with China and a free-trade deal with India but these could pose problems.

to depend on itself for its security, to hold back on taking in new members such as Albania and North Macedonia until it reforms its membership protocols, and to speak strongly and with one voice on a global strategic agenda that is informed by European humanism.

But the Germans are doubtful. Just weeks ago Ms Merkel was scathing about the "huge historical mistake" that prompted France to block EU enlargement into the western Balkans. And just days ago, Ms Merkel's anointed successor as party leader Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, who as Germany's defence minister, said her aim was to strengthen Europe's "ability to act" in support of Nato but that the French "are seeking strong European co-op-

eration to replace Nato".

All of this – including the fact that the UK is preparing to leave the European Union on January 31 next year – suggests that European ambition is in a rather parlous state, except on matters of trade and data. The EU sets the global rules for digital privacy. And it now has the largest trade network in the world with 42 trade agreements and 73 partners. That is a sizeable chunk of the world and compares well – if in a different sphere – with the US's 68 formal political alliances.

On November 21, as a free-trade agreement between the EU and Singapore came into force, the bloc noted that it was the 16th trade deal since 2014 and these include significant bilateral pacts with Canada and Japan. A deal with Mercosur, the South American trade bloc, is awaiting ratification by European governments. There are plans for some sort of an agreement with China and a free-trade deal with India but these could pose problems.

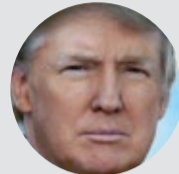
But that may matter less – as, indeed, will the arrangements with a post-Brexit Britain – as long as Europe can agree on a larger vision for itself.

With the international order in flux, it remains to be seen whether Europe can overcome its divisions and its preoccupations to boldly go where it has not before.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



When the Military rips down an old & badly broken Border Wall in an important location, & replaces it with a brand new 30 ft. high Steel & Concrete Wall, Nancy Pelosi says we are not building a Wall. Wrong, and it is going up fast. Brandon Judd just gave us great marks! @FoxNews

@realDonaldTrump

02



Thank you to everyone who stopped to talk at the Royal Welsh Winter Fair. We've got the optimism, energy and drive to get Brexit done and seize the opportunities ahead for our farmers.

@BorisJohnson

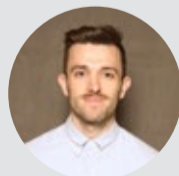
03



It is ironic that on the 15th day India was celebrating its Constitution, the BJP government was busy working to destroy it. The Constitution belongs to every Indian. Let us pledge to uphold its values & defend it at all costs.

@RahulGandhi

04



50% of Americans support impeaching Trump and removing him from office, 43% are opposed, according to a new CNN poll. Trump has been tweeting that polls on impeachment are turning against Democrats, but there doesn't seem to be evidence to support that.

@kylegriffin1

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

Wide Angle

All this data: Is it a problem or solution?



JOEL INDRUPATI

Information Indigestion. One of my university professors had used this term twenty-six years ago when he was teaching us a Business Management course.

He was quoting from a book 'Megatrends 2000', written by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene, originally published in 1990.

Very soon - the professor had warned us - we would all be suffering from 'information indigestion'.

And we students, at that time, thought of the enormous amount of information that we were then being bombarded with - from the growing channels on Television and from the growing number of books and magazines.

Sadly, our professor died in just three or four years from then. He never got to see the amazing growth of the Internet. Or the growth of the emerging ailment he'd mentioned.

I wonder what he would've thought of 'Google' - a search engine which generates web-links pointing to so much data - on anything I ask for - that my entire lifespan will not be enough to read, even, one-hundredth of what it offers.

For instance, I just searched for the term 'Information indigestion' on Google. It tells me there are 18,300,000 results.

Almost 20 million web pages! And, of course, it also proudly proclaims that it only took 0.49 seconds -- to tell me this.

Now, I must just trust Google's algorithm, of listing the order of all those pages in the way I had wanted; with the most important ones, at the top. And so, I click on the first few links.

Keener researchers, I am sure, would spend hours and hours - clicking on many other links - collecting, comparing and contrasting the information obtained. Eventually, I am sure, very often, they get confused.

It was Alvin Toffler who first coined the phrase 'information overload' in his celebrated work, 'Future Shock', published in 1970. And everyone knows that Toffler had an amazing insight into the future.

I remember reading about some bizarre predictions in that book which have all become real now.

According to IBM's website, "Every day, we create 2.5 quintillion bytes of data (that is 2.3 trillion Gigabytes) - so much that 90 per cent of the data in the world today has been created in the last two years alone!"

"By 2020, it's estimated that 1.7MB of data will be created every second for every person on earth".

"This data comes from everywhere: sensors used to gather climate information, posts to social media sites, digital pictures and videos, purchase transaction records, and cell phone GPS signals to name a few. This data is 'big data'".

And IBM's data scientists are working, like those of many other organisations, on the gigantic storage of files on database servers and knowledge base servers and are categorising it for effective usage, and developing models to enable us to have faster access to user-relevant data, information and knowledge.

Challenges include analysis, capture, data curation, search, sharing, storage, transfer, visualisation, and information privacy.

Currently, volume, velocity, variety and veracity are the four Vs on the basis of which IBM's 'big data' scientists are categorising big data, and working on it.

We know, we are living now in critical times, and are told to generate less garbage, and to not pollute the earth.

I am sure the day is not very far when we will be told to generate less data and to not pollute the cyberspace.

Every picture we take, every status update we make, and every tweet we tweet is just adding more and more junk to cyberspace!

Even, this article.

It just added 14.8 kilobytes.

(The writer's twitter handle: @joelindrupati)

business

Citi launches 'Global wallet'

4 currencies in one Debit Mastercard

TDT | Manama

Citi announced yesterday introducing Global Wallet to its newly revamped Citi Mobile App.

Citi said, Global Wallet, in a first by a bank in Bahrain, is a new feature that allows customers to make purchases overseas without incurring additional currency conversion charges.

"The next generation Citi Mobile® App will change the way customers manage their purchases internationally," said Christoph Geidner, Consumer Bank Head in Bahrain.

Citi said to make the wallet work all need to be done is turning on it on the Citi Mobile® app and add foreign currency accounts, which will then instantly link to Citibank Debit Mastercard.

"The debit card will then automatically switch to the currency you are transacting in, allowing you to shop without incurring any extra fees. You can access up to four currencies on your card and top up your currencies when you find exchange rates favourable."



Christoph Geidner, Consumer Bank Head in Bahrain, during the launch

Customers who travel for business, family or leisure or shop online on international websites will benefit from saving on FX and transaction fees and enjoy the convenience of accessing Bahraini Dinars, US dollars, GB pounds and Euros all with one debit card, the statement added.

Khalid Humaidan named chairman of Fintech Bay

TDT | Manama

Bahrain FinTech Bay (BFB) announced naming Khalid Humaidan as new board chairman, succeeding Khalid Al Rumaihi.

Khalid Humaidan, who was recently appointed as the Chief Executive of the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB), has previously served as Head of Global Markets MEA for BNP Paribas.

Khalid Humaidan said, "I look forward to seeing innovation in this sector thrive and I am excited to be working alongside Bahrain FinTech Bay".

Maissan Almaskati, Chairman of Fintech Consortium and Board Member of Bahrain Fintech Bay, expressed his delight in welcoming Khalid Hu-



Khalid Humaidan the Chairman of Bahrain Fintech Bay

maidan as Chairman and extended his gratitude to "Khalid Al Rumaihi for his support and invaluable contributions in the establishment and growth of BFB."

Gulf Air, ATPCO ink 5-year retailing deal

TDT | Manama

Gulf Air has signed a five-year retailing deal with ATPCO to integrate Routehappy Rich Content on the airline's website gulfair.com to further enhance its flight shopping experience.

The deal will also see the airline's targeted rich content integrated with key regional and global third-party sales channels.

Content types that will be integrated by Gulf Air are: Amenities: provide at-a-glance information about flight features, UTAS (Universal Ticket Attrib-



A Gulf Air jet taxiing on the runway

utes) provide easy-to-understand benefits and restrictions such as cancellation, refund policies and boarding priority

by fares and UPAs (Universal Product Attributes) providing relevant media, captions and descriptions to define the airline's products and services by aircraft type, cabin, time of day, etc.

ATPCO will also support Gulf Air in creating and structuring its new branded fares, crafting its UPAs and providing UX (User Experience) consulting and design.

Indirect channels will be live with Gulf Air's UPA content in December 2019, with the airline expecting users to see the first integration on its direct channel in Q2 2020.

