

**Kuwait flag raised
on top of Japan's
highest mountain**



**Day off for south
Indians as new
film sparks frenzy**



**Kohli makes
history with
double century**



150 Files

CAPTAGON PILLS WORTH KD 25 MILLION SEIZED

MOI FOILS MAJOR SMUGGLING ATTEMPT



Min 35°

Max 49°



KUWAIT: Interior Ministry officials look at a heap of seized Captagon pills yesterday. (Inset) The suspect who was arrested is seen in front of the huge cylinder in which the pills were hidden. (More photos on Page 5)

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry has thwarted an attempt to smuggle a huge amount of Captagon pills into the country, according to a statement issued yesterday. Ministry Undersecretary Lt Gen Sulaiman Al-Fahd supervised the effort to foil the major attempt to bring 10 million Captagon pills worth KD 25 million into the country, the statement added. The pills were professionally hidden in a container coming from Turkey.

The back-to-back blows by the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) against drug traffickers offer evidence of the alertness and readiness of the security bodies to protect the country, the statement quoted Fahd as saying. DCGD Director General Colonel Walid Al-Duraei said that the mission was accomplished in cooperation with the General Administration of Customs. He added that they were tipped off by a secret source, who said that the Captagon pills would be hidden in a container of cleaning materials coming from Turkey.

A plan was drawn up, allowing the drugs to enter through Shuwaikh port. It was followed till it reached an open area in a Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh neighborhood. There, it was watched for three days, then a 28-year-old Syrian came to receive it and was caught red-handed, Duraei said. — KUNA

GOVT MULLS 3-DAY WEEKEND, OFF DAYS AMID SEARING HEAT

KUWAIT: Government sources said giving the day off to public employees when temperatures reach 55 C will lead to reducing financial costs for the government, Al-Rai newspaper reported yesterday. Sources said any rise in temperature leads to increased use of electricity, as what happened on Wednesday, when temperatures shot up and government departments had to increase cooling over the limits recommended by the Ministry of Electricity and Water.

This costs the state much more than the services presented to citizens during such a day, when the number of patrons drops significantly. The sources feared that increased loads will cause power cuts, which will double the losses after the departure of employees - the day will still be considered a working day - in addition to electricity costs.

Meanwhile, a parliamentary proposal calls for a three-day weekly holiday at government ministries and departments. The proposal suggests that this be trialed during the "hot months" of July and August, and if the idea is successful, then it will be extended all year long. Four days of serious

work, according to parliamentarians, are enough to process people's transactions. Other benefits of the holiday include a reduction in temperatures because vehicles will not be driven much, and it will also reduce the rate of traveling abroad.

MP Ahmad Lari said his proposal is to have a three-day weekend (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) during July and August due to high temperatures on a trial basis to study the possibility of having a three-day weekend all year long. He said the idea was discussed with government officials, and it ended with proposing to extend the weekend during July and August and study the experiment, and it is possible to extend it later if proven successful.

Lari said it is usual for citizens as well as government officials to spend the summer holiday abroad, so "I do not think extending the weekend to three days will affect the work process". He said four days of serious work are enough to process transactions in government departments. The experiment will be evaluated and if accepted, then the weekend will be for three days.

SEVERAL KILLED IN MUNICH SHOOTING

MUNICH: Gunmen went on a shooting rampage in a shopping mall in the southern German city of Munich yesterday, killing and wounding many people, police said. Authorities were evacuating people from the Olympia mall but many others were hiding inside. The Bavarian Interior Ministry said three people were dead, NTV television reported. A Munich police spokeswoman said multiple people were killed or wounded. "We believe we are dealing with a shooting rampage," the spokeswoman said.

More than one gunman was believed to be involved and no one had been arrested, she said. "We believe there was more than one perpetrator. The first reports came at 6 pm, the shooting apparently began at a McDonald's in the shopping center. There are still people in the shopping center. We are trying to get the people out and take care of them." Police special forces had arrived at the scene, NTV said. It was not immediately clear

who carried out the attack, which took place a week after an axe-wielding teenager went on a rampage on a German train. Islamic State claimed responsibility for that attack.

The Bild newspaper reported that a gunman ran through the mall near the Munich Olympic stadium, firing on several people before fleeing in the direction of a nearby metro station. Staff in the mall were still in hiding, an employee told Reuters by telephone. "Many shots were fired, I can't say how many but it's been a lot," the employee, who declined to be identified, said from the mall in Munich. "All the people from outside came streaming into the store and I only saw one person on the ground who was so severely injured that he definitely didn't survive. We have no further information, we're just staying in the back in the storage rooms. No police have approached us yet." Munich transport authorities said they had halted several bus, train and tram lines. — Agencies



VIENNA: Advisor of the national commission tasked with the Ozone layer Yaqoub Al-Maatouq (right) attends the meeting. — KUNA

KUWAIT COMMITTED TO MONTREAL PROTOCOL ON ENVIRONMENT

VIENNA: Kuwait affirmed its adherence to the Montreal Protocol on cutting contaminating emissions and expressed readiness to discuss any proposed plan aimed at safeguarding the environment. The Kuwaiti stand was expressed in a statement addressed yesterday by the advisor of the national commission tasked with the Ozone layer, Yaqoub Al-Maatouq, to the 37th meeting of the protocol signatory states and the third extraordinary meeting of the protocol parties, currently held here.

Maatouq called on the stakeholders to honor their obligations for protecting the environment, adding that the protocol "had reached a crucial turning point with the historic meeting held in Dubai in November, where the parties agreed to work out solutions for the difficulties with respect of cutting down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)." The Kuwaiti delegation included officials from the Foreign Ministry and Environment Public Authority (EPA).

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (a protocol to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer) is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production of numerous substances that are responsible for ozone depletion. — KUNA

KUWAITI HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS GET SCHOLARSHIPS TO STUDY IN OMAN

KUWAIT: Recent Kuwaiti high school graduates are given the opportunity to further their college education at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman, announced Kuwait's Ministry of Higher Education on Thursday.

Students interested in joining the college of economics and political science and the college of humanities and social studies will be eligible depending on their grade point average (GPA), said a press statement by the ministry.

Part of the admission process requires

proficiency in the English language, math, and computer usage, provided that applicants have graduated from high school as recently as last year and are not over the age of 24, said the statement.

Students who meet the admission requirements to attend Sultan Qaboos University will be awarded full scholarship benefits including room and board and free airline tickets every year of their study there. The school year starts next October 4th. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Thirty three lieutenants from the Kuwaiti Army celebrated their graduation from the Egyptian Military Academy on Thursday. — KUNA

OPEC BASKET PRICE AT \$42.93 PB

VIENNA: The price of OPEC basket of fourteen crudes stood at \$42.93 a barrel on Thursday, compared with \$42.73 the previous day, OPEC said yesterday. The new OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador), Rabi Light (Gabon), Minas (Indonesia), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Merey (Venezuela). — KUNA



DEFENSE MINISTER HEADS KUWAIT'S DELEGATION TO ANTI-IS MEETING

WASHINGTON: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah headed Kuwait's delegation to a joint meeting of the foreign and defense ministers of the Anti-Islamic State (IS) Coalition member states in Washington Thursday.

Speaking at the meeting, Sheikh Khaled reiterated Kuwait's firm stance against terrorism and its full support to the international efforts and measures to eliminate the threat of terror groups, especially the IS group. He highlighted the logistic support offered by Kuwait to the anti-IS coalition forces including the hosting of a large number of coalition aircraft and forces. Kuwait has hosted several conferences and meetings for the coalition, he said.

Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah emphasized Kuwait's commitment towards alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi and Syrian people. Kuwait has offered nearly \$2 billion in humanitarian aid to the Syrian and Iraqi people, hosted three conferences for donor countries and partook in the donors' conference held in February, he stated.

The defense minister noted that Kuwait also announced on Wednesday a \$176 million-aid for Iraq and agreed on two Iraqi requests to postpone the payment of \$4.6 billion in debts for Kuwait. Foreign and defense ministers from over 40 nations fighting the Anti-IS coalition met in Washington



WASHINGTON: Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah heads Kuwait's delegation to the meeting of the foreign and defense ministers of the Anti-Islamic State (IS). — KUNA

on Thursday to discuss diplomatic and military approaches to the campaign.

The ministers held detailed discussions on political-military coordination, putting a stop to the influx of foreign fighters, curbing terror financing, counter-propaganda and

stabilizing liberated areas, according to a State Department statement. Coalition foreign ministers last met in Rome, Italy, while defense ministers last met in Brussels, Belgium, with both talks taking place last February. — KUNA

KUWAITI FM, FINANCE MINISTER IN MAURITANIA FOR SUMMIT'S MEETINGS

KUWAIT WANTS ARAB RESOLUTIONS TO BE PUT IN FORCE

NOUAKCHOTT: Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and Deputy Prime Minister, Finance Minister and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh arrived on Thursday in Mauritania to participate in meetings for the Arab League Summit.

Upon arrival, the two ministers were received by Mauritania's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Isselkou Ould Ahmed Izid Bih, Minister of Finance Mokhtar Ould Diay, Kuwait's Ambassador to Mauritania Khaled Al-Shaibani and the embassy's staff.

Saleh led Kuwait's delegation to the ministerial meeting of the Economic and Social Council yesterday. Meanwhile, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled will lead the delegation to the preparatory meeting for the Arab League Summit tomorrow. The Summit will be held on Monday July 25.

Arab resolutions

Saleh said yesterday that Kuwait is doing its best to ensure that Arab economic resolutions are properly put in place. Speaking following a preparatory meeting of the Arab League's Economic and Social Council ahead of the 27th Arab Summit, he said: "The State of Kuwait is exerting all required efforts in order to ensure the implementation of resolutions adopted by Arab periodical and economic summits to improve the conditions of Arab citizens."

On the meeting, he said the conferees had discussed a host of key issues and subjects pertinent to Arab economic and social cooperation, includ-

ing a report compiled by the Arab League's Secretary-General on the following-up of resolutions adopted during the 26th Arab Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh. He added that they had also addressed the activities of the economic and social sectors and measures taken so as to put the

Economic and Social Council's resolutions in place.

Also among the issues discussed was a mechanism to respond to Sudan's request for Arabs to invest in agriculture there with a view to bridging the food gap and achieving Arab food security. The Kuwaiti official hoped that the council would come up with appropriate resolutions that could lead to promoting and cementing Arab cooperation in economic and social areas.

Unified stance

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs Ambassador Aziz Al-Daihani has underlined the significance of the Arab League's Summit. The Summit needs a unified Arab

stance to combat challenges facing countries and nations in the Arab region, he said. "Up to 16 bills were submitted to the Summit. There is a full understanding and cooperation amongst Arab countries to take resolutions for meeting aspirations of Arab nations," he said.

Daihani stressed Kuwait's keenness on achieving Arab solidarity through taking part in all Arab meetings on all levels, out of its believe in the importance of such meetings and the key role of the Arab League. — KUINA



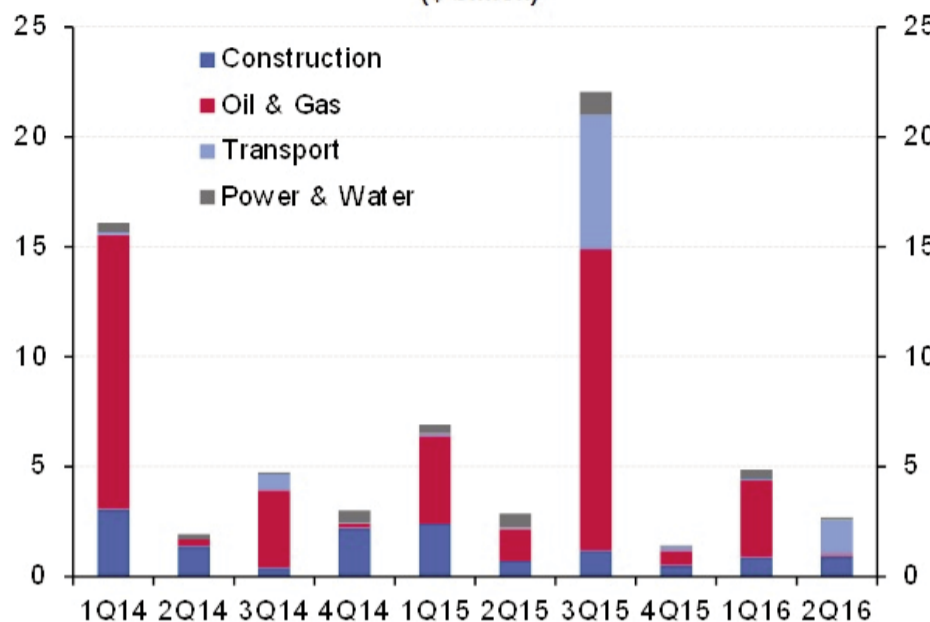
Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah



Anas Al-Saleh

Chart 1: Awarded projects

(\$ billion)



Source: MEED Projects, NBK

Chart 2: Kuwait's projects market

(\$ billion, planned and active projects)



Source: MEED Projects

PROJECTS AWARDS RISE TO KD 2.25 BILLION IN FIRST HALF OF 2016

KUWAIT: Kuwait's projects market continues to expand in spite of the backdrop of low oil prices and their impact on government finances. Kuwait awarded KD 812 million (\$2.7 billion) worth of contracts in 2Q16, according to MEED Projects, bringing the total value of contracts awarded so far this year to KD 2.25 billion (\$ 7.5 billion). By the end of June, Kuwait's projects market (active and planned) grew to KD 76.8 billion (\$255 billion), an increase of 2.9 percent year-to-date.

Looking ahead to the rest of 2016, Kuwait is expected to award another KD 8.4 billion (\$27 billion) worth of contracts before year-end. Although Kuwait's project market faces many challenges on top of low oil prices, such as lack of FDI interest, a weak private sector and a less attractive environment than its neighbors, the economy is cash-rich and the government has an ambitious five-year plan that includes currently over 8 public private partnership schemes aimed at improving the country's aging infrastructure. According to MEED Projects, bids for the bulk of 2016's planned projects (44 percent) are currently under evaluation, followed by 27 percent that are in the main contract bid stage which means that over 71 percent of the planned projects are within their final stage prior to execution. Below is a breakdown of major project developments, by sector.

Oil and gas

Following the awards of the two huge Clean Fuels Project (CFP) and New Refinery Project (NRP) in 2014 and 2015 respectively, the value of Kuwait's oil sector projects in the pipeline has begun to soften. Oil and Gas projects account for 27 percent of the planned projects in Kuwait for 2016, behind the transport and the Power and Water sectors. However that is not to say the Oil and Gas sector is slowing down, as Kuwait still has KD 2.3 billion worth of projects to award this year.

In 1H16, Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) awarded a KD 882 million (\$2.9 bn) contract to build the liquefied natural gas (LNG) Import and Regasification Terminal. However, Kuwait is also expanding domestic gas production with the tendering of the Jurassic Non-Associated Gas Reserves project in northern Kuwait. Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), the state's upstream operator, has tendered three contracts worth KD 1.7 billion (\$5.7 billion) for the development of The project, which aims at producing 10,472 tons of natural gas per day. In January, US firm Schlumberger was awarded the KD 144 million (\$480 million) contract to develop the Sabriyah and Umm Niqa fields. Schlumberger also reportedly submitted the lowest bids for the East Raudhatain package and West Raudhatain package; however, according to MEED, it is unlikely for the company to win all three contracts as the remaining two are still being evaluated. The two contracts are valued at KD 542 million (\$1.8 billion) each.

KOC has also retendered the KD 240 million New Refinery FEED pipeline contract, which aims to connect the South Tank Farm to the New Refinery at Al-Zour. The contract has been retendered following

parliamentarian criticism of its initial tendering in 2015.

Construction

Kuwait awarded KD 570 million (\$1.7 billion) worth of construction projects in the first half of 2016. The biggest and most notable award was for the New Maternity Hospital. The new 600-bed Maternity Hospital is to be built opposite the existing maternity hospital in Sabah Medical Area. The hospital is one of four that were tendered and then canceled in 2013 for being over budget. The contract has been awarded to Italian firm Pizzarotti for KD 219 million (\$730 million).

Under the direction of His Highness the Amir, the Amiri Diwan has taken on several key projects in Kuwait. The Diwan answers to the Amir himself, therefore bypassing government's red tape and the plethora of decision-making bodies. The Diwan's project portfolio includes projects such as the new Al-Jahra Hospital, Al-Shaheed Park and Kuwait's two cultural centers (Abdullah Al-Salem and Jaber Al-Ahmed) set to be complete by year's end. On 20 June, the Amiri Diwan announced the awarding of a KD 49 million contract to local

National Bank of Kuwait report

developer Bayan National Trading Company to design and build Kuwait's Motor Town. According to press reports the project aims at building seven race circuits compatible with international standards. These circuits would enable Kuwait to host Formula 1 and MotoGP races in the future. The project is located south of the city, in Orafan, adjacent to the Wafra road. The contract also includes the construction of a pit building and a media center. According to press reports, the project is set to include a hotel and shopping mall at a later stage (not part of the current package).

The Amiri Diwan works independently and with larger resources than traditional government entities, enabling their projects a faster execution period. For this reason, the Diwan has also recently taken over the Passenger Support Terminal Project at Kuwait's International Airport. The project was originally tendered by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) but ownership was transferred in May 2016 to the Diwan. The Passenger Support Terminal is supposed to accommodate 4.5 million passengers per year and serve as a quick fix while the New Airport Terminal is being constructed. The project (i.e. expansion) is expected to be operational 450 days from the signing of the contract, which is scheduled for November 2016.

Power and water

Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) has extended

the deadline for three of its projects that were scheduled to be tendered this year. The main contract bid for the KD 450 million (\$1.5 billion) Umm Al-Hayman Wastewater Treatment Plant has been pushed (three times) to 31 August, while the bid for the Kabd Municipal Solid Waste Project has been rescheduled to 28 July. Bids for the Al Abdaliya Integrated Solar Combined Cycle (ISCC) Power Plant (CSP) have also been pushed to 28 July. The project will see Kuwait utilizing solar energy and help reduce the level of environmental pollution. The project will be developed on an area of 2 km².

KAPP did announce the bids for the main contract bid for phase 2 of the Al-Zour North IWPP. The project aims at producing 1,800 megawatts (MW) of electricity and 464,100 cubic meters a day of desalinated water. Three consortiums involving 11 companies have submitted their bids, according to an announcement by KAPP on 21 June, though no details were provided.

Kuwait's PPP plan is considered to be one of the projects market's main strengths, public private partnerships (PPP) were identified as one of the six pillars of Kuwait's economic reform plan. However, recent news reports suggest that the government is looking to merge KAPP with other government agencies, primarily Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA). Though such a move will most likely maximize efficiency and cut red tape, any merger at this point will most likely have the effect of slowing awarding process, at least for the time being.

Transportation

Kuwait is investing heavily in the transportation sector. The sector accounts for 34 percent of the value of planned projects in 2016. According to MEED Projects, Kuwait is planning the development of the North and East Regional Highway, a KD 517 million upgrade to roads that will facilitate the growth of inter-regional and international trade within the GCC states; the project includes various packages (not all have been announced). In May, local contractor Kuwait Company for Process Plant Construction and Contracting was awarded a KD 97 million (\$324 million) contract for a renovated Road from Saad Al Abdulla area to Buhaith (north of Kuwait). The Ministry of Public Works is also evaluating bids for a KD 181 million (\$ 600 million) road connecting Salmi (near the Saudi Border) to the 6th ring road.

In late June, The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) signed Kuwait's second largest contract so far this year. PAHW awarded the KD 288 million South Mutlaa City Major Infrastructure Works Package Contract 1 to a joint venture between Italy's Salini and Turkey's Kolin. The contract oversees the development of the main roads and infrastructure for the city, which is expected to house almost 30,000 residential units. The organization is also preparing to tender two additional roads and infrastructure packages for the project before year-end.



KUWAIT: Firefighters tackle a blaze reported in Hawally yesterday.

FIGHTING CORRUPTION AUTHORITY LAW READY

KUWAIT: The Fatwa and Legislation Department finished its work on the executive rules of law 2/2016 with regards to creating the Public Authority for Fighting Corruption, high ranking sources at the department said. “We finished the rules in only three days after receiving it from the justice ministry,” the sources indicated. They added that Fatwa and Legislation Department is not responsible for the delay in completing the executive rules of the laws as “we start on them as soon as we receive them and carry out the reviews and check them very accurately in a maximum of three days.” — Al-Anbaa

BOOTLEGGERS ARRESTED IN JLEEB

KUWAIT: Farwaniya detectives arrested three expats trading in homebrewed and imported liquor. The arrest was made after a chase in Jleeb Al-Shuyikh. Abdullah Mubarak detectives received information about an expat trading in imported liquor, so an undercover agent was sent to him and agreed to buy two boxes of imported liquor for KD 600 per box. It was agreed to make the exchange in an open area in Jleeb. A security source said a car arrived, but three expats who were inside became suspicious of detectives around, so they drove off at high speed trying to escape in the narrow roads, but were finally stopped. When the car was searched, 24 bottles were found. Separately, Farwaniya police closed down a liquor factory in Jleeb run by an Indian couple, where many drums were found full of liquor, as well as several bottles ready for sale. Tips were received by police about liquor being made in a Jleeb house, so it was raided and the arrest was made.

Drug dealers caught

Director General of the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) Colonel Waleed Al-Duriei sent three expats including a woman to the public prosecution for possessing and trading in drugs. A security source said tips were received about an expat who trades in heroin. He agreed to sell an undercover agent drugs in Mahboula, and after he handed the drugs to the agent, he was arrested and his flat was searched, where 500 gm of heroin and 250 gm shabu were found. In Jleeb, tips were received about an expat selling heroin. He was arrested, and when his house was searched, an expat woman, who turned to be his lover, was

found there, along with 80 gm of heroin.

Drug users detained

Hawally police arrested two citizens who were under the influence of drugs, and found shabu and heroin with them. One of them is wanted to serve a five-year jail sentence on a drugs case. Police spotted a car in Rumaithiya with two persons in it who seemed to be in an abnormal condition, so the car was stopped and the arrests were made. Both were sent to concerned authorities.

Worker dies

A man was found dead after he went to take a break during work. The Indian man, who felt heat exhaustion, went to lay down on a pile of sand. When a coworker went to wake him up, he found out that he was unconscious and called police. Paramedics confirmed his death, and his body was sent to the coroner to determine the exact cause of death.

Rescue vehicle involved in accident

A rescue vehicle that rushed to Khaitan flipped over while on the way to fight a fire. Interior ministry operations received two calls, the first from persons to rescue them from a fire in a Khaitan flat, so fire engines rushed to the site, while the second call was from firemen calling for help to upright their vehicle that flipped over while on the way. A security source said the rescue vehicle’s accident did not delay firemen from dealing with the fire, as other vehicles also arrived there. The fire was put out and no injuries were reported. A crane from the backup center dealt with the rescue vehicle, and no one was hurt. — Al-Anbaa and Al-Rai

FIREFIGHTERS TREATED FROM HEAT EXHAUSTION

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Fire broke out in the basement of a Hawally building yesterday. Firemen from the Hawally, Salmiya and Shahuda fire station rushed to the scene, located on Beirut street. The building was evacuated and firemen started fighting the flames. During the operation, they found electronic equipment which were stored at the building and helped spread the flames in a fast way. The fire was put out, and no injuries among civilians were reported. Meanwhile, four firefighters suffered from heat

exhaustion. Two of them were taken to hospital, while the other two were treated on site.

‘Suspected’ drugs

Coastguard patrols arrested a man near Anjafa beach yesterday with possession of bags suspected of containing drugs ready for sale. The patrolmen noticed the man in an abnormal condition, so he was stopped. The man was arrested after he failed to produce an ID when asked, then searched and police found the suspected drugs. He was sent to concerned authorities.



LIST OF ABDALY CELL SUSPECTS AND RULINGS

KUWAIT: The Appeals Court on Thursday upheld the death sentence of two suspects in the Abdaly cell, whose members face charges of spying for Iran and Hezbollah. Below is a list of the 25 suspects, their nationalities and sentences:

| Sentences of suspects in the Abdaly cell case | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Suspect | Nationality | Court of First Instance's ruling | Appeals Court's ruling |
| 1 | Hassan A Hajjiya | Kuwaiti | Death | Death |
| 2 | Ammar H.Ghuloum | Kuwaiti | 15 years | 5 years |
| 3 | Hussein A Tabatabae | Kuwaiti | 10 years | 5 years |
| 4 | Mohammad J Miraj | Kuwaiti | 15 years | 2 years |
| 5 | Ali A Abdelrahim | Kuwaiti | Acquitted | Acquitted |
| 6 | Jassim M Ghadanfoari | Kuwaiti | Life sentence | Life sentence |
| 7 | Mohammad A Al-Husseini | Kuwaiti | 5 years | KD 5,000 fine |
| 8 | Zuhair A Al-Mahmeed | Kuwaiti | 5 years | 5 years |
| 9 | Hassan A Jamal | Kuwaiti | 5 years | KD 5,000 fine |
| 10 | Hassan Murad Jassim | Kuwaiti | 15 years | 5 years |
| 11 | Mohammad J Hajji | Kuwaiti | 15 years | KD 5,000 fine |
| 12 | Abbas E Al-Mousawi | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 13 | Hassan A Al-Attar | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 14 | Abdelmohsen J Al-Shatti | Kuwaiti | 15 years | KD 5,000 fine |
| 15 | Mustafa A Khan | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 16 | Hussein J Al-Bathar | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 17 | Yousuf H Ghadanfari | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 18 | Mahdi M Al-Mousawi | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 19 | Essa J Baqer | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 20 | Hassan D Ramadan | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 21 | Jaafar H Jamal | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 22 | Hashim H Ali | Kuwaiti | 15 years | Acquitted |
| 23 | Abdelredha H Dahqani | Iranian | Death | Death (sentenced in absentia) |
| 24 | Basil H Hussein | Kuwaiti | Acquitted | Acquitted |
| 25 | Abdallah H Hussein | Kuwaiti | KD 5,000 fine | KD 5,000 fine |
| 26 | Hani A Hajjiya | Kuwaiti | Acquitted | Acquitted |

Source: Al-Anbaa



KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry announced yesterday that police seized 10 million Captagon pills worth KD 25 million, and arrested a person who tried to smuggle them into the country. The ministry's Undersecretary Lt Gen Sulaiman Al-Fahad supervised the operation. —Interior Ministry photos



KUWAITI FLAG ON TOP OF JAPAN'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

TOKYO: Eiko Ishiyama, a Japanese-Kuwaiti woman, has fulfilled one of her goals by raising the Kuwaiti flag on Mt Fuji, Japan's highest and most iconic mountain. "It was a tough journey because the weather got colder the higher I climbed."

Ishiyama, who conquered the 3,776-meter peak last week, said yesterday. Living in Kuwait, Ishiyama teaches Japanese to Kuwaiti students, including in Japanese language courses at Kuwait University's (KU) Center for Community Service and Continuing Education.

"One of my former Kuwaiti students tried to raise the Kuwaiti flag at the summit of Mt. Fuji a few years ago, but he did not make it to the top. Ever since then, I was inspired to take the Kuwaiti flag to the top myself, and I set it as one of my personal goals for 2016," said Ishiyama.

She suffered from elevation sickness at the 8th station of the trail, where she was forced to stop and rest. But with remembering the dream of her Kuwaiti student, who could not continue beyond the 9th station, which was only one station away from the peak, Ishiyama stayed motivated to move up.

"I was worried that I could not achieve the same goal either. But after resting, I pushed myself to hike up to the summit while it was still dark." Ishiyama reached the top just in time to see the sunrise, which she described that the view was absolutely stunning and very rewarding. "I recommend this experience to everyone. It is never too late and you are never too old to fulfill your goals," she added. Located about 100 kilometer southwest of Tokyo, Mt Fuji has long been a symbol of Japan. It was added to the UNESCO-designated World Heritage Site in 2013. — KUNA



TOKYO: Eiko Ishiyama raises Kuwait's flag on Mt Fuji. — KUNA

Photo

o f t h e d a y



KUWAIT: Salmiya's skyline and beach. The coastal area remains one of Kuwait's most popular touristic attractions. — KUNA

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KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced that its multi-currency X-Change card can now be obtained free of charge at any of the bank's branches. This offer was specifically designed to accommodate summer travelers who look forward to enjoying their vacation without having to worry about currency fluctuations. This offer is valid for customers and non-customers, from July to September 2016 on all available currencies.

The multi-currency X-Change card targets frequent travelers and students studying abroad. This summer, cardholders will be able to benefit from a wide selection of currencies - including the US dollar, Euro, British Pound, UAE Dirham, Saudi Riyal, Filipino Peso, and Egyptian Pound - while providing easy access to online shopping, ticket booking and hotel reservations, in addition to retaining the exchange rate value.

To find out more about Burgan Bank's new offer for the X-Change cards or any of its products and services, customers can visit any of the bank's branches or contact the call center on 1804080. For more information, customers can also log onto the bank's website on www.burgan.com.



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) presented financial support for an Omrah trip organized by the Kuwait Society for Preventing Smoking and Cancer for cancer patients last May.

International

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**Erdogan announces army
overhaul in new shakeup**

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**Indian air force aircraft
missing with 29 onboard**

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CLEVELAND: US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks on the last day of the Republican National Convention on Thursday. — AFP

TRUMP ACCEPTS GOP NOMINATION

MOGUL SLAMS CLINTON, VOWS TO PUT 'AMERICA FIRST'

CLEVELAND: Donald Trump accused Democratic rival Hillary Clinton of a legacy of "death, destruction, terrorism and weakness" as US secretary of state and vowed to be tough on crime and illegal immigrants in a speech on Thursday accepting the Republican presidential nomination. Trump's 75-minute speech was designed to set the tone for the general election campaign against Clinton, an answer to Republicans who say the best way he can unify the divided party is to detail why the Democrat should not be elected on Nov 8. As the crowd chanted: "Lock her up" for her handling of US foreign policy, Trump waved them off and said: "Let's defeat her in November." Thousands of supporters who were gathered in the convention hall roared their approval. When it was over, Trump was joined on stage by family members as balloons cascaded from above and confetti blew around the arena. A CNN snap poll of viewers of the speech said 57 percent had a "very positive reaction" to the address and 18 percent a somewhat positive reaction, while 24 percent said it had a negative effect.

Social media sentiment toward Trump based on tweets that mentioned his name was slightly more negative than positive shortly after his speech. The acceptance speech by Trump, 70, closed out a four-day convention that underscored his struggle to heal fissures in the Republican Party over his anti-illegal-immigrant rhetoric and concerns about his temperament. The event was boycotted by many big-name establishment Republicans, such as 2012 nominee Mitt Romney and members of the Bush family that gave the party its last two presidents.

Trump presented a bleak view of America under siege from ille-

gal immigrants, threatened by Islamic State militants, hindered by crumbling infrastructure and weakened by unfair trade deals and race-related violence. Accusing illegal immigrants of taking jobs from American citizens and committing crimes, Trump vowed to build a "great border wall" against the border-crossers. "We will stop it," Trump said.

Trump took positions in conflict with traditional Republican policies. He said he would avoid multinational trade deals but instead pursue agreements with individual countries. He would renegotiate the NAFTA trade accord linking the United States, Canada and Mexico. He would penalize companies that outsource jobs and then export their foreign-made products back into the United States. "We will never sign bad trade deals," Trump thundered. "America first!"

The New York businessman, who has never held elected office, filled his speech with some of the bravado he used to win the Republican nomination over 16 rivals, punctuating his rhetorical points by waving an index finger. "I have joined the political arena so that the powerful can no longer beat up on people that cannot defend themselves," Trump said. "Nobody knows the system better than me, which is why I alone can fix it."

In his speech, Trump portrayed himself as a fresh alternative to traditional politicians, willing to consider new approaches to vexing problems and help working-class people who may feel abandoned. Laying out his case against Clinton, he denounced nation-building policies that were actually put in place to some extent by George W Bush, without mentioning by name the Republican pres-

ident who launched wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Trump said policies pursued by Clinton in Iraq, Libya, Egypt and Syria had made a bad situation worse. He blamed her for the rise of Islamic State militants and blasted her willingness to accept thousands of Syrian refugees. "After 15 years of wars in the Middle East, after trillions of dollars spent and thousands of lives lost, the situation is worse than it has ever been before. This is the legacy of Hillary Clinton: death, destruction, terrorism and weakness," Trump said.

Clinton senior adviser John Podesta dismissed the speech as painting "a dark picture of an America in decline" and called it a reminder that Trump "is temperamentally unfit and totally unqualified to be president of the United States". John Weaver, a senior adviser to Ohio Republican Governor John Kasich, a former presidential rival to Trump, said in a tweet that Trump had delivered the "saddest, darkest, most depressing acceptance speech in modern history."

Trump needed a strong performance on Thursday night to improve his chances of getting a boost in opinion polls as Democrats prepare for their own, more scripted convention next week in Philadelphia. In a contest that pits two politicians viewed as unfavorable by large segments of the American people, Trump also accused Clinton, 68, of being the puppet of big business, elite media and major donors who want to preserve the current political system. "That is why Hillary Clinton's message is that things will never change. My message is that things have to change - and they have to change right now," Trump said. — Reuters

INDIAN DOUBLE GANG-RAPE SURVIVOR LIVES IN FEAR

ROHTAK, India: A low-caste Indian who survived a gang-rape aged 17 only to be raped again, allegedly by men awaiting trial for the first attack, said yesterday she feared she and her family would never be safe again. Police say the 20-year-old student from India's lowest Dalit caste was abducted from outside her college on July 13, drugged and raped before being dumped on a highway. Three men have been arrested in connection with the attack, two of whom had been charged with raping her in 2013, and only released on bail a few months ago.

Relatives say they believe the latest attack was revenge for her refusal to drop her complaint against the men, who they say were able to evade justice because they belonged to higher castes and had political connections. "I will have to spend my entire life in constant fear of being raped again or killed," said the woman, who AFP is not naming for legal reasons. "My life will never be the same. I am worried about my family's safety. They can harm us any time," she told AFP by telephone from her hospital bed in the northern Indian state of Haryana.

India promised to speed up rape trials in the wake of a fatal gang-rape in 2012 that shone a global spotlight on frightening levels of violence against women in India. But rape and sexual assault remain commonplace and cases are often slow to come to court - especially if the defendants are wealthy and well-connected. Relatives of the victim said the alleged perpetrators of the 2013 rape had offered them money to withdraw the case, and threatened to attack her again if they did not.

"We were offered five million rupees (\$75,000) to withdraw the case. They are rich people and have strong political links," her cousin told AFP. "We didn't give in to their demands and pursued the case, but we were let down by the court, which gave them bail in May," he told AFP in the city of Rohtak in Haryana, where the family moved to after the first attack.

'Only Rich Get Justice'

He said he believed his cousin was originally attacked because she had spurned the advances of one of the alleged rapists. "He must have thought, they are poor and helpless, and we will get away with the crime,"

he added. The relative said police only moved to arrest the alleged perpetrators after weeks of protests by the Dalit community, who face widespread discrimination in India even though this is illegal.

"We were tossed from one police station to another, but no one was listening. The accused were bribing them and were getting all help from the authorities," he said. "This country is

only for rich and for upper castes, only they get justice," said the cousin, adding that the entire family had now converted to Buddhism to escape discrimination under the Hindu caste system.

Local police say they are using all their resources to track down another two men accused in last week's attack, and have set up a special investigation team. — AFP



ROHTAK, India: Rohtak police superintendent Rakesh Arya speaks in his office on Thursday about the case of gang rape of a woman in this city. — AFP

EX-REBELS ACCUSE KIIR OF PLOT TO OUST MACHAR VP HAS NO PLANS TO RETURN

JUBA: South Sudan's vice president and former rebel leader Riek Machar has no plans for an immediate return to Juba, his supporters said yesterday, accusing his rival President Salva Kiir of trying to oust or even kill him. Machar has not been seen in public since he left the capital after days of intense fighting this month between rival troops that left over 300 people dead and threatened to torpedo an already shaky 2015 peace deal. Kiir had appealed on Thursday for Machar to return to Juba and work together towards rebuilding peace, pledging to guarantee his safety.

"There is no point to come back to be assassinated," Machar's spokesman Goi Jooyul Yol told AFP, speaking from the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa. "Dr Machar is still being hunted around Juba," he said, adding that "we don't trust" Kiir's security pledge. "He has killed the peace agreement. The only way forward is a neutral force," the spokesman insisted.

'Devastating Blow'

Kiir has rejected a proposal by the African Union to deploy a robust protection force in South Sudan and is also against beefing up the mandate of the UN peacekeeping mission UNMISS. But Machar's movement, known as the SPLM/A (IO), is in favour of an independent force. "This is because South Sudan has no national armed forces, no national security agency. The existing armies are all partisan and ethnic in character," it said in a statement.

The SPLM/A (IO) statement reaffirmed



JUBA: People walk on the other side of barbed wire where makeshift graves were placed at the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), the UN House for internally displaced persons in the Jebel area yesterday. — AFP

the group's support for Machar's leadership and denouncing what it said were government efforts to replace him with Taban Deng Gai, who was the chief negotiator for the former rebels during the peace talks.

Any attempt to change Machar's role as chairman and commander in chief of the SPLM/A (IO) "is totally rejected," the statement said. "It will deal a devastating blow" to the government of national unity and the August 2015 peace accord which aimed to end a near two-year civil war in the world's youngest nation.

The statement called on the government "to cease with immediate effect their ongoing military attempts to hunt down and kill (Machar) in their vain hope

of installing Taban Deng Gai as the first vice president".

"Salava Kiir can appoint him (Taban Deng Gai) first VP. That up to him. But he cannot (make him) chairman Juba was rocked by days of heavy fighting in early July between government forces and fighters loyal to Machar which erupted as he was meeting Kiir in the presidential palace. More than 300 people were killed and tens of thousands of people fled, escalating fears of a return to the brutal civil war that erupted just over two years after independence in 2011. The latest violence in the capital echoed the fighting that first triggered the civil war in Dec 2013, when Kiir accused Machar of plotting a coup. — AFP

QATAR TO PAY GAZA WAGES

DOHA: Qatar said on Thursday it would give \$30 million to help pay the salaries of thousands of Gaza Strip public sector workers left without a full wage package since 2013. The donation was welcomed by Hamas, the Islamist group that dominates the enclave who said it would help ease the wage shortages - that have tested already strained relations with the U.S.-backed Palestinian Authority, based in the West Bank.

There was no immediate comment from Palestinian Authority or Israel, who have long been suspicious of Qatar's regular donations to Hamas and other Islamist groups across the region. The emir of the wealthy Gulf state, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, said the payment of 113 million riyals was meant to "alleviate suffering and financial distress", according to Qatar's state news agency, QNA.

Hamas fighters seized control of Gaza in 2007 from forces loyal to Western-backed President Mahmoud Abbas and his Palestinian Authority, triggering years of mutual distrust. A reconciliation pact signed in 2014 by the two sides raised hopes among Hamas that its 50,000 public sector employees' wages would be taken care of via the Palestinian Authority (PA) payroll.

But the Palestinian Authority cannot afford to pay all those extra workers and international donors who support the PA budget, including the European Union, say they want an audit of workers and cutbacks to the bloated payroll, which costs more than \$2 billion a year. The Hamas-hired public servants have grown restive and in 2014 protested over their lack of payment which is partly due to a continued blockade imposed on Gaza by both Israel and Egypt. "The July payment will be made in full immediately once the Qatari financial fund is received," Hamas' deputy finance minister, Youssef Al-Kayyali said.

Qatar, which hosts the largest US air base in the Middle East, has for years preserved influence with Islamist forces across the region it believes are the long-term future. The breadth and resilience of Qatar's links to Islamist groups including Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, which has suffered a crackdown in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, fuels suspicions in other Gulf states. — Reuters

JULY 15, 2016: THE DAY TURKEY CHANGED

ANKARA: For most people in Turkey, July 15, 2016 was just another brilliant summer day heading into a balmy night. Until around 10:30 pm. Then came the F-16s roaring over Ankara, dropping bombs on targets including parliament. Tanks and heavily armed soldiers appeared on the Bosphorus bridges in Istanbul, where they were soon confronted by angry citizens. A week after the coup that was meant to unseat President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was launched and then defeated within hours, there remain many unanswered questions about its origins and how close it came to success.

But one thing is clear. Turkey has changed. While many Turks have bitter experience of full-scale military coups where tanks surged into the streets in their living memories - in 1960 and 1980 - never before had there been such bloodshed, with 265 people killed, among them 24 coup plotters. "This coup attempt maybe did take the world, the country and people like us by surprise," said Kemal Kirisci, senior fellow and director of the Turkey project at the Brookings Institution. "What was shock-

ing was the level of violence. Never before had parliament been attacked."

'Extraordinary Moment'

Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) is now overseeing a crackdown unprecedented since it swept to power in 2002 on a wave of popular support to put Islam at the heart of Turkish politics, sort out the economy and build new infrastructure. Since the failed putsch over 10,000 people - soldiers, judges and prosecutors as well as civil servants - have been detained in a wave of retribution that has sparked intense concern about the rule of law in Turkey.

Another 50,000 have been dismissed from their jobs, including over 20,000 in state education, raising questions about how those places will be filled. A three-month state of emergency has been declared. "This is an extraordinary moment in Turkey. We haven't seen anything like this since the 1980 coup," said Steven Cook, senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. "The speed, the numbers of people who have been purged... is extraordinary."

Erdogan has spoken of cleaning a "virus" from all state institutions. With 125 generals and admirals detained over alleged involvement in the coup, it will be a new-look armed forces which emerges in its aftermath.

'Huge Shockwave'

Turkey's relations with the EU have become more tense, particularly after Erdogan said he would consider reinstating the death penalty, which would

drive the final nail into the coffin of its stalled membership bid. Already strained ties with the United States risk becoming tetchier over the presence inside a leafy Pennsylvania compound of the mysterious, softly-spoken Islamic preacher Fethullah Gulen, whom Ankara blames for the coup bid. "The priority is to put the state back at work after this huge shockwave," Marc Pierini, visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe and a former EU ambassador to Turkey, told AFP. — AFP



ISTANBUL: Pro-Erdogan supporters wave a Turkish national flag during a rally at the Bosphorus Bridge on Thursday. — AFP



HAMBURG: This photo taken on July 16, 2016 shows members of Germany's Turkish community gathering with flags and a portrait of Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan in front of the Turkish consulate. — AFP

TURKEY TENSIONS SPILL ONTO GERMAN STREETS

BERLIN: The failed coup against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has stoked tensions in Germany's three-million strong Turkish community, prompting demonstrations and threats that have put the authorities on edge. After days of purges amid a crackdown on suspects and Erdogan's rivals in Turkey, German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere issued a stern warning to partisans among the world's largest Turkish diaspora. "We don't want these kinds of conflicts to play out in Germany with violence in the streets," he told ZDF public television.

However supporters and opponents of Erdogan in Germany have vented their anger in the wake of a turbulent week in Turkey which saw an attempted coup crushed and Ankara detaining or sacking tens of thousands of people. Turkish authorities imposed a state of emergency, strengthening state powers to round up suspects and suspending a key European rights convention, prompting serious concerns in the EU about the rule of law. Those worries have been compounded in Germany by security fears, as tensions between backers of Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) and his Islamic preacher Fethullah Gulen, whom Ankara blames for the coup, threaten to boil over.

The BDK federation representing 15,000 police officers cautioned there was a "very, very large" potential for the situation to explode. "All Erdogan has to do is snap his fingers to get people to confront each other in the streets in a very emotional way," its vice president Sebastian Fiedler told ZDF. — AFP

ERDOGAN ANNOUNCES ARMY OVERHAUL IN NEW SHAKEUP

GENDARMERIE NOW PART OF INTERIOR MINISTRY, NOT ARMY

ANKARA: Turkish authorities yesterday announced a shake-up of the security forces one week after the botched coup attempt, as Ankara vowed not to seek revenge despite a growing crackdown. Supporters are celebrating the coup's failure to unseat President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, but the Turkish strongman faces growing global criticism over the mass detentions and sackings of tens of thousands of people. Erdogan blames the coup, which saw seized fighter jets bomb Ankara and tanks run amok in Istanbul, on loyalists of the US-based Islamic preacher Fethullah Gulen. Turkey has demanded his extradition.

In the most significant institutional changes since the coup, powerful Interior Minister Efkan Ala said the gendarmerie would in future be part of the interior ministry and not the army. The gendarmerie, which looks after domestic security, had always been part of the military and its removal is a blow to the armed forces' clout after the coup. "The gendarmerie will definitely be dependent entirely on the interior ministry," Ala said, quoted by the state-run Anadolu news agency.

Erdogan was meanwhile meeting the head of Turkey's National Intelligence Agency (MIT) Hakan Fidan at the presidential palace, Turkish television said. Fidan, a key figure in modern Turkey, is under pressure after Erdogan repeatedly identified intelligence weaknesses during the coup. On Wednesday, the president admitted there had been "intelligence failures", saying he learned about the coup from his brother-in-law.

'No Revenge'

Authorities imposed a state of emer-

gency on Thursday, strengthening powers to round up suspects behind the failed putsch and suspending the European Convention on Human Rights. The European Union urged Turkey "to respect under any circumstances the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms", in a joint statement from foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini and enlargement commissioner Johannes Hahn. They slammed as "unacceptable" the sacking or suspension of tens of thousands of people in the education system, judiciary and the media and said they were monitoring the state of emergency "with concern".

Turkey's Western allies have been watching with alarm the turmoil in the key NATO member state, which has also

been reeling from a wave of bomb attacks by Islamic State group jihadists and Kurdish rebels. "Turkey is a state of law and does not act by revenge," said Prime Minister Binali Yildirim as he visited a military centre in Golbasi outside Ankara, where bombings on the night of the coup killed dozens. "Turkey will not do what they (the plotters) have done. We will act with justice but not a single drop of blood spilled will remain without consequences."

Meanwhile 28 people were detained in a nationwide operation against individuals suspected to be behind an allegedly pro-Gulen Twitter account called Fuat Avni, which claims to spill key state secrets, the Dogan news agency reported. —AFP



ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (center) delivers a speech during a press conference at the Presidential Complex yesterday, flanked by Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim (left) and Chief of the General Staff Hulusi Akar. — AFP

AFGHAN BROTHERS LAUNCH MINE-HUNTING DRONE

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands: Former refugees Massoud and Mahmud Hassani stunned the world three years ago with an invention like a dandelion puffball that sought to rid the world of landmines. Now the Afghan brothers are back with their latest creation: A low-cost drone to detect and destroy mines, which each year claim thousands of lives. Ridding the world of their childhood horror has become the life work of the Hassanis, who now live in the Netherlands.

In 2013, they won worldwide acclaim for the "mine kafon" - a giant ball shaped like a dandelion-seed head that rolls around with the wind, its plastic stalks tripping landmines in the process. Inspired by their childhood toys, the kafon - short for "kafondan" which in the Hassanis' native Dari language means "something that explodes" - drew high praise from anti-landmine organisations.

Flying Blue Octopus

Now their latest mine-hunting device combines drone technology, 3D printing and robotics with a metal detector to find and ultimately destroy landmines. Hinged on six arms with rotors that creates lift, the 4.5 kilo drone consists of a blue hard plastic casing that contains batteries, comput-

er hardware and software and a global positioning system. A robotic arm slung underneath is fitted with pincers that can remotely be opened and closed. The pincers can carry a metal detector or a small explosive charge, which the brothers say can be used to destroy a landmine. The on-board GPS allows it to plot its course via comput-

er. Massoud explains that the drone works in three stages: Mapping, detecting and destroying. When deployed, a 3D mapping system scans the section that needs to be demined. Secondly, the mapped area is meticulously swept by the drones carrying a metal detector on a pre-program path. "This way the mine field in ques-

tion can be scanned inch-by-inch," Massoud told AFP at his workshop in the southern Dutch city of Eindhoven. Finally, the plan is to destroy the mines by using the drone to place a small charge on every mine to detonate it. "We believe this way mines can be cleared almost 20 times faster than what they are now," Massoud said.

'Time-Consuming Process'

So far the duo have built three working prototypes, and have carried out demonstrations before the Dutch military, who say they are willing to help with further testing. "Clearing minefields is an incredibly time-consuming process," Major Fred de Vries of the Dutch army's explosives ordinance disposal unit told AFP. "We see many possibilities to use drones" to save time to map and detect landmines in a given area, De Vries said. The key phase will be to carry out field tests in Afghanistan, which the brothers hope to finance by crowdfunding. If all goes well, the pair believe the drone can be made for as little as €1,000 (\$1,100) each. Other opinions are guarded. One of them is the Halo Trust, the world's largest humanitarian mine clearing organization. —AFP



EINDHOVEN: A picture taken on July 4, 2016 shows Afghan refugee brothers Mahmud Hassani (left) and Massoud Hassani holding their latest anti-landmine invention called a mine kafon drone. — AFP

DOES BREXIT MEAN BREXIT? CAN UK CHANGE ITS MIND?

LONDON: Since entering Downing Street as Britain's new prime minister last week, Theresa May has quickly dispelled hopes that the UK might change its mind about leaving the European Union. "Brexit means Brexit," she said in her inaugural speech. She added later that Britain will take the time it needs to invoke the now notorious Article 50 of Europe's de facto constitution governing a member's divorce from the EU. Both May and her new minister for Brexit have said Article 50 would not be triggered before the end of the year.

Yet once May gets the United Kingdom onto the Brexit runway, can she turn back the plane? That is the question many UK and continental European legal minds are now pondering. One London firm of human rights lawyers has formally asked the government's legal department to clarify whether a country can invoke Article 50 and begin the process of EU divorce - but then revoke it down the line. May's government is also looking into the issue, as ministers study their position regarding the timing and aftermath of invoking Article 50, according to a person close to the government.

Article 50 of the European Union's 2009 Lisbon Treaty, which was drafted by a former British ambassador to the EU, has never been used, providing no legal precedent for how it works. Yet how May navigates the 256-word provision is ultimately a political decision, government officials say, that will define her premiership and the future of Britain's ties with the rest of Europe. If Article 50 can be revoked after it is invoked, then May's calculations of when and how to start Britain's EU

divorce could be radically different from the widely assumed "irrevocable trigger" of Article 50, according to lawyers and government sources.

Charles Streeten, a British barrister who has examined the legal arguments around the invocation and possible revocation of Article 50, says a country can unilaterally pull back at any point prior to the expiry of the two-year period during which, according to the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union and the exiting state need to work out the terms of their divorce. "The benefits of this should not be underestimated. If I am right, Britain would have a much stronger hand to play in the EU negotiations," Streeten told Reuters. Streeten said the government should seek formal advice from the European Union's Court of Justice on the matter.

Bindmans, a top London firm of human rights lawyers, has written to the government's legal department seeking clarification on the revocability issue as well. "It would appear to be in the UK's interests for that issue to be resolved before the Article 50 process is commenced," Bindmans wrote in its letter. The department declined comment.

In Brussels, another view prevails. EU lawyers say Britain could only revoke an Article 50 notification if all the other 27 members of the EU agreed. Otherwise, Britain could theoretically pull out of its divorce a day before the two-year negotiating period is up and start again, tangling the world's biggest trading block in years of divorce talks.

Un-Divorce?

The June 23rd referendum in which 17.4 million voters cast their ballots in

favor of leaving the European Union versus 16.1 million who wanted to remain has opened up the biggest period of British financial, political and constitutional uncertainty in modern times. The vote has been cast by some lawyers as a "Peasants' Revolt" that is now facing a "counter revolution" because the vote went against the wishes of most of Britain's political, financial and business elites.

Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage, Britain's foremost Brexit politician, has said there is a concerted attempt to slow - or even prevent - a British exit, just like the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 was ultimately crushed. Since the referendum, several legal challenges have been mounted aimed at giving lawmakers a say over both Brexit and Article 50. At least seven lawsuits have been started arguing that only parliament has the authority to decide whether Britain should trigger Article 50.

The first of such lawsuits will be heard in October. "I believe that people have been fooled," Gina Miller, a co-founder of London fund manager SCM Private, 51, who is the main claimant in the challenge. "They have not realized that the referendum was not legally binding and secondly there is no Brexit plan." Dominic Chambers is a senior lawyer who has filed another lawsuit aimed at forcing the government to allow parliament to decide whether Brexit goes ahead. That case forms part of Miller's case. Chambers, who is acting for hairdresser Deir Dos Santos, says he wants parliament involved precisely because he believes "Article 50 is a one-way street; once Article 50 has been triggered it is irreversible." —Reuters

CYPRUS ON EDGE AS TURKEY REELS

NICOSIA: Turkey's crackdown on government opponents and the imposition of a state of emergency following the abortive military coup last week has tempered hopes of a swift settlement on divided Cyprus. Nicosia is watching with increasing trepidation how the fallout could hit reunification talks between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Turkey provides military and financial support to the breakaway Turkish Cypriot state in northern Cyprus. The turbulence in Turkey has so far not touched the enclave, home to at least 30,000 Turkish troops since Ankara invaded the island 42 years ago in response to a brief Greek-inspired coup.

But Turkey's crisis is unsettling for interlocutors hoping for a deal by the end of 2016, or at least before talks are hijacked by elections scheduled in the north and the south of the island in 2018. Diplomats have previously said the current round of peace talks is the best chance in generations for ending a conflict that has become a perpetual irritant between NATO allies Greece and Turkey, and an obstacle to Turkey joining the European Union. "Nobody actually knows if it will have an effect," said one official close to the peace process. "But it is overshadowing negotiations ... There are elements that are big unknowns."

Turkey's input is vital for solving the Cyprus conundrum, one of Europe's most enduring conflicts. "We are talking about a system that will make all Cypriot citizens safe," said Cypriot Foreign Minister Ioannis Kassoulides. "In such a system there is no room for treaties of guarantee or the presence of Turkish troops," he told reporters in Athens. Under a treaty which granted the former British colony independence in 1960, Britain, Greece and Turkey have intervention powers to restore constitutional order.

Among others, Ankara needs to agree to a pullout of Turkish troops, adjusting military-controlled boundaries between the north and south and writing off an estimated 17 billion euros (\$18.8 billion) it considers as Turkish Cypriot debt to Ankara. "If they don't write that off there is no way there can be a settlement," said the official. Cyprus, whose Greek Cypriot-led government represents the whole island in the European Union, required an international bailout in 2013. —AFP

ITALY FEARS 'CALAIS-STYLE' MIGRANT CAMPS

ROME: Italy is scrambling to find extra places for incoming migrants amid fears the failure of a European relocation plan may result in mass encampments. Rome bowed to pressure from the EU at the end of last year and implemented a rigorous system to identify all arrivals on its shores in exchange for a deal which should have seen thousands of refugees relocated across Europe. But with many countries dragging their feet, Italy has found itself with growing numbers of migrants registered and blocked.

Some 135,000 people who have requested asylum are still waiting in Italian reception facilities to learn whether they will be allowed to stay and given the papers to travel, or will

be earmarked for expulsion. Frustrated by months of delays, some make their way to border crossings. Tighter security controls have made it harder to cross illegally into France, Switzerland and Austria, so many migrants set up camp while they wait for the opportunity.

The town of Ventimiglia on the Italy-France border has seen some 30,000 migrants break their journeys there since the start of 2016. "We are doing everything to avoid a Calais-type scenario in Ventimiglia," Mario Morcone, the interior ministry's immigration chief, said this week, referring to the camp known as "the Jungle" in France, from where migrants attempt crossings to Britain.

The latest plan is to try and spread the weight more equally across Italy, housing two or three migrants per 1,000 residents. "We do what we can, and try to do it with dignity," Morcone said, admitting he was "not very optimistic" about the weeks to come, as the flow of people setting out by boat for Italy from the coasts of North Africa continues unabated. It was not clear whether the new plan would get asylum seekers off the streets. Ventimiglia mayor Enrico Loculano has said his town, where migrants sleep under bridges or on the beach front, is "strangled by a system that does not work".

'Trapped in Italy'
Lake Como, best known as a play-

ground for the rich and famous, has also had to make space for people who have set up camp in a park near the border with Switzerland as they bide their time for a chance to journey north. Vast international media coverage of Austria's plans to build a fence along the border at Brenner seems for now to have deterred migrants from trying to cross there, Arno Kompatscher, head of the Bolzano province, told AFP. But with every chance Brenner will make it back on the migrant route, and could soon have its own camp to deal with, Kompatscher is quick to insist "Italy cannot shoulder the weight of this phenomenon, alone, for the whole of Europe". — AFP

FIVE CHARGED OVER NICE TRUCK ATTACK

QUESTIONS OVER POSSIBLE SECURITY FAILINGS

PARIS: Five suspects have been formally charged over the truck attack in the French Riviera city of Nice that killed 84 people, the Paris prosecutor said Thursday. Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlel, who mowed down crowds of people enjoying a Bastille Day fireworks display, had long plotted the carnage, prosecutor Francois Molins said. The revelations come as the French government continues to be plagued by questions over possible security failings, prompting authorities to launch an investigation into potential oversights.

Molins said photos on Bouhlel's phone showed he had likely already staked out the same July 14 event in 2015. It also emerged that one of the five suspects in custody, a Tunisian named Mohamed Oualid G, had filmed the scene the day after the carnage, as it crawled with paramedics and journalists. The five were brought before anti-terrorism judges late Thursday and charged. They are 22-year-old Franco-Tunisian Ramzi A, 37-year-old Tunisian Chokri C, 40-year-old Tunisian Mohamed Oualid G, 38-year-old Albanian Artan H, and his wife Enkeledja Z who holds both French and Albanian nationality.

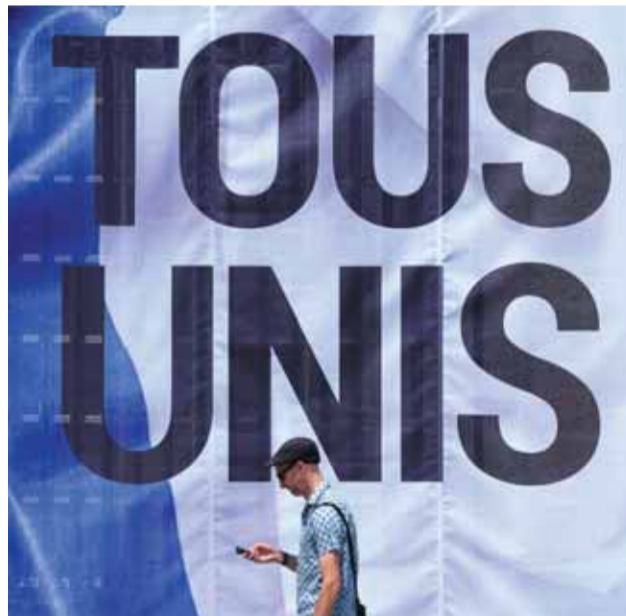
None were known to intelligence services, and only Ramzi A, who was born in Nice, had a criminal record, for robbery and drug offences. He led police to discover a Kalashnikov and a bag of ammunition on Thursday, however the purpose of the weapons was unclear. Ramzi, Chokri and Oualid were charged with being accomplices to murder by a terror group. Ramzi and the Albanian couple faced a second charge, of breaking the law on firearms in relation to a terrorist crime. They are accused of providing Bouhlel with the gun he fired at police officers before he was shot dead.

More than 400 investigators have been poring over evidence since the grisly attack last Thursday, the third in France in 18 months, and it was analyses of Bouhlel's telephone records that led them to the five suspects. While the Islamic State group claimed the attack, describing Bouhlel as a "soldier", investigators have not found direct proof of his allegiance to the jihadists.

Many people interviewed by investigators described the Tunisian father of three as "someone who did not practice the Muslim religion, ate pork, drank alcohol, took drugs and had an unbridled sexual activity", Molins said earlier this week. However initial details of the investigation revealed Bouhlel had been fascinated with jihad for a while. In May last year, he took a photo of an article about the drug Captagon, an amphetamine used by jihadists in Syria.

'I am not Charlie'

In July 2015 he took photos of the crowd at the Bastille Day fireworks display, as well as another crowd watching a concert on Nice's Promenade Des Anglais three days later. In April this year, Chokri C sent Bouhlel a Facebook message reading: "Load the truck with 2,000 tonnes of iron... release the brakes my friend and I will watch." — AFP



MARSEILLE: A man walks past a giant poster yesterday which translates as "ALL UNITED" displayed in tribute to the victims of the deadly Nice attack on Bastille Day. — AFP

KARADZIC APPEALS 40-YEAR SENTENCE

THE HAGUE: Wartime Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic yesterday lodged an appeal against his 40-year jail sentence for genocide, accusing UN judges of "subjecting him to a political trial". War crimes prosecutors also appealed the sentence, asking the court to put Karadzic behind bars for life. Karadzic, who appealed on 50 grounds before the UN's Yugoslav war crimes court, "was subjected to a political trial that was simply designed to confirm the demonization of him and the Bosnian Serb people," his lawyer Peter Robinson said in a statement. Once the most powerful Bosnian Serb leader, Karadzic, 71, was sentenced in March for genocide over the 1995 Srebrenica massacre and nine other charges stemming from Bosnia's bloody three-year war. More than 100,000 people died and more than 2.2 million others were left homeless in the conflict that followed the break-up of the former Yugoslavia after the fall of communism in the early 1990s. Judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) ruled that Karadzic, the most high-profile figure convicted over the wars that tore the Balkans apart, bore criminal responsibility for murder and persecution during the Bosnian conflict.

Almost 8,000 Muslim men and boys were butchered and their bodies dumped in mass graves in Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia in mid-July 1995, when Bosnian Serb forces brushed aside lightly armed UN Dutch peacekeepers protecting a UN safe area. — AFP



Radovan Karadzic

DEATH IN POLICE CUSTODY SPARKS PARIS CLASHES

BEAUMONT-SUR-OISE, France: Violence erupted in the northern suburbs of Paris for a third night in a row on Thursday, with 15 cars set ablaze by residents furious over the death of a young man in police custody. The unrest began on Tuesday night after it emerged that Adama Traore, 24, had died shortly after being arrested in the town of Beaumont-sur-Oise. Authorities said an autopsy revealed he was suffering from a serious infection at the time of his death and that his body showed few signs of violence. He was taken into custody after interfering in the arrest of his brother in an extortion case, said a source close to the investigation.

Local prosecutor Yves Jannier said Traore "fainted during the ride" to the

police station, and paramedics were called immediately but were unable to revive him. Jannier said the infection was "very serious" and had "impacted several organs", while the medical examiner had found scratches but no "marks of significant violence" on the man's body. However, Traore's family said it would seek an outside expert's opinion before his burial.

"The infection that Adama Traore may have been suffering from does not explain the causes of his death," said the family's lawyer Karim Achoui. Traore's twin sister, Hawa, said she did not believe the autopsy findings were accurate, but called for calm. "We will find the truth. Calm down," she told AFP, addressing those on the

streets in support of her brother.

'Healthy, Tall, Sporty Guy'

On Tuesday night five members of the paramilitary police were injured in clashes, and nine cars set on fire, while several public buildings were damaged. One person was arrested. The unrest continued on Wednesday night in a series of villages situated near each other some 30 km north of Paris, where 15 cars were set ablaze and protesters tried to set a mayor's office and a preschool on fire. "Eight people were arrested. Some for throwing incendiary devices at security forces, others for trying to set a public building on fire," said local government official Jean-Simon Merandat. — AFP

VOTE TRUMP FOR EQUAL PAY, CHILDCARE: IVANKA

CLEVELAND: Ivanka Trump stepped out as a potent surrogate for her father on Thursday promising he would be a compassionate leader who would fight for women's rights and affordable childcare. The 34-year-old businesswoman and mother of three, a loyal fixture on her dad's campaign trail, introduced the 70-year-old mogul as he accepted the Republican nomination for president that few imagined ever possible. "My father not only has the strength and ability necessary to be the next president, but also the kindness and compassion that will enable him to be the leader that this country needs," said the elegant blonde.

For those disturbed by Trump's inflammatory comments about women, Muslims and immigrants, Ivanka presents a quandary: how can a woman whose public image is beyond reproach support him so lovingly? The answer, appar-

ently, is that America does not know the man as she does. Or as she diplomatically put it: "It is possible to be famous and yet not really well known."

Trump often gushes about Ivanka, her intelligence and business acumen, and her sib-

lings acknowledge that she is the apple of her father's eye. Yet she treads a careful line, supporting her father but equally careful never to say anything controversial, as she maintains a carefully curated public image as business-

woman and entrepreneur. On Thursday she spoke to women, independents and young people, who resonated particularly strongly with defeated Democratic presidential candidate, Bernie Sanders, and referred to crippling college debt.

Millennial Vote

"Like many of my fellow millennials, I do not consider myself categorically Democratic or Republican," she said. "This is the moment and Donald Trump is the person to make America great again." He was the single-most qualified person to lead the economy, and would "call on the best and brightest, both sides of the aisle," she said. Trump, who polls as low as 34 percent among women, hired women on construction sites before it was commonplace, has more female than male executives and would introduce equal pay, she said.

"Women are paid equally and when a woman becomes a mother she is supported, not shut out," she said of life at The Trump Organization where she is a vice president of acquisitions and development. "He will focus on making quality childcare affordable and accessible for all," she added, in comments that could have been lifted straight from the mouth of Trump's Democratic rival Hillary Clinton. "American families need relief... He will fight for equal pay for equal work and I will fight for this too." Ivanka's Instagram account is a heady mix of adorable pictures of her photogenic children, tips for working mothers and pictures of herself modeling elegant dresses from her affordable high-street range. But behind the scenes, she is a force to be reckoned with. She reportedly urged her father to adopt a more presidential style and took exception to ugly nicknames he gave opponents. —AFP



CLEVELAND: Ivanka Trump delivers a speech during the evening session on the fourth day of the Republican National Convention on Thursday at the Quicken Loans Arena. — AFP

COPS TESTIFY OVER MURDER OF MEXICAN JOURNALIST

MUSICIAN DECAPITATED, WIFE AND SON KILLED

COATZACOALCOS, Mexico: Eight Mexican police officers appeared before investigators Thursday to testify over the murder of a journalist, as his family accused agents present during the homicide of letting the killers flee. Pedro Tamayo Rosas, a 45-year-old newspaper reporter who covered crime, was gunned down late Wednesday in front of his wife and two grown sons in the town of Tierra Blanca, eastern Veracruz state. Mexico, plagued by drug violence, is among the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists, with 19 reporters killed in Veracruz alone since 2010.

The Veracruz prosecutor's office said in a statement that the state police officers

"appeared voluntarily" before investigators and gave their "version of the moment they arrived at the scene of the homicide." The statement did not describe the legal status of the officers. The prosecutor's office said it would look at all lines of investigation. Tamayo's relatives, speaking on condition of anonymity due to security concerns, said a state police vehicle was parked near his home during the attack.

The family told investigators that the police vehicle blocked access to other vehicles but that the two assailants were able to arrive in their car. Tamayo was working with his wife and sons at the family's food stand in front of their house after 10:00 pm when the two men arrived and ordered a

hamburger. After the killers opened fire, they left "calmly, they didn't run, they weren't in a hurry or concerned. They got into their car and left," one of the relatives said.

A family member ran to the police for help, but the officers did not act and "laughed" before leaving, the relative said. Another relative said the killers even drank beers at a bar a few blocks away following the murder. The prosecutor's office said in a previous statement that preliminary investigation indicates "there were two assailants who approached Tamayo to greet him at a business in his home." The gunmen opened fire and fled in a vehicle, the statement said. Tamayo succumbed to his wounds in a hospital.

Meanwhile, gunmen burst into a musician's home in southern Mexico before dawn on Thursday, decapitated him and killed his wife and son, police said. The armed group entered the family's home in Juchitan, Oaxaca state, at 2:30 am and killed Victor Sanchez, 40, the singer of the tropical band Sensacion Caribu, the police said in a statement. His wife and 11-year-old son were gunned down. It was the second slaughter of a family this week in Oaxaca, a state that has been relatively spared of the drug violence afflicting other regions of Mexico.

The state prosecutor's office issued a separate statement saying that shots had been fired at Sanchez's house a few months ago and that a note threatening him with death was left behind at the time. Authorities are investigating whether the murders are linked to a dispute between rival criminal gangs. In the previous massacre on Monday, eight shark fishermen from the same family were killed in Puerto Escondido, a beach resort famous among surfers. —AFP



BLANCA, Mexico: Paramedics and neighbors carry the body of Mexican journalist Pedro Tamayo killed outside of his house in Veracruz state on July 20, 2016. — AFP

US COP: BLACKS HAVE 'VIOLENT TENDENCIES'

AUSTIN: Patrol car video shows a white Austin, Texas, police officer violently throwing a black woman to the ground during a traffic stop, followed by another white officer telling her black people have "violent tendencies" and whites are justifiably afraid. Austin Police Chief Art Acevedo condemned both officers' actions. He called the officer's comments on the video "disturbing" and said a criminal investigation has been opened against the officer who arrested Breia King.

The traffic stop happened in June 2015 but was not made public until the Austin American-Statesman published the video Thursday. Acevedo called a news conference hours later and said both officers have been taken off street patrol and are on desk duty pending new internal investigations, which he said will include both officers' conduct in the year since the incident. The video is surfacing amid heightened nationwide tension over police treatment of black people.

"For those that think life is perfect for people of color, I want you to listen to that conversation and tell me we don't have social issues in this nation," said Acevedo, who is Hispanic. "Issues of bias. Issues of racism. Issues of people being looked at different because of their color." In one of two videos, Officer Patrick Spradlin is heard talking to King, who was pulled over for speeding, about race while driving her to jail. "Why are so many people afraid of black people?" Spradlin asks. King replies that she is also trying to figure that out. "I can give you a really good idea why it might be that way," he said. "Violent tendencies." Spradlin goes on to say that "I don't blame" white people for being afraid because of violence in the black community. "Some of them, because of their appearance and whatnot, some of them are very intimidating," he says. The newspaper identified King as an elementary school teacher. Her attorney did not immediately return a message seeking comment.

Acevedo said King did not file a complaint after the arrest and that he did not know about the traffic stop until this week, saying his subordinates should have previously alerted him to the video. King told the newspaper that the encounter changed how she views police. Acevedo said she was pulled over for driving 15 mph over the speed limit when Officer Bryan Richter ordered her out of the car. The video shows him nearly throwing her into an adjacent truck while trying to place her under arrest in a Wendy's parking lot. "I've become fearful to live my life," King told the newspaper. —AP



CHENNAI: Indian air force personnel stand guard outside Tambaram air force station yesterday. — AFP

INDIAN AIR FORCE AIRCRAFT MISSING WITH 29 ONBOARD

SEARCH OPERATION LAUNCHED

NEW DELHI: India yesterday mounted a massive search and rescue operation for an Indian Air Force plane that went missing with 29 people on board over the Bay of Bengal. With concern mounting hours after its disappearance, five surveillance aircraft and 13 navy and coastguard ships launched the search for the aircraft, which vanished shortly after take-off from the southern city of Chennai. The aircraft was on its way to Port Blair, the capital of the remote Andaman and Nicobar islands.

"Full scale search & rescue launched to look for IAF AN 32 overdue at Port Blair since 1130 hrs. Max assets being deployed at earliest," the defense ministry tweeted. The Russian-built Antonov AN-32 military transport plane was carrying service per-

sonnel and six crew members as it undertook a routine courier service to the Indian islands. The last contact with the plane was made around 15 minutes after take-off from Tambaram Air Force Station on the outskirts of Chennai, an IAF spokesman said.

"A search operation is on. The plane was airborne at 8:30 am (0300 GMT) and was supposed to land at Port Blair at 11:30," Wing Commander Anupam Banerjee said. The AN-32, equipped with navigational aids, are the IAF's workhorse aircraft and capable of flying for up to four hours without refuelling. An IAF source told AFP the radar data from the missing aircraft showed it making a sharp left turn before rapidly losing altitude. "We are keeping our fingers crossed. —AFP

OIL-RICH KAZAKHSTAN SHAKEN BY ATTACKS

ALMATY, Kazakhstan: Two multiple-target attacks in as many months have shaken Kazakhstan's reputation for stability and led to fears that home-grown radicalism could be on the rise in the ex-Soviet republic. Some have suggested that the central Asian state's faltering economy may also have had a role in the unrest. On any given evening the trendy cafes lining the leafy boulevards of economic hub Almaty teem with chatting students, creative types and business people enjoying the fruits of years of oil-fuelled economic boom.