Information Security focus of BBBF's ICT meeting

TDT | Manama

The Information Communications & Technology (ICT) Special Interest Group of the British Bahrain Business Forum (BBBF) in collaboration with Sysprove Consulting and David Lynas Consulting hosted a meeting for ICT professionals yesterday at the Capital Club.

The meeting provided insights on how to transform a traditional information security function to meet the needs of the modern enterprise, and how information security governance and enterprise security architecture can lead the transformation of information security to deliver demonstrable value to businesses.

The meeting was opened by Ravi Jayasundera, Head of the BBBF ICT Special Interest Group and CEO of Sysprove Consulting. Keynote presentation was delivered by John Czaplewski who is a senior SASBSA Consultant and trainer, a Director at David Lynas Consulting, a UK based enterprise security architecture consultancy, and a trustee of the SASBSA Institute, the UK based Community of Interest non-profit organization. Czaplewski said: "Informa-



Keynote speaker John Czaplewski and Ravi Jayasundera with BBBF Executive Committee members Mike Jackson and Marke Gravener



A presentation in progress

tion security has become vital for all organisations, both governmental and private. Most organisations focus on information security from a technical perspective, but an enterprise

security architecture approach can transform the information security programme into a centre of excellence that is business-driven and strategic-aligned".

TRA holds 5G Network training

TDT | Manama

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA), in collaboration with Huawei, Ericsson & The GSM Association, held a 5G network training session for telecom service providers, government officials and business leaders in Bahrain at the Sofitel Hotel, Zallaq yesterday. The event aimed at raising awareness of the next wave of 5G technology and cultivating local ICT talent under the umbrella of the Fourth National Telecoms Plan (NTP4).

Among the subjects discussed in the panel and workshop were 5G motivation and developments in the market, 5G network architecture and key technologies, as well as presenting recent use cases for 5G and international best practices. It also addressed the key challenges facing the sector, including the procedures needed to embrace the Kingdom's telecommunications networks.

TRA says mobile service carriers began deploying 5G towers as early as July 2019, rendering the Kingdom a leader in implementing 5G not only in the country but worldwide.



Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) Sameer Nass at Bait Al Tijjar yesterday with the managing director of APM Terminals Susan Hunter accompanied by the general manager of security and government relations Isa Al Qetami. The meeting deliberated about the impact of the fast-paced technological updates and e-commerce on the transport and logistics sector in Bahrain. The meeting also underlined Bahrain's position as a gateway to the GCC markets and its prospect in becoming a transport and logistics hub. Also present at the meeting were BCCI's first vice-chairman Khalid Najibi and Chief Executive Officer Shaker Al Shater.

Mazad announces draw on two unique numbers

TDT | Manama

Mazad in cooperation with Arabian Auctions has announced an update to their fourth public auction that will feature a new set of unique vehicle license plate numbers at 6 pm, Saturday, at the Four Seasons Hotel, Bahrain Bay.

Raffle draw

The Auction will involve a raffle draw for two new unique vehicle license plate numbers. Interested participants should arrive before the start of the auction to receive their raffle tickets.

Auction attendance and participation are open for everyone with no limits on the number of unique vehicle license plate numbers that participants can bid on.



event that none of their respective bids is successful.

Power of attorney

Participants bidding on behalf of other individuals must submit a legal power of attorney (proxy) that allows them to register and submit offers on behalf of their client. It should also be noted that individuals who are interested in participating in auctions starting at a minimum amount of BD500 or less are required to pay a refundable amount of BD1000 by cheque or credit card.

The list of available unique numbers can be viewed on Mazad's social media account @mazadbahrain or Arabian Auction's account @arabianauction as well as the website www.arabian.auction.

Open insurance cheque

Furthermore, participants are required to deposit an open insurance cheque upon registration, which will be returned immediately to its owner upon conclusion of the auction in the

Zimbabwe turns to charcoal as power outages bite



Power outages have been the order of the day since President Mnangagwa won 2018 elections

Mhondoro Ngezi | Zimbabwe

Miller Chizema walked through the forest near his home and came across a pile of freshly-cut logs -- a sight that spurred the 82-year-old villager to dismay and anger.

The logs were arranged in such a way that they were ready to be burnt into charcoal -- a fuel that has become a substitute for Zimbabwe's energy shortages, at a terrible cost to its forests.

"It hurts to see forests decimated like this," said Chizema, who lives in Mhondoro Ngezi, in the centre of the country, 150 kilometres (90 miles) southwest of Harare.

Some loggers come from as far as Harare, "where we hear there is a big demand for charcoal," he said.

"We, as elders, try to discourage the practice, but it's all about money and survival."

For nearly six months, Zimbabwe has been in the grip of chronic power cuts, sometimes running to 19 hours a day.

The price of cooking gas has increased more than six-fold since the start of the year, placing it beyond the reach of many.

For many lower-income urbanites, firewood and charcoal have become the go-to sources of substitute energy -- and rogue logging is the result.

Zimbabwe is losing more than 330,000 hectares (815,000 acres) of

forest annually, according to Abednigo Marufu, general manager of the Zimbabwe Forestry Commission.

That's the equivalent to nearly half a million football pitches. "Zimbabwe is losing quite a lot of trees and forests... everywhere because there is no electricity and our people need to feed themselves, they need heating in their homes," he said.

Even so, "agriculture is still the number one driver of deforestation," he said.

A con- t r o v e r -

sial land reform programme launched in 2000 saw a surge in the loss of forest cover as people cleared land for cultivation.

"Some of them started growing tobacco and cut down trees to use for curing their crop." The practice continues, as farmers view wood to be free compared to other options.

Dilemma

Authorities are confronted with an enforcement conundrum.

Charcoal production is outlawed in Zimbabwe but it can be imported from neighbouring Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi, with special permits.

But Marufu said no such licences had been issued for over a year, yet Zimbabwe was awash with charcoal.

"How do you then know what charcoal is imported and locally produced?" Marufu asked rhetorically.

A lot of the older indige-



The charcoal is openly sold at Mbare Musika Market in Harare, despite the signs that it came from illegal sources



A charcoal vendor in Zimbabwe arranges his wares of 50kg polythene bags full of charcoal piled on top of each other openly displaying and selling charcoal at Mbare Musika Market in Harare



Forestry officer Best Muchenje inspects a mopani tree which loggers felled to provide fuel

nous mopani trees have been reduced to stumps. AFP journalists saw numerous darkened patches where the logs had been piled and burnt into charcoal in the forests at Mhondoro-Ngezi.

Best Muchenje has been the district's forestry officer for the past two years.

"Deforestation was already bad when I came here," he said.

"But the power crisis has worsened the situation, (and) the mopani tree is a target because it is hard and produces quality charcoal."

Mopani is one of the country's iconic indigenous trees that easily survive hot and dry conditions.

The law allows those living in the sparsely populated villages to cut trees for personal use and not for commercial purposes.

'Forests or humans'

But for unemployed villagers like Enia Shagini, lack of money forces them to risk being fined or even jailed for cutting down trees for charcoal.

She sells a 50-kilogram (110-pound) bag for the equivalent of less than 50 US cents (40 euro centimes).

"We have children to send to school," said the mother of three, bemoaning a crackdown on illicit charcoal production

which has widely been ignored.

In the capital, charcoal vendors at the Mbare market, just a few minutes' drive from downtown Harare, display dozens of 50-kilo polythene bags of charcoal for sale.

Prudence Mkonyo claimed she got her charcoal from Nyamapanda, near the border with Mozambique.

"It's difficult bringing the stuff to Harare," she said.

"We ferry it on trucks at night but sometimes you have to deal with the police at roadblocks. You need to be prepared to pay them bribes when you get stopped."

She sold her charcoal at the equivalent of between US\$2.50 and US\$3.00 a bag, but sales are slow.

People are struggling with unemployment and the country's worst economic crisis in a decade.

"There isn't much money going around so business is really bad. Some people are burning discarded plastic soft drink bottles for cooking."

While the law is clear on production of charcoal, the government is in a dilemma.

"It's a very complicated issue," Nqobizitha Ndlovu, newly-appointed minister for the environment and climate change, said.

"We acknowledge the shortage of electricity and that gas is expensive, so wood and charcoal are alternatives. So while we are worried about forests, we also worry about human beings."

Xerox prepares to take HP bid hostile

Reuters

Xerox Corp said yesterday it was planning to take its \$33.5 billion buyout bid directly to HP Inc shareholders after the personal computer maker refused to open its books for due diligence before a deadline.

"We plan to engage directly with HP shareholders to solicit their support in urging the HP Board to do the right thing and pursue this compelling opportunity," Xerox said in a letter to HP's board.

HP did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

HP on Sunday rejected Xerox's \$22 per share offer that consists of \$17 in cash and 0.137 Xerox share for each HP share, saying the offer "significantly undervalues HP".

The computer maker also accused Xerox of using aggressive words and actions to force a potential combination



Xerox made the offer for HP, a company more than three times its size

on opportunistic terms and without providing adequate information.

"While you may not appreciate our 'aggressive' tactics, we will not apologize for them," Xerox said yesterday.

Last week, Xerox threatened to take its bid hostile, if HP did not agree to a "friendly" discussion and open its books before Monday.

Xerox made the offer for HP, a company more than three times its size, on Nov. 5, after it resolved a dispute with its joint venture partner Fujifilm Holdings Corp (4901.T) that represented billions of dollars in potential liabilities.

VW's Audi to cut one in ten jobs to fund electric vehicles

Reuters | Hamburg/Munich

Volkswagen's luxury car unit Audi yesterday said it would cut one in ten jobs, freeing up billions of euros to fund its shift towards electric vehicle production.

Carmakers are struggling with an auto industry downturn, particularly in key market China, and the need to increase investment in electric vehicles as several countries move to eventually ban conventional combustion engines.

Audi said it would cut up to 9,500 jobs, or 10.6 per cent of its total staff by 2025, saving 6 billion euros (\$6.61 billion), but also create up to 2,000 new positions in the areas of electric mobility and digitalisation.

"The company must become lean and fit for the future, which means that some job profiles will no longer be needed and new ones will be created," Audi said in a statement.

The group said the cuts, which would also include man-



The Audi logo is pictured on the new "Aicon" at the 2019 Frankfurt Motor Show

agement positions, would take place along the demographic curve through employee turnover and early retirement programmes and help it reach a profit margin of 9-11pc.

Rival Daimler as well as car suppliers Continental and Osram have also recently announced staff and cost cuts.

Audi agreed to extend an employment guarantee which rules out forced layoffs for its workforce until the end of 2029. Audi said a fund would be set up at the Neckarsulm site to fund the shift towards electric vehicles and would be worth 300 million euros by 2025.

US sets out procedure for barring threats to telecom networks

Reuters | Washington

The US Commerce Department yesterday set out a procedure to protect US telecommunications networks and their supply chains from national security threats, saying it would consider whether to bar transactions on a case-by-case basis.

US President Donald Trump issued an executive order in May declaring a national emergency and barring US companies from using telecommunications equipment made by firms posing national security risks.

The Commerce Department said yesterday that Secretary Wilbur Ross had chosen to adopt a "case-by-case, fact-specific approach to determine which transactions must be prohibited, or which can be mitigated."

Trump's order said Ross, in consultation with other US



US Commerce Department Secretary Wilbur Ross

agencies, can bar transactions from firms connected to "a foreign adversary" that pose a national security risk, including those that "pose an undue risk of sabotage or subversion."

The Commerce Department said yesterday that its proposed procedure is open to public comment before it becomes final, but that the determination of "foreign adversary" is solely at Ross's discretion. It also gives Ross the power to immediately prohibit or revise transactions that pose national security risks.

Regional markets slide



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

Reuters

Gulf stock markets fell yesterday, with the Saudi index leading the losses after MSCI rebalancing that triggered passive fund outflows, while Egyptian stocks also came under pressure.

Saudi Arabia's benchmark index slid 1.7 per cent, dragged down by a 3.3pc drop in Al Rajhi Bank and a 4pc plunge in National Commercial Bank.

Among other stocks, Saudi Basic Industries and Savola Group eased 3pc and 5.6pc respectively.

Global index provider MSCI yesterday implemented the final step of the weight increase of mainland Chinese stocks, or A shares, in its widely followed emerging markets benchmark.

Rebalancing of MSCI resulted in outflows by passive funds, causing some pressure on the market, so some rebound could come into play, said Vrajesh Bhandari senior portfolio manager at Al Mal Capital.

"In Saudi Arabia, post the Aramco IPO, excess liquidity will return to the broader market," Bhandari added.

The Qatari index slid 1.2pc as declining stocks outnumbered the gainers, with Qatar Fuel down 4.5pc and Qatar National Bank losing 1.9pc.

Separately, Turkish and Qatari central banks on Monday increased the overall limit of a swap agreement between them to \$5 billion equivalent of lira and riyals, from \$3 billion previously.

The deal aims to facilitate

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▼ 1.7pc to 7,878 pts
ABU DHABI	▼ 0.9pc to 5,046 pts
DUBAI	■ at 2,705 pts
QATAR	▼ 1.2pc to 10,191 pts
EGYPT	▼ 1.4pc to 13,782 pts
BAHRAIN	■ at 1,520 pts
OMAN	▼ 0.5pc to 4,064 pts
KUWAIT	▼ 0.8pc to 6,373 pts

bilateral trade in respective local currencies and support the countries' financial stability.

In Dubai, the index ended flat as gains in industrials were offset by losses in property stocks.

Budget airline Air Arabia jumped 4.9pc to become the top gainer while logistics company Aramex closed 2.5pc up. In real estate, Emaar Properties lost 1.4pc while Deyaar Development retreated by 2pc.

However, Dubai Islamic Bank gave up early gains to close with a 0.4pc decline. The lender called a shareholder meeting for Dec. 17 to approve the acquisition of Noor Bank.

The Abu Dhabi index dropped 0.9pc as the country's largest lender First Abu Dhabi Bank shed 0.8pc and telecoms group Etisalat fell 1.7pc.

Egypt's blue-chip index dipped 1.4pc, with 27 of its 30 stocks declining. Egypt Kuwait Holding shed 3.5pc and Commercial International Bank lost 0.5pc.

Pilot error caused fatal 2016 Russia crash

Reuters | Moscow

Pilot error led to a fatal plane crash operated by Flydubai in Russia in 2016, the RIA news agency said yesterday, citing an investigation by the Moscow-based Interstate Aviation Committee.

The Boeing 737-800, operated by Dubai-based budget carrier Flydubai, came down in the early hours of March 19, 2016 at Rostov-on-Don airport in southern Russia on its second attempt to land after flying from Dubai, killing all 62 people on board.

Global stocks steady as dealers await trade agreement

AFP | London

Stock markets steadied yesterday as investors tracked developments in the China-US trade talks, while Chinese online retail titan Alibaba surged almost eight per cent on its Hong Kong debut.

In Europe, the pound fell back as Britain's main opposition Labour party clawed back ground in the polls ahead of next month's general election, as they attempt to unseat Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservatives and unleash a programme of renationalisation.

As has been the case in recent weeks, stock markets were taking their direction from twists and turns in US-China trade deal hopes.

"Optimism is rising that a phase one trade deal could be agreed before December 15 when new US tariffs are expected to kick in," said Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets UK.

"However it seems much more likely that these could well be deferred once more, with an agreement more likely to occur sometime in the New Year, if we get one at all."

He added: "The continued impasse remains a clear and present danger to the global economy."

While the mood remains upbeat across trading floors that a partial tariffs agreement will eventually be signed, there is a sense of unease about the lack of detail from both sides.

On Tuesday, Chinese Vice Premier Liu He spoke by phone



Traders work on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange at Wall Street in New York City. (file)

Key figures around 1430 GMT

London - FTSE 100:	▲ 0.1pc at 7,403.79 points
Frankfurt - DAX 30:	▼ less than 0.1pc at 13,237.84
Paris - CAC 40:	▲ less than 0.1pc at 5,928.73
EURO STOXX 50:	▼ less than 0.1pc at 3,706.29
New York - Dow:	▲ less than 0.1pc at 28,072.18
Tokyo - Nikkei 225:	▲ 0.4pc at 23,373.32 (close)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng:	▼ 0.3pc at 26,913.92 (close)
Shanghai - Composite:	■ at 2,907.06 (close)
Euro/dollar:	■ at \$1.1014
Pound/dollar:	▼ at \$1.2856 from \$1.2900 at 2100 GMT
Euro/pound:	▲ at 85.66 pence from 85.38 pence
Dollar/yen:	▲ at 109.05 yen from 108.93 yen
Brent North Sea crude:	▲ 0.4pc at \$63.89 per barrel
West Texas Intermediate:	▲ 0.6pc at \$58.34 per barrel

to US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, state media said.

The two sides "discussed solving issues regarding each other's core concerns, reached

consensus on properly resolving related issues, and agreed to maintain communication on remaining issues in consultations on the 'phase one' deal", China's official Xinhua news agency said, without providing

more details.

The news came after Beijing said at the weekend it would hike penalties on violations of intellectual property rights and also look at lowering the threshold for criminal punishments of those who steal IP.