But on Monday the scene was shattered when gunmen attacked a police station and a building used by the security services, leaving six dead. President Nursultan Nazarbayev called it an "act of terror." On June 5, four civilians and three soldiers were killed in the western city of Aktobe when assailants attacked gun shops and tried to storm a military base in a bus they had hijacked. Security forces killed 18 people suspected of involvement in the Aktobe incidents.

Nazarbayev said the attacks had been orchestrated "from abroad" and carried out by "followers of the non-traditional religious movement Salafism," referring to an ultra-conservative brand of Sunni Islam. Sabina Sailaubekova, a marketing specialist who witnessed Monday's attack in Almaty, told AFP: "I never thought something like that would happen so close to us. We had no idea how to react in such situations."

Under Nazarbayev, 76, majority-Muslim Kazakhstan, which shares a border with Afghanistan, has cultivated an image as an island of stability in a volatile region wracked by poverty. While other former Soviet republics in the region have endured varying degrees of political upheaval, ethnic clashes and violence, Nazarbayev's firm rule since the fall of the USSR has largely kept a lid on any turmoil in his own country. So far the motives for Monday's attack remain murky.

Jihadist Links?

Police on Thursday said the main suspect had previously carried out several armed robberies and had spent two stints in jail. They also said he was usually unemployed and that he had been violent towards his wife, whom he forced to wear Islamic clothing. —AFP

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JAPAN 'RENT MEN' WHO ARE PAID JUST TO LISTEN

TOKYO: From lonely pensioners to Japanese schoolgirls with shattered dreams, Takanobu Nishimoto and his crew of middle-aged men will lend an ear to clients who would never dream of spilling their guts to a therapist or worse, their families. Anyone in need of company can sign up to his online service to rent an "ossan" - a man aged between 45 and 55 - for 1,000 yen (\$10) an hour. "For me, the service is a hobby more than anything," says Nishimoto, who first came up with the concept four years ago and who now has a growing network of some 60 men across Japan. "The initial idea was to improve the image of guys my age, people who might not be spring chickens anymore and not taken so seriously."

And while the 48-year-old professional fashion coordinator is used to renting himself out, he insists conversation is all he offers to between 30 and 40 clients a month, roughly 70 percent of whom are women. "The people who rent me are just asking me to keep them company for an hour or two, mainly to listen to them," he tells AFP between sessions, giving the example of a woman in her 80s who would book him every week for a walk around the local park. "I almost became like her son," he says.

Other clients include a fisherman who was sick of waiting in solitary silence for a catch, a college student

with ambitions to get into show business but who lacked family support, and an awkward young employee who did not know how to behave around his direct supervisor. Japan has struggled with problems of social



TOKYO: This picture taken on May 23, 2016 shows Takanobu Nishimoto of "Ossan Rental" (Old Guy Rental) listening during an interview. — AFP

isolation, most notably the phenomenon of "hikikomori" where people, often teens and young adults, refuse to leave the house or engage socially, instead

opting to play video games or remain in their rooms.

'Express Yourself'

But the people who come to Nishimoto do not suffer from detachment from society or challenges adjusting to it. Rather, those who use the service say it allows them to forget the expectations of their family and friends and speak freely - an option which experts say is especially useful in Japan, where social roles can be tightly defined and expectations rigid. "There's a different 'me' depending on whether I'm with my friends, my family, or my boyfriend," says 24-year-old Nodoka Hyodo after her session with Nishimoto. She explains: "I create a 'me' in relation to others. Here, all that disappears because I'm talking to someone I don't know - thanks to him, I feel like I'm understanding myself better."

Psychologist Hiroaki Enomoto stresses that in Japan there are social norms governing what can and can't be said even with close associates. "When you come up against something new, it might be difficult to talk about this with someone because you might not necessarily have a suitable person in your existing circles," he tells AFP. "It's difficult to know how to express yourself without bothering someone else." —AFP

SEARCH FOR MH370 FACING SUSPENSION

HOPES 'FADE' FOR MISSING PLANE

PUTRAJAYA, Malaysia: Hope of finding flight MH370's final resting place is "fading" and the massive three-nation search for the doomed jet will be suspended if nothing turns up in the suspected crash zone, Malaysia, Australia and China said Friday. With the designated search area due to be fully scanned within weeks, transport ministers from the three countries held talks to discuss the future of the unprecedented deep-sea sonar hunt for the Malaysia Airlines passenger plane.

"Ministers acknowledged that despite the best efforts of all involved, the likelihood of finding the aircraft is fading," Malaysian Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said after the talks in the

country's administrative capital Putrajaya. He was joined by Australia's Darren Chester and China's Yang Chuantang. Unless "credible new evidence" is found by the current operation, "the search would not end, but be suspended" until solid new information pointing to a crash site emerges, Liow said.

The use of the term "suspended" was an apparent nod to anguished families who have stepped up pressure on authorities not to declare efforts to locate the aircraft completely abandoned. "The suspension does not mean the termination of the search," the joint ministerial statement said. "Ministers reiterated that

the aspiration to locate MH370 has not been abandoned."

The Boeing 777 vanished for unknown reasons on March 8, 2014 en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people aboard, mostly Chinese nationals. It remains one of the greatest mysteries in aviation history. The Australian-led operation is scanning the seafloor at forbidding depths within a 120,000-square-kilometre area - nearly the size of Greece. Search authorities say satellite data indicates the plane went down somewhere in that remote and stormy part of the southern Indian Ocean far off Western Australia. Only about 10,000 sq km are left, and officials say that could be completed in August, weather permitting.

Families Welcome Statement

Next-of-kin who turned up for the three ministers' appearance told reporters they welcomed the official statement. "This means authorities are committed to finding answers and not just quitting. This is to be welcomed," said K S Narendran, a business consultant in Chennai, India, whose wife Chandrika Sharma was on board. Many relatives have long questioned whether the right area is being searched and want a thorough reassessment of the data.

Some next-of-kin present yesterday called for the three searching countries to actively seek new angles on the mystery, but the transport ministers did not mention any plans to gather new information or re-examine existing data. Chester defended the focus on the current search zone, saying expert analysis determined it was the "most probable location for MH370". "I hope new information will come to light and that the aircraft will be located," he said. —AFP



PUTRAJAYA: Malaysian Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai (center), Chinese Minister of Transport Yang Chuantang (right) and Australian Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester hold hands together after a joint press conference of the ministerial tripartite meeting on the search for missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 at the Malaysian federal administrative center outside Kuala Lumpur yesterday. — AFP



HONG KONG: Student leader Billy Fung speaks to the press yesterday after pleading not guilty to multiple criminal charges over a protest in January. — AFP

HK STUDENT LEADER PLEADS NOT GUILTY

HONG KONG: A Hong Kong student protester pleaded not guilty yesterday to multiple criminal charges over a demonstration against a pro-Beijing figure, a day after the conviction of an "Umbrella Revolution" leader was blasted by rights activists. The court cases come with feelings running high in the city over fears that Beijing is tightening its grip. Billy Fung, former president of Hong Kong University's student union, faces a raft of charges over a protest at the university in January where students stormed a council meeting.

Supporters gathered outside the court to support Fung Friday, a day after teenage protest leader Joshua Wong and two other prominent student activists were convicted for a protest that sparked major pro-democracy rallies in Hong Kong, known as the "Umbrella Revolution". That prosecution was slammed by rights group Amnesty International, which said the "vague charges" against Wong, Alex Chow and Nathan Law "smacked of political payback".

Speaking outside the court Friday, Fung said he worried other students could be targeted, after pleading not guilty to four charges - criminal intimidation, disorderly conduct in a public place, criminal damage and attempted forcible entry. The charges all relate to the student siege of the meeting in January in protest at the appointment of pro-Beijing Arthur Li to a senior administrative role. Around 200 students surrounded an HKU building and refused to let both Li, who is council chairman, and the vice-chancellor of the university leave the meeting, according to reports at the time. They said Li "forced" their hand due to his unwillingness to speak with them. —AFP

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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DEIR BALLUT: Palestinian women work in an apiculture farm in the West Bank village of Deir Ballut north of Ramallah. In the hills of the West Bank, occupied for nearly half a century by Israel, producing honey has become an economic lifeline for a growing number of women. — AFP

HONEY PROVIDES SWEET RELIEF FOR PALESTINIANS AN ECONOMIC LIFELINE FOR PALESTINIAN WOMEN

KAFR MALIK: Their faces covered in mesh and bodies protected by white suits, three Palestinian women carefully inspect beehives which they say have helped to transform their lives. In the hills of the West Bank, occupied for nearly half a century by Israel, producing honey has become an economic lifeline for a growing number of women. The income it brings is a major boost in the Palestinian territories, where one in four people and 40 percent of women are unemployed.

Muntaha Bairat, 37, started beekeeping four years ago in an olive grove near the village of Kafr Malik, near Ramallah, the seat of the Palestinian Authority. She was not expecting big results, she said as she examined the beehives, which she runs with five women from the village. "But after we worked we discovered it was a great project for us," she said. "It has totally changed our lives." Each year they produce 600 kilos (1,320 pounds) of honey, which sells for about 100 shekels (\$26, 23 euros) per kilo.

Once maintenance costs are deducted, each woman takes home around 6,000 shekels a year—more than \$1,500. From the profits, one woman was able to send her son to college, while another bought a television she had long dreamed of, Bairat said. "Before this project, some of the women never left Palestine," Bairat said. "Today they travel to Jordan or Spain" to display their goods in agricultural and trade forums. As well as honey, they now aspire to make products with jelly and beeswax.

Strong roots

The project was supported by the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC), an organization that helps 103 women run 64 small agricultural projects across the West Bank and Gaza. Most of the projects in the West Bank are in the region known as Area C, the roughly 60 percent of the West Bank under full Israeli control since the Oslo Accords of the

1990s. Since then, Israel has tightly restricted any Palestinian development of the area. The decision to focus on Area C was deliberate, says PARC's Nasseh Shaheen, who oversees the projects.

He said the goal is to "support people to stay on their land, especially women living in agricultural areas." The share of agriculture in the Palestinian economy has fallen by 72 percent since the Oslo agreement. It now represents just four to five percent of the economy, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. In the West Bank, more than one in 10 families rely on the mother as the major breadwinner. This is true among the beekeepers, with some feeding families of seven or nine members, Bairat said. No'ama Hamayel expects the annual harvest in August. The 52-year-old mother of six has school bills to pay and "by selling a kilo of honey every week, my finances improve substantially." — AFP

AKP-ERA FOREIGN INVESTMENTS JARRED BY TURKEY CRACKDOWN

LONDON: Turkey's botched coup and an apparent lurch towards authoritarianism is rattling investors and threatens to throw into reverse the hundreds of billions of dollars that have flowed to this once-booming emerging market. In the years after its 2001-2002 financial crisis, Turkey rode a wave of bullishness towards emerging markets, and while estimates vary, the Institute of International Finance reckons overseas investors poured more than \$150 billion into Turkish stock and bond markets since end-2003. The IIF, one of the most authoritative trackers of capital to and from the developing world, also calculates bricks-and-mortar direct investment (FDI) into Turkish factories and property at \$163 billion.

Much of that success was down to game-changing reforms by President Tayyip Erdogan's Islamist-rooted AK Party from 2003. After sweeping privatizations, fiscal discipline and banking reforms, Turkey's old problems - military coups, soaring debt and crawling growth - seemed firmly consigned to history. Now, suddenly, they may be back. What's more, many are unnerved by the ferocity of Erdogan's response to the coup, with tens of thousands of soldiers, civil servants, judges and academics fired, arrested or suspended in the past week and a state of emergency imposed. There is concern also about economic growth collapsing and surging inflation, as the lira weakens against the dollar. The political shock will complicate Turkey's fragile balance of payments picture as its \$30 billion-plus annual deficit requires a steady inflow of foreign money. "The risk of capital flight remains unless the measures adopted during the state of emergency are revealed clearly," said Ozlem Derici, chief economist at Deniz Invest in Istanbul. The issue is potentially serious because Turkey's funding gap is largely plugged with portfolio capital, dubbed "hot money" due to the speed at which it can move between markets.

Deric said that Turkey's investment-grade credit rating, gained only in 2013, was in danger; its loss will drive capital outflows from conservative, rating-constrained funds while making it costlier for companies and banks to raise finance. Aviva and GAM were among foreign investment funds that used Monday's temporary bounce in the lira to cut back on Turkish holdings, while many banks, including Morgan Stanley, Societe Generale, BNP Paribas and Citi suggested reducing exposure.

Others such as Standard Life, Ashmore and Lombard Odier told Reuters they made no changes because their Turkey holdings had already been below its weight in indexes. Patrick Mange, head of EM strategy at BNP Paribas Investment Partners, has been negative on Turkish assets and plans to leave them in "the underweight box" until there is more clarity. "Turkey's risk premium is on the rise and there could be repatriation of funds for some time," Mange said. "When you speak of hot money you speak of something that's quite volatile and this is one of our worries."

Holding on

Turkish stocks, 64 percent of which are in foreign hands according to official data, had outperformed other emerging markets prior to Friday's putsch with dollar-based returns in excess of 15 percent. They have slumped now into the red as both the lira and blue-chip local equities have been whacked. But not everyone sees recent developments as unambiguously negative - asset managers Aberdeen, Baring and Berenberg said recent price falls could represent an opportunity to buy back newly cheap assets, given Turkey's longer-term potential. Turkey remains a preferred emerging equity market for UBS Wealth Management which says that share valuations are cheap compared to other emerging markets and already contain a price premium for the risks.

That's reflected in equity risk premia - the excess returns stock market investments offer over government bonds - of 190 basis points, versus a long-term 120 bps average, UBS says. Many other funds will be cautious however, especially those which do not typically invest in emerging markets but have in recent years been lured into the sector by high bond yields. Such funds often require credits to be rated investment-grade by at least two big ratings agencies. For them, decisions by Fitch and Moody's agencies next month will be crucial, because a third, rival organization, S&P Global, already rates Turkey as "junk". JPMorgan, which runs the most widely used emerging debt indexes, reckons a rating downgrade will force funds to dump around \$10 billion worth of Turkish bonds. Over 10 percent of hard currency Turkish debt would be at risk of forced selling, it added. —Reuters

KIA MOTORS TO PICK SITE FOR ITS FIRST INDIA PLANT

KIA IN TALKS WITH THREE INDIAN STATES

SEOUL: South Korea's Kia Motors Corp is expected to pick a site next month for its first factory in India, stepping up plans to start making cars in one of the world's fast-growing auto markets, two people familiar with the matter said. The move would enable Kia to leverage the existing supplier base of its affiliate Hyundai Motor Co, India's second-biggest automaker by sales. The proposed factory would start production in 2019 and eventually have capacity to make 300,000 Kia vehicles a year, one of the people told Reuters - a major bet for a firm that sold 3.05 million vehicles last year.

The Korean pair, jointly the world's No.5 carmaker, are chasing new business after missing annual targets in 2015 for the first time since the 2008 global financial crisis. Their combined sales fell 2 percent in first-half 2016, hit by weakness in markets like China, Russia and Brazil. India is likely to become the world's third-largest car market by 2020, according to IHS, up from fifth place now, with annual sales nearly doubling to about 5 million vehicles from 2.7 million in 2015.

The size of Kia's investment has yet to be decided, one of the people said, declining to identify which models will be produced at the factory. Kia is best known as a maker of relatively inexpensive cars, like the Rio sub-compact. Three sites are under consideration for the plant, and Kia may announce the plan in September after deciding on a location in August, the second person said. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because the project was confidential.

The states of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat have all been wooing Kia, according to two other people with knowledge of the matter. One of the two, an official with the Andhra Pradesh administration, said the state - which neighbors Tamil Nadu, home of Hyundai's existing plants near Chennai - is the frontrunner. Kia said in a statement to Reuters on Thursday that it was "continually evaluating potential locations for overseas manufacturing facilities, including India, to secure additional engines for future growth. However, as of now no concrete plans have been finalised."

Maruti challenge?

Hyundai started India production nearly two decades ago and has two factories in India that make cars for the domestic market and for export to Europe and elsewhere. The firm trails only

Maruti Suzuki India Ltd in sales in India, and has an extensive service and dealer network that gives it an advantage over global rivals that have struggled to build market share including General Motors, Toyota Motor Corp and Volkswagen.

Kia's South Korea factories accounted for 57 percent of its sales last year. It also has plants in China, the United States and Slovakia, and its first Mexico factory began production earlier this year. For the time being most cars sold in India are small. Hyundai sells several low-priced vehicles in the country, which could present a challenge in terms of market positioning for Kia, which would not want to cannibalize Hyundai sales. Hyundai shares parts and vehicle underpinnings with Kia, which Hyundai bought at the height of the Asian financial crisis in 1998. Differentiating their brands has been a challenge, as they compete in similar segments and markets. — Reuters



MUMBAI: Chairperson of the State Bank of India (SBI), Arundhati Bhattacharya listens during a press conference to launch the bank's new e-payment gateway, in Mumbai yesterday. The government has shortlisted its list of candidates to become the next governor of India's central bank - the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Bhattacharya is considered to be one among them. - AFP

YEN SLIPS AFTER 'HELICOPTER MONEY' MANIA SHOT DOWN

TOKYO: The yen hovered above six-week lows yesterday after comments from Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda dented speculation Japan may be preparing a radical "helicopter money" economic stimulus. The yen bounced back to 105.88 yen per dollar from 107.49, its six-week low against the US currency touched on Thursday.

The rebound was triggered by Kuroda's comments on a BBC Radio 4 interview on Thursday playing down the idea of helicopter money, essentially a policy of injecting cash directly to the economy in some form by printing money. With Prime Minister Shinzo Abe crafting a massive spending package worth about \$190 billion to bolster the economy, some speculators had bet the BOJ could be financing the additional spending - likened by economists to dropping large amounts of cash from a helicopter.

The BBC later said its interview with Kuroda had been conducted in mid-June, helping to cool the yen's gains. But expectations that the BOJ will adopt easing steps at its policy meeting next week remained strong, whether those measures fall into the category of "helicopter money" or not, thus limiting the yen's gains. "Certainly his comments have not dispelled expectations of easing. I suspect a rough consensus in the market is increase in buying of ETFs and REITs as well as 0.10 percentage point cut in interest rates," said Koichi Takamatsu, head of forex at Nomura Securities.

Few market players take Kuroda's words at face value after he introduced negative interest rates in January only days

after he said publicly that he was not considering such measures. A small number of market players, however, think the BOJ may opt to ease later to keep its dwindling fire power. "I think the BOJ is more likely to ease in November when the government's supplementary budget will be ready, rather than now. I'm not sure if the BOJ feels it needs to act now, when even the Bank of England has not eased," said Minori Uchida, chief currency analyst at the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ.

The dollar was steadier against other major currencies, with investors still trying to figure out how Britain's decision to leave the European Union will affect the US economy and the policy of the US Federal Reserve. The dollar index stood at 96.917, off Wednesday's 4-month peak of 97.323. The euro was moving little against the dollar after the ECB held off on any immediate further easing of monetary policy on Thursday as expected.

The euro traded at \$1.1028, slightly above this week's low of \$1.0980 but little changed from late US levels on Thursday and is also almost flat on the week. The British pound was also little changed at \$1.3230. The New Zealand dollar was on a slippery slope after it had fallen to six-week low on Thursday as New Zealand's central bank said further rate cuts were likely as it sets its sights on the high New Zealand dollar and perilously low inflation. That cemented expectations for easing at its Aug 11 meeting. The kiwi stood at \$0.6982, having fallen to \$0.6952 on Thursday. — Reuters



PEKING: Participants attend the 1+6 Roundtable meeting on promoting growth in the Chinese and global economies at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing yesterday. — AFP

CHINA ALONE CANNOT SAVE THE WORLD FROM BREXIT DOWNTURN

BEIJING: The world cannot depend on China alone to save it from a Brexit-induced downturn, the country's premier said yesterday, ahead of hosting a meeting of G20 finance ministers. Government representatives and central bank chiefs from the world's top 20 economies gather in the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu this weekend with the impact of Britain's vote to leave the European Union (EU) high on the agenda. China's economic boom of recent decades has seen it become the world's second-largest economy and a key driver of global growth, with a massive stimulus package Beijing launched in 2008 credited with helping ease the pain of the global financial crisis.

But investors worldwide have worried over its slowing expansion, while Britain's referendum last month has heightened risks and instability. "It is impossible to carry all of the burden of the whole world on our shoulders," said Premier Li Keqiang, after meeting the heads of six global economic organizations, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Beijing. The IMF just days ago predicted that uncertainty created by Britain's vote to leave the EU, commonly referred to as Brexit, would slow the world economy into next year.

In an update to its April forecast, the IMF lowered its forecasts for global growth this year and next by 0.1 percent, to 3.1 percent and 3.5 percent respectively. "Failure to achieve clarity about the future relationship between the UK (United Kingdom) and the European Union would add to uncertainty and weigh on confidence," IMF staff warned in a report for the G20 finance ministers' meeting issued on Thursday. "And, if not managed well, China's transition could further raise volatility around the baseline path of the global economy," it said.

Raised pressure

China is seeking to restructure its economy to make the spending power of its nearly 1.4 billion people a key driver for growth, instead of massive government investment and cheap exports. But the transition has caused growth to sputter. The Asian giant's economy expanded at 6.7 percent in the April-June period, the same as the first three months of the year and slowing from 6.9 percent in 2015 - its weakest annual rate in a quarter of a century. But the IMF has just upped its forecast for Chinese growth this year by 0.1 percent, to 6.6 percent.

Li said the IMF hike put "pressure" on China to "maintain growth and stability", but he vowed to push economic reforms such as making its yuan currency trade more freely-something Beijing has repeatedly promised, and a key sticking point with the United States and

other major trade partners. "Given the financial fluctuations as a result of Brexit, China will advance market-based reform of its exchange rate," Li said, adding: "We will not engage in a trade war or currency war." Recent weakness in the yuan, which touched a six-year low earlier this week before rebounding, renewed worries that China is allowing the unit to slide to boost its exports.

Beijing also finds itself in a dispute with the EU over whether or not it deserves to be granted market economy status, a designation that would make it much harder for major economies to fight Beijing over alleged unfair trading practices. In Chengdu, representatives from the world's biggest industrialized and emerging economies will gather to discuss the impact of Brexit and other challenges to the global economy. Britain's new finance minister Philip Hammond will be among those attending, and officials say he will have several meetings with his counterparts on the sidelines of the gathering.

Brexit was "clearly an important event and its consequences on the British, European and world economies need to be assessed precisely - which is not possible today", French finance minister Michel Sapin said yesterday. It was not the only issue on the agenda, and it should not be exaggerated "inappropriately or irrationally", he added, but said that negotiations on Britain's departure needed to start "as soon as possible". Given the surprise referendum result and British authorities' "lack of preparation", he said London needed time to "reflect on how it can act". "But that cannot be an indefinite period, uncertainty is damaging, including economically, and particularly for Britain itself." — AFP

UK'S ECONOMY WILTING FAST AFTER BREXIT VOTE

HAMMOND SIGNALS FISCAL 'RESET'

LONDON: Britain's economy is shrinking, the broadest survey of business confidence since last month's historic vote to quit the European Union showed yesterday, leading finance minister Philip Hammond to pledge a loosening of purse strings if the weakness endures. The Bank of England has also been clear that easing monetary policy may be necessary. The flash, or preliminary, Markit survey of purchasing managers - executives who make spending decisions at 1,250 big firms - fell by the most in its 20-year history. It was consistent with an economy contracting 0.4 percent in the third quarter, contrasting with an actual reading of plus 0.4 percent in the first quarter.

"July saw a dramatic deterioration in the economy," said Chris Williamson, Markit's chief economist. "The downturn, whether manifesting itself in order book cancellations, a lack of new orders or the postponement or halting of projects, was most commonly attributed in one way or another to Brexit." The readout, little more than a week after Prime Minister Theresa May formed a new Conservative government, indicates the challenge she faces to maintain market and investor confidence as she embarks on what promise to be long and difficult Brexit talks.

Hammond played down the purchasing manager surveys as a measure of sentiment, not of "hard activity", but also said he would act to support the economy when he announces his budget plans later in the year. "Exactly what that framework looks like will depend on the state of the economy at the time of the Autumn (budget) statement. The data that we see over the next three months or so will be crucially important in shaping our response," he told Sky News during a visit to China.

Alarm bells

Hammond is attending a weekend meeting of finance ministers from the Group of 20 economies at which counterparts will be keen to hear how Britain can pull off a smooth exit from the EU while minimizing the damage to the global economy. The International Monetary Fund has already cut its forecast for global growth after Brexit threw "a spanner in the works". It has slashed its UK growth forecast for 2017 by 0.9 percentage points to 1.3 percent. The darkening outlook jars with the resolute optimism of newspapers that backed Brexit: "Britain BOOMS after EU vote: Ignore the doom-mongers...it's good news all round," the Daily Express has trumpeted in a raft of bullish headlines this week.

The Markit PMIs, which give an early indica-

tion of how gross domestic product is likely to perform, suggest the 1.8 trillion pound (\$2.4 trillion) UK economy is shrinking faster than at any time since the aftermath of the global financial crisis. It showed the services sector - one of the few British growth drivers - has been hit especially hard by Brexit, with orders plunging and confidence crumbling. A major concern among businesses is the access Britain will have to the EU's single market after leaving. Britain insists it want to limit freedom of movement of workers; the EU says such freedom is a condition of the single market.

The PMI for the services sector fell to 47.4 in July from 52.3 in June, the steepest drop since records began in 1996 and the worst reading since March 2009, around the low point of the global economic recession. Economists polled by Reuters had expected a much smaller fall to 49.2. The evidence of a sharp drop in business activity across a broad swathe of Britain's economy may alarm the Bank of England, which is trying to decide how aggressively to act at its August policy meeting to cushion the shock of the referendum vote.

Sterling extended earlier losses to trade 1 percent lower to hit fresh lows for the day at \$1.3095 to the dollar, while British government bond prices rose. Sterling's post-referendum plunge to its lowest level against the dollar since the mid-1980s has helped manufacturing exports expand at the fastest pace in almost two years, Markit said. But the pound's fall also pushed up costs for energy and raw material at the fastest pace in five years. "This is the first major survey showing the pace of activity through the economy and it is soft. Taken literally it would imply a period of contraction in the economy," Investec analyst Philip Shaw said.

Economists said the "reset" Hammond had in mind may resemble the fiscal rule adopted by his Osborne in 2010 when he aimed to balance the public finances within five years, excluding investment spending and taking into account where Britain was within the economic cycle. "He could both loosen fiscal policy at a time when the economy may well need it but also he could claim that he wasn't completely abandoning the conservative's concern for being responsible with the public finances," said Sam Hill, senior UK economist at RBC Capital Markets. The manufacturing PMI fell to 49.1 from 52.1 in June, the lowest since February 2013. The composite index, which combines services and manufacturing, slumped to 47.7 from 52.4, the weakest reading since April 2009. — Reuters

EURO-ZONE BUSINESS ACTIVITY 'RESILIENT' DESPITE BREXIT

BRUSSELS: Economic activity in the euro-zone fell in July, but only slightly in a signal that the bad effects of Brexit have yet to take hold in continental Europe, a closely watched survey showed yesterday. Data monitoring company Markit did not cite Britain's vote to leave the EU as the specific cause of the downturn, and even said France and Germany showed surprising resilience. Markit said the preliminary July reading for its Composite Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) for the euro-zone fell to 52.9 points, a 18-month low, from 53.1 in June.

The PMI measures companies' readiness to spend on their business and so gives a good idea of how the underlying economy is performing before official statistics are compiled and released.

Any reading above the boom-bust 50 points line indicates the economy is expanding. Markit chief economist Chris Williamson said the euro-zone economy "showed surprising resilience in the face of the UK's vote to leave the EU and another terrorist attack in France." Williamson said the better than expected July figures suggested the euro-zone economy "is growing at a sluggish but reasonably steady annual rate of around 1.5 percent".

As comparison, the IMF earlier this week said euro-zone growth this year would hit a stronger than expected 1.6 percent, instead of the previously forecast 1.5 percent. The IMF warned however that next year growth in the currency bloc would drop to 1.4 percent as the Brexit effects kicked in. Howard Archer of IHS Insight said that

the PMI data "may alleviate some concerns over euro-zone growth prospects following the Brexit vote." "But it is clearly early days, and much could yet depend on how negotiations between the UK and the EU develop and what political fall-out there is in euro-zone countries," he added.

Stephen Brown at Capital Economics said the PMI report "suggests that the real economy has generally shrugged off the financial market volatility that followed the UK's Brexit vote, but remains sluggish." Germany's sharp rise "... was a big surprise ... that offset weakness in the remaining euro-zone economies," he added. The preliminary German composite index rose to 55.3 points, the highest reading of this year. France's rose to 50.0 points, a two-month high. — AFP

CRUDE PRICES FACE DECLINE

GLUT FEARS PERSIST

LONDON: Crude futures were on track for weekly losses yesterday as investors reassessed US data on oil stocks and excesses in oil products in Europe and Asia. While many expect global oversupply of oil to ease in the near term, huge amounts of crude remain in vessels at sea and storage tanks on land as the rebalancing takes longer than some had anticipated. "The narrative of a balanced oil market (in the second half of 2016) has so far been an illusion," UBS oil analyst Giovanni Staunovo said. "Supply might actually increase in the near term with the further return of disrupted production and higher Middle East production, while demand growth is set to slow in emerging Asia."

Brent crude briefly fell to a more than two-month low of less than \$46 per barrel before rebounding to \$46.35 as of 1210 GMT, 15 cents higher. The contract closed 2.1 percent lower in the previous session, and is on track for a decline of more than 2.5 percent for the week.

US West Texas Intermediate traded as low as \$44.25 a barrel before bouncing back to \$44.78, three cents higher than the previous close. It ended Thursday down 2.2 percent and is on track to close the week also more than 2.5 percent lower.

"It's been pretty volatile," said Richard Mallinson, analyst with Energy Aspects, adding that low trading volumes in Europe amid summer holidays can "accentuate swings even if there isn't a major catalyst". In the Middle East, Iraq's oil exports are set to rise in July, according to loading data and an industry source, putting supply growth from OPEC's second-largest producer back on track after two months of decline. Falling prices in the United States have also encouraged traders to send US oil to Europe, adding to supply in the region.

This has helped counterbalance disruptions in Nigeria, where the largest stream of crude is under force majeure and pipeline attacks have cut some 700,000 barrels per day from production, according to state oil firm NNPC. While US production has been falling, crude inventories are at 519.5 million barrels, historically high for this time of year, the government's Energy Information Administration said this week. Inventories of oil products have also been climbing in Europe and Asia, with gasoline stocks in the Amsterdam-Rotterdam-Antwerp hub at record highs and BMI Research warning of "brimming stockpiles" in Asia. — Reuters

GOLD EASES ON NERVOUSNESS OVER US FED POLICY OUTLOOK

LONDON: Gold prices eased yesterday, reflecting tension between an easier global interest rate backdrop and the chance of US monetary policy being tightened before the end of the year. Spot gold shed 0.5 percent to stand at \$1,323.47 an ounce at 1217 GMT, on course for a weekly decline of about 1 percent. Bullion has benefited significantly—hitting its highest in two years this month—as central banks from Europe to Japan opt to keep policy looser for longer, which neutralizes the opportunity cost of holding an asset that does not pay interest.

But the dollar has gained ground recently on strong readings on the US labor market and inflation, boosting bets that the Fed will raise US rates by year-end. "People think the international situation is enough to keep the Federal Reserve on hold, but there's some slight nervousness," Macquarie analyst Matthew Turner said. "The assumption that the Fed is more cautious now is surely correct as it didn't manage to do the hiking cycle it wanted, but being more cautious does not mean completely paralyzed."

There's a slight down cycle for gold at the moment as there has been a string of good US data." The US Federal Reserve will wait until the fourth quarter before raising interest rates, probably in December after the presidential election, according to a Reuters poll that again showed subdued inflation expectations. The European Central Bank, meanwhile, held rates at record lows on Thursday as it seeks to revive growth and inflation with cheap credit to the economy. It left the door open to more policy stimulus, highlighting great uncertainty and abundant risks to the economic outlook. — Reuters



TOKYO: A pedestrian looks at a quotation board displaying share prices on the Tokyo Stock Exchange (left) in front of a securities company yesterday. — AFP

STOCKS FALL, UK PMIs FLASH BREXIT RECESSION WARNING

G20 MEET IN CHINA; STOCKS RALLY LOSES STEAM

LONDON: Shares fell yesterday after soft US corporate results pulled Wall Street back from record highs, and sterling slumped as the first snapshot of the UK economy since the vote last month to leave the European Union painted a bleak picture. European stocks and MSCI's leading global share index were both on course for their first consecutive daily losses in two weeks, while Japan's Nikkei posted its biggest decline over the same period. US stock futures pointed to a slightly higher open yesterday.

British purchasing managers data showed manufacturing and services activity plunged in July, a fall consistent with a broader 0.4 percent economic contraction in the third quarter and raising the probability of recession. "It wasn't exactly a big surprise to see confidence in both sectors take a hit, but what was a concern was the size of the hit to the services sector, the main engine of growth for the UK economy," said Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at Oanda. "If we continue to see these kinds of figures in the coming months, the economy could be headed for recession before the year is out," he said.

The pound fell nearly two cents to \$1.31, back to within a couple of cents of the 31-year low struck earlier this month following the June 23 EU referendum. The weaker exchange rate lifted UK stocks up into positive territory and within sight of last week's 11-month high. The FTSE 100 index, which derives most of its earnings from abroad, rose 0.4 percent to 6,727 points. Europe's FTSEuroFirst index of leading 300 shares trimmed earlier losses and was last down just 0.1 percent, while Germany's DAX was flat on the day and France's CAC 40 was up 0.2 percent.

Euro zone private sector growth slowed in July to its weakest in 15 months, according to the euro zone PMI data. "We've seen the 'Duracell bunny' momentum of the market finally wind down this week, with European and UK exchanges just running out of steam despite fresh record highs in the US," said Chris Beauchamp, senior analyst at IG. Intel, the world's largest chipmaker, led Wall Street lower on Thursday after it reported slower revenue growth at its data centre business. US stocks are expected to open little changed yesterday.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan fell 0.5 percent, having hit a nine-month high on Thursday. Japan's Nikkei closed down 1.1 percent, dragged down by the yen's 1 percent rally on Thursday. The index is still up 0.8 percent in a week in which it touched an eight-week high thanks to an initially weaker yen and expectations of fiscal and monetary stimulus.

"Pretty much everything is on the table when it comes to the next BOJ monetary policy decision on 29 July ... except for outright helicopter money," Frederic Neumann, co-head of Asian economic research at HSBC in Hong Kong, wrote in a note yesterday. "The case for more easing is evident." G20 finance ministers and central bank governors meet this weekend in Chengdu, China. While Japan and Britain signaled they may be prepared to give a fiscal boost to their respective economies, US Treasury Secretary Jack Lew said he saw little need for the same type of massive coordinated fiscal stimulus efforts used to combat recession in 2008-2009.

The yen relinquished earlier gains, and the dollar was last up around 0.3 percent at 106.15 yen. The dollar index was up 0.15 percent at 97.145, closing in on the four-month peak of 97.323 struck on Wednesday as traders once again put money back on the Federal Reserve raising interest rates this year. The euro was down slightly at \$1.1015. As widely anticipated, the ECB stood pat on monetary policy on Thursday. But the bank kept the door open to more policy stimulus, citing uncertainty and risks to the region's economic outlook.

Benchmark 10-year US Treasury yields rose over a basis point but on course for a slight fall on the week, easing back after chalking up the biggest rise in over a year the previous week. German bond yields were flat at -0.1 percent, still on track for a fall on the week but up from earlier lows on the back of the surprisingly upbeat German PMI data. In commodities, crude futures bounced back from overnight falls after data pointed to record US stockpiles of gasoline and other oil products. Brent crude rose 0.5 percent to \$46.44 a barrel and US crude rose 0.3 percent to \$44.91 a barrel. Both contracts are poised for a fall of more than 2 percent on the week. — Reuters

LAGARDE: UNFLAPPABLE IMF CHIEF WHO SMASHED GLASS CEILING

PARIS: Five years ago Christine Lagarde burst through the glass ceiling at one of the world's leading institutions, becoming the first woman to head the International Monetary Fund. Her ascension to the prestigious post marked the culmination of a meteoric rise for the French lawyer and former government minister, who began a second term as managing director of the IMF in July. But her stellar career may have hit a snag.

Yesterday, France's highest appeals court ruled she should stand trial over a massive state payout to tycoon Bernard Tapie in 2008 when she was the country's economy minister. Lagarde is accused of negligence for ordering that a long-running legal row between the state and Tapie be resolved by arbitrators, instead of in court, and then failing to challenge his colossal 404-million-euro (\$445 million) award. The trailblazing 60-year-old says she has a "clear conscience."

"I've always acted in accordance with the law, and I've always had in mind the public interest," she told AFP in an interview in Washington earlier this month. Her legal woes have done little to dent her popularity in France, where her name has long been bandied about as a possible contender for president. She herself has ruled herself out of the running. "I think I'm better suited to what I'm doing today than for the world of politics," she said.

A high-profile trial would be a blow to the unflappable finance czar, who patiently worked to restore the IMF's lustre after the sex scandal that brought

down her predecessor and fellow compatriot Dominique Strauss-Kahn in 2011.

The IMF move gave her a seat inside the closed, male-dominated circle of world leaders, but also landed her with responsibility for handling Greece's debt crisis. Less than a year after her arrival, the initial rescue plan for Greece crumbled and the IMF was forced to join an expanded second bailout operation, taking the cost to a massive 240 billion euros (\$270 billion). Greece kept bleeding, and now has a third bailout. IMF has refused to contribute to the latest rescue plan until Greece comes up with a plan to slash its massive debt pile.

Straight-talker

A tough negotiator, Lagarde, accusing her successor as French economy minister, Pierre Moscovici, of being asleep during one crisis meeting. "There are many instances of Ms Lagarde's courageous truth-telling," said economist Desmond Lachman, a former IMF official.

At the same time, she skillfully managed the shifting currents of power in the Fund, where emerging giants like China are challenging the Europe-US-dominated status quo. Lagarde recently scored two major successes at the IMF: the addition of the Chinese yuan to the Fund's basket of reserve currencies and the passage by the US Congress of long-stalled IMF reforms, for which she had joked she would "do belly-dancing" if needed to get US ratification.

Synchronized swimmer

The silver-haired mother of two sons has fashioned herself as an icon to talented women fighting male dominance in large organizations like the IMF. Born in Paris to teacher parents, she was brought up in the port city of Le Havre. As a teenager she was a synchronized swimming champion and learned to speak nearly flawless English.

After earning a law degree, she skipped a French establishment career and instead joined the Paris office of prestigious US legal consulting giant Baker & McKenzie. She worked her way up to become chairwoman of the company's global executive committee in 1999, a first for the firm, and then of its global strategy committee in 2004. She then embraced politics, joining the centre-right government of President Jacques Chirac as trade minister in June 2005. Chirac's successor Nicolas Sarkozy appointed her to the finance portfolio in 2007, making her the first woman named to the post which she held until 2011.

Though not a trained economist, she proved deft at dealing with the financial crisis that at one pointed threatened the euro-zone's unity. In an interview with American public radio, she recalled how she was told by a major French law firm at the outset of her career there was no way to break through the glass ceiling. "You can join us tomorrow and be an associate, be given great tasks and great files and great clients to work on, but don't ever expect to make partnership." And I said, 'Why would that be?' They said, 'Because you're a woman.'" "And I just left...," she said. — AFP

IMF'S LAGARDE TO STAND TRIAL OVER 'TAPIE AFFAIR'

A SETBACK TO LAGARDE'S STELLAR CAREER

PARIS: IMF chief Christine Lagarde was ordered yesterday to stand trial in France over a massive state payout to a controversial tycoon when she was French economy minister, dealing a setback to her stellar career. France's highest appeals court dismissed Lagarde's challenge against the decision to try her for negligence in her handling of a dispute between a state-owned bank and businessman Bernard Tapie.

Tapie walked away with a staggering 404 million euros (\$445 million) in compensation in 2008 after Lagarde ordered the long-running row over the sale of sports gear giant Adidas to be resolved by arbitration. Friday's ruling means the 60-year-old IMF chief will go before a special tribunal that hears cases against government ministers accused of wrongdoing in the discharge of their duties. The ruling is a blow to the IMF boss, who insists she acted in France's best interests in the case.

She will be the third successive head of the Washington-based lender to face trial. Her predecessor, compatriot Dominique Strauss-Kahn, was acquitted of pimping by a French court last year, four years after he resigned his IMF post to fight separate sexual assault allegations. Spain's former IMF chief Rodrigo Rato has also been ordered to stand trial for misusing funds when he was head of Spanish lender Bankia.

Lagarde was placed under formal investigation in 2014 over her handling of a long-running dispute with Tapie, who claimed he was defrauded by the state-controlled bank Credit Lyonnais in its handling of his sale of Adidas in the



LONDON: International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde speaks during a panel discussion during the Anti-Corruption Summit London 2016, at Lancaster House in central London. IMF chief Christine Lagarde was ordered yesterday to stand trial in France over a massive state payout to a colorful tycoon when she was French economy minister, dealing a setback to her stellar career. — AFP

1990s. The case against Lagarde stems from her decision to allow the row be settled by arbitration instead of by the courts, which would likely have resulted in a much smaller bill for the state. Prosecutors have also questioned her failure to challenge the massive award. A court has since found the arbitration to be fraudulent because one of the arbitrators had links to 73-year-old Tapie.

'Clear conscience'

Lagarde has denied any wrongdoing or that she acted on orders from then president Nicolas Sarkozy, of whom

Tapie was a supporter. In an interview with AFP in Washington earlier this month she insisted she had a "clear conscience". "I've always acted in accordance with the law, and I've always had in mind the public interest. "It was not my duty to select the arbitration panel, to investigate their past and history, and I had no reason to doubt their probity and honesty," she said.

Investigating magistrates however found evidence of "serious negligence on the part of a minister tasked with conducting affairs of state" and in December ordered the case go to trial. —AFP



The company logo of the Boeing is displayed in Tokyo. Wall Street stocks treaded water in opening trade yesterday as Boeing shares took a hit after the company announced that it would take a \$2.1 billion charge against second quarter earnings. — AFP

BOEING HIT BY \$2.1 BILLION IN TANKER, PRODUCTION COSTS

NEW YORK: Boeing warned yesterday that second-quarter earnings will be hit by \$2.1 billion in unexpected after tax costs, including its third charge in a year on a large Air Force tanker contract. Boeing said its quarterly earnings release on July 27 will recognize \$393 million in costs associated with the KC-46 tanker program, a next-generation military refueling aircraft.

The latest costs are to address a load issue identified during test flights, the company said. These expenses follows earlier tanker charges of \$156 million in April and \$536 million in July 2015. "This additional investment in the KC-46 supports the delivery timeline for the initial production aircraft and our transition to full-rate production," said Boeing chief executive Dennis Muilenburg. "We remain confident in the long-term value of the KC-46 for our customers and our shareholders." Boeing also booked \$847 million in costs after deciding not to upgrade two Boeing 787s that been used in flight and ground testing. Boeing will now account for the planes as an expense rather than inventory. Finally, the aerospace giant also allotted for \$814 million in costs due to a lower production schedule for its 747-8 cargo plane. The charge reflects lower estimated revenue on future sales. The announcement of the unanticipated charges to earnings sent Boeing shares down 1.2 percent to \$132.00 in after-hours trade. —AFP



FRANKFURT: The headquarters of the European Central Bank (ECB) is pictured in Frankfurt, western Germany yesterday. The European Central Bank is ready, willing and able to help put the euro-zone economy back on its feet, if needed, President Mario Draghi said. — AFP

US BANKS GET BREXIT BOOST BUT FACE LONGTERM PAIN

NEW YORK: Large US banks got a lift from the June "Brexit" vote in the second quarter, but could face long-term pain from a British retreat from the European Union. Earnings released by JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup and others over the last week showed a pickup in some key trading businesses in the days after the surprise June 23 vote by Britain to leave the EU. Banks attributed the bounce to a rise in market volatility after the British vote, resulting in double-digit revenue gains in some trading operations. "There was increased volatility around Brexit that I think we were probably positioned for, and importantly with that volatility, customers came to us with their issues," said Citigroup chief financial officer John Gerspach.

Morgan Stanley chief financial officer Jonathan Pruzan pointed to a "high level of activity at the very end of June, primarily due to Brexit as we supported our clients." The higher trading revenues were a factor in earnings reports that generally bested market expectations. Some analysts say the US banks are also relatively well positioned compared with their European counterparts, which suffer from weaker economic growth in the EU and the prospect of low and negative interest rates. Yet bank executives also pointed to a host of unknowns after the British vote.

What's after London?

US banks have their European headquarters in London, and the five largest US banks currently employ more than 40,000 people in the city. But that structure that will make less sense if London loses direct access to the 27 other members of the EU single market. If Britain withdraws from the European Union, banks based in London could no longer be allowed to freely market services to EU countries without a presence there.

Relocating staff from London would cost banks an average of £50,000 (\$66,000) per employee, said consultancy Synechron. Moving 1,000 jobs to hubs like Dublin, Frankfurt or Paris would then cost some £50 million. Banks have already begun informal discussions with regulators in other European countries on procedures for obtaining bank licenses and establishing compliance with local capital requirements, said one banking source who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Of the preferred cities, Frankfurt offers close access to the European Central Bank, as well as the custom of employing English in addition to German in business affairs. Dublin in some ways is a natural choice, because English is the primary language, and the culture is more similar to the United States. But limited housing and the absence of a true downtown business center are considered liabilities, according to a banking source. Paris has a vibrant business district, but could suffer comparatively from high taxes and heavy regulatory burdens.

Bank executives have so far offered few clues on their thinking, emphasizing that much rests on negotiations between Britain and the EU over the structure of their post-Brexit trade relations, which could take years. The pace of decision-making is expected to accelerate when Britain officially notifies the EU of its plan to leave, triggering a two-year negotiation period. "It's very early days," said JPMorgan chief financial officer Marianne Lake. "We would like to believe that we can continue to have our European franchise headquarters in London, and London would be a strong financial center."

But there's a long time before we'll have certainty about what the outcomes are." Goldman Sachs chief financial officer Harvey Schwartz also predicted a lengthy shakeout before the impact of Brexit on bank operations is known. "We are hopeful, along with everyone else, that the parties that are engaged in these negotiations will be prudent and thoughtful, because obviously ... a thoughtful negotiation outcome would just be good for economic growth," he said. — AFP

JAPAN PM'S MAGLEV DECISION REFLECTS POLITICAL CALCULUS OVER ECONOMICS

CRITICS QUESTION ECONOMIC IMPACT, EXPORT POTENTIAL

TOKYO: Few doubt Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's decision to invest public funds in a \$90 billion dollar high-tech "maglev" railway makes political sense. Whether it makes equally good economic sense is less clear. Proponents say lending government money to Central Japan Railway Company (JR Tokai) to speed up the launch of a service linking Tokyo and Osaka with a high-speed, magnetically levitated train will spark growth in an economy still fragile after three years of an "Abenomics" mix of hyper-easy monetary policy, spending and promised structural reforms. But critics counter the government is targeting the plan mainly because it has a big price tag, and doubt its economic impact and export potential.

"Abe needs to spend a lot of money and it's easy to spend on big projects," said Fujitsu Research Institute economist Martin Schulz. "Abe needs things that are linked to technology, the future of infrastructure and getting Japan into the next century. On paper, maglev ticks most of the boxes," said Schulz, adding the benefits might not stack up in practice. Other private economists share those doubts. "It is highly questionable whether we need to fast-track this," said Hiroshi Shiraishi, senior economist at BNP Paribas Securities.

Abe's administration decided to back the project only after the Bank of Japan in January adopted a negative interest rate policy and the government got a Group of 20 go-ahead for more fiscal spending, interviews with local and national government officials, a JR Tokai executive and an Abe adviser showed. Abe has pledged a stimulus package by the end of July, including using the government's Fiscal Investment and Loan Programme (FILP) to help JR Tokai bring forward operation of the maglev line from Nagoya to Osaka by up to eight years to 2037.

The government is looking to lend 3 trillion yen (\$28 billion) over three years at 0.3 percent interest, to be paid back over 20 or 30 years, an LDP lawmaker said. JR Tokai's original plan called for finishing a line from Tokyo to Nagoya, central Japan, by 2027 and - after an eight-year break to pay back debt - opening service to Osaka in 2045. The maglev, with speeds of up to 500 km per hour and running through tunnels deep under mountainous terrain, would cut the trip to Nagoya by one hour to 40 minutes, and to Osaka to just 67 minutes from 145 minutes.

'Go it alone'

Unable to find a powerful political sponsor and with big public works projects out of fashion, JR Tokai had abandoned efforts to get government aid about a decade ago. In December 2014 began construction for the Tokyo-Nagoya line using private funding. That same year, business leaders, governors and LDP lawmakers in western Japan stepped up lobbying for a "national project" to finish the line to Osaka at the same time as that to Nagoya.

"Originally, JR Tokai said it would fund this itself ... but people in Osaka wanted to speed up the second stage and wondered if FILP could be used," said a senior government source. FILP loans are financed by government bonds, but are not included in the regular budget so issuing them technically doesn't increase Japan's debt, already equal to more than twice the size of the economy. Such project-specific loans must be paid back by the firm that receives them.

That lobbying effort seemed to be going nowhere until early this year, when the government began eyeing a stimulus package. "I proposed to Prime Minister Abe we make the best use of the negative rate environment to spur private and public investments," Abe adviser Satoshi Fujii, a Kyoto University professor said. Pushing forward completion by eight years would have an economic spinoff of "several tens of trillions of yen", Fujii added. JR Tokai is considering the offer but some executives worry the government will try to butt into its plans for the maglev line.

"If they put in money, politicians will interfere for sure," one JR Tokai executive told Reuters. "I wish the president would say 'No'." JR Tokai President Koei Tsuge welcomed the government's suggestion and said the company would consider it based on the premise of maintaining management freedom. "If they make a proposal acceptable to us as a private firm, this is very welcome," Tsuge said in a written statement to Reuters.

A JR Tokai spokesman said fast-tracking the project by the full eight years would be tough given the need to assess envi-

ronmental impacts and other challenges.

'Dream technology' for export

Some economists question how much speeding up the project would stimulate the economy anyway. "I have to give them credit for vision, but I'm not sure the numbers add up," said Morgan Stanley MUFG chief economist Robert Feldman. Abe, who is close to JR Tokai Chairman emeritus Yoshiyuki Kasai, has touted the maglev as a "dream technology" that could, for example, link New York and Washington in under an hour. Experts, however, cast doubt on the extent of overseas demand. "What is being sought is not super-high speed ... It's safety, convenience, network and environmental protection," said Reijiro Hashiyama, a University of Alabama professor emeritus. "In short, the export potential is zero." — Reuters

STERLING DIVES 1%

LONDON: Surveys that suggested the UK economy may start to contract in quarterly terms after last month's Brexit vote dominated trade on major currency markets yesterday, knocking almost 1 percent off sterling across the board. The yen also weakened, weighed down by expectations that next week's Bank of Japan meeting will unveil further money-printing initiatives, despite a number of reports suggesting the bank's view on the economy had not worsened that dramatically.

That helped the dollar to a minimal gain on the day, putting it on track for its fifth weekly rise on the trot, in part a reflection of the latest recovery in expectations for a rise in US interest rates this year. More generally, it has been a week of minimal moves in the major pairs amid a handful of signals that the European Central Bank and the Bank of England may be less gung ho than previously thought in reducing interest rates further.

Analysts wonder if the PMI numbers yesterday may mark the start of the more decisive turn against sterling - and a cut next month in BoE interest rates - predicted by many banks since the vote to leave the European Union. "Warning signs were already apparent yesterday with the decline in retail sales," said David Cheetham, a market analyst from online broker XTB. "But the severity of the drop in manufacturing and services PMIs combined with the fact that this is the first data that focuses solely on the post-referendum economy accentuates its importance." The pound, up before the Purchasing Managers' Index data, flipped to stand 0.8 percent down on the day at \$1.3120 and 83.95 pence per euro respectively.

No helicopters, just cash

The yen recovered on Thursday from six-week lows above 107 per dollar after BOJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda dented speculation it may be preparing a radical "helicopter money" economic stimulus. But that has not shifted many investors' conviction that the BOJ will deliver some form of new stimulus next week and French bank BNP Paribas issued a recommendation to sell the yen while also sounding downbeat on the euro's near-term prospects. "We now expect the euro to trade down to \$1.07 by the end of the third quarter, while we expect the dollar to reach 111 yen, with Fed hikes contrasting with ECB and BOJ easing to drive USD gains," the bank's London-based FX strategy team said in a note. "This (yen) trade should benefit from three key events: BOJ easing, Japanese fiscal easing and a September Fed rate hike."

Having bounced back to as strong as 105.88 yen per dollar in Asian time, the yen fell 0.4 percent to 106.21. The dollar was steadier against other major currencies. Flash PMI surveys in the euro zone were the latest to sound more upbeat on the economic fallout of the Brexit vote there. "It's all about the PMIs this morning," said Kamal Sharma, a strategist with Bank of America Merrill Lynch in London. "There's a lot of post-Brexit data coming out in the next couple of weeks. But the inability of the pound to rise tells you that the market is very comfortable selling any rallies at the moment." — Reuters



Weekender

Kuwait Times

www.kuwaittimes.net

SATURDAY, JULY 23, 2016

NEW DELHI: Indian designer Reynu Taandon showcases her latest designs yesterday. — AFP

Color is power for the brightly-dressed Queen

SEE PAGE 24

Iggy Azalea has been put off dating

The 'Fancy' hitmaker recently split from her fiancé Nick Young after she allegedly caught him having sex with another woman and has admitted the heartbreaking incident has made her re-evaluate the idea of relationships for the time being.

Speaking to TMZ, she said: "I've only been single for like three seconds. I don't want to be with anyone right now." Iggy announced she'd dumped the 31-year-old basketball player last month after she saw him having sex with a mystery lady on their home CCTV footage while she was away.

She said at the time: "I broke up with Nick because I found he had brought another woman into our home while I was away and caught them on the security footage. I feel like I don't even know who the hell it is I've been loving all this time."

However, shortly after they went their separate ways, the 26-year-old rapper found out her former lover is expecting his second child with his ex-girlfriend Keonna Green.

The former flames - who already have son Nick Jr - got together in September 2015, just three months after he proposed to Iggy, and are now expecting a baby girl. Iggy and Nick began dating in 2014 and got engaged in 2015, but their romance has been rocked with numerous cheating allegations over the past two years.

Iggy briefly split from Nick earlier this year when a video leaked online of Nick admitting to his Los Angeles Lakers teammate D'Angelo Russell that he had cheated on her.

They managed to patch up their differences and give their relationship another go until Iggy found Nick in bed with another woman.



Kendall Jenner is reportedly having 'a fling' with A\$AP Rocky

The 20-year-old model has been spending a lot of time with the 27-year-old rapper over the past few weeks and they are enjoying having fun together.

A source told Us Weekly magazine: "It's a fling. It's not serious." They first sparked rumors when they were seen walking through Paris together last month before enjoying an evening of eating and dancing.

The pair then caught up again in Los Angeles two weeks later. Kendall was most recently linked to basketball player Jordan Clarkson and despite spending Fourth of July together, they're not keen to make anything official.

A source said: "They're casually dating but it's not anything very serious." Kendall recently revealed she wants to be married with children within the next 10 years. She wrote in a post on her website: "Hearing Kylie mention what she sees her life like at 30 - on a farm with kids - got me thinking about my own life in 10 years, which weirdly gave me a strong urge to play 'The Sims'."

"If I were building my perfect world on the game, this is how it would look: I'd have a beautiful, secluded house in Malibu with a gorgeous husband and a couple of kids. "Seeing models like Cindy Crawford and Gisele live chilled but extremely fortunate and blessed lives seems like exactly what I would want."

"Even though I love dogs, I don't want to be overwhelmed so I'd probably just have one. I'd definitely want a horse, too, so I could ride whenever I wanted."

Adele is set to star in a Hollywood movie and wants to write a novel

The 'When We Were Young' hitmaker will reportedly have a small role in 'The Death and Life of John F. Donovan', directed by Xavier Dolan, who she enjoyed working with when he directed her music video for 'Hello'.

A source told the Daily Star newspaper: "Adele doesn't want to be a full-time actress, but she enjoyed working with Dolan and he thought she could bring a lot to the screen." The film revolves around a movie star whose correspondence with an 11-year-old actor is exposed by a journalist at a magazine called The Gossip.

'The Death and Life of John F. Donovan' will star Natalie Portman, 'Game of Thrones' Kit Harington, Susan Sarandon, Kathy Bates and Jessica Chastain.

Kit will take the lead as John F. Donovan, an actor famous for playing a Marvel-like superhero role, while Jessica will play an unscrupulous gossip columnist, Kathy will play Donovan's manager and Susan as his mother.

It is yet to be confirmed what role Adele, 28, will play in the movie, but it has been reported that she will film the scene during a holiday from touring.

As well as branching out into acting, Adele recently revealed how she would like to pen a novel. The mother-of-one told the crowd at her Chicago concert: "I'd like to write a book. I mean, I'm not very great at stuff like that but I'd like to learn and try to write a book. Fiction. I don't know what about yet."

Writing a book

The 'Someone Like You' hitmaker says one of her ambitions is to learn how to write a piece of fiction but admits she is unsure what the topic would be as of yet.

Speaking to the crowd at her Chicago concert, she said: "I'd like to write a book. I mean, I'm not very great at stuff like that but I'd like to learn and try to write a book. Fiction. I don't know what about yet." But the book writing process could be difficult for Adele as she previously admitted she is only creative when she's "momentarily depressed".

Speaking about her post break-up routine, she explained: "I mope around for a little while. I do embrace the fact that I'm heartbroken. I don't move on quickly. I don't know if that's because it seems that I'm only really creative when I'm a bit momentarily depressed."

And fans hoping to get their hands on her novel sooner rather than later may be disappointed as it was recently reported

the 28-year-old singer - who has three-year-old son Angelo with partner Simon Konecki - is due to sign a £90 million record deal.

An insider at Sony revealed: "We have secured the biggest music star in a generation. This is massive. Adele's deal with her original label XL expired and we'd an existing relationship with her in America. The deal is being worked on by our Columbia label in the US, but is worth £90 million and gives Sony the rights to release her future music exclusively around the world."

"Jonathan Dickens [her manager] has been putting it together for a couple of years. He was very aware of her worth in the market and stood firm to push for the £90 million."



Cara Delevingne has got a new tattoo



The 23-year-old model - who already has an extensive collection of body art - got an elephant's face etched on the inside of her right forearm on Thursday (21.07.16).

Cara shared a picture of the new tattoo on her Instagram account shortly after the masterpiece was done and thanked famed artist Brian Woo - also known as Doctor Woo - for creating the perfect inking of the large animal.

Doctor Woo - who is recognized for his signature single-needle technique - also posted the latest addition to his ever growing portfolio of art on his social networking site. He wrote: "Lil for @caradelevingne#halfneedle (sic)." The 'Paper Towns' actress acquired her first tattoo of a lion's face on the index finger of her right hand in 2013, which ignited her love for the intricate designs.

The star has since got 'BACON ...' embossed on the sole of her foot, whilst the base of the other reads 'Made in

England', a small diamond inside her ear, a quote from Bobby McFerrin's hit single 'Don't worry, be happy' positioned on her chest to contour her breasts, her initials engraved on the side of her hand, four white dots on her ribcage, which are representative of her family members, and more that currently total approximately 25 designs.

And the 'Suicide Squad' star even allowed her co-star Margot Robbie to tattoo her foot, whilst in the character of Harley Quinn, which is rumored to be a tribute to the film.

Meanwhile, Cara - who has starred in numerous campaigns for luxury fashion houses Burberry, Mulberry and Dolce & Gabbana - has admitted she will "never" get a tattoo on her face or on her genitals. Speaking previously, she said: "Probably not my face. I've already done my ears. Or my vagina... probably."

Bethenny Frankel is 'ecstatic' her divorce has been finalized

The 'Real Housewives of New York' star split from husband Jason Hoppy four year ago and after so many disputes, she's thrilled they have finally sorted everything out.

However, details of the divorce will remain private for the sake of the couple's six-year-old daughter Bryn. Her lawyer Allan Mayefsky told Us Weekly magazine: "Out of respect for her privacy and the well-being of her daughter, Bethenny is declining to comment. We can confirm that the divorce has been resolved. Our client is ecstatic that this long chapter is over, and she is looking forward to moving on." Jason's own legal representative Bernard Clair added: "Jason is thrilled that this chapter of his life is over and extremely pleased with the settlement that was reached. Jason looks forward to the future and enjoying that time privately with family, friends and most important to him, his daughter." Bethenny, 45, recently revealed she is planning a huge party once the divorce had been finalised. She said: "I believe there's an end in sight. I do. I think we are at the very end. I've said that before and been wrong. But this is the closest I've ever felt. I might just have party plans. You don't want to decorate the nursery until the baby comes, but I'm excited, just as excited as someone is excited to paint the nursery pink. I don't know many parties that would rival my divorce party, I'll tell you that."

Bethenny - who had to pay Jason \$26,000 a month in spousal support until a court recently ruled she no longer had to - also said she couldn't understand why it was taking so long.

She shared: "You know, there's a lot more to that puzzle than people will realize. Divorces on two-year marriages don't normally take almost four years to get divorced."



Chris Martin could be set to wed again

The Coldplay rocker recently finalized his divorce from Gwyneth Paltrow and just days later, his new girlfriend Annabelle Wallis sparked speculation they're engaged by showing off a huge diamond ring on her wedding finger.

The 31-year-old actress posted a selfie onto her Instagram account as she got ready to attend a wedding but fans were quick to spot the sparkler on her left hand. One said: "Look at that big ring on her wedding finger", while another said: "That definitely looks like an engagement ring, I hope it is!"

Chris, 39, and Annabelle started dating in March and are said to be smitten with each other. The speculation comes just days after Chris and Gwyneth's divorce was officially announced. The former couple, who famously announced their "conscious uncoupling" two years ago, reached a divorce settlement in May and their judgment was entered at a Los Angeles County court. The couple first announced their plan to end their decade-long marriage in March 2014. Since then, Chris and the 'Iron Man' actress have remained close, holidaying with their two children - Apple, 12, and 10-year-old Moses - and socializing at other family gatherings. Gwyneth - who is now in a relationship with Brad Falchuk - recently spoke about how the couple have always put their children first, although she admitted the split hasn't always been easy.

The 43-year-old beauty said: "As anybody who has been divorced knows, you have to put a lot aside to maintain the family and the practicalities of what that might mean and sometimes that's quite tough on a personal level."

Kim Kardashian West talks about race 'every single day' in her house

The 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' star - who has three-year-old daughter North and seven-month-old son Saint with her husband Kanye West - has revealed the family regularly have discussions about their "different backgrounds".

She told Elle.com: "We talk about race in America every single day in our house. The topic really does get broached, somehow, every single day. Kanye's just really vocal and I definitely know that our kids will grow up having a really good sense of their different backgrounds."

"I know Kanye is so excited to talk to them about how he grew up. As a little kid, they don't grasp how they might be different from other little kids. They don't understand color, or background, and that's why children are so amazing. But as they get older, we plan on talking to them a lot about where they came from. I want them to know their lives matter. I want them to feel safe in this world. Will they? I hope so. But that depends on all of us, doesn't it?"

The 35-year-old television personality recently penned an emotional essay about her children, admitting she fears they will grow up thinking that "their lives don't matter".

Writing in response to the shootings of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, she shared: "This week we watched Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, two innocent black men, get senselessly murdered by police officers. Like a lot of you guys, I watched the videos, and was appalled and completely heartbroken. I was left speechless, angry and numb."

"I want my children to grow up knowing that their lives matter. I do not ever want to have to teach my son to be scared of the police, or tell him that he has to watch his back because the people we are told to trust - the people who 'protect and serve' - may not be protecting and serving him because of the color of his skin."





LONDON: Exhibits on display at the "Fashioning a Reign: 90 Years of Style from The Queen's Wardrobe" exhibition inside Buckingham Palace on Thursday. — AFP

Color is power for the brightly-dressed Queen

They may look garish for some but Queen Elizabeth II's brightly-colored outfits are a power dressing tool that allow her to make an impression, according to a new exhibition opening on Saturday.

Exhibits at the Buckingham Palace show range from her christening gown to the eye-catching bright green wool-crepe and silk dress she wore at one of her 90th birthday celebrations earlier this year.

The queen's wedding dress from 1947 and the one she wore at her coronation in 1953 are also exhibited together for the first time in "Fashioning a Reign: 90 Years of Style from the Queen's Wardrobe".

"The Queen is well-known for block color dressing using vivid and bold colors to ensure she is easily visible on impor-

tant occasions," Caroline De Guitaut, the exhibition's curator, told reporters. De Guitaut said the dresses reflected the multi-faceted role the Queen plays as sovereign not only of Britain but also of the Commonwealth states, as well as being commander-in-chief of the British army.

The curator said that hats also played an important role in making her easier to spot in large crowds, which is why they often have elaborate trimming. The monarch's preferences for headgear range from cloche hats made popular in the 1960s to the Breton style of the 1970s and 1980s.

Nowadays, she is rarely seen in public without a hat. Details such as colors and design gained a whole other level of significance during her state visits. "The Queen's ensembles are carefully designed to ensure they are appropriate for the climate

like the oriental-flower patterned dress Her Majesty wore to a state visit to Singapore," De Guitaut said.

Others respect religious or social conventions like the ensemble worn for her state visit to the Middle East in 1979, in which the Queen was covered as much as possible to respect local traditions. "Clothing can do things for women sovereigns that it can't do for men and the Queen has definitely used that as a tool in her reign," De Guitaut said.

The exhibition, which runs until October 2, is one of three organized by royal officials this year showing off 150 outfits and is billed as the biggest ever. — AFP

Syrians harnessing Pokemon frenzy to depict their plight

A sad-eyed Pikachu Pokemon Go character sits amidst the rubble on a Syrian street, while a Charizard dragon from the smash hit game is perched alongside gun-toting jihadists. The striking montages are the work of Syrian Khaled Akil, who is one of several activists and artists using the international frenzy over Pokemon Go to draw new attention to the plight of their battle-scarred country. In the images posted on Akil's website, characters from the wildly popular smartphone app are placed into news photographs of scenes from the conflict in Syria, which is now in its sixth year and which has killed more than 280,000 people.

One image appears to show the aftermath of bombardment, with the facades sheared from buildings and smoke rising from the blackened carcass of a car. A child walks across the rubble strewn throughout the street, atop which sits the yellow Pikachu character, his tall ears flopping down. In another image, a boy wheels his bicycle down a devastated street, with the turquoise-green Vaporeon character by his side.

"The idea came to me when I was reading the news and saw the news about Syria was mixed with the news about Pokemon Go," Akil told AFP. "I searched for photos of destruction in my city Aleppo and I imagined the Pokemon Go game in Syria and the impact of the war on these creatures," he added. "My goal with this simple project is to shed light on what is happening in Syria," said Akil. "Unfortunately, after five years of war, the Syrian death machine has become ordinary, everyday news."

Since its global launch, Pokemon Go has sparked a worldwide frenzy among users who have taken to the streets with their smartphones. The free app uses satellite locations, graphics and camera capabilities to overlay cartoon monsters on real-world settings, challenging players to capture and train the creatures for battles.

'Come to Save Me'

But some Syrians see it as a chance to redirect attention to the conflict that began in March 2011, which has often fallen out of the headlines despite a spiralling death toll and the displacement of more than half the Syrian population. Syrian graphic designer Saif Aldeen Tahhan post-

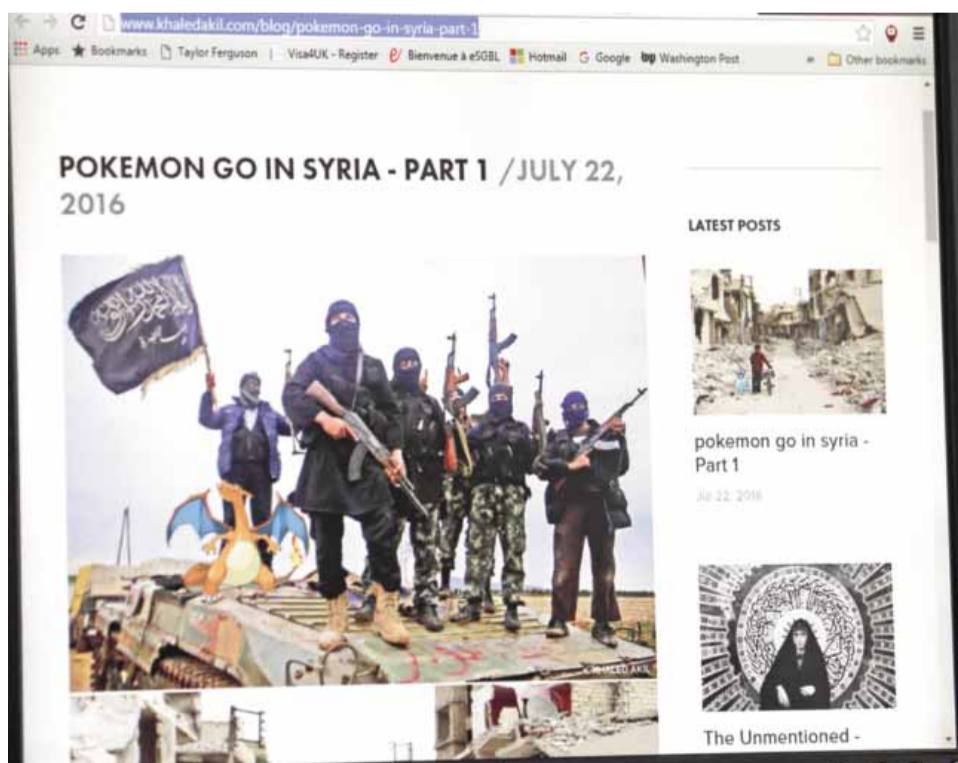
ed images on his Facebook page showing users holding smartphones and seeking not Pokemon but medical care, school books or undamaged homes. One image depicts a smartphone in front of a rubber dinghy carrying refugees at sea, with the user trying to capture a life ring.

"I wanted to draw world attention to the suffering of the Syrians in this war," the 26-year-old told AFP. Tahhan, from Damascus province, left Syria in December 2011, shortly after the conflict began, seeking refuge first in Egypt. In Aug 2014, he took to the seas like thousands of Syrian refugees, landing in Italy before continuing onto Denmark, where he now lives.

Syrian opposition activists inside the country have also sought to harness the craze over the game, posting a series of images online this week showing children holding posters of individual characters. "I am in Kafr Nabal in Idlib province, come and save me," reads the text underneath a Pikachu on a poster held by a young boy. Kafr Nabal is a rebel-held town in northwestern Idlib province, which is mostly held by an opposition alliance that includes Al-Qaeda affiliate Al-Nusra Front.

Towns across the province are regularly bombarded by the Syrian government and its Russian ally, with more than 20 civilians reported dead in raids in Idlib on Thursday alone. Other images in the series created by the Syrian Revolutionary Forces activist group show children in the rebel-held towns of Kafr Zita and Kafr Nabuda in central Hama province. And an additional montage depicts a giant Pikachu in tears, seated next to a child in the ruins of a devastated building. "I am from Syria, come to save me!," the picture is captioned, with the hashtag #PrayForSyria.

Inside Syria, the game is accessible via a proxy, but has attracted little interest. Players in the war-torn country also face unique obstacles, with one enthusiast telling AFP he started chasing a Pokemon in Damascus only to realize the creature was next to a car with darkened windows belonging to the intelligence services. "I decided it was best to let it go," he said. — AFP





CHENNAI TAMIL NADU, INDIA: Indian fans of Bollywood star Rajinikanth wear T-shirts bearing his image on the first day of release of his new Tamil-language film "Kabali" react in celebration of the release yesterday. — AFP

Day off for south Indians as new film sparks frenzy

Fans of the wildly popular Indian film star Rajinikanth queued overnight for a 4am screening of his new movie yesterday in the southern city of Chennai, where many companies abandoned hope of staff coming to work and closed for the day.