The IP issue is a major sticking point for the United States in the discussions and agreement on it is seen as key to their success.

Alibaba stars on debut

In Hong Kong, shares in Chinese e-commerce titan Alibaba surged 7.7pc as it began trading for the first time following an \$11 billion initial public offering, which is the city's biggest since 2010.

It ended at HK\$187.60, up 6.6pc from its listing price.

Asia's most valuable firm, which is already traded in New York, said the decision to list in Hong Kong was a vote of confidence in the city, which has been hit by months of violent protests and the trade war.

However, Asian markets struggled to extend advances from the day before despite Wall Street closing at record highs.

Tokyo did manage to rise 0.4pc as the trade optimism lifted the dollar against the yen, providing a boost to Japanese exporters, while Shanghai was flat. Wall Street's main indices barely moved at the open, with the blue-chip Dow and tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite both inching higher from their record closes, which the S&P 500 dipped.

BoE hands Citi record fine over UK reporting breaches

AFP | London

The Bank of England yesterday said it has handed US banking giant Citigroup a record fine of almost £44 million (\$57 million, 51 million euros) for "serious and widespread" reporting breaches.

The British central bank said in a statement that its Prudential Regulation Authority division has given the penalty to Citigroup for "failings in their regulatory reporting governance and controls".

"The PRA has imposed a combined financial penalty on Citigroup Global Markets Limited



Sam Woods, deputy governor for prudential regulation

(CGML), Citibank N.A. London branch (CBNA London) and Citibank Europe Plc UK branch (CEP UK) of £43.9 million for failings in relation to their in-

ternal controls and governance arrangements underpinning compliance with PRA regulatory reporting requirements," the watchdog said.

The PRA added that Citigroup's UK reporting framework was not designed, implemented or operating effectively between June 2014 and December 2018, or for parts of that period.

"This led to them failing to submit complete and accurate regulatory returns to the PRA," it added.

"While Citi remained in surplus to its liquidity and capital requirements at all times, the failings persisted over a signifi-

cant length of time and were serious and widespread in nature.

"They led to significant errors in the firms' returns, including six substantive matters which had a material or potentially material impact on the returns.

Sam Woods, deputy governor for prudential regulation and head of the PRA, added that Citigroup had "failed" to meet the standards expected of a "systemically important bank".

The US bank agreed to resolve the matter swiftly and therefore qualified for a 30-percent discount. Without this action, the fine would have stood at £62.7 million.

Report shows high injury rate at Amazon warehouses

Washington

Injury rates reported for workers at Amazon warehouses across the United States are more than double the national average, according to a news investigation into workplace conditions at the electronic commerce giant.

The report released Monday by Reveal, a project of the Center for Investigative Reporting, showed the rate of serious injuries at Amazon was more than double the national average for the warehousing industry -- 9.6 serious injuries per 100 full-time workers in 2018, compared with



After an investigation found a high injury rate at Amazon warehouses, the company contended the reason is that it has been "aggressive" in reporting incidents to safety authorities

an industry average that year of four.

Amazon, which has gained a reputation for speed and efficiency in its operations, said the high rate is an indication it is "aggressive" in reporting workplace injuries to authorities including the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

"Reveal is on to something and it's something OSHA has been talking about for years: there's a dramatic level of under-recording of safety incidents across the industry -- we recognized this in 2016 and began to take an

aggressive stance on recording injuries no matter how big or small," Amazon said in a statement.

The Reveal report suggested Amazon's penchant for speed has put employees into the position where they must accelerate their pace or lose their jobs.

Several former workers told the journalists they had to break safety rules to keep up, including hoisting heavy items without the proper precautions.

The report comes with Amazon transitioning to one-day delivery for most items to its Prime subscribers, and with the

massive holiday shopping season about to begin.

According to Reveal, company logs show injury counts spiked during peak shopping periods including "Cyber Monday," which follows the Thanksgiving holiday, and the special sales offered for "Prime Day."

The report also suggested robots used at Amazon facilities may contribute to a higher rate of injury. It found that after the introduction of robots in a fulfillment center at Tracy, California, five years ago, the serious injury rate nearly quadrupled to 11.3 per 100 workers in 2018.

SHOW



FROZEN 2 (PG)(ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

OASIS JUFFAIR (KIDS CINEMA):10.45 AM + 1.00 + 3.15 + 5.30 + 7.45 + 10.00 PM
 OASIS JUFFAIR (ATMOS): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM
 OASIS JUFFAIR (VIP): 12.00 + 4.30 + 9.00 PM
 OASIS JUFFAIR (3D): 11.15 AM + 1.30 + 3.45 + 6.00 + 8.15 + 10.30 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 12.15 + 1.30 + 2.30 + 3.45 + 4.45 + 6.00 + 7.00 + 8.15 + 9.15 + 10.30 + 11.30 PM
 CITY CENTRE (IMAX 3D): 11.45 AM + 2.00 + 4.15 + 6.30 + 8.45 + 11.00 PM
 CITY CENTRE (ATMOS): 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 + 12.00 MN
 CITY CENTRE VIP (II) :12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM
 SEEF (I): 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM
 SEEF (II): 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 + 8.30 + 10.45 PM
 SEEF (3D): 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: (3D): 11.30 AM + 1.45 + 4.00 + 6.15 PM

KRISTEN BELL, IDINA MENZEL, JOSH GAD

21 BRIDGES (PG-15) (CRIME/ACTION/THRILLER)

OASIS JUFFAIR :12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM
 OASIS JUFFAIR (VIP): 2.15 + 6.45 + 11.15 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 12.30 + 2.45 + 5.00 + 7.15 + 9.30 + 11.45 PM + (12.45 MN THURS/FRI)
 CITY CENTRE VIP (I):12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (I): 10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 9.45 + 12.00 MN
 SEEF (II): (1.00 AM THURS/FRI)
 WADI AL SAIL:10.30 AM + 12.45 + 3.00 + 5.15 + 7.30 + 8.30 + 9.45 + 10.45 + 12.00 MN

CHADWICK BOSEMAN, SIENNA MILLER, STEPHAN JAMES

MIRACLE IN CELL NO. 7 (PG-15)(TURKISH/ DRAMA)

OASIS JUFFAIR :12.00 + 2.45 + 5.30 + 8.15 + 11.00 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 12.30 + 3.15 + 6.00 + 8.45 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (I): 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN
 WADI AL SAIL:12.15 + 3.00 + 5.45 + 8.30 + 11.15 PM

ARAS BULUT YNEML , N SA SOF YA AKSONGUR, LKER AKSUM

LAST CHRISTMAS (PG-15)(COMEDY/ROMANTIC/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE: 12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (II): 12.15 + 2.30 + 4.45 + 7.00 + 9.15 + 11.30 PM
 WADI AL SAIL:1.15 + 6.30 + 11.45 PM

EMILIA CLARKE, HENRY GOLDING, EMMA THOMPSON

PAGALPANTI (PG-15)(HINDI/COMEDY/ACTION)

OASIS JUFFAIR :11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
 CITY CENTRE: 11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (II):11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM
 WADI AL SAIL:10.30 AM + 3.30 + 8.45 PM

JOHN ABRAHAM, ANIL KAPOOR, KRITI KHARBANDA

10 MINUTES GONE (PG-15)(ACTION/CRIME)

CITY CENTRE:8.00 + 10.00 + 12.00 MN
 SEEF (II): 11.45 AM + 1.45 + 3.45 + 5.45 + 7.45 + 9.45 + 11.45 PM

MICHAEL CHIKLIS, BRUCE WILLIS, MEADOW WILLIAMS

BEHIND THE TREES (15+)(THRILLER/ HORROR)

SEEF (II): 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 + 8.00 + 10.00 + 12.00 MN

VANESSA CURRY, SAHIL SHROFF, SUBRAT DUTTA

THE SHED (18+)(HORROR/DRAMA)

SEEF (II): 8.00 + 10.00 + 12.00 MN

JAY JAY WARREN, CODY KOSTRO, SOFIA HAPPONEN

CHARLIE'S ANGELS (PG-15)(ACTION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

CITY CENTRE:11.30 AM + 2.00 + 4.30 + 7.00 + 9.30 + 12.00 MN
 SEEF (II): 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM

KRISTEN STEWART, NAOMI SCOTT, ELLA BALINSKA

MALEFICENT 2: MISTRESS OF EVIL

CITY CENTRE: 11.00 AM + 1.30 + 4.00 + 6.30 + 9.00 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (II): 1.45 + 6.30 + 11.15 PM

ANGELINA JOLIE, TERESA MAHONEY, MICHELLE PFEIFFER

JOKER (15+)(THRILLER/CRIME/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE: 10.30 AM + 1.00 + 3.45 + 6.30 + 9.15 + 12.00 MN
 SEEF (II):11.30 AM + 4.30 + 9.30 PM