Tickets for "Kabali", which stars Rajinikanth as an ageing gangster, sold out well before the release and were changing hands on the black market for up to 5,000 rupees (\$75) — a huge sum for most Indians. The 65-year-old Tamil language cinema icon inspires an almost god-like adulation in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where fans refer to him simply as "The Superstar".

Fans cut their hair in the style of Rajinikanth's character and some even had his face tattooed on their arms as they awaited the release. In Chennai fans set off firecrackers, gave out sweets and poured milk over giant posters advertising the movie—a tradition that derives from the ritual bathing of Hindu idols in milk.

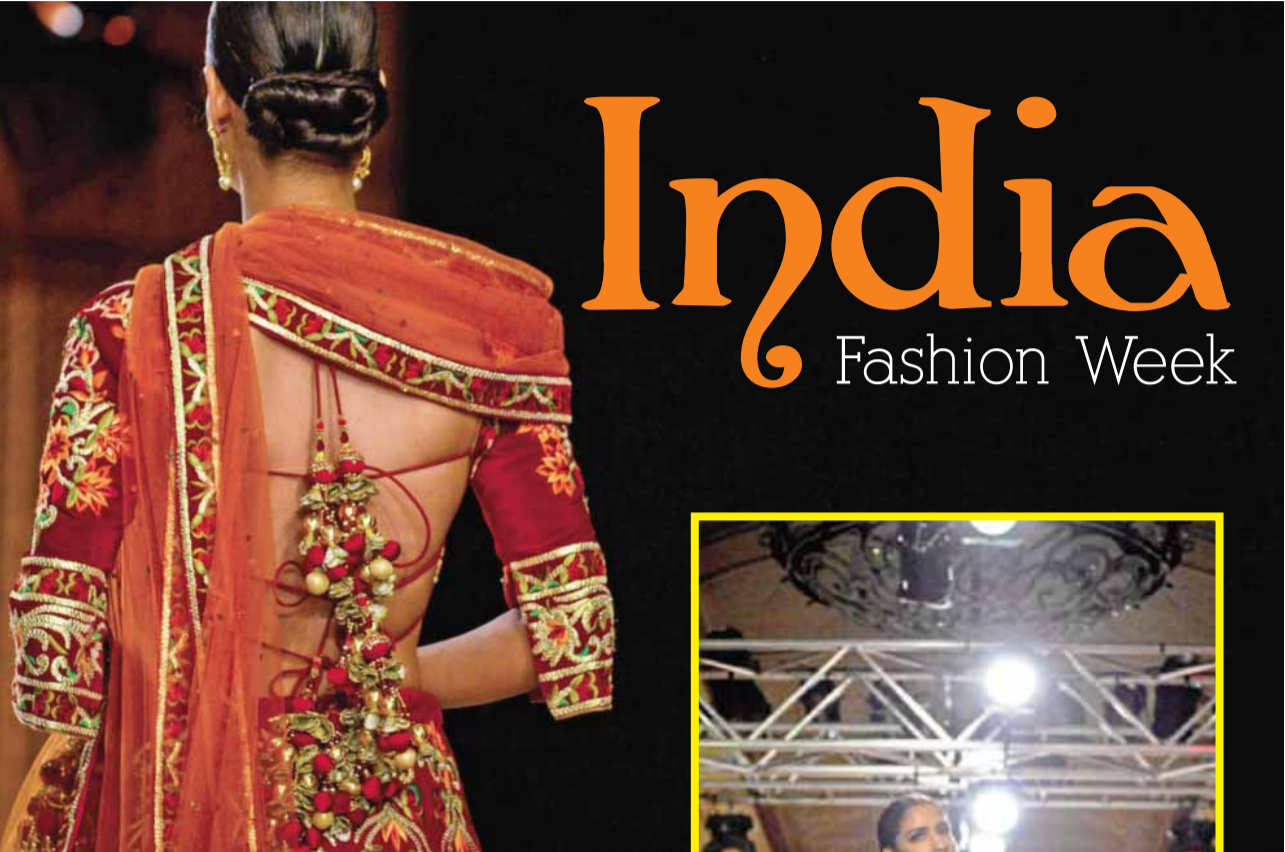
Several companies in the city, a burgeoning IT hub, said so many staff had asked for yesterday off that they had decided to simply close for the day. "The story line is too good, it's very emotional," said one fan who had watched the 4am screening in Chennai.

Another fan in Mumbai called the movie "brilliantly awesome". "It has emotions, it has fights, it has all those things that a Rajini fan expects and it has those super moments where every Rajini fan will start clapping and whistling. Absolutely no disappointment," he told the NDTV news channel.

Rajinikanth famously worked as a bus conductor in the southern Indian city of Bangalore before heading to Chennai in 1973 to pursue his passion of acting. His last major film, the science fiction epic "Endhiran", was one of India's most profitable releases ever, grossing a record-breaking \$13.8 million globally on its opening weekend in 2011 — including \$4.4 million in the United States alone.

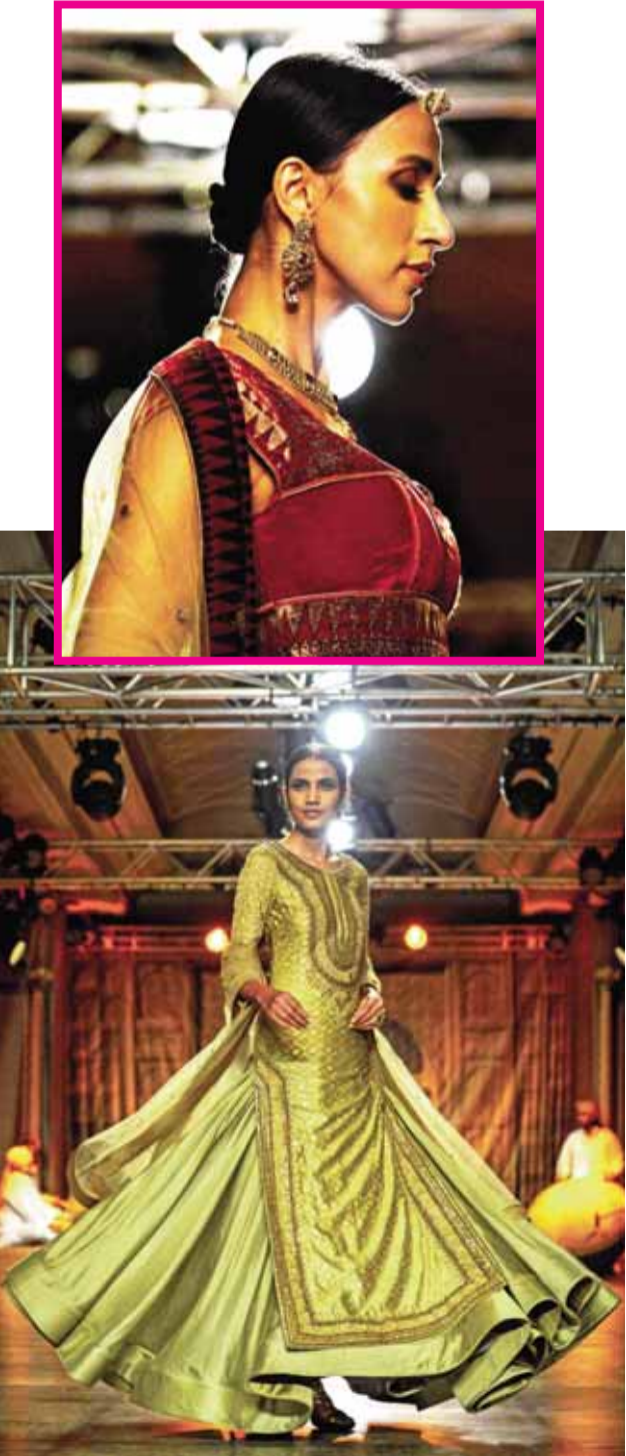
Its performance stoked global ambitions for the Tamil-language film industry, nicknamed "Kollywood" after the Kodambakkam district of Chennai where many studios are based. Most of Tamil Nadu's chief ministers have had connections to the industry and the incumbent, Jayalalitha Jayaram, was once a lead actress.—AFP

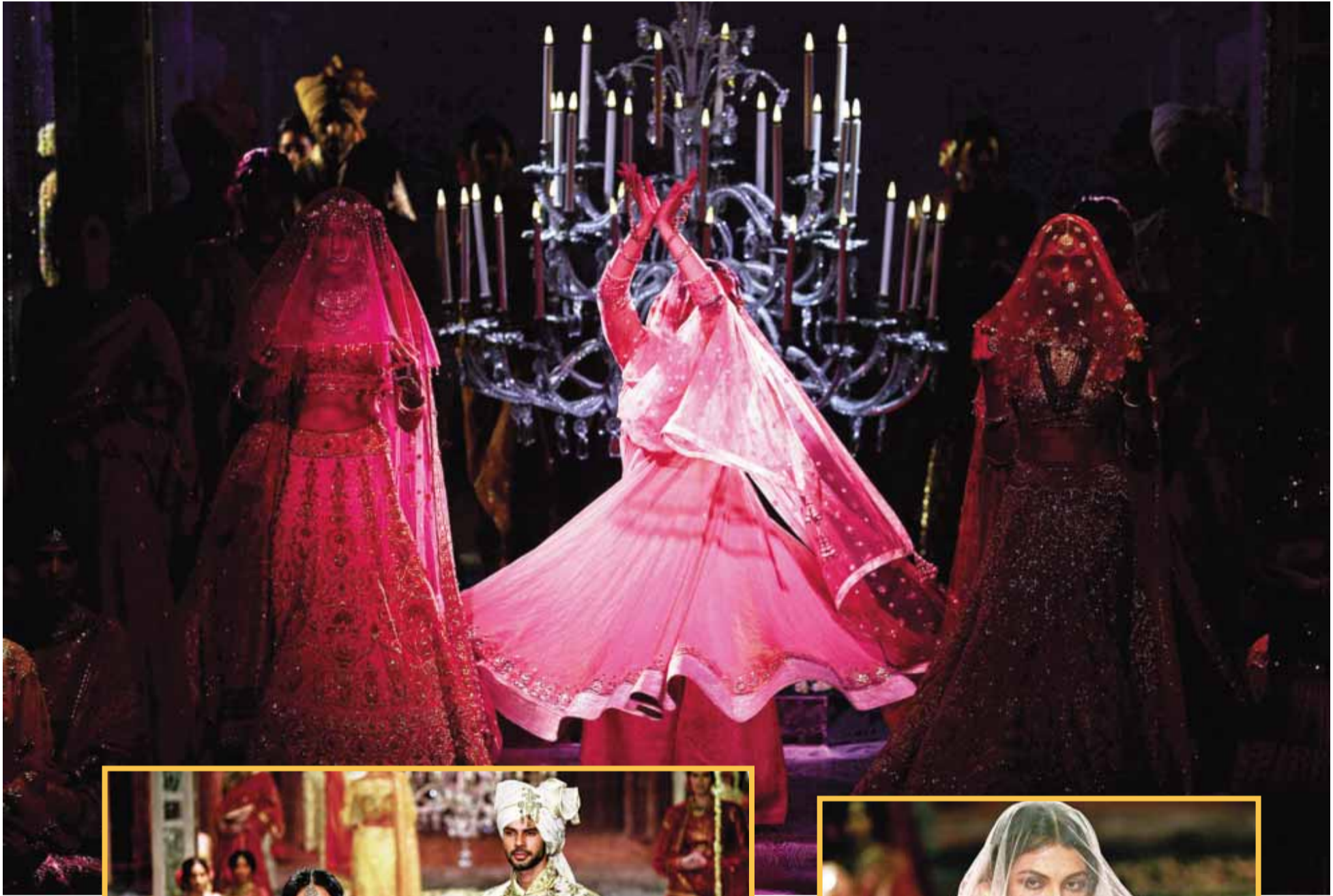




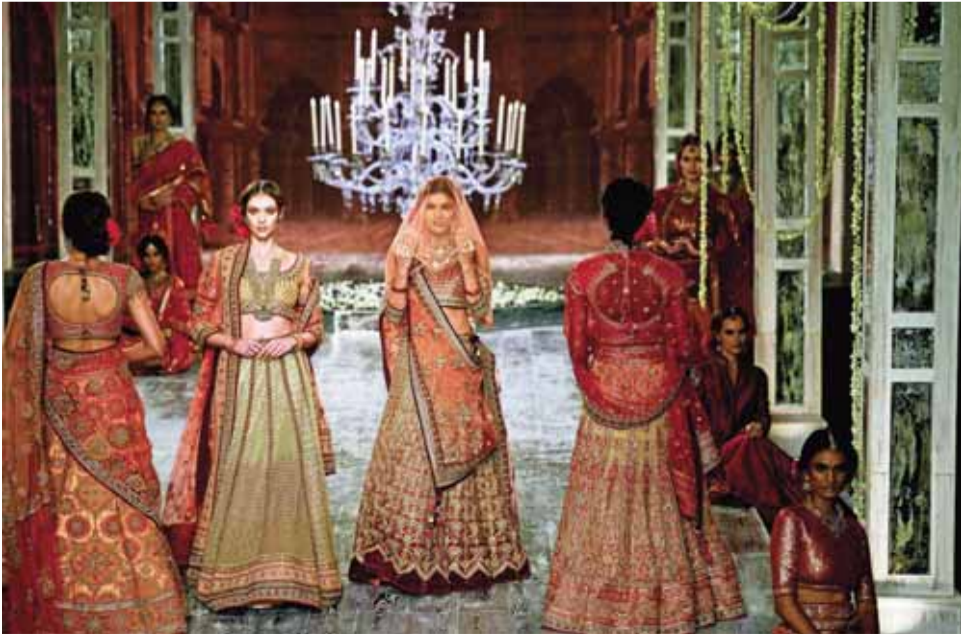
NEW DELHI: Indian designer Reynu Taandon (CL) poses with Bollywood actress Divya Khosla Kumar (CR) as models showcase the designer's creations yesterday.—AFP

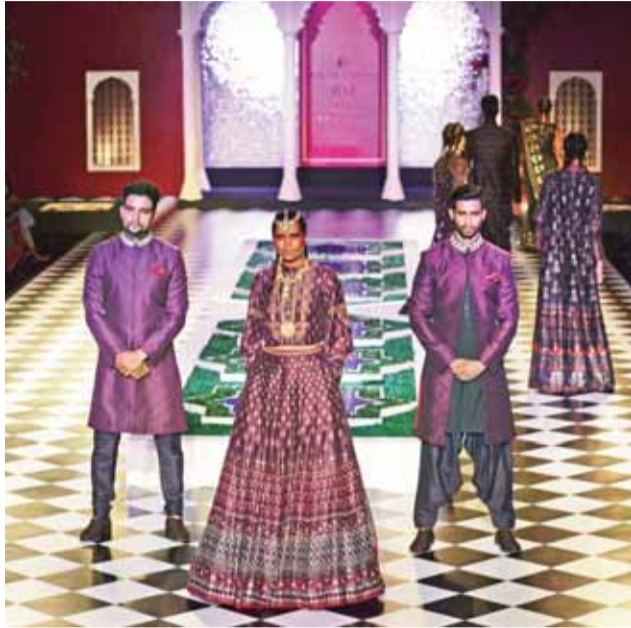
Reynu Taandon





Tarun Tahiliani





Anita Dongre



AMAZON SET TO INCREASE BET ON ITALY DIGITAL TURNAROUND PLAN

MILAN: Online retailer Amazon.com is set to announce yesterday the first in a series of investments in Italy worth at least 500 million euros (\$550 million), a bet on the government's plan to go from laggard to leader in digital commerce, sources said. Amazon will invest 150 million euros to build a major storage and logistics centre outside Rome, its second in Italy, said one source close to the matter. The new centre, due to open next year, will employ 1,200 people.

"There are wide margins of growth for small and medium businesses in Italy, which are still very much behind their European counterparts on e-commerce," the source said. It will be the biggest foreign IT investment to be unveiled in Italy since

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi announced in April a new tactic to speed up broadband rollout across the country. He enlisted the help of state-controlled utility Enel to lay fibre-optic cable alongside its existing power network.

The European Union's fourth-largest economy comes last in the EU for Internet usage, with barely half of Italian households subscribing to fixed-line broadband. However, online shopping is growing and will have almost doubled between 2011 and the end of this year when transactions are estimated to reach around 19 billion euros, according to national ecommerce association Netcomm. Amazon also plans to build data centers in Italy in the next 12 months for its expanding cloud-service

division, housing them in old power stations belonging to Enel, two sources said.

Enel Chief Executive Francesco Starace has said previously that Amazon is among companies interested in acquiring three old stations, following reports by newspaper Corriere della Sera. Amazon has a share of 14 percent of Italian Internet retailing, second to eBay with 24 percent, according to research firm Euromonitor International. It has already invested some 450 million euros in the last six years in Italy, its fourth largest European market, after the United Kingdom, Germany and France. Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos will visit Italy and is set to meet Renzi in Florence yesterday, sources said. — Reuters

CHINA'S WECHAT TAKES ON WHATSAPP IN AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG: Late to the party, WeChat, China's biggest Internet-based mobile messaging platform, is scrambling to get a piece of the action in the booming African market. The move is leading the South Africa-China joint venture down a fiercely competitive path as Facebook's WhatsApp is already part of the social media fabric in most African countries. Africa is not often the scene of battles between tech giants, but the outcome could help determine who can turn the exponential growth in online messaging services into profits.

WeChat stands at a major disadvantage as WhatsApp is used far more widely, making users naturally reluctant to choose a rival service. But WeChat is betting an array of services that include money transfers, prepaid electricity and airtime purchases and its experience in selling products to lower income users in the villages of China will loosen the Silicon Valley grip. "That's at the heart of the story for us because we knew that we were late to the market compared to other instant messaging apps and so we realized that focusing on chat services was not the most practical way to get to market," WeChat Africa head Brett Loubser said.

Launched in Africa in 2013 by China's Internet giant Tencent and its 34 percent shareholder South African e-commerce and media group Naspers, WeChat Africa is a rare south-south corporate partnership to expand on the continent. The joint venture is facing an uphill battle in taking on WhatsApp, which offers free text, picture and video messages and whose adoption in big African markets such as South Africa was lightening-fast because texts over a phone network are still expensive. A 2015 study by World Wide Worx, a Johannesburg consultancy, showed WhatsApp had just over 10 million users in South Africa compared with just over 5 million for WeChat.

But WhatsApp, acquired by Facebook in 2014 for \$19 billion and which has a long-standing promise to keep the platform ad-free, has no immediate plans to make money out of the service in Africa, Facebook Africa head Nunu Ntshingila said. "At this point in time, we are not at the stage where we are looking at monetizing WhatsApp," Ntshingila told Reuters. "That's in a three-year time frame because right now the focus is on two big apps which are Facebook and Messenger."

With Facebook's deep pockets, analysts believe WhatsApp can easily leverage its popularity on the continent as and when it turns on the monetization tap. Ntshingila said WhatsApp is the No.1 messaging platform in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya. "You could argue that WeChat is pulling ahead in monetization efforts but WhatsApp guys can do anything using their numbers. It's all about who's got numbers," ICT analyst Sibonginkosi Nyanga at fund manager Momentum SP Reid said. WhatsApp is testing making restaurants, airlines and credit card firms pay to contact consumers, its Chief Executive Jan Koum said in January, when the company announced it is dropping its token \$1 fee levied on some of its users.

Although there are no reliable statistics on the number of mobile phone owners who use either WhatsApp or WeChat on the rest of the continent, there are parts of Africa where WeChat is almost unknown whereas WhatsApp is everywhere from Namibia to Niger. "I used to have a WeChat account but I deleted it because you will find virtually nobody to chat. With WhatsApp, there are no complications, it's simple and all my friends use it," Nkululeko Mabuza, a 24-year-old social worker in Tzaneen, a large town 400 km (250 miles) north of Johannesburg. — Reuters



TOKYO: This picture shows a VHS videocassette recorder. The world's last videocassette recorder is set to roll off the factory line as a Japanese manufacturer ends production of the once booming home-theatre technology. — AFP

END OF AN ERA: VCR HEADED FOR OUTDATED TECH HEAVEN

OUTDATED TECHNOLOGY LONG BEEN ECLIPSED BY DVDS

TOKYO: The clunky videocassette recorder is going the way of floppy disks, eight-track tapes and camera film as the world's last manufacturer ends production of the once booming home-video technology. Japan's Funai Electric cited a sharp decline in sales and trouble sourcing parts for its decision to stop making VCRs at a plant in China by the end of this month. Most of the consumer electronics firm's VCRs were sold in North America in recent years, including under the Sanyo brand.

Sales have plummeted from 15 million units a year at their height to 750,000 in 2015 - although some may be surprised VCRs were still being made at all. Demand appears largely driven by consumers who have large videotape collections that must still be played on VCRs. A Gallup poll several years ago found that 58 percent of Americans still had one in their home. The boxy machines—originally about the size of a briefcase with a top-loading slot for videotapes—entered into mainstream popularity in the seventies and eighties, and spawned a new industry: tape rental stores.

But the outdated technology has long been eclipsed by DVDs and other more advanced options, while once ubiquitous rental shops have all but disappeared. Panasonic pulled out of the business several years ago, making Funai the last VCR maker in the world, a company spokesman said Friday. "A company that was making parts for us said it was too tough to keep making them with sales at this level so they stopped, which led to our decision we can't make them without that part," he said. Funai has been overwhelmed with calls from

desperate Japanese VCR tape owners who had not transferred treasured recordings of weddings and other special occasions on to other formats, he added.

'Hi-tech' Japan

Japan may have a reputation for hi-tech devices and futuristic robots, but many people still cling to seemingly outdated options including fax machines and flip phones. Cassette tapes are also still popular while major DVD rental chains can be found in Japanese cities. Last year, electronics giant Sony announced it would stop selling Betamax video tapes, ending the storied history of a product that had been ousted years earlier by the more popular VHS tape format. The inventor of the Walkman first launched its Betamax products in 1975 as a household, magnetic video format for consumers to record analogue television shows. The popularity of Betamax tapes peaked in 1984 when some 50 million cassettes were shipped.

However, the format, initially supported by Toshiba and other electronics makers, is most remembered as the loser of a corporate battle over setting the de facto household video standard. VHS, developed by another Japanese electronics maker that later became part of JVC, won the battle. But it lost the war as video cassette recorders were replaced later by digital formats, such as DVDs, which have themselves largely been replaced by online streaming technology. Sony stopped making Betamax recorders in 2002, but it kept making tapes for die-hard fans. — AFP

POKEMON GO PLAYERS RISK ALL FOR THEIR MONSTERS

PARIS: Walk into a minefield, enter a military base or simply cross the road without looking: fans of Pokemon Go are prepared to do whatever it takes to capture the likes of Pikachu and its friends. A virtual hunt that has taken players worldwide by storm, the game has had real-world consequences in the Tokyo stock exchange and beyond. The "augmented reality" smartphone app challenges users to roam the real world in search of virtual cartoon monsters to capture and train for battles, incorporating characters from the hit Nintendo game of the 1990s.

"By appealing to several generations, from those who have memories of the original Pokemon in 1996 to the very youngest gamers, this app has the potential to reach vast numbers of players and become the reference point for virtual reality," says Laurent Michaud, head of digital entertainment at the Idate ideas laboratory. The phenomenon has grown so rapidly that authorities in a number of countries have issued warnings about the dangers of the game, while police forces have taken to social media to remind users how to behave safely in public spaces.

And not without cause—the hunt for Pokemon (or

"pocket monsters") has resulted in some unexpected situations. In Indonesia, a French player was stopped by police and questioned for several hours after the app led him into a military base. He was later released. Players in Bosnia meanwhile have been warned to avoid minefields, which remain a hangover from wars that wracked the country between 1992 and 1995. And the Japanese government has published a leaflet advising children of the potential risks of Pokemon Go—including the dangers of playing the game while cycling—despite the app not yet having been officially released in the country.

The Israeli navy, however, makes no secret of its passion for Pokemon Go, publishing a screenshot of its forces capturing a sea-based monster with the caption: "There are some Pokemon only we can catch".

A much-shared Palestinian tweet shows a Pikachu emerging from the ruins of house in Gaza. While the game is only officially available in some 40 countries, many players have found ways to access the app before its release in their territory. In France, where the game is still supposedly unavailable, police have already tweeted advice to

Pokemon "trainers", including: "Do not play Pokemon Go while driving" and "Pedestrians—take extra care".

Behind the phenomenon is the Pokemon Company but also its shareholder Nintendo, the Japanese group whose devices have been needed to play any earlier versions of digital Pokemon games. And while Nintendo's profits from the recent explosion of Pokemon Go remain unknown, investors have already made their feelings felt.

Since the release of the game, shares in the group have more than doubled on the Tokyo stock exchange, even if their value remains well below a 2007-2008 peak, which came with the release of the Wii console. But real-life security risks are not the only threat, as the game has already attracted the attention of hackers, according to the Russian internet security group Kaspersky. "Nintendo servers have already experienced a number of problems concerning traffic, and their attackers are very aware that the group cannot afford to have broken or inactive servers," says David Emm, a researcher at Kaspersky. — AFP

INDONESIA SHRUGS OFF POKEMON FATWA; GAMING FEVER TAKES HOLD

JAKARTA: Avid players of smash-hit mobile phone game Pokemon GO in Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, are not letting religious decrees or security warnings get in the way of their mission to catch their next cartoon creature. Nintendo's augmented reality app, in which players walk around real-life places to hunt virtual characters on their smartphone screens, has become an instant hit globally, almost doubling the market value of the Japanese game-maker.

But not everyone is cheering it. Saudi Arabia's top clerical body issued a fatwa, or religious edict, in 2001 that declared the Pokemon game franchise un-Islamic, saying it promotes gambling and the theory of evolution, among other concerns. Saudi media on Wednesday said the body had renewed the fatwa though without mention of the new Pokemon GO mobile game. Late on Thursday, an official at the country's ministry of culture and information denied the edict had been renewed.

The Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), the country's top Muslim clerical body, has not made a formal statement on Pokemon GO, senior official Amidhan Shaberah told Reuters. But he said the game carries "more harm than benefits" as it can make people "intoxicated", at the cost of their work or studies. Indonesian security officials have said it could allow enemies to gather sensitive satellite data, according to local media. Officials have also banned people from playing in the presidential palace premises. A spokeswoman at Pokemon Co, which produced the title with Nintendo, said the game was designed for enjoyment and not to promote social ills.

Pokemon GO has not been officially launched in the country of 250 million people - an enthusiastic adopter of social media apps - but tens of thousands of Indonesians are already getting it by using a proxy location on their smartphones that gives them access to app stores of other countries. "I will not stop playing unless the reason is realistic," said Mohammad Resja Ilham, a 24-year-old radio host who catches Pokemons on his way to work and back home, and up to five hours on weekends. "I can meet new people when I play, it's really fun."

Businesses are also cashing in. Indonesian telecommunication service provider PT XL Axiata Tbk is offering a 20 percent discount for certain 4G data packages to "take advantage of the Pokemon GO trend", spokeswoman Turina Farouk said. Last Saturday, Southeast Asian ride-hailing service Grab offered deals to Pokemon hunters who hopped on its vehicles to get to the National Monument in the Indonesian capital. "People are crazy about it now," said Ridzki Kramadibrata, Indonesia managing director for Grab. "I was there (the National Monument) myself and managed to catch some Pokemons." — Reuters

POKEMON GO CRAZE FINALLY ROCKS JAPAN

POKEMON LAUNCHED, BRINGING SMASH-HIT GAME HOME

TOKYO: Eager Japanese rushed to their phones yesterday to start hunting as Pokemon GO, the hit Nintendo-backed smartphone game, finally launched in Japan, home of the colorful cartoon characters. The game has been an unexpected, runaway success from Spain to Australia, doubling Nintendo's value since the game's launch in the United States earlier this month. Japan, however, had been made to wait, as Niantic, the developers behind the game, and Nintendo sought to ensure servers would withstand the game's popularity. Finally, after days of rumors, it launched yesterday.

"Everyone was talking about why we couldn't do it here, since Pokemon is Japanese," said Maho Ishikawa, a 16-year-old high school student who said she had already captured a monster. "Since I really wanted to play, I'm very, very glad." The augmented reality game has players out in their real life neighborhoods 'capturing' monsters on their smartphones as they turn up even in ordinary offices and taxis. In a video address to Japanese fans, Junichi Masuda, head of development at Game Freak and co-creator of the game, apologized for keeping players waiting so long.

"From today you can go out and find Pokemon to your heart's content," he said. "We hope the game enables users to see the world in a new, fulfilling way. Obey the rules and have fun." University students in Tokyo on their last day of classes before summer holidays did just that, jumping into the fray within moments of the launch, capturing monsters as a frenzy erupted between classes. "This game is just as I imagined it to be, it's really fun," said Toshinori Ishibashi, 18, who was seen playing the game near a Pokemon goods store in Tokyo Station. "It's also a great reason to go outside, so I'm really enjoying it."

The game was created by Nintendo,



TOKYO: People hold their mobile phones while standing in the street playing Nintendo's Pokemon Go game at Akihabara shopping district in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

Niantic and Pokemon Co, part-owned by Nintendo. Both Nintendo and Pokemon Co have undisclosed stakes in Niantic. As retailers and brands vie for a piece of a hit that takes players from place to place, fast food chain McDonald's Holdings Co Japan Ltd said its nearly 3,000 shops across Japan would serve as spots where Pokemon can be battled or "trained" in the game - within limits. "Ultimately, McDonald's is a restaurant," said a company spokesman. "We will call on players not to become a bother to customers who are eating."

The game has enthralled players and boosted investors' view of Nintendo's future, as they bet the group can cash in on a treasure chest of other lucrative cartoon characters, from Donkey Kong to Super Mario. But the game has also prompted warnings, as players glued to their phones become prone to tripping over, crashing cars, getting mugged or

wandering into dangerous places. The Japanese government on Thursday became the latest to issue a safety warning. The country's National Center for Incident Readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity (NISC) told users of the mobile game not to use their real names and warned them about the risks of heat stroke in the muggy Japanese summer.

A number of other Asian nations still await the game, including China, the world's biggest smartphone and online gaming market. Niantic Chief Executive John Hanke has said it would be technically possible to launch there, but noted a host of complex rules and restrictions. Nintendo shares, which have seen a meteoric rise in recent days, climbed in Tokyo trading yesterday but pared gains to close up under 1 percent. McDonald's Japan ended up 4.2 percent. — Reuters



03:25 Wildest Africa
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
06:12 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
06:36 Swamp Brothers
07:00 Swamp Brothers
07:25 Too Cute!
08:15 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
08:40 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
09:10 Treehouse Masters
10:05 Tanked
11:00 Too Cute!
11:55 Bondi Vet
12:50 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
13:15 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
13:45 Gator Boys
14:40 Treehouse Masters
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Wildest Africa
17:25 Big Fish Man
18:20 River Monsters
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Saving Africa's Giants With Yao Ming
21:05 Treehouse Masters
22:00 River Monsters
22:55 Gator Boys
23:50 Big Fish Man
00:45 I'm Alive
01:40 River Monsters
02:35 Tanked



03:50 I Want My Wife Back
04:15 Doctors
04:45 Eastenders
05:15 Sinbad
06:00 Holby City
07:00 Doctors
07:30 Eastenders
08:00 Eastenders
08:30 Call The Midwife
09:25 Death In Paradise
10:20 Dickensian
12:40 Casualty
13:35 Holby City
14:35 Doctors
15:05 Eastenders
15:35 Doctor Who
18:15 Doctors
19:15 Father Brown
20:10 Orphan Black
21:50 The Fear
22:40 I Want My Wife Back
23:05 Ideal
23:35 Doctors
00:35 Father Brown
01:25 Orphan Black
02:15 Orphan Black



03:40 Extreme Collectors
04:05 Auction Hunters
04:30 Dallas Car Sharks
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 How Stuff's Made
06:00 Mythbusters
06:50 Man vs Expert
07:40 Incredible Engineering
Blunders: Fixed
08:30 Diamond River Hunters
09:20 Venom Hunters
10:10 Dive Wars Australia
11:00 What On Earth?
11:50 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
12:40 Mega Shippers
13:30 Fast N' Loud
14:20 Fat N' Furious: Rolling Thunder
15:10 Street Outlaws
16:00 Impossible Engineering
21:00 Fast N' Loud
21:50 Fat N' Furious: Rolling Thunder
22:40 Street Outlaws
23:30 Sherpa
01:10 Fast N' Loud
02:00 Fat N' Furious: Rolling Thunder
02:50 Street Outlaws



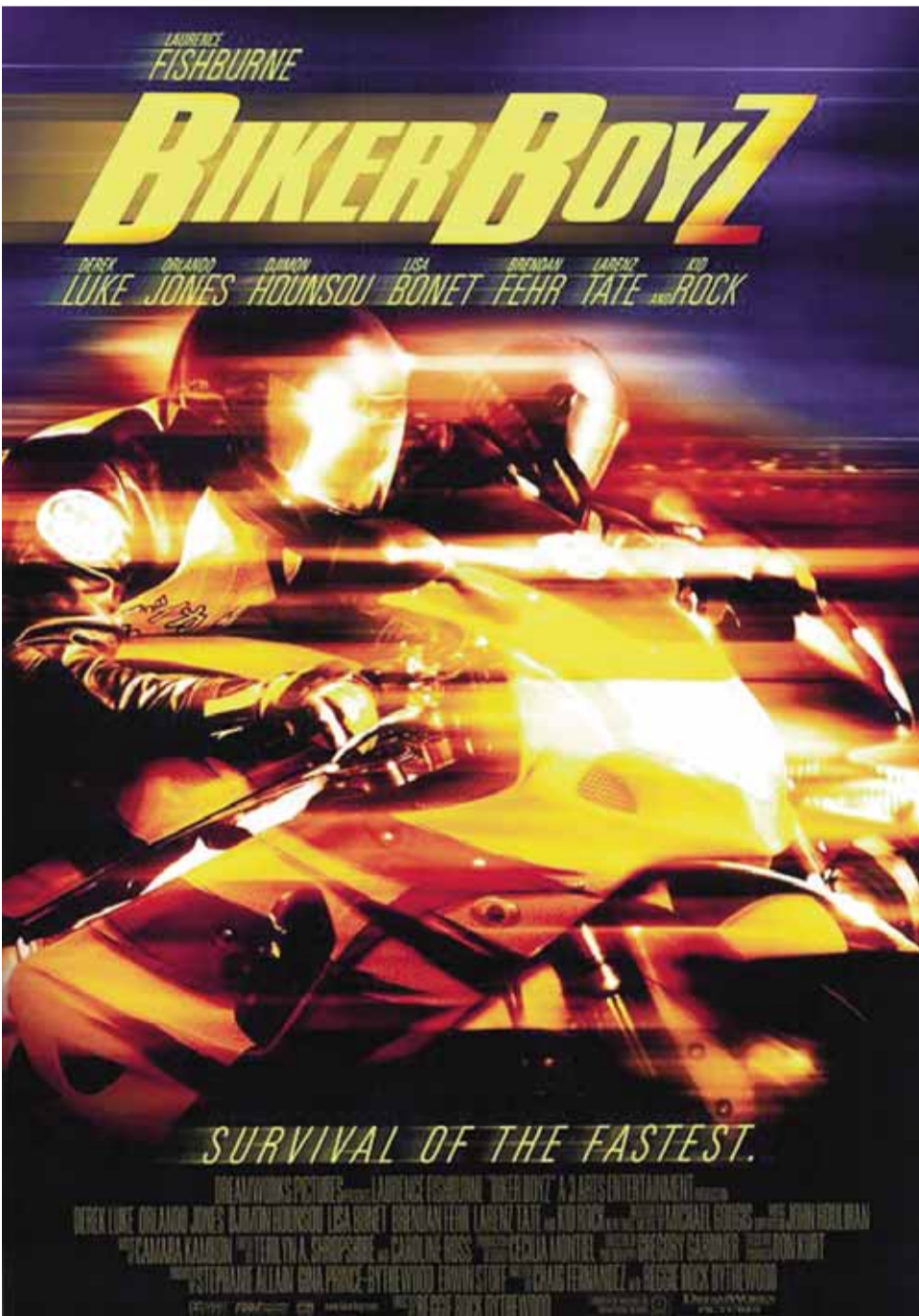
03:01 Paw Patrol
03:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
03:35 Dora The Explorer
03:59 Max & Ruby

04:07 Bubble Guppies
04:29 Little Charmers
04:41 Shimmer And Shine
05:05 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
05:27 Zack & Quack
05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
06:00 Paw Patrol
06:13 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
06:36 Dora The Explorer
07:00 Wanda And The Alien
07:11 Zack & Quack
07:22 Dora And Friends
07:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines
08:10 Paw Patrol
08:35 Shimmer And Shine
08:58 Dora The Explorer
09:22 Little Charmers
09:32 Paw Patrol
09:57 Bubble Guppies
10:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
10:42 Roary The Racing Car
10:52 Team Umizoomi
11:15 Louie
11:22 Louie
11:30 Ni Hao, Kai-Lan
11:53 Olive The Ostrich
11:58 Olive The Ostrich
12:03 Max & Ruby
12:26 Wanda And The Alien
12:37 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:48 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:00 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:22 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:45 Zack & Quack
13:55 Zack & Quack
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02:35 Louie



03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:48 Henry Danger
04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
04:36 The Haunted Hathaways
05:00 Max & Shred
05:24 Henry Danger
05:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:48 Winx Club
08:12 The Loud House
08:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
09:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:24 Harvey Beaks
09:48 Henry Danger
10:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
10:36 The Haunted Hathaways
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
11:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
13:00 Breadwinners
13:24 The Loud House
13:48 Get Blake
14:12 Rabbids Invasion
14:36 100 Things To Do Before High School
15:00 Game Shakers
15:24 Harvey Beaks
17:00 Sanjay And Craig
19:00 100 Things To Do Before High School
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
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22:12 Sanjay And Craig
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00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn



BIKER BOYZ ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

00:36 Max & Shred
01:00 The Haunted Hathaways
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants



03:00 Untamed & Uncut
03:50 Ultimate Survival
04:40 How It's Made
05:05 How It's Made
05:30 Dirty Jobs
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Doki
07:25 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
07:50 My Cat From Hell
08:40 How It's Made
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16:10 Doki
16:35 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
17:00 Troy
17:50 Race To Escape
18:40 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
19:30 Mythbusters
20:20 How It's Made
20:45 How It's Made
21:10 Troy
22:00 Race To Escape
22:50 What Happened Next?



03:00 Murder Among Friends
03:48 Disappeared
07:00 I'd Kill For You
07:50 I'd Kill For You
08:40 I'd Kill For You
09:30 I'd Kill For You
10:20 Southern Fried Homicide
11:10 Heartbreakers
12:00 Disappeared
12:50 Disappeared
13:40 Disappeared
14:30 Disappeared
15:20 Southern Fried Homicide
16:10 Murder Comes To Town
17:00 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
17:50 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
20:20 Southern Fried Homicide
21:10 A Crime To Remember
22:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
22:50 Sex Sent Me To The Slammer
23:15 Sex Sent Me To The Slammer
23:40 Vanity Fair Confidential
00:30 Scorned: Crimes Of Passion
01:20 Obsession: Dark Desires
02:10 Sex Sent Me To The Slammer
02:35 Sex Sent Me To The Slammer



03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 Calimero
03:35 Zou
03:45 Loopdidoo
04:00 Art Attack
04:25 Henry Hugglemonster
04:35 Calimero
04:50 Zou
05:00 Loopdidoo
05:15 Art Attack
05:35 Henry Hugglemonster
05:50 Calimero
06:00 Zou
06:20 Loopdidoo
06:35 Art Attack
07:00 The Hive
07:10 Zou
07:25 Loopdidoo
07:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
08:05 Sofia The First
08:30 Miles From Tomorrow
08:45 PJ Masks
09:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
09:35 Doc McStuffins
10:00 Sofia The First
10:30 Goldie & Bear

10:55 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
11:25 The Lion Guard
11:50 Miles From Tomorrow
12:15 Henry Hugglemonster
12:30 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
12:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons
13:00 Sofia The First
13:30 Doc McStuffins
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01:00 Zou
01:15 Loopdidoo
01:30 Art Attack
02:00 Calimero
02:15 Zou
02:30 Loopdidoo



06:00 Boyster
06:10 Super Matrak
06:35 Super Matrak
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 K.C. Undercover
07:50 Supa Strikas
08:15 Phineas And Ferb
08:40 Camp Lakebottom
09:10 Gravity Falls
09:35 Lab Rats
10:00 Rocket Monkeys
10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man
10:50 Boyster
11:20 Boyster
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Pair Of Kings
12:35 Lab Rats
13:00 Lab Rats
13:30 Phineas And Ferb
13:55 Phineas And Ferb
14:20 Kickin' It
14:45 Kickin' It
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Mighty Med
15:40 The 7D
15:50 The 7D
16:05 Lab Rats
16:30 Pickle And Peanut
16:55 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
17:25 K.C. Undercover
17:50 Supa Strikas
18:15 Lab Rats
18:40 K.C. Undercover
19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:10 Annedroids
19:35 Phineas And Ferb
20:00 Kirby Buckets
20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:55 K.C. Undercover
21:20 Pickle And Peanut
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Mighty Med
22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
03:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:00 Man Fire Food
04:30 Man Fire Food
05:00 Chopped
06:00 Guy's Grocery Games
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:30 Man Fire Food
08:00 Chopped

09:00 Barefoot Contessa
09:30 Barefoot Contessa
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
11:30 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
12:00 Chopped
13:00 Guy's Big Bite
13:30 Guy's Big Bite
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Man Fire Food
15:30 Man Fire Food
16:00 Chopped
17:00 The Kitchen
18:00 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
18:30 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Andy Bates American Street Feasts
20:30 Andy Bates American Street Feasts
21:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
22:00 Chopped South Africa
23:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:00 Iron Chef America
01:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
02:00 Chopped South Africa



03:40 American Restoration
04:05 American Restoration
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Grave Trade
06:00 The Curse Of Oak Island
06:50 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
07:40 Battle 360
08:30 American Restoration
08:55 Mountain Men
09:45 Ax Men
10:35 Swamp People
11:25 American Restoration
12:15 Counting Cars: Best Of
12:40 Counting Cars
13:05 American Pickers
13:55 Grave Trade
14:45 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
15:35 Battle 360
16:25 Counting Cars: Best Of
16:50 American Restoration
17:40 Down East Dickering
18:30 Duck Dynasty
19:20 Ax Men
20:10 Swamp People
21:00 Storage Wars Miami
21:25 Storage Wars
21:50 Criss Angel: Mindbreak
22:15 Barry'd Treasure
22:40 Battle 360
23:30 Inside Alcatraz: Legends Of The Rock
00:20 Grave Trade
01:10 Counting Cars: Best Of
01:35 Counting Cars
02:00 American Pickers
02:50 Down East Dickering



03:25 Don't Tell The Bride
04:20 The Syndicate
05:15 Come Dine With Me Couples
06:10 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
07:05 Chopping Block
08:00 Don't Tell The Bride
08:55 The Syndicate
09:50 Come Dine With Me Couples
10:40 The Chase
11:35 Chopping Block
12:30 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
13:25 Emmerdale
13:50 Eggheads
14:20 Coronation Street
14:45 Coronation Street
15:10 Tracey Ullman's Show
15:35 Chopping Block
16:30 Don't Tell The Bride
17:25 Together
17:55 Tracey Ullman's Show
18:20 Emmerdale
18:45 Eggheads
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 Chopping Block
20:30 Don't Tell The Bride
21:25 Together
21:55 Tracey Ullman's Show
22:20 Coronation Street
22:50 Coronation Street
23:15 Emmerdale
23:40 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
00:35 Emmerdale
01:00 Emmerdale
01:25 Emmerdale



BIG GAME ON OSN MOVIES HD



03:00 Two And A Half Men
03:30 Two And A Half Men
04:00 The Goldbergs
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
06:00 George Lopez
06:30 The Bernie Mac Show
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 The Goldbergs
08:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
09:00 Two And A Half Men
09:30 Suburgatory
10:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
10:30 The Bernie Mac Show
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 George Lopez
12:30 The Goldbergs
13:00 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
13:30 The Bernie Mac Show
14:00 Two And A Half Men
14:30 Suburgatory
15:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
15:30 Dr. Ken
16:00 Last Man Standing
16:30 George Lopez
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
18:30 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
19:00 2 Broke Girls
19:30 New Girl
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Dr. Ken
21:30 Last Man Standing
22:00 It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia
22:30 Louie
23:00 Web Therapy
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers
00:30 Dr. Ken
01:00 Last Man Standing
01:30 It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia
02:00 Louie
02:30 Web Therapy



03:00 The Leftovers
04:00 Carnivale
05:00 Warm Springs
07:00 RKO 281
08:30 For Love Or Country: The Arturo Sandoval Story
10:30 Game Change
12:30 Prom Night In Mississippi
14:30 My Zinc Bed

16:00 Game Change
18:00 Any Given Wednesday With Bill Simmons
18:30 Last Week Tonight With John Oliver
05:30 11.22.63
19:00 11.22.63
20:00 Six Feet Under
21:00 True Blood
22:00 Vinyl
23:00 Tell Me You Love Me
00:00 11.22.63
01:00 Six Feet Under
02:00 True Blood



03:00 Second Chance
04:00 Good Morning America
06:00 The Art Of More
07:00 Devious Maids
08:00 The Blacklist
09:00 The Flash
10:00 Second Chance
11:00 Devious Maids
12:00 The Blacklist
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 Second Chance
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 The Blacklist
19:00 The Flash
20:00 Shark Tank
21:00 Suits
22:00 Downton Abbey
23:00 Outlander
00:00 Devious Maids
01:00 Suits
02:00 Downton Abbey



04:00 Justice League: Gods And Monsters
06:00 Justice League: Gods And Monsters
07:30 Jesse Stone: Lost In Paradise
09:30 Biker Boyz
11:30 Independence Day
14:00 Wrath
16:00 Jesse Stone: Lost In Paradise
17:45 Biker Boyz
19:45 Need For Speed
22:00 Harley Davidson And The Marlboro Man
00:00 Mama



04:00 Se Puder... Dirija!
06:00 Father Of The Bride Part II
08:00 Win A Date With Tad Hamilton!
10:00 Se Puder... Dirija!
12:00 The Bounty Hunter
14:00 The Trip To Italy

16:00 Win A Date With Tad Hamilton!
18:00 Chef
20:00 Wild Hogs
22:00 Role Models
00:00 Save Your Legs!
02:00 Chef



03:00 Mr. Magoo
05:00 G-Force
07:00 Mulan
09:00 Wall-E
11:00 Mars Needs Moms
13:00 Beverly Hills Chihuahua
15:00 A Bug's Life
17:00 Penguins Of Madagascar
19:00 Mighty Joe Young
21:00 White Fang
23:00 Penguins Of Madagascar
01:00 Mighty Joe Young



04:00 The Doctor
06:00 Les Miserables
09:00 Beyond The Edge
10:30 The Doctor
12:30 Les Miserables
15:15 Secret Window
17:00 Beyond The Edge
19:00 What Maisie Knew
20:45 Wall Street
23:00 Maps To The Stars
01:00 I Will Follow You Into The Dark



03:00 Big Game
05:00 Goosebumps
07:00 Home
09:00 Big Game
11:00 Kon-Tiki
13:00 Le Weekend
14:45 Selma
17:00 The Cobbler
19:00 Hector And The Search For Happiness
21:00 Birdman
23:00 American Heist



04:30 Worms
06:00 Looney Tunes Rabbit's Run
08:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
10:00 Scooby-Doo! And Kiss: Rock And Roll Mystery
11:30 Curious George: Back To The

Jungle
13:00 Yellowbird
14:30 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
16:00 Tom And Jerry: Spy Quest
18:00 Scooby-Doo! And Kiss: Rock And Roll Mystery
20:00 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend
22:00 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
23:30 Tom And Jerry: Spy Quest
01:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
02:30 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend



04:45 The Duff
06:30 Trigger Point
08:15 Brick Mansions
10:00 Next Goal Wins
12:00 Pompeii
14:00 The Song
16:00 Brick Mansions
18:00 The Imitation Game
20:00 Serena
22:00 The Homesman
00:15 The Drop
02:15 The Imitation Game



05:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost
07:00 Sunshine On Leith
09:00 Fast Girls
11:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost
13:00 Late Bloomers
15:00 I'll Follow You Down
17:00 Fast Girls
19:00 The Selfish Giant
21:00 Cake
23:00 Cold In July
01:00 Fast Girls



04:30 From Dusk Till Dawn
06:15 The Hurricane
08:45 Carjacked
10:30 The Faculty
12:15 Venom
14:00 Pearl Harbor
17:00 Scary Movie 5
18:15 Coyote Ugly
20:00 Real Steel
22:15 Unbreakable
00:00 The Horse Whisperer
02:45 Ladder 49



03:00 Private Practice
04:00 Making Mr.Right
05:00 Fit For Fashion
06:00 The Simpsons
06:30 The Simpsons
07:00 Bones
08:00 American Idol
09:00 American Idol
10:00 Private Practice
11:00 Private Practice
12:00 Making Mr.Right
13:00 Fit For Fashion
14:00 The Simpsons
14:30 The Simpsons
15:00 Bones
16:00 American Idol
17:00 Cougar Town
17:30 Cougar Town
18:00 Desperate Housewives
19:00 Desperate Housewives
20:00 Fit For Fashion
21:00 American Idol
22:00 American Idol
23:00 American Idol
00:00 Private Practice
01:00 Making Mr.Right
02:00 Desperate Housewives



03:15 Your Style In His Hands
04:00 Belief
04:45 Little People, Big World
05:10 Little People, Big World
05:35 Cake Boss
06:00 Say Yes To The Dress
06:25 Cake Boss
06:50 Cake Boss
07:15 Cake Boss
07:40 Cake Boss
08:05 The Face UK
08:55 The Face UK
09:45 Little People, Big World: Wedding Farm
10:35 Nida'a
11:25 Say Yes To The Dress
11:50 Say Yes To The Dress
12:15 Say Yes To The Dress
12:40 Say Yes To The Dress
13:05 Say Yes To The Dress
13:30 Oprah's Master Class
14:20 Belief
15:10 Little People, Big World
15:35 Little People, Big World
16:00 Little People, Big World
16:25 Little People, Big World
16:50 Little People, Big World
17:15 Mormon Half Love
18:05 Designer Darlings
18:55 Cake Boss
19:20 Say Yes To The Dress ,Ai
Bridesmaids
19:45 Say Yes To The Dress ,Ai
Bridesmaids
20:10 Kate Plus 8
21:00 Jill & Jessa: Counting On
21:50 Kate Plus 8
22:40 Little People, Big World: Wedding Farm
23:30 Breaking Amish
00:20 My Giant Life
01:10 My 600-Lb Life: Where Are They Now?
02:00 Outrageous 911
02:50 Monsters Inside Me



04:00 The Fits
05:10 In Conversation With
05:40 Christmas, Again
07:00 The Journey
08:40 Welcome To Pine Hill
10:05 The Trip To Bountiful
13:10 The Strongest Man
14:50 The Journey
16:30 Welcome To Pine Hill
17:55 Miss Firecracker
19:35 Above Freezing
21:00 Cathedrals Of Culture
21:30 Hollywood's Best Film Directors
22:00 Detroit Unleaded
23:30 The Strongest Man
23:50 Banksy Does New York
01:10 Miss Firecracker
02:50 Detroit Unleaded



Kuwait University's Faculty of Education recently hosted its third exhibition titled 'Thank you my teacher, in all languages,' by Dr Samiya Al-Sanafi.



A state-formed joint committee between Kuwait University and the Ministry of Higher Education to study achieving harmonization between the higher education's outcomes and the labor market held its first meeting recently. Discussion focused on specifying a work plan to identify required jobs in the public and private sector in the next five years.



Kuwait University Rector Dr Hussein Al-Ansari met recently with Cultural Affairs Officer at the US Embassy Dr Zennia Paganini, as well as programs' officer at the embassy's cultural and media sector.



Kuwait University's Rector Dr Hussein Al-Ansari recently met with KU's strategic planning team to discuss supportive projects for the university's visions for the period between 2018 and 2022.

ORIENTATION MEETING FOR KU FRESHMEN



Kuwait University's Deanship of Students Affairs participated in the orientation meeting for new students, which took place recently at the Othman Abdulmalek Theater in the Faculty of Law.



FLORIDA PROBES POSSIBLE ZIKA CASE IN NON-TRAVELER

MIAMI: A second case of Zika virus possibly acquired locally is being investigated in Florida, just days after the first potential case was announced in Miami, officials said Thursday. Until now, there have been hundreds of cases of Zika virus in Florida but all involved people who were infected while traveling to areas where the mosquito-borne virus is spreading. If confirmed, the Florida infections would mark the arrival of the homegrown virus on the US continent for the first time.

Zika can be spread by mosquito bites or by sexual contact, and can cause birth defects if women are infected while pregnant. "The Florida Department of Health announced that it is conducting an epidemiological investigation into a possible non-travel related case of Zika virus in Broward County," said a statement, referring to the county just north of Miami, which includes Fort Lauderdale and Hollywood.

Health officials are working with "mosquito control to ensure trapping, reduction and prevention activities are conducted in the area of investigation," the department added. The department urged people living in the area and visiting to respond to requests for

blood and urine samples. "These results will help the department determine the number of people affected," it said. Regarding the possible non-travel case of Zika in Miami-Dade county, a health department spokeswoman told AFP the investigation is ongoing, and that sexual transmission "related to travel has not been ruled out." Few other details have been released about that possible case, which was first announced Tuesday. The Zika infection has been confirmed, but the mode of transmission has not.

As of Thursday, mosquitoes in the Miami area have tested negative for Zika, the spokeswoman added. Zika virus has spread through dozens of countries in Latin America. One way it could arrive in the United States is if a person who was infected with Zika while traveling elsewhere comes into the country and is bitten by a mosquito, which then bears Zika and bites another person, spreading the infection.

As of mid-July, there have been 1,306 cases of Zika in the continental United States, nearly all involving people who had traveled to areas in Latin America and the Caribbean basin that are affected by the current outbreak. Fourteen of the cases were transmit-



SAU PAULO: In this Jan 18, 2016, file photo, a female *Aedes aegypti* mosquito acquires a blood meal on the arm of a researcher at the Biomedical Sciences Institute in the Sao Paulo's University. — AP

ted by sexual contact between those who had traveled and their US-based partners. Earlier this week, a case emerged in Utah in which a caregiver appeared to have been infected by an elderly patient, though the exact route of transmission remains unknown. Zika is a concern because if a pregnant woman is infected, she faces a higher risk of bearing a child with microcephaly, in

which the skull and brain are malformed and smaller than normal. President Barack Obama spoke by phone with Florida Governor Rick Scott on Wednesday and said the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would be sending another \$5.6 million to Florida for Zika funding, in addition to \$2 million in federal funds the southern state has already received. — AFP

'ANTI-EVOLUTION' DRUGS MAYHELP IN NEW CANCER FIGHT

LONDON: Scientists are opening a new front in the war on cancer with plans to develop "anti-evolution" drugs to stop tumor cells from developing resistance to treatment. Britain's Institute of Cancer Research (ICR), one of the world's top cancer centers, said yesterday its initiative was the first to have at its heart the target of overcoming cancer evolution and drug resistance. In the same way that bacteria evolve resistance to antibiotics, cancer cells also change to evade the medicines used to fight them, leading to "survival of the nastiest".

As a result, most cancer drugs eventually stop working, causing patients to relapse. There are signs, however, that drugs can be developed to tackle this problem, while advances in immunotherapy may also make it possible to direct patients' immune systems to adapt in response to cancer changes. Over the next five years, the ICR aims to discover at least one new drug targeting a novel evolutionary mechanism and a new immunotherapy. While doctors have known about cancer drug resistance for decades, it is only now, with advances in genetics and the development of ultra-fast DNA sequencing, that scientists are unravelling the factors driving the process.

"We now have an incredibly precise understanding of the genetic basis for resistance," said ICR Chief Executive Paul Workman. "Over the next five years we will focus all our efforts on overcoming this problem ... we need researchers around the world to embrace the challenge." Already an experimental medicine inhibiting the protein Hsp90, which cancer cells use to protect themselves from stress, has shown encouraging results in clinical trials. ICR scientists are also working on an even more important controller of the stress response known as HSF1.

Workman said experiments on HSF1 were still at an early stage but scientists were close to selecting a drug candidate. The end result is likely be the development of a number of combination treatments to stop cancer evolving, similar to the drug cocktails used to control HIV or tuberculosis. In addition to understanding biology, a large part of the research effort will be driven by "big data", through the use of mathematical models to predict the path of cancer evolution from tumor samples. — Reuters



XUANQUANZHI, China : This handout picture released on July 21, 2016 by the University of Cambridge shows a 2000-year-old personal hygiene sticks with remains of cloth, excavated from the latrine. — AFP

PARASITES TRAVEL DOWN SILK ROAD

PARIS: Merchants plying the ancient Silk Road between China and the Mediterranean moved more than gold, fabrics, spices and tea—they also exported gut parasites, researchers said yesterday. It has long been theorized that the Silk Road helped spread bubonic plague, leprosy, anthrax and other infectious diseases between East Asia, the Middle East and Europe—though concrete archaeological evidence has been scant. But now analysis of the contents of an ancient latrine along the route has revealed evidence that traders 2,000 years ago did indeed spread disease.

The team from Britain and China examined feces preserved on wood and bamboo sticks wrapped in cloth—the toilet paper of their day—that were excavated in 1992 at the Xuanquanzhi pit stop in north-west China. Unearthed from a latrine dating back to 111 BC, during China's Han Dynasty, and which was still in use in 109 AD, seven samples yielded eggs from four types of parasite: roundworm, whipworm, tapeworm and Chinese liver fluke, the researchers wrote in the *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*. The fluke, a parasite that causes pain, diarrhea, jaundice and liver cancer, needs wet, marshy areas to complete a life cycle, whereas

Dunhuang is in an arid area on the edge of the desert.

"The liver fluke could not have been endemic in this dry region," said a statement from Cambridge University, whose researchers took part in the study. "In fact, based on the current prevalence of the Chinese liver fluke, it's closest endemic area to the latrine's location in Dunhuang (in north-west China) is around 1,500 kilometers away, and the species is most common in Guangdong Province—some 2,000 km from Dunhuang." Xuanquanzhi in Dunhuang was a popular stopping place for merchants, explorers, soldiers and government officials.

"Finding evidence for this species (liver fluke) in the latrine indicates that a traveler had come here from a region of China with plenty of water, where the parasite was endemic," said study co-author Piers Mitchell. "This proves for the first time that travelers along the Silk Road really were responsible for the spread of infectious disease along this route in the past." The Silk Road is so called for perhaps the most famous commodity that crossed its inter-connected network of trade routes criss-crossing Eurasia. — AFP

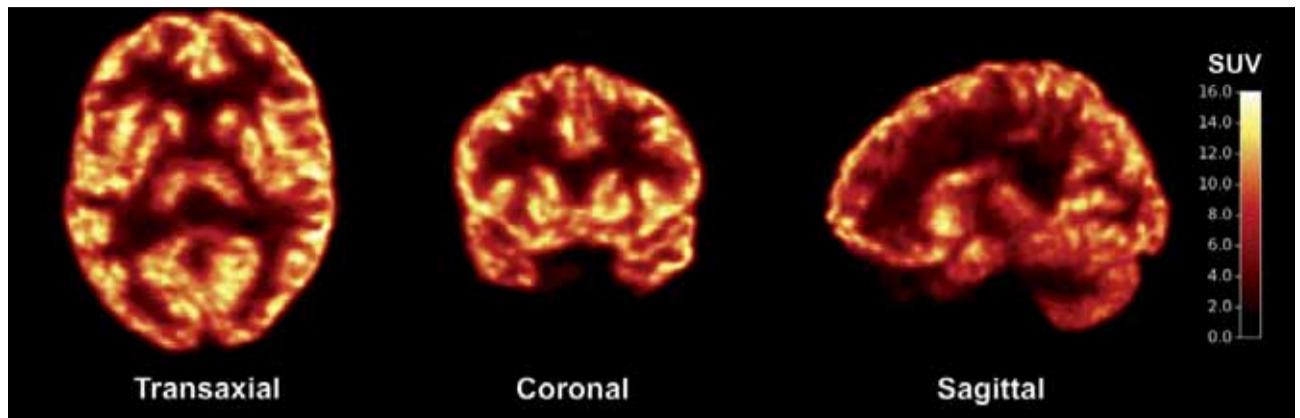
COLORADO TOWN'S WATER MAY BE TAINTED WITH MARIJUANA

HUGO: Officials told residents of a small Colorado community not to drink or shower in tap water Thursday because one of the town's wells may have been contaminated with THC, marijuana's intoxicating chemical. No illnesses have been linked to the water in Hugo, a town of about 730 people some 100 miles southeast of Denver, said Lincoln County Public Health Director Susan Kelly. THC was detected in tests conducted with field kits, although other field tests were negative, sheriff's Capt. Michael Yowell said. More definitive laboratory tests were underway, he said.

The field tests weren't capable of showing how much THC was in the water, but only whether the chemical was there, he said. Investigators found signs that one of Hugo's five wells had been tampered with, but they hadn't determined whether someone deliberately tainted the water, Yowell said. The FBI and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation are helping with the case, he said. Hugo prohibits marijuana cultivation, product manufacturing, testing facilities and retail marijuana stores, although those activities are legal elsewhere in the state.

Peter Perrone, owner of a marijuana testing facility in the Denver area, expressed doubt that THC could be in the water. The chemical isn't water-soluble, he told The Denver Post. Yowell said investigators were aware of that but had to follow up because of the field test results. He said a company that administers employee drug tests was the first to detect THC in Hugo's water. A tester sampled tap water, assuming it would be negative, but it was positive. It's unlikely that consuming pot-tainted water would cause lasting health effects, said Mark Salley, a spokesman for the state Department of Public Health and Environment.

The effects of drinking THC-laced water would depend on the concentration, the amount consumed and how quickly it was consumed, and officials don't yet have that information, Salley said. Consuming water containing THC would be similar to eating marijuana-infused food, meaning the effect would depend entirely on how much was consumed and the strength of the tainted water. — AP



In this photo provided by Science Translational Medicine, PET scans taken at the Yale PET Center show the density of connections between nerve cells, called synapses, in a healthy living brain. Yale researchers developed a way to picture synapses in a living brain, something that until now has been studied mostly during autopsies. — AP

NEW PRACTICE SHOWS HOW BRAIN CELLS COMMUNICATE

WASHINGTON: The brain's nerve cells communicate by firing messages to each other through junctions called synapses, and problems with those connections are linked to disorders like Alzheimer's and epilepsy. Now Yale University researchers have developed a way to picture synapses in living brains. The technique reported Wednesday, using PET scans, is highly experimental but it raises the possibility of one day monitoring synapse function in some common diseases.

A healthy human brain harbors trillions of synapses, a number that changes over a lifetime. Early in life, the brain "prunes" the many synapses between neurons so the right number is in each region, a process that can go wrong in disorders such as autism or schizophrenia. Changes in the density of synapses may signal where epilepsy seizures originate. Later in life,

synapse loss is associated with Alzheimer's disease. But measuring synapses has required autopsies, or occasional attempts during brain surgery. To find a non-invasive approach, the Yale-led team developed a radioactive compound, called a tracer, that is injected into the body and binds with a particular protein that is found in the brain's synapses. The idea: During a PET scan, those synapses appear lit up against dark, synapse-free areas of the brain. Animal testing confirmed the tracer was targeting synapses.

The research team then mapped the density of synapses in the brains of 10 healthy volunteers and three patients with a form of epilepsy. Compared to the healthy brains, the technique revealed lost synapses in the epilepsy-affected regions of those patients' brains, the researchers reported Wednesday in the journal Science

Translational Medicine. "This work represents a breakthrough in the ability to study an important process in the brain that is not only part of normal brain development but that also may be involved in several neuropsychiatric diseases," said Dr. Peter Herscovitch, who directs PET scanning at the National Institutes of Health's Clinical Center and wasn't involved in the research.

Much more work is needed to make the tracer last longer in the brain, a key if it's ever to be of use to doctors, cautioned Yale radiology professor Richard Carson, the study's senior author. But even though it starts disappearing quickly, he said it's a good tool to research brain function. Stay tuned: Carson's team has begun using the technique to study Alzheimer's, to determine if changes in synaptic density over time can help predict that disease's development. — AP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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SHARQIA-1
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 11:30 AM
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS 1:45 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 4:00 PM
THE CONJURING 2 6:45 PM
THE CONJURING 2 9:30 PM
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE 12:15 AM

SHARQIA-2
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 12:30 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 2:45 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 5:00 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND -3D 7:15 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 9:45 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 12:05 AM

SHARQIA-3
THE CONJURING 2 12:30 PM
FINDING DORY 3:15 PM
FINDING DORY 5:30 PM
ABU SHANAB 7:45 PM
ABU SHANAB 10:00 PM
THE CONJURING 2 12:15 AM

MUHALAB-1
SULTAN- HINDI 12:30 PM
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS 3:45 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 6:00 PM
ABU SHANAB 8:15 PM
ABU SHANAB 10:30 PM
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE 12:45 AM

MUHALAB-2
THE CONJURING 2 11:45 AM
FINDING DORY 2:30 PM
FINDING DORY 4:45 PM
THE CONJURING 2 7:00 PM
THE CONJURING 2 9:45 PM
THE CONJURING 2 12:30 AM

MUHALAB-3
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 12:00 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 2:15 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 4:30 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND -3D 6:45 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 9:30 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 11:45 PM

FANAR-1
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS 12:30 PM
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS 3:00 PM
GHOSTBUSTERS 5:15 PM
ABU SHANAB 7:30 PM
ABU SHANAB 9:45 PM
NOW YOU SEE ME 2 12:05 AM

FANAR-2
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 12:45 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 3:15 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND -3D 5:30 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 8:00 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND -3D 10:15 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 12:45 AM

FANAR-3
SULTAN- HINDI 12:45 PM
FINDING DORY 1:45 PM
FINDING DORY 4:00 PM
FINDING DORY 6:15 PM
KABALI - Tamil 8:30 PM
THU+FRI+MON
SULTAN- HINDI 8:30 PM
NO THU+FRI+MON
SULTAN- HINDI 11:45 PM

MARINA-1
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 1:00 PM
FINDING DORY 3:15 PM
FINDING DORY 5:30 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 7:45 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 10:15 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 12:45 AM

MARINA-2
FINDING DORY 11:45 AM
THE CONJURING 2 2:00 PM
THE CONJURING 2 4:45 PM
ABU SHANAB 7:30 PM
THE CONJURING 2 9:45 PM

KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (21/07/2016 TO 27/07/2016)

THE CONJURING 2 12:30 AM

MARINA-3
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 12:00 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 2:15 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 4:30 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 7:00 PM
NOW YOU SEE ME 2 9:15 PM
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE 12:05 AM

AVENUES-1
SULTAN- HINDI 11:45 AM
SULTAN- HINDI 3:00 PM
KABALI - Tamil 6:15 PM
KABALI - Tamil 9:15 PM
DHAY FE ABU DHABI - Arabic 12:15 AM
DHAY FE ABU DHABI - Arabic 6:15 PM
DHAY FE ABU DHABI - Arabic 8:45 PM
DHAY FE ABU DHABI - Arabic 11:15 PM

AVENUES-2
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -4DX 12:30 PM
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS -4DX 3:00 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -4DX 5:30 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -4DX 8:00 PM
GHOSTBUSTERS -4DX 10:30 PM
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS -4DX 1:00 AM

AVENUES-3
FINDING DORY 1:30 PM
NOW YOU SEE ME 2 4:00 PM
KABALI - Tamil 4:00 PM
KABALI - Tamil 7:00 PM
KABALI - Tamil 10:00 PM
SULTAN- HINDI 10:00 PM
MARAUDERS 1:15 AM

360°- 1
STAR TREK BEYOND -3D 1:00 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND -3D 3:30 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 6:00 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND -3D 8:30 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 11:00 PM

360°- 2
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 11:30 AM
SULTAN- HINDI 1:45 PM
SULTAN- HINDI 5:00 PM
SULTAN- HINDI 8:15 PM
INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE 11:30 PM

360°- 3
FINDING DORY 12:45 PM
FINDING DORY 5:15 PM
FINDING DORY 7:30 PM
NOW YOU SEE ME 2 9:45 PM
NOW YOU SEE ME 2 12:30 AM

AL-KOUT.1
DHAY FE ABU DHABI - Arabic 11:30 AM
THE CONJURING 2 2:00 PM
THE CONJURING 2 4:45 PM
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE 7:30 PM
THE CONJURING 2 9:45 PM
THE CONJURING 2 12:30 AM

AL-KOUT.2
FINDING DORY 1:00 PM
FINDING DORY 3:30 PM
ABU SHANAB 5:45 PM
ABU SHANAB 8:00 PM
ABU SHANAB 10:15 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 12:45 AM

AL-KOUT.3
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 12:45 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 3:15 PM
FINDING DORY -3D 5:30 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS -3D 7:45 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 10:00 PM
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS 12:15 AM

AL-KOUT.4
STAR TREK BEYOND 11:30 AM
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS 2:00 PM
DHAY FE ABU DHABI - Arabic 4:15 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 6:45 PM
STAR TREK BEYOND 9:15 PM
DHAY FE ABU DHABI - Arabic 11:45 PM

ACCOMMODATION

1 room in a fully furnished CAC 3 bedroom flat is available for single individual with kitchen and drawing room facility in Ishbiliya Block 1. Indian/Pakistani Muslim is preferred. Contact: Afzal Shafi 99714430 (C 5193)

MISCELLANEOUS

Wanted Immediately Toyota Corolla or Camry, models: 2008 to 2012, ready to buy. Please call: 60747748. (C 5192) 21-7-2016

EMERGENCY
112

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr: 03:32

Shorook 05:03

Duhr: 11:54

Asr: 15:30

Maghrib: 18:46

Isha: 20:14



**Automated enquiry
about the Civil ID card is
1889988**

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital 24812000

Amiri Hospital 22450005

Maternity Hospital 24843100

Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital 25312700

Chest Hospital 24849400

Farwaniya Hospital 24892010

Adan Hospital 23940620

Ibn Sina Hospital 24840300

Al-Razi Hospital 24846000

Physiotherapy Hospital 24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center 25716707

Rawda 22517733

Adaliya 22517144

Khaldiya 24848075

Kaifan 24849807

Shamiya 24848913

Shuwaikh 24814507

Abdullah Salem 22549134

Nuzha 22526804

Industrial Shuwaikh 24814764

Qadsiya 22515088

Dasmah 22532265

Bneid Al-Gar 22531908

Shaab 22518752

Qibla 22459381



Flight Schedule

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page
(www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