JOAQUIN PHOENIX, ZAZIE BEETZ, ROBERT DE NIRO



PLAYING WITH FIRE (PG)(ADVENTURE/COMEDY/FAMILY)

CITY CENTRE:12.00 + 2.15 + 4.30 + 6.45 + 9.00 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (II):11.30 AM + 4.15 + 9.00 PM

JOHN CENA, KEEGAN-MICHAEL KEY, JOHN LEGUIZAMO

TERMINATOR: DARK FATE (PG-15)

CITY CENTRE: 12.45 + 3.30 + 6.15 + 9.00 + 11.45 PM
 SEEF (II) : 2.00 + 7.00 + 12.00 MN

LINDA HAMILTON, ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, MACKENZIE DAVIS



THE ADDAMS FAMILY (PG)(ANIMATION/COMEDY)

CITY CENTRE: 11.00 AM + 1.00 + 3.00 + 5.00 + 7.00 PM
 SEEF (II): 12.00 + 2.00 + 4.00 + 6.00 PM

OSCAR ISAAC, CHARLIZE THERON, CHLO GRACE MORETZ

GEMINI MAN (PG-15)(ACTION/THRILLER/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 1.45 + 4.15 + 6.45 + 9.15 + 11.45 PM
 SEEF (II):11.30 AM + 4.30 + 9.30 PM

WILL SMITH, MARY ELIZABETH WINSTEAD, CLIVE OWEN

BALA (PG-15)(HINDI/COMEDY/DRAMA/ROMANTIC)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 2.45 + 8.30 PM

AYUSHMANN KHURRANA, BHUMI PEDNEKAR, YAMI GAUTAM

ABOMINABLE (PG)(ANIMATION/ADVENTURE/COMEDY)

CITY CENTRE:11.00 AM + 1.15 + 3.30 + 5.45 PM

CHLOE BENNET, TENZING NORGYA TRAINOR, ALBERT TSAI

MIDWAY (PG-13)(ACTION/THRILLER/DRAMA/WAR)

CITY CENTRE:9.00 + 11.45 PM

ED SKREIN, PATRICK WILSON, LUKE EVANS

KHAYAL MAATA (PG)(COMEDY/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE: 11.15 AM + 4.15 + 9.15 PM

AHMAD HELMY, MINNA SHALABI, HASSAN HOSNEY

ANGEL HAS FALLEN (PG-15)(ACTION/THRILLER/DRAMA)

CITY CENTRE :1.45 + 6.45 + 11.45 PM

GERARD BUTLER, MORGAN FREEMAN, JADA PINKETT SMITH

SANGA THAMIZHAN (PG-15)(TAMIL)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 11.45 AM + 5.30 + 11.15 PM
 SEEF (I): 11.45 AM + 2.45 + 5.45 + 8.45 + 11.45 PM
 AL HAMRA: (12.00 MN THURS/FRI)

VIJAY SETHUPATHI, RAASHI KHANNA, NIVETHA PETHURAJ

ADITHYA VARMA (PG-15)(TAMIL)

From Thursday 7:30pm Onwards.
 OASIS JUFFAIR : 10.30 AM + 1.45 + 5.00 + 8.15 + 11.30 PM
 SEEF (I): 10.45 AM + 2.00 + 5.15 + 8.30 + 11.45 PM
 WADI AL SAIL: 1.30 + 7.45 PM
 AL HAMRA: 5.45 PM

DHRUV VIKRAM, BANITA SANDHU



JACK & DANIEL (PG-15)(MALAYALAM)

OASIS JUFFAIR : 11.00 AM + 2.00 + 5.00 + 8.00 + 11.00 PM
 SEEF (I):11.30 AM + 2.30 + 5.30 + 8.30 + 11.30 PM
 WADI AL SAIL:10.30 AM + 4.45 + 11.00 PM
 AL HAMRA:9.00 PM

DILEEP, ARJUN SARJA, ANJU KURIAN

AKASHAGANGA II (PG-13)(MALAYALAM)

AL HAMRA: 2.45 PM

RAMYA KRISHNAN, SALIM KUMAR, SREENATH BHASI

KABADDI KABADDI KABADDI (PG-13)(NEPALI)

AL HAMRA: 12.00 NOON

KABITA ALE, BIJAY BARAL, MAOTSE GURUNG

MOVIE REVIEW

'Far From the Tree' zooms in on parent-child divides

'Far From the Tree' explores the struggles and triumphs of being different

● This documentary version of Andrew Solomon's best-seller offers a valuable resource for parents with children who don't fit society's narrow definition of 'normal.'

When Emily Perl Kingsley and her husband found out their son had Down syndrome, they decided to prove the doctors wrong — that their Jason could be normal. They devoted their lives to teaching him to develop his mind and his social skills. He was chatty and outgoing, and even became a minor celebrity — he was interviewed by media and made a guest appearance on "Sesame Street."

But at some point, he began regressing, as doctors had predicted. Now Jason is 41. He's had the same low-maintenance job — distributing mail in an office building — for 18 years.



A scene from 'Far From the Tree'

He's in love with a woman who isn't real: Elsa, the heroine of his favourite movie, "Frozen."

"It was letting go of a dream to realize who Jason is," sighs Emily, and one can sympathize.

"Far From the Tree," Rachel Dretzin's documentary adaptation of Andrew Solomon's best-selling book, spends time with five families whose children are very different from their parents, and explores how the families cope. As Solomon, who is one of the subjects explored — or at least serves as our guide — says, it's a look at "the

very nature of family itself." It's a plea for unconditional love.

The genesis of Solomon's book was that he was gay at a time when the closet was way too overcrowded, and initially bought into the common view — embraced by his parents — that his homosexuality was an illness of the mind, a defect. Society changed dramatically, gay went mainstream and he realized he did not have an illness, but an identity.

His book wondered whether anyone could be considered abnormal. Weren't people with

normal kid in every way, part of a happy family that included his parents and a brother and sister. But one day, for reasons apparently even he can't explain, he killed an 8-year-old boy. He is serving a life sentence. What went wrong?

Trevor's unspeakable crime has both pulled the remaining family closer together, and destroyed it: His brother and sister no longer wish to have children of their own. In a sense they are living in their own prisons.

There are many lovely and touching moments in the film — Leah and Joe trying to realize their dream of having children; Jack being fitted for braces and typing out "Watch out, ladies"; Jason bonding with his two roommates, also with Down syndrome (they call themselves the Three Musketeers).

There is much to think about in "Far From the Tree," a worthy and at times tender film. But Trevor's story — worthy of perhaps its own film — goes against Dretzin's and Solomon's own concept: Trevor is in no way a "different kind of normal."

CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, VELAYUDHAN NAIR VINITHA D/O. Nair Velayudhan , holding Indian Passport No. T 2401976 dated 28/01/2019 issued at Bahrain , having permanent residence at Saroja Nilayam , Behind Annappa Reddy Lane , Doorvani Nagar , Bangalore - 560016 , Karnataka . Presently residing at Flat No. 51, Building No. 432 , , Road No. 3601 , Block No: 336 , Al Adliya , Bahrain will henceforth be known as (Given Name) VINITHA , (Surname) VELAYUDHAN NAIR , objection if any may be forwarded to Embassy of India , P.O.Box 26106, Bldg No. 1090, Road No. 2819 , Block 428, Al Seef , Kingdom of Bahrain



Blake Lively

Blake Lively “so high” in hilarious video after injury

Los Angeles

Actress Blake Lively has taken a walk down memory lane to recall her freak on-set injury while filming the movie “The Rhythm Section”.

The “Gossip Girl” alum posted an Instagram Story video of her looking high after injuring her hand. She was lying in a hospital bed with a sling around her right arm while Tone Loc’s “Wild Thing” was played in the background, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Lively credited her husband Ryan Reynolds as her bedside DJ. In the video, she opened her eyes to the head-bopping tune and seemingly gave an approval to the “Deadpool” actor’s music selection as she gave him a wink and flashed a smile.

She captioned the video: “Literally 4 weeks after I said, ‘I’d give my right hand to be in this movie!’ (Good thing no one told me to “break a leg”). My husband somehow knew “Wild Thing” would be my version of smelling salts. I’ve never felt so seen. Or high. Also...I have zero recollection of this.”

Lively injured her hand while filming an action sequence for “The Rhythm Section” in December 2017. The filming was temporarily suspended as she underwent a surgery.

Nawazuddin: “McMafia” win a pure delight

Mumbai

Actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui is elated that his “McMafia” has been named as the Best Drama Series at the 2019 International Emmy Awards, and says getting the honour is a “pure delight”.

The actor, whose “Sacred Games” was also in the race to get the trophy in the category, was on cloud nine, and took to social media to express his views.

“It’s a pure delight to be receiving the beautiful trophy at the International Emmy Awards 2019 Gala in New York with one of my fav director James Watkins for our work “McMafia,” he tweeted.

The BBC show is inspired by the 2009 non-fiction book of the same name by Misha Glenny and explores the world of organised crime.

It is about Alex Godman (essayed by James Norton), an educated hedge-fund manager who unwillingly gets sucked into the lawless world of his Russian mafia family. Nawazuddin features as Mumbai-based gangster Dilly Mahmood in the show.

her friend eat is always immense fun, reports aceshowbiz.com. “She carries around these little bags of snacks all day,” Witherspoon explains, adding: “I make fun of her. She pours hot cocoa on her cappuccino but only eats the foam. She eats weird old lady candies like your grandma had in the candy dish.”

Reese Witherspoon reveals Nicole Kidman’s weird “old lady” habits

Los Angeles

Actress Reese Witherspoon says she is fascinated by her friend Nicole Kidman’s eating habits. She also reveals Kidman is like a little old lady.

Witherspoon has spent a lot of time working with Kidman in recent years after joining her as a co-producer and star of “Big Little Lies”, and she says watching

Kidman says the butterscotch candies she gobbles remind her of her grandmother, but she insists



Reese Witherspoon and Nicole Kidman

there’s a health reason behind them: “I have low blood sugar.” As Witherspoon dished the dirt on her friend’s eating habits, Kidman returned the favour. “I’ll tell you Reese doesn’t like anyone eating off her plate. I have kids so I’m constantly doing that with them, but not Reese,” Kidman revealed, adding: “I had a brother who ate all my food, so I’m like, “Don’t eat my food!””



Katie Price

Katie Price declared bankrupt after blowing £45m fortune

London

Singer Katie Price has been declared bankrupt by a London court after she failed to pay off thousands of pounds in debt despite warnings from her creditors, a media report said on Tuesday.

Price, earlier known by pseudonym Jordan, is a media personality, model, and author. Mother to five children, she now runs the risk of losing her mansion due to insolvency, the Mirror reported.

Price was declared bankrupt after she had blown her entire £45million (57 million dollars) fortune over the years.

The 41-year-old was once said to be worth £45million.

She didn’t turn up in person or sent a lawyer to fight her case in court, the report added.

JMW Solicitors, who represented the insolvency practitioner overseeing Price’s IVA, said: “She hasn’t acknowledged the petition.”

She had submitted a payment plan in the form of an Individual Voluntary Agreement (IVI) late last year to manage repayment of estimated £250,000 in debt.

But she was unable to meet her creditors’ demands and pay back £12,000 a month to her creditors in time.

In September, a bankruptcy charge was laid on her West Sussex mansion.

At a hearing in October 2018, she was given time to negotiate a deal with taxmen over her finances and her proposal for an IVA was accepted on November 30, 2018, the report said.

Jennifer Lopez to get Spotlight Award at Palm Springs fest

Los Angeles

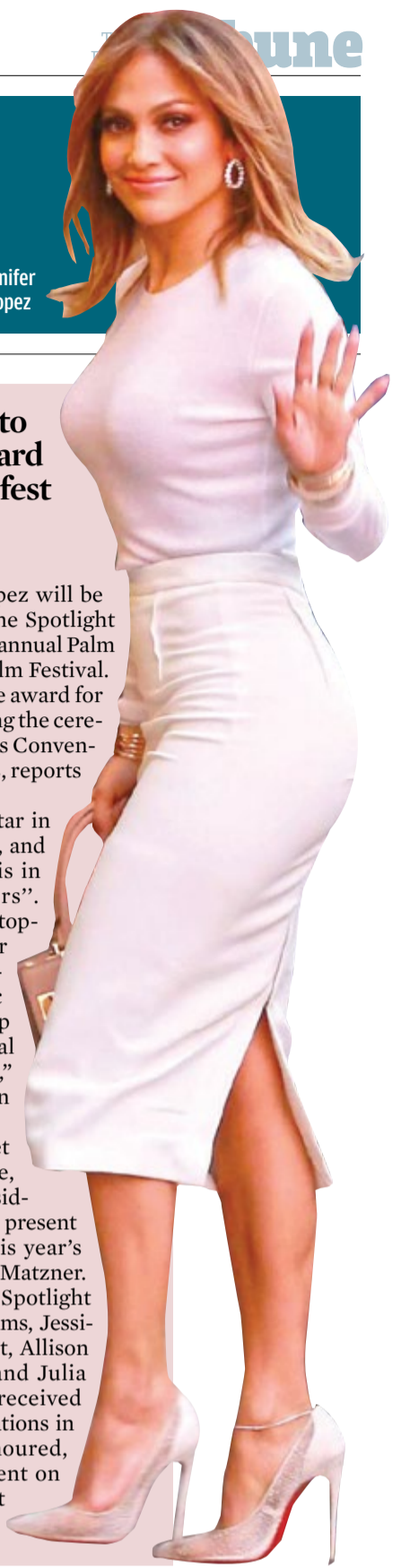
Actor Jennifer Lopez will be honoured with the Spotlight Award at the 31st annual Palm Springs International Film Festival.

The actress will get the award for her film “Hustlers” during the ceremony at the Palm Springs Convention Center on January 2, reports hollywoodreporter.com.

“Jennifer Lopez is a star in every sense of the word, and you will experience this in her latest film “Hustlers”. Starting with her show-stopping entrance Jennifer brings to life the character of Ramona, an exotic dancer, who leads a group of dancer friends to steal money from their clients,” said Festival Chairman Harold Matzner.

“For this full-force yet grounded performance, deserving of awards consideration, we are thrilled to present Jennifer Lopez with this year’s Spotlight Award,” added Matzner.

Past recipients of the Spotlight Award include Amy Adams, Jessica Chastain, Helen Hunt, Allison Janney, Rooney Mara and Julia Roberts. All recipients received Academy Award nominations in the year they were honoured, out of which Janney went on to get an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress.



Jennifer Lopez

Deepika confirms Alia is getting married, then covers up

Mumbai

Actress Deepika Padukone accidentally confirmed that her friend, actress Alia Bhatt, is all set to get married. Then, on realising what she had just said, the “Padmaavat” star said she had made it up.

The incident happened when Alia, Deepika, Ranbir Kapoor



Ranbir Kapoor

Alia Bhatt and Deepika Padukone

veer Singh, Vijay Deverakonda and Ayushmann Khurrana came together for a discussion on films recently along with other actors, according to news18.com.

During the interview with Film Companion, Deverakonda was asked about actors who he would like to take advice from in Indian cinema.

While answering the question, Vijay said: “Without shame, a lot of people on this table have been massive crushes. I’ve been in love with some of them -- like these two (Deepika and Alia). She (Deepika) got married.”

To which, Deepika said: “She (Alia) is getting married.”

Alia promptly said: “Excuse me, why have you made this declaration?”

Deepika then clarified that she just made it all up and laughed it off.

Earlier this year, there were rumours that Alia and her beau Ranbir Kapoor are set to tie the knot.

Ariana Grande tumbles down stage during performance at Amalie Arena

Los Angeles

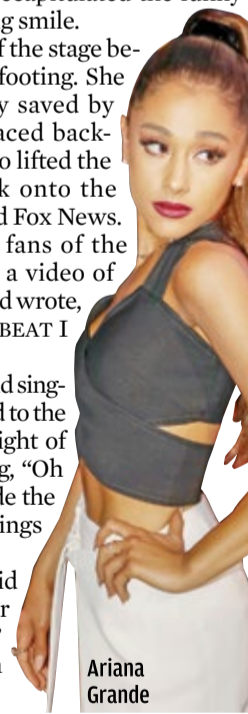
Singer Ariana Grande, who tumbled down the stage during her performance of ‘Bad Idea’ at the Amalie Arena in Tampa, recapitulated the funny moment with a big smile.

She tripped off the stage before losing her footing. She was ultimately saved by a properly-placed back-up dancer, who lifted the pop star back onto the stage, reported Fox News.

One of the fans of the singer shared a video of the incident and wrote, “SHE FELL ON BEAT I HAVE TEARS.”

The 26-year-old singer then responded to the tweet and made light of the incident, stating, “Oh my, at least I still made the button. I’m crying, things were going too well.”

Grande’s fall comes amid a potential cancellation of her tour after the ‘Thank u, Next’ singer revealed that she fell ill with a bad sinus condition.