Arrival Flights on Saturday 23/7/2016

| Airlines | Flt | Route | Time |
|----------|------|-----------------|--------|
| MSC | 415 | Sohag | 00:10 |
| THY | 772 | Istanbul | 00:10 |
| JZR | 239 | Amman | 00:20 |
| JZR | 267 | Beirut | 00:30 |
| KKK | 718 | Istanbul | 00:35 |
| CLX | 852 | Luxembourg | 00:35 |
| FDB | 069 | Dubai | 00:55 |
| DLH | 635 | Doha | 01:00 |
| QTR | 1086 | Doha | 01:15 |
| JZR | 539 | Cairo | 01:20 |
| KAC | 1802 | Cairo | 01:30 |
| SAI | 441 | Lahore | 01:30 |
| PGT | 858 | Istanbul | 01:40 |
| RJA | 642 | Amman | 01:45 |
| ETH | 620 | Addis Ababa | 01:45 |
| THY | 1464 | Istanbul | 01:50 |
| MSC | 501 | Alexandria | 02:00 |
| KKK | 6506 | Istanbul | 02:05 |
| GFA | 211 | Bahrain | 02:15 |
| UAE | 853 | Dubai | 02:25 |
| THY | 768 | Istanbul | 02:50 |
| ETD | 305 | Abu Dhabi | 03:05 |
| OMA | 643 | Muscat | 03:05 |
| RJA | 644 | Amman | 03:10 |
| FDB | 067 | Dubai | 03:15 |
| MSR | 612 | Cairo | 03:15 |
| QTR | 1076 | Doha | 03:25 |
| PGT | 860 | Istanbul | 03:30 |
| KAC | 544 | Cairo | 03:40 |
| KAC | 514 | Tehran | 03:50 |
| THY | 1416 | Bursa | 04:05 |
| JZR | 555 | Alexandria | 04:15 |
| FEG | 931 | Alexandria | 05:00 |
| DHX | 170 | Bahrain | 05:10 |
| THY | 770 | Istanbul | 05:15 |
| JZR | 529 | Asyut | 06:00 |
| SYR | 341 | Damascus | 06:00 |
| PAL | 668 | Manila | /Dubai |
| KAC | 412 | Manila/Bangkok | 06:30 |
| BAW | 157 | London | 06:40 |
| JZR | 563 | Sohag | 06:55 |
| JZR | 1541 | Cairo | 07:10 |
| FDB | 5061 | Dubai | 07:15 |
| JZR | 503 | Luxor | 07:25 |
| KAC | 382 | Delhi | 07:30 |
| KAC | 346 | Ahmedabad | 07:35 |
| KAC | 206 | Islamabad | 07:40 |
| KAC | 204 | Lahore | 07:40 |
| KAC | 302 | Mumbai | 07:50 |
| SVA | 512 | Riyadh | 07:50 |
| FDB | 053 | Dubai | 07:50 |
| KAC | 344 | Chennai | 08:15 |
| KAC | 332 | Trivandrum | 08:15 |
| KAC | 352 | Kochi | 08:20 |
| KAC | 362 | Colombo | 08:20 |
| UAE | 855 | Dubai | 08:25 |
| KAC | 284 | Dhaka | 09:00 |
| ETD | 301 | Abu Dhabi | 09:00 |
| ABY | 125 | Sharjah | 09:05 |
| QTR | 1070 | Doha | 09:20 |
| RJA | 648 | Amman | 09:30 |
| FDB | 055 | Dubai | 09:40 |
| SAW | 703 | Damascus | 09:45 |
| CCE | 341 | Alexandria | 10:00 |
| UAE | 873 | Dubai | 10:40 |
| GFA | 213 | Bahrain | 10:40 |
| IRM | 1188 | Mashhad | 11:10 |
| RBG | 553 | Alexandria | 11:30 |
| JZR | 165 | Dubai | 11:50 |
| IAW | 157 | Al Najaf | 11:55 |
| FDB | 075 | Dubai | 12:25 |
| JZR | 241 | Amman | 12:30 |
| MSC | 401 | Alexandria | 12:30 |
| UAE | 871 | Dubai | 12:45 |
| FEG | 933 | Sohag | 12:55 |
| MSR | 610 | Cairo | 13:00 |
| RJD | 132 | Abu Dhabi | 13:05 |
| THY | 766 | Istanbul | 13:10 |
| KKK | 712 | ABD | 13:50 |
| FBA | 831 | Al Najaf | 13:50 |
| BON | 101 | Sarajevo | 13:55 |
| KAC | 672 | Dubai | 14:00 |
| KNE | 231 | Riyadh | 14:00 |
| QTR | 1078 | Doha | 14:05 |
| MSR | 575 | Sharm el-Sheikh | 14:15 |
| FDB | 057 | Dubai | 14:20 |
| GFA | 221 | Bahrain | 14:20 |
| JZR | 779 | Jeddah | 14:25 |
| KAC | 512 | Mashhad | 14:30 |
| MSC | 507 | HRG | 14:45 |
| KAC | 540 | Sharm el-Sheikh | 14:50 |
| KAC | 788 | Jeddah | 15:00 |
| KNE | 683 | Madinah | 15:05 |
| ETD | 303 | Abu Dhabi | 15:10 |
| OMA | 645 | Muscat | 15:10 |
| ABY | 127 | Sharjah | 15:35 |
| UAE | 857 | Dubai | 15:45 |
| NIA | 251 | Alexandria | 15:50 |
| RJA | 640 | Amman | 16:00 |
| FDB | 051 | Dubai | 16:10 |
| QTR | 1072 | Doha | 16:15 |
| JZR | 535 | Cairo | 16:20 |
| JZR | 257 | Beirut | 16:25 |
| JZR | 787 | Riyadh | 16:45 |
| KAC | 562 | Amman | 16:55 |
| KAC | 680 | Muscat | 16:55 |
| KAC | 118 | New York | 17:00 |
| SAW | 707 | Latakia | 17:05 |

| | | | |
|-----|------|-------------------|-------|
| IRA | 669 | Mashhad | 17:10 |
| SVA | 510 | Riyadh | 17:15 |
| JZR | 357 | Mashhad | 17:30 |
| GFA | 215 | Bahrain | 17:30 |
| JZR | 177 | Dubai | 17:45 |
| KAC | 792 | Madinah | 17:45 |
| JZR | 777 | Jeddah | 17:50 |
| SVA | 500 | Jeddah | 17:55 |
| QTR | 1080 | Doha | 17:55 |
| KAC | 176 | Geneva/Frankfurt | 18:20 |
| KAC | 774 | Riyadh | 18:35 |
| KAC | 786 | Jeddah | 18:35 |
| KAC | 502 | Beirut | 18:35 |
| IRM | 1180 | Mashhad | 18:45 |
| KAC | 742 | Dammam | 18:50 |
| CLX | 856 | Luxembourg | 18:50 |
| KAC | 542 | Cairo | 18:55 |
| KAC | 618 | Doha | 18:55 |
| KAC | 104 | London | 19:00 |
| GFA | 217 | Bahrain | 19:05 |
| UAE | 875 | Dubai | 19:05 |
| FDB | 063 | Dubai | 19:10 |
| KAC | 614 | Bahrain | 19:10 |
| ABY | 123 | Sharjah | 19:15 |
| MSR | 620 | Cairo | 19:20 |
| JAV | 621 | Amman | 19:25 |
| JAI | 572 | Mumbai | 19:35 |
| KAC | 674 | Dubai | 19:45 |
| FDB | 059 | Dubai | 19:50 |
| DLH | 634 | Frankfurt | 20:05 |
| ABY | 121 | Sharjah | 20:10 |
| KNE | 381 | Taif | 20:10 |
| MEA | 402 | Beirut | 20:15 |
| OMA | 647 | Muscat | 20:20 |
| JZR | 189 | Dubai | 20:25 |
| MSR | 618 | Alexandria | 20:30 |
| QTR | 1088 | Doha | 20:35 |
| FDB | 5053 | Dubai | 20:55 |
| KAC | 174 | Munich | 20:55 |
| ETD | 307 | Abu Dhabi | 21:05 |
| UAE | 859 | Dubai | 21:15 |
| ALK | 229 | Colombo | 21:20 |
| KLM | 415 | Amsterdam | 21:25 |
| THY | 764 | Istanbul | 21:30 |
| KAC | 676 | Dubai | 21:35 |
| FDB | 8053 | Dubai | 21:40 |
| QTR | 1082 | Doha | 21:55 |
| GFA | 219 | Bahrain | 22:00 |
| KAC | 564 | Amman | 22:05 |
| NIA | 151 | Cairo | 22:10 |
| ETD | 309 | Abu Dhabi | 22:10 |
| JZR | 125 | Bahrain | 22:15 |
| AIC | 987 | Chennai/Hyderabad | 22:25 |
| JZR | 185 | Dubai | 22:55 |
| JAI | 574 | Mumbai | 23:20 |
| JZR | 513 | Sharm el-Sheikh | 23:30 |
| MSR | 614 | Cairo | 23:30 |
| FDB | 071 | Dubai | 23:35 |
| JAD | 301 | Amman | 23:45 |

Departure Flights on Saturday 23/7/2016

| Airlines | Flt | Route | Time |
|----------|------|-----------------|-------|
| AIC | 976 | Goa/Chennai | 00:05 |
| BBC | 044 | Dhaka | 00:10 |
| JZR | 1540 | Cairo | 00:20 |
| JAI | 573 | Mumbai | 00:25 |
| MSR | 615 | Cairo | 00:30 |
| FDB | 072 | Dubai | 00:30 |
| JZR | 562 | Sohag | 00:30 |
| PIA | 240 | Sialkot | 00:40 |
| MSC | 416 | Sohag | 01:05 |
| KLM | 413 | Amsterdam | 01:05 |
| JZR | 502 | Luxor | 01:15 |
| KKK | 719 | ADB | 01:35 |
| THY | 773 | Istanbul | 01:40 |
| DLH | 635 | Frankfurt | 02:00 |
| CLX | 852 | Sharjah | 02:05 |
| SAI | 442 | Lahore | 02:30 |
| ETH | 621 | Addis Ababa | 02:45 |
| THY | 765 | Istanbul | 02:45 |
| PGT | 859 | Istanbul | 02:55 |
| UAE | 854 | Dubai | 03:45 |
| THY | 769 | Istanbul | 03:45 |
| RJA | 645 | Amman | 03:55 |
| MSC | 502 | Alexandria | 04:00 |
| OMA | 644 | Muscat | 04:05 |
| FDB | 068 | Dubai | 04:05 |
| ETD | 306 | Abu Dhabi | 04:10 |
| MSR | 613 | Cairo | 04:15 |
| KKK | 6505 | Istanbul | 04:20 |
| PGT | 861 | Istanbul | 04:30 |
| QTR | 1077 | Doha | 04:35 |
| THY | 1465 | Istanbul | 06:00 |
| FEG | 934 | Sohag | 06:00 |
| RJA | 643 | Amman | 06:25 |
| QTR | 1087 | Doha | 06:30 |
| THY | 771 | Istanbul | 06:45 |
| GFA | 212 | Bahrain | 06:50 |
| JZR | 240 | Amman | 06:55 |
| SYR | 342 | Damascus | 07:00 |
| FDB | 070 | Dubai | 07:05 |
| JZR | 164 | Dubai | 07:15 |
| FDB | 5062 | Dubai | 07:55 |
| BAW | 156 | London | 08:25 |
| FDB | 054 | Dubai | 08:30 |
| KAC | 173 | Munich | 08:35 |
| KAC | 511 | Mashhad | 08:40 |
| SVA | 513 | Riyadh | 08:50 |
| KAC | 539 | Sharm el-Sheikh | 08:50 |
| JZR | 778 | Jeddah | 08:50 |

| | | | |
|-----|------|------------------|-------|
| JZR | 256 | Beirut | 09:05 |
| KAC | 671 | Dubai | 09:15 |
| KAC | 787 | Jeddah | 09:30 |
| JZR | 534 | Cairo | 09:30 |
| ABY | 126 | Sharjah | 09:45 |
| UAE | 856 | Dubai | 09:50 |
| KAC | 101 | London/New York | 10:00 |
| ETD | 302 | Abu Dhabi | 10:05 |
| RJA | 649 | Amman | 10:15 |
| QTR | 1071 | Doha | 10:35 |
| FDB | 056 | Dubai | 10:40 |
| SAW | 708 | Latakia | 10:45 |
| KAC | 501 | Beirut | 11:00 |
| CCE | 342 | Sharm el-Sheikh | 11:10 |
| KAC | 561 | Amman | 11:20 |
| KAC | 679 | Muscat | 11:25 |
| KAC | 165 | Rome/Paris | 11:25 |
| GFA | 214 | Bahrain | 11:35 |
| JZR | 356 | Mashhad | 11:40 |
| KAC | 541 | Cairo | 12:05 |
| UAE | 874 | Dubai | 12:10 |
| RBG | 554 | Alexandria | 12:10 |
| JZR | 776 | Jeddah | 12:15 |
| IRM | 1189 | Mashhad | 12:20 |
| IAW | 158 | Al Najaf | 12:55 |
| KAC | 791 | Madinah | 13:00 |
| KAC | 785 | Jeddah | 13:00 |
| FDB | 076 | Dubai | 13:10 |
| JZR | 176 | Dubai | 13:10 |
| JZR | 786 | Riyadh | 13:20 |
| MSC | 402 | Alexandria | 13:30 |
| RJD | 133 | Abu Dhabi | 13:50 |
| FEG | 932 | Alexandria | 13:55 |
| MSR | 611 | Cairo | 14:00 |
| THY | 767 | Istanbul | 14:10 |
| UAE | 872 | Dubai | 14:15 |
| PAL | 669 | Dubai/Manila | 14:45 |
| KKK | 713 | Bursa | 14:50 |
| KNE | 382 | Taif | 14:55 |
| MSR | 576 | Sharm el-Sheikh | 15:00 |
| KAC | 773 | Riyadh | 15:00 |
| GFA | 222 | Bahrain | 15:05 |
| FDB | 058 | Dubai | 15:05 |
| KAC | 673 | Dubai | 15:05 |
| FBA | 832 | Al Najaf | 15:10 |
| QTR | 1079 | Doha | 15:15 |
| KAC | 617 | Doha | 15:15 |
| KAC | 741 | Dammam | 15:30 |
| MSC | 508 | HRG | 15:45 |
| JZR | 189 | Dubai | 15:50 |
| KNE | 684 | Madinah | 16:00 |
| KAC | 613 | Bahrain | 16:00 |
| BON | 102 | Sarajevo | 16:05 |
| OMA | 646 | Muscat | 16:10 |
| ABY | 128 | Sharjah | 16:15 |
| ETD | 304 | Abu Dhabi | 16:20 |
| KAC | 563 | Amman | 16:30 |
| NIA | 252 | Alexandria | 16:50 |
| RJA | 641 | Amman | 16:55 |
| FDB | 052 | Dubai | 17:00 |
| KAC | 675 | Dubai | 17:00 |
| JZR | 266 | Beirut | 17:10 |
| JZR | 512 | Sharm el-Sheikh | 17:15 |
| QTR | 1073 | Doha | 17:25 |
| UAE | 858 | Dubai | 17:40 |
| IRA | 666 | Esfahan | 18:10 |
| SVA | 511 | Riyadh | 18:15 |
| SAW | 706 | Damascus | 18:20 |
| GFA | 216 | Bahrain | 18:20 |
| JZR | 184 | Dubai | 18:20 |
| JZR | 538 | Cairo | 18:30 |
| KAC | 1801 | Cairo | 18:55 |
| QTR | 1081 | Doha | 19:05 |
| JZR | 238 | Amman | 19:15 |
| JZR | 124 | Bahrain | 19:20 |
| SVA | 505 | Jeddah | 19:25 |
| KAC | 285 | Dhaka | 19:40 |
| GFA | 218 | Bahrain | 19:50 |
| FDB | 064 | Dubai | 19:50 |
| ABY | 124 | Sharjah | 19:55 |
| KAC | 361 | Colombo | 19:55 |
| IRM | 1181 | Mashhad | 20:00 |
| CLX | 856 | Hong Kong | 20:20 |
| MSR | 621 | Cairo | 20:20 |
| JAV | 622 | Amman | 20:25 |
| FDB | 060 | Dubai | 20:30 |
| UAE | 876 | Dubai | 20:35 |
| JAI | 571 | Mumbai | 20:35 |
| KAC | 331 | Trivandrum | 20:45 |
| DLH | 634 | Doha | 20:50 |
| ABY | 122 | Sharjah | 20:50 |
| KAC | 353 | BLR | 20:55 |
| KAC | 543 | Cairo | 21:00 |
| KAC | 351 | Kochi | 21:00 |
| KNE | 232 | Riyadh | 21:10 |
| MEA | 403 | Beirut | 21:15 |
| OMA | 648 | Muscat | 21:15 |
| JZR | 554 | Alexandria | 21:15 |
| MSR | 607 | Luxor | 21:30 |
| QTR | 1089 | Doha | 21:45 |
| DHX | 171 | Bahrain | 21:50 |
| FDB | 5054 | Dubai | 21:55 |
| ETD | 308 | Abu Dhabi | 21:55 |
| ALK | 230 | Colombo | 22:20 |
| UAE | 860 | Dubai | 22:25 |
| KLM | 415 | Dammam/Amsterdam | 22:25 |
| THY | 1413 | TZX | 22:25 |
| KAC | 381 | Delhi | 22:25 |
| KAC | 301 | Mumbai | 22:30 |
| KAC | 345 | Ahmedabad | 22:55 |

WORDSEARCH PUZZLE

World Currencies 1 - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

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

- BAHT
BALBOA
BIRR
BOLIVAR
DINAR
DOLLAR
DRAM
FRANC
- GUARANI
KRONE
KWANZA
LITAS
METICAL
NAIRA
NEW SHEKEL
OUGUIYA
- POUND
QUETZAL
RAND
RUFYAA
TALA
TENGE
TOLAR

Yesterday's Solution

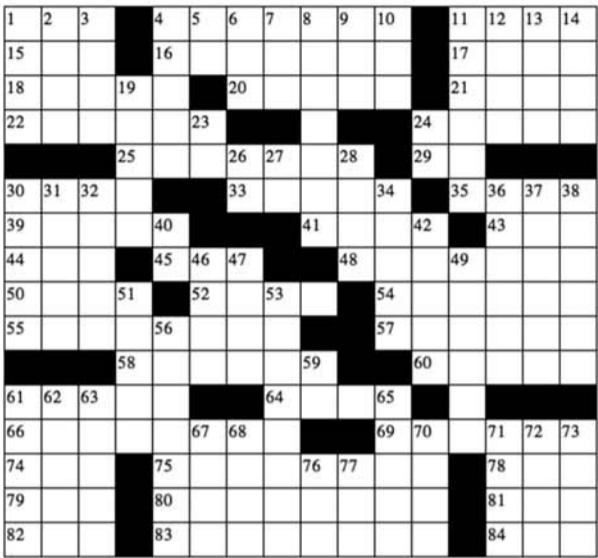
Large Print Word Search Puzzles

Fantasy 3 - Solution

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

- BARD
BATTLE
COURT
CROWN
GOBLET
GOLD COINS
GUARDS
HEADSMAN
- LANCE
LORDS
MAGIC SPELL
MEAD
MINSTREL
PALACE
PEASANTS
SHIELD
- SILVER
SPEARS
SPRITE
THRONE
TOWER
WARLOCK
WRAITH

CROSSWORD 1320



ACROSS

1. A master's degree in business.
4. (Old Testament) The son of Abraham who was cast out after the birth of Isaac.
11. Any of various aromatic resinous substances used for healing and soothing.
15. Late time of life.
16. A simple jointed bit for a horse.
17. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
18. An Indian side dish of yogurt and chopped cucumbers and spices.
20. Molten rock in the earth's crust.
21. Utter a high-pitched cry, characteristic of pigs.
22. Of an instrument of certain death.
25. (zoology) Lacking a tail or taillike appendage.
29. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
30. Goddess of spring and wife of Bragi.
33. Valuable fiber plant of East Indies now widespread in cultivation.
35. Round object that is hit or thrown or kicked in games.
39. Australian tennis player who in 1962 was the second man to win the Australian and French and English and United States singles titles in the same year.
41. (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
43. An independent agency of the United States government responsible for collecting and coordinating intelligence and counterintelligence activities abroad in the national interest.
44. One of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
45. A graphical recording of the cardiac cycle produced by an electrocardiograph.
48. An early French settler in the Maritimes.
50. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
52. An island of central Hawaii (between Molokai and Kauai).
54. Relating to or having the characteristics on an icon.
55. A region of southern Italy (forming the toe of the Italian 'boot').
57. Having a melody (as distinguished from recitative).
58. Medium-sized tree-dwelling monkey of the Amazon basin.
60. The beginning or early stages.
61. Large long-armed ape of Borneo and Sumatra having arboreal habits.
64. (British) Diesel oil used in cars and lorries with diesel engines (from d(iesel) e(engine) r(oad) v(ehicle)).
66. Durable fragrant wood.
69. A descent down a nearly vertical surface by using a doubled rope that is coiled around the body and attached to some higher point.
74. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
75. Milled product of durum wheat (or other hard wheat) used in pasta.
78. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
79. The state of matter distinguished from the solid and liquid states by.
80. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
81. A user interface in which you type commands instead of choosing them from a menu or selecting an icon.
82. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
83. Something transitory.
84. The federal department that administers federal program dealing with better housing and urban renewal.

DOWN

1. Common black European thrush.
2. (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
3. A nearly horizontal passage from the surface into a mine.
4. (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
5. A silvery malleable metallic element that resists corrosion.
6. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
7. A master's degree in fine arts.
8. Of or relating to or characteristic of Afghanistan or its people.
9. Any of various trees of the genus Ulmus.
10. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
11. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
12. An elaborate song for solo voice.
13. A transparent optical device used to converge or diverge transmitted light and to form images.
14. A recognizable kind.
19. A feudal lord or baron in Scotland.
23. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
24. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
26. A monarchy in northwestern Europe occupying most of the British Isles.
27. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
28. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
31. (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
32. Of or relating to the uvea of the eye.
34. A sheet or band of fibrous connective tissue separating or binding together muscles and organs etc.
36. Plants closely allied to the genera Satureja and Calamintha.
37. act between parties with a view to reconciling differences.
38. An acutely pointed Gothic arch, like a lance.
40. A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
42. (combining form) Very large in scale or scope or capability.
46. Outer bark of the cork oak.
47. (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
49. Manner of acting or conducting yourself.
51. A unit of weight used in Asia.
53. Stubbornly resistant to change or improvement.
56. The dry dusty pulp that remains after juice is extracted from sugar cane or similar plants.
59. That is to say.
62. The capital of Morocco.
63. Squash bugs.
65. (Norse mythology) Race of ancient gods sometimes in conflict with the Aesir.
67. A fabric with prominent rounded crosswise ribs.
68. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
70. A small cake leavened with yeast.
71. (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
72. An Eskimo hut.
73. Set down according to a plan.
76. A spacecraft that carries astronauts from the command module to the surface of the moon and back.
77. A strong emotion.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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| | 1 | | | 3 | | 9 | |

Yesterday's Solution

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

TURNER HOMERS LEAD DODGERS TO 6-3 VICTORY

Justin Turner hit two home runs with five RBIs to hand Stephen Strasburg his first loss of the season as the Los Angeles Dodgers posted a 6-3 victory over the Washington Nationals on Thursday afternoon. The Dodgers (54-43), who used eight pitchers, took two of three games in the series and are 5-1 this season against the National League East leaders. Washington (57-39) is 30-18 at home, but has lost six of its last 11 at Nationals Park. Turner recorded the fourth multi-homer game of his career, his second this season. His career-high 17 homers this season eclipses the 16 he hit for the Dodgers last season.

ORIOLES 4, YANKEES 1

Chris Tillman pitched seven sharp innings and became the second 14-game winner in the major leagues as Baltimore snapped a four-game losing streak with a victory over New York. Tillman (14-2) joined Chicago White Sox left-hander Chris Sale on the exclusive list by allowing one run and four hits. Tillman won his fourth straight decision while improving to 7-0 against American League East opponents. The right-hander struck out seven, got double

none in 6 1/3 innings. Liriano, who gave up three runs (two earned) on four hits, had won only once in eight starts since May 24. Gregory Polanco had a pair of hits and scored twice for the Pirates, who took two of three in the series. Pittsburgh has won 12 of 17.

RED SOX 13, TWINS 2

Steven Wright tossed eight innings of two-run ball and the Boston offense took it from there en route to a victory over Minnesota at Fenway Park. Wright was perfect through 4 1/3 innings before giving up two runs-one earned-in the fifth. He allowed four hits and a walk while striking out a career-high-tying nine. David Ortiz hit a two-run homer and drove in four runs, Jackie Bradley Jr. added three RBIs and Mookie Betts and Xander Bogaerts each had two RBIs for Boston, which maintained a 1/2-game lead over Baltimore for sole possession of first place in the American League East.

CARDINALS 6, PADRES 5

Down by four runs with six outs left, St. Louis con-

during his 87-pitch outing. DJ LeMahieu and Nick Hundley each had two hits for the Rockies.

TIGERS 2, WHITE SOX 1

Ian Kinsler and Miguel Cabrera homered as Detroit beat the Chicago in a rain-shortened game. Rain delayed the contest for two hours after the top of the seventh inning before it was called. Kinsler went 3-for-4 as the Tigers snapped a two-game losing streak. Detroit improved to 5-2 against the Chicago this season. The White Sox lost for the seventh time in eight games. Tigers starter Mike Pelfrey (3-9) surrendered a run and eight hits in 5 1/3 innings. He entered 1-5 with a 5.81 ERA in his career against the White Sox.

RAYS 7, ATHLETICS 3

Matt Moore pitched seven strong innings, and Tim Beckham and Corey Dickerson hit solo home runs as Tampa Bay defeated Oakland. Moore (6-7) gave up three runs on four hits, struck out six and walked two. He pitched at least six innings for the ninth straight game. Beckham, who had a franchise-record-tying five hits Wednesday against Colorado, homered in his first at-bat Thursday and singled in his second, giving him eight straight hits in eight at-bats. — Reuters



WASHINGTON: Washington Nationals starting pitcher Stephen Strasburg delivers a pitch during the third inning of a baseball game against the Los Angeles Dodgers. — AP

plays in the first two innings and retired 16 of the last 17 hitters he faced. Tillman also induced eight other ground-outs aside from the double plays.

MARLINS 9, PHILLIES 3

Tom Koehler was nearly unhittable, the Miami offense did plenty of hitting and rolled to a win over Philadelphia at Citizens Bank Park. The Marlins seized control of the game in the fourth inning. Christian Yelich led off with his ninth home run of the season to get Miami on the board. Doubles from Marcell Ozuna and Chris Johnson sandwiched Derek Dietrich being hit by a pitch from Phillies starter Jerad Eickhoff. All three players scored runs in the inning. Adeiny Hechavarria's RBI double made the score 4-0.

PIRATES 5, BREWERS 3

Matt Joyce hit a three-run home run in the first inning and drove in four runs, and Pittsburgh beat Milwaukee. Francisco Liriano struck out a season-high 13 and walked

cocted a stunning comeback and swept a four-game series from San Diego. Aledmys Diaz was the hero, slashing an RBI single for the winning run as St. Louis won four straight games at home for the first time this year. Tommy Pham started the winning rally with a double off Carlos Villanueva. After an intentional walk to Greg Garcia, Jeremy Hazelbaker sacrificed both runners up 90 feet. Following a second intentional walk to Jedd Gyorko, Diaz lined a 3-2 pitch into left to score Pham.

ROCKIES 7, BRAVES 3

Chad Bettis pitched well into the seventh inning, and Carlos Gonzalez opened the scoring with a three-run homer in the sixth inning as Colorado beat Atlanta. The Rockies' victory came after consecutive lopsided losses to the Tampa Bay Rays by scores of 10-1 and 11-3, defeats in which the Colorado starters pitched a combined seven innings. Bettis (8-6) gave up one run and four hits in 6 2/3 innings. He got 11 outs on ground balls

MLB results/standings

La Dodgers 6, Washington 3; Baltimore 4, NY Yankees 1; Miami 9, Philadelphia 3; Pittsburgh 5, Milwaukee 3; Boston 13, Minnesota 2; St. Louis 6, San Diego 5; Detroit 2, Chicago White Sox 1 (7 innings); Colorado 7, Atlanta 3; Tampa Bay 7, Oakland 3.

American League Eastern Division

| | W | L | PCT | GB |
|------------|----|----|------|-----|
| Boston | 54 | 39 | .581 | - |
| Baltimore | 54 | 40 | .574 | 0.5 |
| Toronto | 54 | 42 | .563 | 1.5 |
| NY Yankees | 48 | 47 | .505 | 7 |
| Tampa Bay | 38 | 57 | .400 | 17 |

Central Division

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----|----|------|------|
| Cleveland | 56 | 38 | .596 | - |
| Detroit | 50 | 46 | .521 | 7 |
| Kansas City | 47 | 47 | .500 | 9 |
| Chicago White Sox | 46 | 49 | .484 | 10.5 |
| Minnesota | 35 | 60 | .368 | 21.5 |

Western Division

| | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|------|------|
| Texas | 55 | 41 | .573 | - |
| Houston | 51 | 44 | .537 | 3.5 |
| Seattle | 48 | 47 | .505 | 6.5 |
| LA Angels | 43 | 52 | .453 | 11.5 |
| Oakland | 42 | 54 | .438 | 13 |

National League Eastern Division

| | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|------|------|
| Washington | 57 | 39 | .594 | - |
| Miami | 52 | 43 | .547 | 4.5 |
| NY Mets | 50 | 44 | .532 | 6 |
| Philadelphia | 44 | 53 | .454 | 13.5 |
| Atlanta | 33 | 63 | .344 | 24 |

Central Division

| | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|------|------|
| Chicago Cubs | 57 | 37 | .606 | - |
| St. Louis | 51 | 44 | .537 | 6.5 |
| Pittsburgh | 49 | 46 | .516 | 8.5 |
| Milwaukee | 40 | 53 | .430 | 16.5 |
| Cincinnati | 36 | 59 | .379 | 21.5 |

Western Division

| | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|------|------|
| San Francisco | 57 | 38 | .600 | - |
| LA Dodgers | 54 | 43 | .557 | 4 |
| Colorado | 44 | 51 | .463 | 13 |
| San Diego | 41 | 55 | .427 | 16.5 |
| Arizona | 40 | 55 | .421 | 17 |



WASHINGTON DC: Gael Monfils of France returns a shot to Borna Coric of Croatia during day 4 of the Citi Open at Rock Creek Tennis Center. — AFP

MONFILS CRUISES INTO WASHINGTON QUARTERS

WASHINGTON: US top seed John Isner and French second seed Gael Monfils breezed into the ATP and WTA Washington Open quarter-finals Thursday with impressive serving performances in straight-set triumphs. Isner blasted 15 aces in downing Cypriot 15th seed Marcos Baghdatis 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 while Monfils fired 12 aces and won 22 of 23 first-serve points in defeating Croatian teen 16th seed Borna Coric 6-2, 6-3. Neither winner faced a break point.

"When you win most of your points with the serve, you can focus on your shots and you feel less pressure," Monfils said. "I've been serving much better this year. I've changed some motions with my legs. I serve a lot and it's working so I enjoy it. I trust my serve and the court is fast so I can switch from my defense to attack." Monfils, the 2011 Washington runner-up, will next meet US eighth seed Sam Querrey, who ousted Ukraine 11th seed Alexandr Dolgoplov 7-6 (7/5), 6-3.

Three-time Washington runner-up Isner next faces US fifth seed Steve Johnson, who ousted American qualifier Ryan Harrison 6-4, 6-4. Johnson won his first ATP crown last month at Nottingham. "He turned a corner and he has carried that confidence over," Isner said of Johnson. "He's playing very well. This is an extremely tough match." No American has won the Washington title since Andy Roddick in 2007.

"Still the number one is John," Monfils said. "I will get to the final if I can. I've got to focus on my game." Ball-bashing Ivo Karlovic, the 37-year-old Croatian who won last week at Newport to become the ATP's oldest singles champion since 1979, smashed 21 aces in dumping Australian third seed Bernard Tomic 7-6 (7/4), 6-3. US sixth seed Jack Sock downed Britain's Daniel Evans 6-1, 7-5, to book a last-eight date with Karlovic, the only men's quarter-finalist not among the top eight seeds.

"It's a good tournament for big servers," Isner said. "Myself, Karlovic is still alive, Jack and Stevie. A big serve and a forehand." Sock hit only 44 percent of his first serves but won 23 of 25 first-serve points. "I was able to 1-2 punch, serve and forehand and get a few points that way," Sock said. French fourth seed Benoit Paire outlasted Luxembourg's 14th-seeded Gilles Muller 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (7/4) and will play Germany's Alexander Zverev for a semi-final spot. Zverev, 19, matched his Washington run last year by beating Tunisia's Malek Jaziri 6-2, 5-7, 6-2.

Ozaki reaches last eight

Risa Ozaki, a 22-year-old from Japan who lost five of her prior six WTA matches before this week, outlasted Britain's Naomi Broady 6-1, 5-7, 6-4, to reach her first tour quarter-final, where she will face Kazak sixth seed Yulia Putintseva. Ozaki ousted defending champion and second seed Sloane Stephens in her opening match.

American Lauren Davis upset Puerto Rican third seed Monica Puig 6-4, 6-2 to reach a quarter-final against Italy's Camila Giorgi, who advanced by walkover when Austrian Tamira Paszek withdrew with an upper respiratory infection. French fourth seed Kristina Mladenovic beat Germany's Sabine Lisicki 6-3, 6-3, and next plays Belgian seventh seed Yanina Wickmayer. Australian top seed Samantha Stosur meets US wildcard Jessica Pegula in yesterday's other women's quarter-final. — AFP

DAY DEFENDS PGA CROWN, MICKELSON SEEKS MAGIC

SPRINGFIELD: Moving the 98th PGA Championship two weeks after the British Open to accommodate golf's Rio Olympic return has allowed several favorites to quickly try and move on from disappointments at Royal Troon. Australia's world number one Jason Day, who will defend his first major title this week at Baltusrol, shared 22nd at the British Open. He has won seven times in the past year but still seeks more major mastery.

"It does free you up," Day said of winning a major. "Because you don't want that tag of 'best player without a major' and I had that tag for awhile. And I don't anymore." "It has been a crazy last 12 months. I think the next step for me is to go, 'OK, how many can I win now?' and be able to shoot a goal for maybe the career Grand Slam, even though it is tough to get that, but that's a good goal to have." Third-ranked Jordan Spieth shared 30th at Royal Troon and 37th at the US Open. The US star has struggled since a back-nine meltdown cost him the Masters crown last April.

"If you win a major, it would be pretty amazing," Spieth said. "Just getting three majors in my career would be special. That week at PGA Championship alone could become one of the most special weeks I've ever had, so that's what we're focused on, grinding for that." World number two Dustin Johnson, who won his first major at last month's US Open, has 13 top-10 finishes in 30 major starts, including a share of ninth at Royal Troon. He will try to be the first man to win the US Open and PGA in the same year since Jack Nicklaus in 1980.

"When I'm teeing it up in a major, I'm not still trying to get that first one and I know what it takes," Johnson said. "I know I've got what it takes to get it done. That obviously gives me a lot of confidence when I'm out there playing. "Winning, it has definitely increased my confidence and maybe even relaxed me more." And then there is Phil Mickelson, the 46-year-old US left-hander who won the last PGA staged at Baltusrol in 2005. He was a heartbreaking runner-up to British Open winner Henrik Stenson, losing a two-man duel for the Claret Jug to the Swede.

"I've got a lot of special memories going back to Baltusrol in '05, and probably that we don't have a month to wait between majors is a good thing for me," Mickelson said. "I'll try to look at the positives and take that into Baltusrol and keep my game sharp." Stenson, who had three runner-up efforts and six third places in majors, vows to be on his game even after his long-sought major breakthrough. "I'm going to be out there trying my hardest in the PGA," he said.

'It will be odd'

Day won last year's PGA at Whistling Straits with a major record of 20-under par and is the tour's hottest player over the past year. "I always thought I could play golf on a level like this," Day said. "I can't get too complacent with where I'm at. I'm currently ranked the best player in the world, but I need to work harder than I ever have before to keep that spot." Spieth hopes momentum will ease the tension of two majors in such a short span.

"It will be odd to play two majors in three weeks. I'm sure that will be a different feeling," he said. "But it's a good feeling if you can ride any kind of momentum and I think we can." Baltusrol's par-70 layout could be just the tonic Mickelson needs to forget the British Open defeat, his 11th second-place finish in a major. "It was probably the best I've played and not won. I think that's probably why it's disappointing," Mickelson said. "I played what I feel was well enough to win and yet I got beat by three strokes."