Ariana Grande

Johnny Depp settles fee dispute with ex-lawyers

Los Angeles

Actor Johnny Depp has resolved a lawsuit challenging the around \$30 million he paid Bloom Hergott for representing him in transactional matters.

A settlement announced by the parties avoids the need for a trial that was scheduled to take place in December.

The actor, who according to court documents across several cases has been beset by financial problems, claimed in his suit that his oral contract with talent lawyer

Jake Bloom was void thanks to a California statute that requires contingency fee agreements be in writing, reports hollywoodreporter.com.

Bloom argued that Hollywood’s percentage fee deals aren’t contingency fee arrangements, but a Los Angeles Superior Court judge didn’t buy it. Nevertheless, even if the agreement was ripped up, that didn’t necessarily mean that Bloom would have to return money.

Bloom Hergott pursued its own claim of quantum meruit on the basis that the firm deserved adequate compensation for its services.



Johnny Depp

sports

Spirit of Le Mans comes to Bahrain



A scene from 'Le Mans '66'

● **BIC partners with VOX Cineco for Bahrain premiere of 'Le Mans '66'**

● **Fans can win tickets for exclusive VIP premiere on November 27 through BIC competition**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) has partnered with VOX Cineco and 20th Century Fox to bring the Spirit of Le Mans to Bahrain with the local premiere of the highly acclaimed film Le Mans '66, starring Matt Damon and Christian Bale.

As Bahrain gets ready to bring the modern-day Spirit of Le Mans to the Island with the FIA World Endurance Championships (WEC) at BIC from December 13 to 15, this film looks back at one of Le Mans' greatest-ever battles between Ford and Ferrari from 1966.

BIC and its partners will be hosting an exclusive VIP premiere on November 27 and five lucky fans can win a pair of tickets each to the VIP premiere at IMAX at VOX Cineco in City Centre Bahrain. Visit BIC's Instagram account for details on the competition.

Le Mans '66 has generated rave reviews ever since its release. In the biopic, American car designer Carroll Shelby, played by Damon, and driver Ken Miles, played by Bale, battle corporate interference, the laws of physics and their own personal demons to build a revolutionary race car for Ford and challenge Ferrari at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1966.

The Spirit of Le Mans will be alight at BIC in a few weeks' time when the FIA WEC Bapco 8 Hours of Bahrain takes place in conjunction with the BIC National Day Festival from December 13 to 16.

For more information on the FIA WEC Bapco 8 Hours of Bahrain, visit the circuit's official website on www.bahrainingp.com or call the BIC Hotline on +973-17-450000.

Sousa plays down title talk but vows to fight

Bahrain to face defending champions Oman in opening Group B clash today

TDT | Manama

National football team head coach Helio Sousa played down suggestions that Bahrain could clinch its first-ever title in the Arabian Gulf Cup this year, but vowed that his team will fight to win every game.

Sousa was speaking yesterday in his pre-match Press conference ahead of the Bahrainis' opening Group B clash against defending champions Oman.

Bahrain have taken part in all but the 1972 edition of the Gulf Cup but have never won the title. They finished as runners-up four times, including in the inaugural edition in 1970, in 1982, in 1992, and then again in 2003-2004.

In the last tournament held in Kuwait in 2018, Bahrain finished fourth overall after losing in the semi-finals, while Oman defeated the UAE in a tight penalty shootout to claim the crown.

Sousa said that he knows of the importance of the Gulf Cup to Bahrain, and while he avoided any title talk, assured that the team would give their maximum effort to win.

"We know about the history of this tournament and what this tournament means to Bahrain," said the Portuguese tactician. "Bahrain was one of the founders of this competition, and we were also runners-up a few times in the past.

"We will try as we have been doing since we started five months ago. Most of the teams who are present here have had a more consistent process than ours, but we have already achieved very important things - mainly, a consistent idea of playing and a mentality that we are prepared to be in every game to win it.

"We will be best prepared as we can to win. If we are in the semi-finals, then we will fight to win again and to be in the final. In the final, as ever, it will be for winning too, and we hope to have the conditions to be capable to do it."

Sousa said that the team is

completely focused on their first match against Oman, whom he described to be a very consistent and quality side.

"It will be a difficult game for sure," he said. "They are the title-holders, and in the last two to four years have been very consistent in the Fifa ranking, which means a lot.

"All of these things tell us they are a very consistent team with very good players who have a lot of experience. They are players with quality and with a good identity of playing. They will try to focus on us, but we will try to get something from what they don't do so well.

"This first game will be very important as are all the games in these short competitions; we will face each game as it comes."

Sousa added that the national team's players are continuing to grow and each time they take to the pitch they are developing as a squad.

"For some of our guys, these tournaments are a very new experience," he explained. "It is a learning process. Now, maybe most of them feel some pressure, but as I said to them it is the pressure that we want. The pressure of winning. To be one of the best and to be the first. This is a new thing, a new feeling that we must learn, but



Sousa, centre, speak at his Press conference alongside national team official Mohammed Abdulghaffar, left, and player Ali Haram

our goal will also be on the next game.

"This is a very good tournament for us to keep building what we want and what we propose for Bahrain football. We try to achieve and conquer every game. We will always try to get the three points for us to get into the next stage of a competition."

Bahrain's match with Oman is scheduled for a 5.30pm kick-off and it will be held at Doha's Abdullah bin Khalifa Stadium.

Photo cap: Sousa, centre, speak at his Press conference alongside national team official Mohammed Abdulghaffar, left, and player Ali Haram.



We will be best prepared as we can to win. If we are in the semi-finals, then we will fight to win again and to be in the final. In the final, as ever, it will be for winning too, and we hope to have the conditions to be capable to do it

HELIO SOUSA



Bahrain players during their final training session last night in Doha

Klopp 'not worried' over Salah fitness ahead of Napoli clash

AFP | Liverpool

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp says he has no concerns about Mohamed Salah's fitness ahead of their Champions League clash with Napoli.

Salah was an unused substitute in the 2-1 win at Crystal Palace on Saturday after missing training with an ankle problem.

"Mo Salah looks really good," Klopp said at his pre-match press conference on Tuesday. "I'm not worried about it."

Klopp also provided an update on the fitness of defender Joel Matip, who has been sidelined with a knee injury.

"Joel is improving but is some time away. There will be a scan this week and then we will see how it is."

Klopp said

he had plans to cope with Liverpool's fixture pile-up over the next few weeks.

Their involvement in the FIFA Club World Cup in Qatar, plus their progress in the League Cup, mean Liverpool have been forced to play two games within 24 hours of each other, over 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometres) apart in mid-December.

"We have plans for everything, as you can imagine, and we change them constantly. I have two smartphones and when one of them is ringing it is really rare it is good news," said Klopp.

"You only get the messages when a player is not fine, so then we have to make new plans and we don't know exactly how many players we'll have to train.



Mohamed Salah

Lends rally past Mumbai Riders in CBA T20 league

TDT | Manama

Sumesh's All-round performance helped Lends to win against Mumbai Riders in CBA Division C T-20 League.

Riders won the toss and elected to bowl first. Legends opener Sumesh (54) scored a brilliant half century to give a good start. Rihans quick 34 runs helped them to score 159 runs at the end of 20 overs. Rahul took two wickets for Riders. In second innings Sumesh took four wickets in his four over spell for 21 runs which helped Legends to



Shakeel - Global Stars

restrict their opponent for 112 runs and win the match by 47 runs.

Legends 159/6 in 20 overs (Sumesh 54, Rihan 34, Rahul 2/1) beat Mumbai Riders 112/10 (Irfan 21, Sumesh 4/21) by 47



Sameer - Tornado

runs

Brave Warriors 153/9 (Rehmat 37, Salman 37, Sukesh 4/15) Tied with Awali Gents 153/9 (Vishal 44, Naresh 28, Majid 2/31)

Titans 118/9 in 18.5 overs (Rahul 28, Bilal 3/25) beat Patrick

York 117/7 (Kaleem 25, Khalid 25, Ibrar 3/13) by 1 wicket

Global Stars 210/4 (Anwar 67, Shakid 48, Imran 37) beat LuLu 145/7 (Pradeep 45, Tariq 2817) by 65 runs

Awali Camels 171/3 (Khuram 38, Ahmed 57) beat Indian Delights 86/10 (Sadakath 20, Ishtiaq 4/13, Ahmed 3/28) by 85 runs

Z-XI 146/5 (Ajay 32, Asif 28) beat FOG CC 108/9 (Javed 30, Ajay 2/15) by 38 runs

Pak Eagles 164/9 (Hassham 43, Sulaiman 33, Vijesh 3/27) beat Royal Blasters 158/5 (Philson 47, Vinoh 37,) by 6 runs.

Manama secure BBA Cup

Manama defeated Riffa in the final match of the tournament

TDT | Manama

Manama clinched the first-ever Bahrain Basketball Association (BBA) Cup last night following a 95-85 victory over Riffa in the tournament final played at Zain Basketball Arena in Um Al Hassam.

The victors had a strong showing in the second half which helped them pull away from their rivals en route to icing the result late in the final period.

Following the game, Manama were presented with the BBA Cup by BBA President Talal Kanoo in the presence of other BBA and Manama Club officials. Team captain Mohammed Hussain received the trophy on the team's behalf.

Hussain and American professional Christopher McKnight combined for 45 points to spearhead the maiden cup holders, who had four other players in double figures.

McKnight played all 40 minutes and finished with 23 points while also taking down 13 rebounds and registering three steals. He also buried three baskets from beyond the arc. Hussain added 22, including 12 from the charity stripe. He also had seven rebounds and nine assists, while also committing eight turnovers.

Ali Hussain, Mohammed Jassim, Mohayad Ameer and Hassan Nowrooz

chipped in with 12 points apiece.

For Riffa, Hassan Helal had 20 to pace his side in the losing effort. Ali Jassim added 18, US import Joseph Jones had 16 points and 17 rebounds, while Younes Kuwayed finished with 14 markers.

Manama took a narrow 22-17 lead at the end of the first quarter, but Riffa were able to narrow the gap to 37-39 heading into the half.

Manama then began to stretch their advantage in the third period and they went ahead 66-59 heading into the final

canto. There, they enjoyed their biggest lead of 14 points following a lay-up by Ali Hussain that made it 88-74 with under two minutes left.

Both teams had sub-par shooting performances in the contest, with Manama going 30-for-61 and Riffa finishing 26-for-62. They were both dismal from beyond the three-point line, with Manama shooting five-for-20 and Riffa going two-for-21.

The result earned Manama their first trophy of the national basketball season.



Manama captain Hussain receives the BBA Cup from Kanoo



Manama team members and officials celebrate with the BBA Cup after the final

Gritty Iraq beat Qatar in Gulf Cup opening match

● **Midfielder Mohammed Qasim Majid scores twice for the visiting side, as regional tournament kicks off in Doha**

Doha

Iraq has stunned hosts Qatar on the opening day of the 24th Arabian Gulf Cup, beating the Asian football champions 2-1 in Doha.

Midfielder Mohammed Qasim Majid scored a brace for the visiting side in the first half - at the 18th and 27th minute - during the Group A match at Khalifa International Stadium yesterday.

Qatar tried hard to cut the deficit but failed to penetrate the tight defence of Iraq as the first half-half ended with a score of 2-0.

Abdelaziz Hatem opened the scoring for the hosts early in the second half, finding the net the 49th minute.

Qatar came close to level-



Iraq's midfielder Ibrahim Bayesh (centre) vies for the ball with Qatar's defender Boualem Khoukhi

ling - with an Iraqi header that deflected off the goalpost, as well as a chance during extra time - but were unable to break through the opponent's defences.

Both Qatar and Iraq have won the Gulf Cup three times, and this is the fourth time Doha is hosting the biennial regional football tournament.

Meanwhile, Kuwait coach Thamer Enad said Gulf championships have not abandoned their traditions and were always pressured by the momentum that accompanies them.

Thamer congratulated, at the beginning of his talk, the Saudi Club Al Hilal for winning the Asian Champions League where he described this victory as a

pride for the Gulf and all Arabs.

"We started the preparations in a foreign camp and then played the West Asian Championship and then played several games in the Asian double qualifiers. We are ready for the Gulf Cup which has no specific standards and we expect it to be difficult for everyone, as usual."

On the first Gulf championship as coach of the Blue, he commented: "I am in front of a great responsibility and contemporary Gulf tournaments as a player, assistant coach and a coach and I know a lot about it is hidden."

"It is very difficult off the pitch because of the privacy that no one is unaware of, and this is a wonderful feeling to contend the tournament this time as a coach for the Kuwaiti team."

He continued: "Gulf championship started before the whistle of referees and this is the nature of the momentum that accompanies them as you can see now in the press conference - a championship that makes everyone lives under great pressure."

England support 'emotional' Archer after racist abuse

Reuters | Sydney

England players will rally around an "emotional" Jofra Archer after the pacer was racially abused by a spectator in New Zealand, director of cricket Ashley Giles said yesterday, as local officials scoured CCTV footage to identify the culprit.

"It's a shame that sort of thing is still in society," Giles told reporters after Archer was subjected to racist comments after being dismissed late on day five of the opening Test in Mount Maunganui.

The Barbados-born bowler tweeted after the match that it was "a bit disturbing hearing racial insults today whilst battling to help save my team".

The 24-year-old later told ESPNcricinfo that the abuser was a solitary New Zealand spectator making comments "about the colour of my skin".

Archer has been a powerful advocate for diversity in cricket and Giles, when asked how the player was faring, replied: "The tweet, it was obviously



England's Jofra Archer looks on during the match

emotional, it hurts.

"We fully support Jof, there is no place for racism in the game... you know what our team is like, they'll rally round him."

The incident has overshadowed the result of the first Test ever played at Mount Maunganui's Bay Oval, which New Zealand won by an innings and 65 runs.

Black Caps captain Kane Williamson described the taunt as "horrific", while New Zealand Cricket said the culprit would be reported to the police and face a life ban if identified from the venue's CCTV footage.

Tennis star Murray reveals emotional impact of Dunblane Massacre

AFP | London

Former world tennis number one Andy Murray reveals for the first time in a new documentary that he suffered from breathing problems and anxiety following the Dunblane School massacre.

The 32-year-old and his older brother Jamie were pupils at the school in Scotland where on March 13, 1996, Thomas Hamilton shot dead 16 children, aged five and six, and a teacher in the gymnasium.

Andy Murray, then eight years old, had been on his way with

his classmates to the gym when Hamilton -- armed with four handguns and 700 rounds of ammunition -- opened fire.

He was ushered away and told to hide under the windows of the headmaster's office whilst Jamie, who is 15 months older, was in another classroom.

Murray has rarely spoken about the massacre and did not want to be filmed talking about it.

But the documentary 'Andy Murray: Resurfacing' includes a voice-note that the three-time Grand Slam champion and two-time Olympic gold medalist sent

to filmmaker Olivia Cappuccini. "You asked me a while ago why tennis was important to me," says Murray in the documentary due to be released on Amazon on Friday.

"Obviously I had the thing that happened at Dunblane. I am sure for all the kids there it would be difficult for different reasons.

"The fact that we knew the guy (Hamilton), we went to his kids' club, he had been in our car, we had driven and

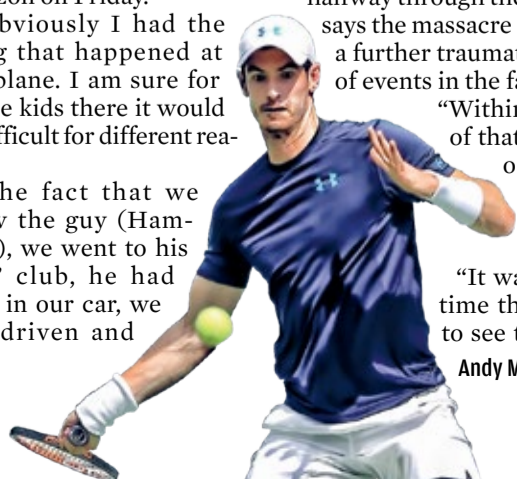
dropped him off at train stations and things."

Divorce

Murray, who bursts into tears halfway through the voice-note, says the massacre precipitated a further traumatic sequence of events in the family.

"Within 12 months of that happening, our parents got divorced," he said.

"It was a difficult time that, for kids, to see that and not



Andy Murray

quite understand what is going on.

"And then six to 12 months after that, my brother (Jamie) moved away from home.

"He went away to train, to play tennis. We obviously used to do everything together. When he moved away that was also quite hard for me."

Murray admits that is when he suffered from anxiety but tennis has provided an escape for him.

"Around that time and after that, for a year or so, I had lots of anxiety but that came out when I was playing tennis," said Murray.

"When I was competing I would get really bad breathing problems.

"My feeling towards tennis is that it's an escape for me in some ways, because all of these things are stuff that I have bottled up.

"We don't talk about these things. They are not things that are discussed."

"The way that I am, on the tennis court, I show some positive things about my personality and I also show the bad things and things I really hate.

"Tennis allows me to be that child, that has all of these questions."