'Each one means a lot'

"It's not like I have decades left of opportunities to win majors, so each one means a lot to me. I'm happy with the way I played, but even more disappointed that it wasn't enough." Spieth still sees Mickelson as a threat whenever he plays. "He has the utmost confidence that he can beat anybody on any given day. Why wouldn't he? He's a legend," Spieth said. "I love how confident he is in the way he strikes the ball. His hand-eye coordination is as good as anyone's at anything in the world." — AFP



OAKVILLE, Ontario: Jason Day, of Australia, watches his tee shot on the 15th hole during the first round at the Canadian Open golf tournament at Glen Abbey in Oakville. — AP

FIVE FAST FACTS OF THE 98TH PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

SPRINGFIELD: Fast facts on the 98th PGA Championship:

1. This is the ninth major tournament staged at Baltusrol, the first since Phil Mickelson won the first PGA Championship staged at Baltusrol in 2005. It has hosted seven US Opens, with Scotland's Willie Anderson winning the first in 1903 to become the only Baltusrol major winner not from the USA. Other US Open winners here were Lee Janzen in 1993, Jack Nicklaus in 1967 and 1980, Ed Fergol in 1954, Tony Manero in 1936 and amateur Jerome Travers in 1915.
2. This year's PGA Championship is being moved up two weeks from its traditional early August place in the season schedule to allow for the return of golf to the Olympic sports lineup for the first time in 112 years at the Rio Games. For those who did not qualify for Brazil or decided not to attend, the US PGA Tour is staging the John Deere Classic at the same time.
3. Australian Jason Day won his first major title at the 2015 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits with a major record 20-under par total for 72 holes (288 aggregate total), although the low aggregate record for the PGA Championship remains the 265 (15-under) by American David Toms at the 2001 PGA at Atlantic Athletic Club. Day has won seven titles in the past 12 months overall, including this year's Arnold Palmer Invitational, Players Championship and World Golf Championship Match Play.
4. Gene Sarazen was the youngest winner in PGA Championship history when he took the 1922 title at Oakmont Country Club. Sarazen was 20 years, 5 months and 22 days old when he defeated Emmet French 4 and 3 in the match-play final. He would win again in 1923 to become the first golfer to win the PGA Championship in consecutive years. Jim Barnes won the first two PGAs but in 1916 and 1919 due to World War I.
5. The oldest winner in PGA Championship history was Julius Boros, who is also the oldest champion in major golf history as a result of his triumph in the 1968 PGA Championship at Pecan Valley Golf Club in San Antonio, Texas. Boros was 48 years, 4 months and 18 days old when he edged Arnold Palmer and Bob Charles by a stroke for the title. It was the third and final major crown for the American, who also won the 1952 and 1963 US Opens. — AFP

FROOME: DUMOULIN TIME-TRIAL FAVORITE

MEGEVE: Chris Froome believes Tom Dumoulin will be the man to beat in the time-trial at the Rio Olympics next month. Froome beat the Dutchman in Thursday's second time-trial at the Tour de France this year, but he was bested by Dumoulin in the first one last week. Thursday's time-trial was just 17km long and almost all uphill, whereas the one Dumoulin won was more than twice as long and although it had two climbs, most of it was flat.

The Rio time-trial will be 54.5km long with four climbs, suiting specialist time-trial expert Dumoulin. And Froome, who was third in the time-trial in London four years ago behind British team-mate Bradley Wiggins and German Tony Martin, believes this time

around Dumoulin will be the favorite. "He's certainly the man to beat in Rio. He's made it a big objective and focused a lot on it," said Froome. "After freshening up after this year's Tour de France he'll be the man to beat."

On a flatter course, three-time world time-trial champion Martin would probably be the favourite, or even veteran Fabian Cancellara, a four-time world champion, although one whose best years are now behind him. But it is Dumoulin's ability to be strong on climbs as well as on a flat speed test that makes him the favorite for Froome. "He's a great rider, he's shown already what he can do in Grand Tours, he's been very close to winning the Vuelta (a Espana). "Let's see, he's got great potential. Let's see what he can do in Rio."

Dumoulin proved his versatility last year in coming sixth at the Vuelta, having led the race until late on. He won two stages during that race, including a time-trial, just as he has done at this year's Tour de France. His best finish yet in the world championships was second behind Martin in 2014, but the mix of climbs and flat should suit Dumoulin, who is getting better every year. The lumpy course will also favor Froome, who has proved himself an able time-trialer as well as climber.

Hot seat

Dumoulin sat in the hot seat for one and a half hours on Thursday waiting to see if any rider would beat his time. In the end one did, the very last one, but only by 21 seconds.

Even before Froome had finished, Dumoulin had admitted it would be hard to hold onto the lead. "It wasn't my best time-trial but also not a bad one," he said. "I've been over my limit sometimes. The GC (general classification) riders should be able to do better. In his best form, Chris Froome would beat me."

It proved to be an accurate prediction, although it was more surprising that none of the other specialist climbers could do likewise. Dumoulin has said before he believes he will one day challenge for Grand Tour success but he's not quite ready yet. If he manages to keep improving his climbing, that day could come sooner rather than later. But in the meantime, he has a special prize to go for in Rio. — AFP



Colombia's Nairo Quintana trains prior to the start of the 17 km individual time-trial, the eighteenth stage of the 103rd edition of the Tour de France cycling race on July 21, 2016 between Sallanches and Megeve, French Alps. — AFP

RAIN NOT SHINE THE KEY TO QUINTANA REVIVAL

ALBERTVILLE: With the rain comes hope, at least that's what Tour de France fourth-placed rider Nairo Quintana believes. Following the oppressive heat of the last few days in the Alps, the Colombian is hoping for a change of fortunes as radical as Friday's altering skies. Quintana has been a shadow of himself at this Tour, sitting fourth overall at 4min 37sec off his great British rival and race leader Chris Froome.

The 26-year-old Movistar leader had been expecting to challenge the Tour's Caesar and many even believed, given the mountainous course, that this year would see a passing of the baton from England's finest Kenyan import to the pride of the Andes. Yet instead, Quintana has found himself impotent, uninspired and overrun during a Tour in which he's been unable to launch an attack or acceleration to change the tide of a race that's been strangled by Froome's all-conquering Sky team. Yet Quintana, second overall to Froome in 2013 and last year, still believes there is

hope, although not in terms of overall victory.

Searing heat

After the searing heat, Friday's 146km 19th stage from Albertville to Saint Gervais Mont Blanc is due to be ridden under thick, dark clouds with intermittent rain. The temperature too will drop around 10 degrees Celsius. And Quintana, who until Thursday was at a loss to explain his sluggish form, claims that will allow him to finally, and truly, express himself. "I didn't expect to be feeling like this, it's not fatigue that I'm feeling, but my body isn't responding," complained Quintana following the uphill time-trial in which he finished a disappointing 10th.

"I could have at the moment a type of allergy because I'm not able to oxygenate my legs very well. "It might be an allergy from this area that I have and which has been affecting me the last few days." Yet Quintana believes the solution has arrived with grey skies,

although too late to save his hopes of overall victory. Instead he is embroiled in a thrilling battle for the minor placings. "I hope that with the rain that is expected, I'll feel better and will be able to fight for the podium," he said. Bauke Mollema in second is just 1min 08sec ahead of Richie Porte in sixth with four categorized climbs on Friday's menu, including the first category ascent to the finish.

Another four categorized climbs will be tackled on Saturday's 20th stage and while Froome's Sky armada will unlikely be troubled, the rest should at least scabble amongst themselves in the fight for a top three finish. Quintana is currently outside of that, but he is only 45sec behind Mollema and just 21sec off third-placed Adam Yates, the 23-year-old Briton and surprise package of this Tour. Also in the hunt are Frenchman Romain Bardet and Australian Porte. That battle at least promises much, despite the damp squib of the yellow jersey race. — AFP

WOMAN TAKES ON OLYMPIC BUILDERS

RIO DE JANEIRO: If the world's strongest and fastest athletes in Rio's Olympic Park want to see a real champion they should look across the fence for Maria da Penha Macena. Penha, 51, may not have sporting muscles, but she's proved her strength in taking on Rio's powerful mayor and the Olympic construction machine in refusing to leave the place she calls home. The area, called Vila Autodromo, was a working class favela where Penha had lived 23 years before the authorities said the whole neighborhood had to be torn down to make way for the Olympic Park.

After long resistance, nearly everyone agreed, in many cases swapping their homes for generous financial compensation or a place in a newly built housing complex. But Penha and a handful of others stayed on, standing their ground as the streets around them were razed. Against all odds they won: Penha's original house was knocked down but the government agreed to build her a new dwelling nearby. "I am happy because what I wanted above all was to stay in this community and we were victorious," Penha, a cleaning lady, says. However the long drama came at huge cost. "Out of the 600 families that used to be here there are only 20 now," she said amid noise and dust from construction on her house.

Thorn in mayor's side

Mayor Eduardo Paes is used to getting his own way when it comes to staging the Olympics, which start August 5. And starting in 2013 he saw the Vila Autodromo, a laid back and largely unregulated community, as an eyesore in the way of the Olympic Park and his glitzy vision of Rio de Janeiro. Eviction orders were issued, backed by compensation packages, and immediately resistance started, dividing neighbors as they debated over whether to accept.

Penha turned into a leader of the stay camp, literally fighting for her right to remain: her nose was broken during violent scuffles with city security forces at one protest. Vocal and a frequent presence in the international media, she became a constant thorn in Paes' side. At one point she was being offered the equivalent of \$614,000 to leave a huge fortune for most Brazilians-but still refused. "I believe in the right not to sell. Happiness, rights and respect, they have no price," she said.

On March 8 this year, a construction crew flattened her house, breaking her heart. "It was as if they were gradually destroying the history of my life," she said. The house gone, Penha was forced to move in with relatives. But while she looked defeated, she had her supporters: that same day, the local legislature recognized her in honor of International Women's Day. And Penha was still not giving up. "They can knock down my house, but not me," she told journalists at the time.

New life

Amazingly, her patience was awarded. In April, City Hall accepted a new development plan for the area which would include housing for 20 families, including Penha's. Construction is underway and expected to end soon. Penha, true to form, is staying on site in a container so that she can supervise the work. —AFP

NIGHTMARE FOR SPEEDSKATING STAR SABLIKOVA

PRAGUE: Triple Olympic speedskating champion Martina Sablikova will travel to Rio for the cycling time trial without knowing whether she will be allowed to take part, her agent said yesterday. The 29-year-old Czech celebrated qualification to Rio after the world cycling championships in Richmond, United States last year. But the Czech Cycling Federation apparently overlooked a glitch in the rules—that time trial qualifiers must also qualify for the road race, which Sablikova has not.

Sablikova was not on the list of time trial qualifiers published by the International Cycling Union (UCI) in early June, which led to frantic legal and diplomatic action to secure a berth for her. Those pleading with International Olympic Committee for Sablikova included Czech President Milos Zeman

and seven-time Olympic gymnastics champion Vera Caslavskaya. But the pleas have come to nothing up to now. “Martina Sablikova has decided to travel... to Rio where she will train for the Olympic time trial and wait for a special panel of the Court of Arbitration for Sport... which might allow her to race,” the Sport Invest agency said yesterday.

“We are glad she has decided to fight for her Olympic dream to the very end,” said her agent David Travnicek. Sablikova, who won three Olympic gold medals at Vancouver 2010 and Sochi 2014 and who is the reigning world champion on 3,000 and 5,000 meters and in allround speedskating, said she would go to Rio to honor the work done in her favor. “I can see how much work and effort has been exerted by so many people so that I can keep

dreaming my Olympic dream,” Sablikova said in a statement.

“It wasn’t easy. The possibility of racing at the summer Olympics is of course a big challenge,” said the woman who has won the speedskating world cup on 3,000 and 5,000 metres every year since 2006. “On the other hand, the uncertainty about my participation and the possibility of a speedy return home are a big scare,” she said in a statement. Sablikova finished 12th in the time trial at Richmond and ninth in reduced rankings with only one rider from each country, meeting the UCI criteria granting berths to top 10 racers in the reduced rankings. But the UCI reckons with “25 riders already entered in the Road Race event” for the Rio time trial scheduled for August 10. — AFP



ZHUKOVSKY: Russian athletes rest before competing at the Russian Athletics Cup, at Zhukovsky, outside Moscow. — AP

RUSSIA WAITS ON RIO CALL AS IOC REPORTS TEST FAILURES

MOSCOW: Russia yesterday said it expects to avoid a blanket ban at the Rio Games over state-run doping as a fresh batch of drug test failures from Beijing 2008 and London 2012 rocked the Olympics. The IOC’s executive board are to hold a conference call on Sunday to discuss barring Russia from the Rio Games starting on August 5 over bombshell doping revelations. The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) on Thursday rejected an appeal by Russia’s track and field team against their suspension from Rio in a decision seen as a key indicator as the IOC debates whether to kick out the whole Russian team. Russia is a sporting powerhouse whose absence from Rio would create the biggest crisis in decades for the Olympic movement and Moscow is banking on the IOC rejecting a total ban.

“All sportsmen who have not been convicted or are not under suspicion of doping should have the right to compete,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. “That is the decision we are counting on.” Against the backdrop of the current doping scandal engulfing Russia the IOC reported separately on Friday 45 new doping failures from the

last two Games, bringing the total number of positive drug tests to 98 since a retesting program was launched. The IOC has reanalyzed more than 1,200 samples, with the emphasis on medal winners, in a bid to clean up the Olympics’ reputation. It said it was not able to identify the athletes concerned or their nationalities for legal reasons but said 30 positives came back from Beijing, including for 23 medal winners, and 15 from London.

Calls for action

The IOC is facing international pressure to act tough on Russia and ban the entire team over incendiary revelations of a state-run doping system that has seen the country cheat its way to victory. Fourteen national anti-doping agencies including the United States, Canada and Germany sent a joint letter to IOC President Thomas Bach on Thursday urging him to ban Russia from Rio. Officials in Moscow have slammed the decision by CAS to reject its appeal against a ban from the world athletics body IAAF, calling it part of a broader political campaign by the West against Russia.

The suspension of the track and field team already means that star athletes like pole vaulter Yelena Isinbayeva and hurdler Sergey Shubenkov will not be in Rio. Isinbayeva—who has threatened to call time on her career over the ban-slammed the CAS ruling as a “funeral for athletics.” Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko—who has clung on despite the scandal-said Moscow now hopes the IOC will defer to individual international sporting federations to decide whether other Russian squads can compete.

‘In suspense’

The CAS ruling has been the focus of Olympic attention since an independent WADA report this week said Russia ran a “state-dictated failsafe system” of drug cheating in 30 sports at the 2014 Sochi Games and other major events. But Russia has found support from some international sports bodies, with the International Judo Federation (IJF) insisting all clean athletes should be allowed to take part in Rio. Individual Russian sports federations said they were now looking nervously ahead for the IOC to make its next move. AFP

CHINA CARRIES RIO’S TABLE TENNIS TORCH

RIO DE JANEIRO: The Rio Olympics table tennis in five key points:

There are at least two Olympic certainties: the torch will burn and China will sweep table tennis gold. China has won 24 of 28 gold medals in its national sport since its 1988 Olympic debut, plus more silver and bronze than you can shake a paddle at, and both team titles since that format launched in 2008. After China swept all singles medals in Beijing in 2008, a rule change now limits countries to two contestants per gender to give others a shot at the podium. So the smart money is on a Chinese 1-2 in both men’s and women’s singles, with Japan, Germany, Chinese Taipei or South Korea fighting for bronze.

China is so loaded that it snubbed world number one Liu Shiwen for the Rio women’s singles, citing recent inconsistency. No problem. London 2012 gold and silver medallists Liu Xiaoxia and Ding Ning will lead the charge instead. Watch for 15-year-old Mima Ito of Japan, who defeated Ding in an April qualifying tournament. China’s men are world number one Ma Long and London gold medalist Zhang Jike who, incidentally, was named after Brazilian soccer legend Zico.

The August 6-17 competition at the RioCentro exhibition centre features four medal possibilities: men’s and women’s singles and team competitions. The team event features up to 16 three-person national squads competing in a rapid-fire succession of singles and doubles matches with five-minute breaks in between. All contests are single-elimination.

Table tennis showcases lightning reflexes and eye-hand coordination, with elite players smacking the ball up to 160km per hour (100mph) while using deceptive body movement and ball spin to confuse opponents. In 2000, balls were expanded to 40 mm in diameter (1.57 inches), up by 2 mm, to increase air resistance and slow the ball down after complaints that the game’s machine-gun pace was too hard for spectators to follow.

Originating as a parlour game in Victorian England played with makeshift paddles, rounded wine corks as balls, and stacks of books as nets, its early names included “whiff-whaff”, but “table tennis” and the trademark “ping-pong” entered usage by the late 1800s. An undeniable boost came when Mao Zedong declared it China’s national sport, setting the stage for “ping pong” diplomacy. Today table tennis is among the world’s most popular sports, played competitively by tens of millions. — AFP

TENNIS 'BIG FIVE' GIVE RIO MILLIONAIRES FEEL

RIO DE JANEIRO: Five facts on the Olympic Games tennis tournament: Novak Djokovic, Andy Murray, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, the big four of the men's game, and Serena Williams, the undisputed superstar of the women's tour, will comfortably be amongst the medal favorites in Rio. Murray and Williams are the defending champions while Nadal took gold in Beijing in 2008. However, there have been a number of high-profile pull-outs with top ten players Milos Raonic, Tomas Berdych and Dominic Thiem opting not to play either over fears of the Zika virus or scheduling complaints ahead of the US Open. Maria Sharapova is also missing as she serves a drugs ban while Victoria Azarenka is expecting a baby and will sit out the rest of the year. Some players are unhappy that there are no ranking points or prize money up for grabs. Latvia's Ernests Gulbis

refused to play, blasting the event as "tennis tourism".

Irish-born John Pius Boland, representing Great Britain, was the first tennis gold medalist at the Olympics in 1896 in Athens. Boland was a late entry into the event after originally going to Greece to visit a friend. He also won the doubles gold with a German partner as part of a mixed team. Boland was an Irish nationalist politician who backed Home Rule for Ireland and sat in the British House of Commons from 1900-1918.

Tennis was left off the Olympic program from 1924 until 1988 after a row over allowing professional players to take part. When the sport returned to the schedule in Seoul in 1988, the men's singles gold was won by Czech player Miroslav Mecir. Other surprise gold medalists have been Marc Rosset of Switzerland

in 1992 in Barcelona and Nicolas Pietrangeli of France at the 2004 Athens Games. Pietrangeli had also partnered Fernando Gonzalez to the men's doubles title in Greece, giving Chile its first ever gold at an Olympics.

Five golds are up for grabs in Rio-men's and women's singles and doubles and mixed doubles. The event takes place at the purpose-built centre in the Barra Olympic Park with a main court, named after Brazilian tennis veteran Maria Bueno, holding 10,000 fans.

Federer has fond memories of the Olympics. He won a doubles gold medal with Stan Wawrinka in Beijing in 2008 and a silver in singles in London four years later. He also met his wife at the 2000 Sydney Olympics-Mirka Vavrinec was also competing for Switzerland. A foot injury led to her retirement from the sport in 2002. — AFP

OLYMPIANS TO DUEL EACH OTHER, WINDS AND TRASH

RIO DE JANEIRO: The Rio Olympic sailing in five key points: Olympic sailing is grabbing international headlines in Rio because of the massive pollution. Only half of greater Rio has treated sewage and the other half dumps into Guanabara Bay, which hosts sailors and windsurfers. Ecologically dead rivers also flow into the bay, bringing floating trash. A major operation is underway to corral most debris before it gets into the bay, then to capture the rest with special boats. Environmentalists, boaters and clean up crews have reported finding everything from televisions and mattresses to bodies. There are dangerous levels of bacteria in the waters. However, officials insist the course will be clear.

Sailing has five events for men, four for women and one mixed contest. Unlike many yacht races, the small boats competing in the Olympics are divided into identical classes, so that skill trumps everything else. Competitors battle each other around a series of buoys but they are also battling the wind, which is typically-but not necessarily-light in Guanabara Bay during the southern hemisphere winter.

A lot of sailors are happy to be in Guanabara Bay because they will be competing right in the heart of Rio. At the 2008 Beijing and 2012 London Games the sailing took place in completely separate towns, far from the main Olympic buzz. For a sport always fighting to gain viewership, Rio will be a big moment. Photographers and television viewers will love the visuals of boats dueling in front of the sheer cliffs of Sugarloaf Mountain and sailors will be able to mingle with the crowds ashore.

Ben Ainslie, Britain's star from the London Olympics has moved on to bigger things. Winner of medals at five consecutive Olympics including gold in the last four, Ainslie has traded up from his Finn class dinghy for ocean yacht race events. This time, watch out for Britain's Olympic debutant Giles Scott, who is looking like a medal contender in the Finn class. The 49er class will likely see Peter Burling and Blair Tuke of New Zealand demanding podium spots. They took silver in the London Games and have just come to the end of a stunning undefeated run of 27 regatta victories.

If teams were drawn from families, not countries, there's little doubt that the Graels of Brazil would clean up. Dubbed Brazil's "sailing royalty," they have made the Olympics their family business-and now it's in their backyard. Torben Grael, the national coach, previously won five Olympic medals, a record for the sport shared with Ben Ainslie and Brazil's Robert Scheidt. Torben's brother Lars is another medal winner. Now it will be Torben's daughter Martine Grael in the 49erFX class and son Marco in the 49er class. — AFP



BUDAPEST: Mercedes AMG Petronas F1 Team's British driver Lewis Hamilton drives out of the pit lane during the first training session ahead of the Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix at the Hungaroring circuit. — AFP

ROSBERG FASTEST IN PRACTICE AS HAMILTON CRASHES OUT

BUDAPEST: Nico Rosberg ended the opening day of practice for the Hungarian Grand Prix fastest after Mercedes team mate and title rival Lewis Hamilton crashed out yesterday. The world championship leader, fresh from signing a two-year contract extension keeping him at Mercedes until the end of 2018, lapped the 4.3-kilometre Hungaroring in one minute 20.435 seconds in the afternoon, after having gone second quickest in the morning.

Hamilton, bidding to seize the championship lead for the first time this season with an unprecedented fifth win in Hungary, was fifth after crashing out with four laps on the board. The Briton, who went into the weekend at one of his most rewarding circuits as the man to beat, was fastest in the morning. But he lost control of his Mercedes 15 minutes into the second post-lunch session, skating across the run-off and clouting the barriers side-on.

He underwent a precautionary check at the medical centre and appeared to be fine, but his car had to be fully stripped and checked, ruling him out of the rest of the session. Hamilton has won four of the last five races and trails Rosberg by one point heading into Sunday's race, down from the 43-point deficit

between the pair after May's Spanish Grand Prix. He jointly holds the record for most wins at the track with Michael Schumacher. Former Hungarian Grand Prix winner Daniel Ricciardo, fifth in the morning, ended the day second fastest, half a second adrift of Rosberg's mark.

His Red Bull team, the only ones to beat Mercedes this year with Max Verstappen's win in Spain, are hoping to pose a genuine threat to their German rivals at a circuit that should suit their car. Sebastian Vettel, who won the race last year, was third in his Ferrari ahead of Verstappen. His team mate Kimi Raikkonen was sixth. McLaren, who are also expecting an improvement in form, ended both sessions seventh and eighth with Fernando Alonso ahead of Jenson Button, on a track where both claimed their maiden Formula One wins. The Force India cars of Nico Hulkenberg and Sergio Perez rounded out the top 10. Hamilton's accident was the only high-profile incident of the session, run in hot conditions with track temperatures in the forties. The crash prompted a brief red-flag stoppage as track marshals worked to the repair damage to the barrier. — Reuters

JUVENTUS SNAP UP DINAMO STAR PJACA

MILAN: Juventus have confirmed the signing of Marko Pjaca, the exciting young Croatian international midfielder signing a five-year deal with the Italian champions that expires in 2021. A statement by the Turin giants, who secured a fifth consecutive championship last season, said: "Juventus Football Club announces the transfer of Marko Pjaca from Dinamo Zagreb." Dinamo will receive a "23m euro transfer fee, payable in two instalments," added the statement.

He arrives as Juve are negotiating with Manchester United over a potential world record transfer for their France star Paul Pogba to Old Trafford. Pjaca, 21, came to the attention of some of Europe's top clubs at Euro 2016, where his average dribbling statistics were second only to Welsh forward Gareth Bale and Belgium star Eden Hazard. Juventus are current-

ly on a tour of Australia but Pjaca, who will wear his usual number 20 in Turin, will only join up with the squad following a week's rest when pre-season training resumes on July 28.

"I'm happy to have signed for such an important team. I can't wait to join the squad, start training and get down to winning trophies," said Pjaca. "That's why I joined Juventus. I want to win the Italian league title, the Cup and go as far as possible in the Champions League." Born in Zagreb on May 6, 1995, Pjaca has made 11 appearances for Croatia, scoring one goal, and helped his former club to two consecutive league and Cup doubles. Over two seasons with the Croatian league giants, Pjaca scored 19 goals in 60 league appearances and scored one goal in 10 Croatian Cup games.

A versatile, right-footed midfielder who can also play in attack, Pjaca made his Euro 2016

debut when he replaced Juventus striker Mario Mandzukic late in their 1-0 opening win over Turkey. He was an unused substitute during Croatia's 2-2 draw with the Czech Republic, but produced a sterling performance on the wide left of midfield for Croatia when they stunned Spain 2-1 to finish top of their group. In that game, Pjaca sent an acrobatic effort just wide of David De Gea's goal from a rebound then had claims for a penalty waved away as Croatia continued to threaten.

In the last 16 Croatia fell to Ricardo Quaresma's extra-time winner for Portugal, Pjaca making only a late cameo appearance in the second period of extra-time when he replaced Barcelona's Ivan Rakitic. Juventus last season secured a record-equaling fifth consecutive title and, like Dinamo Zagreb, will be aiming for a third consecutive league and Cup dou-



SHANGHAI: Manchester United head coach Jose Mourinho, right, chats with his team member during a training session at a stadium. — AP

MOURINHO ON POGBA: NO SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE

LONDON; French midfielder Paul Pogba is a target for Manchester United their manager Jose Mourinho all but confirmed to the BBC in an interview given in China. The Portuguese handler told the BBC it would be pointless to pull the wool over their eyes and say he and United weren't courting Italian champions Juventus's 23-year-old playmaker who could cost the English club a world record £100million (\$131m, 119m euros) just four years after he left them for £800,000.

"You have smoke, you have fire," said Mourinho, who is in China with the squad for a friendly tournament involving Manchester City-managed by his bitter rival Pep Guardiola and Borussia Dortmund. "I am not going to try to make you naive and believe that we are not trying for one player." However,

Mourinho, who replaced the sacked Louis van Gaal shortly after the Dutchman had overseen United win the FA Cup last season, said if the Pogba deal fell through there was a fallback option.

French alternatives

Pogba's French international teammate the tireless Paris Saint Germain midfielder Blaise Matuidi has been mentioned as an alternative. "We set four targets for us, we got three of them and we are going to get the fourth," said Mourinho.

"We established the profile of four players to improve the squad, to give us more options, especially adapted to my way of thinking about football. "Everybody speaks about one, but it wouldn't be a surprise for me if it is not

him and it is another one because we went for profile. "We have two more options in front of us and we are going to close one."

Mourinho's three successful forays into the market since he took over have been bringing veteran striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic in on a free transfer, signing young Ivory Coast defender Eric Bailly for a reported £30million from Villarreal and splashing out a fee believed to be between £26 million and £35m for Armenian Henrikh Mkhitaryan from Dortmund. United finished fifth in the Premier League last season, 15 points behind shock champions Leicester City, and failed to qualify for the Champions League. That prompted the club to sack Van Gaal and replace him with former Chelsea boss Mourinho. — AFP

GUNNERS STAY TRUE TO SPENDING PRINCIPLES

LONDON; Arsenal have a good enough squad to win their first Premier League crown since 2004 so the fans better not expect Arsene Wenger to be bringing in more high-profile faces, said chief executive Ivan Gazidis yesterday. Wenger has brought in Swiss star Granit Xhaka for a fee reported to be up to £35million (42m euros, \$46m) from German side Borussia Moenchengladbach. However, the fans have been restless as to how a club with in excess of £100million in cash reserves is not willing to compete with their rivals such as Chelsea, Manchester United and Manchester City in the transfer market.

Gazidis, though, moved to quell the fans' concerns by saying Arsenal's transfer policy—which usually revolves around one big name signing such as Mesut Ozil and Alexis Sanchez over the past few years—was correct. "This approach, for us, gives us a very, very powerful balance because it's not just about spending money but about how you spend your money and doing it wisely," Gazidis told ESPN. "It's about having a strong core philosophy and values within the club that players buy into and our fans can be proud of. "These are all things that lead to success, and when you look at Arsenal over the last four or five years, there's no question that the squad has been progressing in strength. "We've got a squad now that we believe is capable of competing to win the Premier League. We came in second last year, which was disappointing. But we're on the right track."

Arsenal finished without a trophy last season and there were small groups of fans who voiced their displeasure venting it at Wenger, even stealing second spot off bitter north London rivals Spurs on the final day of the season proving insufficient for them. — AFP

SAUDI FA RELEGATES CLUB FOR MATCH FIXING

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's football governing body has relegated a club and penalized several officials over match fixing in the kingdom's second tier. The Saudi Arabian Football Federation (SFF) ordered the relegation of Al-Mojzel to the second division (Saudi's third tier) over manipulating the result of its match with Al-Jeel, a statement said late Thursday. The kingdom's top division is the Abdul Latif Jameel League, followed by the first division, which Al-Mojzel had belonged to.

The SFF also banned Al-Mojzel's president Ahmed Al-Abdallah, along with an administrator and a player, from practicing any football-related activities for life. It also fined each of them \$80,000 (72,000 Euros). The managers of clubs Hajer and Al-Feiha faced the same penalties along with other officials over unspecified violations. The SFF said last month that it was probing a "suspected manipulation of results" insisting on the "importance of a fair competition." — AFP

ARGENTINA EYES SIMEONE TO HELP FILL COACH VOID

BUENOS AIRES: Mauricio Pochettino and Diego Simeone are among men Argentina want to talk to about the national team coach vacancy following last month's shock resignation of Gerardo Martino. Armando Perez, head of an Argentine FA (AFA) Regularisation Committee, also plans to talk to Lionel Messi with a view to asking the team's former captain to reverse his decision to quit international soccer. The four-person committee, put in place by world body FIFA to get the AFA's house in order, was due to begin work yesterday after being sworn in on Thursday.

"It will take charge of administrating

(the AFA) which includes choosing a national team coach," FIFA representative Primo Corvaro, who picked the committee members, told reporters. Naming a new coach is a matter of urgency with 2018 World Cup qualifiers against Uruguay and Venezuela scheduled in early September. The cash-strapped AFA has been in crisis since the death of former strongman Julio Grondona in July 2014 and reached a nadir last year when an election for a new president ended in farce with 76 votes cast by 75 delegates and a 38-38 result.

Corvaro said the committee would call an AFA presidential election by

July 30, 2017 at the latest. The crisis at competitive international level was exacerbated last month when Argentina lost the Copa America final on penalties to Chile. Messi said he was quitting the team and Martino resigned a week later, ostensibly over problems in naming a side for next month's Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. The committee was set to begin interviewing candidates for the head coach's position yesterday.

Perez plans to fly to Europe next month because he wants to hear personally from Atletico Madrid's Simeone and former Chile boss Jorge Sampaoli, now at Sevilla, their views on the

national team. Both have said their ambition is to coach Argentina and would be popular choices. Perez, president of first division club Belgrano, will not be visiting Tottenham Hotspur manager Pochettino, another former Argentina player widely regarded as a future national coach, in London but plans to talk to him from Spain about his availability, AFA sources daily told La Nacion. His last stop will be Barcelona for talks with Messi and Argentina vice-captain Javier Mascherano. "It would be gratifying for everyone to persuade Messi to desist from his decision (to quit)," Perez told reporters. — Reuters

BA SURGEON CONFIDENT STRIKER WILL PLAY AGAIN

SHANGHAI: Demba Ba's surgeon arrived in Shanghai and declared he was confident the former Chelsea striker would return to competitive football. French orthopaedic surgeon Olivier Bringer touched down in the Chinese megacity late Thursday and immediately went to Putuo District People's Hospital where the Senegalese striker has been treated since suffering a horror left leg fracture playing for Shenhua in the Shanghai derby against SIPG last Sunday.

"I'm sure he will be able to recover and play football again," Bringer was quoted yesterday as saying by the Shanghai Daily newspaper. "In a few months, he will have the possibility of making a comeback. He is a tough guy and I'm sure he will be able to get over this." Ba is due to go under the scalpel on Saturday morning when Bringer's team of French doctors will be bolstered by medical staff from Shanghai's Huashan Hospital. "We are used to such surgeries," Bringer said. "My team's done it many times in France."

Without Ba, Shenhua lost 2-1 at Shijiazhuang Ever Bright in the Chinese Super League on Thursday night. Striker Obafemi Martins, who posted pictures on social media visiting Ba in hospital this week, put Shenhua ahead after 18 minutes. But it was former Shenhua frontman Mao Jianqing who equalised after the break and Korean defender Cho Yong-Hyung popped up with the winner 15 minutes from time. — AFP



MANCHESTER: Pakistan's bowler Mohammad Amir (C) holds his head as England's captain Alastair Cook (R) and England's Alex Hales run on the first day of the second cricket test match between England and Pakistan at Old Trafford Cricket Ground. — AFP

DORTMUND SIGN SCHURRLE

BERLIN: Borussia Dortmund have signed Germany international winger Andre Schurrle from Wolfsburg on a five-year deal, the two Bundesliga clubs announced yesterday. Reports in Germany indicate Dortmund will pay around 30 million Euros for the World Cup winner, which would make Schurrle the club's record signing. "He has already amassed considerable international experience. His quality will be of great value for our team," said Dortmund's sporting director Michael Zorc.

Schurrle, 25, has played 55 times for his country and becomes Dortmund's second major signing in as many days after Mario Goetze returned to his former club on Thursday following a frustrating three-year spell at Bayern Munich.

Schurrle, who has scored 48 goals in 174 Bundesliga games, spent the past 18 months at Wolfsburg after he joined them from Chelsea in February 2014 for 32 million Euros. He is Dortmund's eighth signing this close season as Thomas Tuchel looks to reinforce his side following the departures of Henrikh Mkhitaryan, Ilkay Gundogan and Mats Hummels. — AFP

COOK, ROOT KEEP PAKISTAN AT BAY

MANCHESTER: Alastair Cook and Joe Root overcame the early loss of Alex Hales to leave England well-placed on 95 for one at lunch on the first day of the second Test against Pakistan at Old Trafford yesterday. Cook, who marked his 50th Test as England captain by winning the toss, was 40 not out and Root unbeaten on 41, with the hosts looking to bounce back from losing last week's first Test at Lord's. England's second-wicket partnership was so far worth 70 runs after Hales was bowled by a superb Mohammad Amir delivery for 10.

Predictably, there were a few jeers as Amir prepared to bowl the first ball of the match. There were also some shouts of "No-ball!", a reference to the 2010 spot-fixing controversy at Lord's which

saw Amir given a five-year ban for deliberately over-stepping as part of a newspaper betting sting. Amir, who took the last wicket in Pakistan's win in the first of this four-Test series, saw his first and second deliveries edged through gully for four by Cook. Cook also seized on a short and wide Rahat Ali delivery which he cut for four.

Amir, one of three left-arm quicks in Pakistan's attack with Rahat and Wahab Riaz, had Hales dropped in the gully on six by Asad Shafiq, the ball speeding away to third man for four. But three balls later, having repeatedly moved the ball away from Hales, Amir skilfully swung the ball back into the right-handed opener. The delivery also cut off the seam a touch and knocked over Hales's

middle and off stumps. England were now 25 for one after seven overs. Root got off the mark with a straight driven four off Rahat.

Leg-spinner Yasir Shah, England's tormentor-in-chief at Lord's with 10 wickets, saw his second ball Friday cut in front of point by Root for four. That shot brought up England's fifty in 92 balls with 10 boundaries. Left-hander Cook then cashed in on a rare Shah short ball with a pull to the mid-wicket rope. Root, in the manner of Yorkshire and England great Geoffrey Boycott, forced both Wahab Riaz and Amir through cover-point off the back foot for fours as he and his skipper looked to make the most of an even-paced pitch in sunny conditions ideal for batting. — AFP

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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: India's cricketer Virat Kohli celebrates 100 runs during day one of the cricket Test match between West Indies and India July 21, 2016 at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium. — AFP

KOHLI CENTURY PUTS INDIA IN CHARGE

INDIAN CAPTAIN LEADS WAY WITH AUTHORITATIVE INNINGS

NORTH SOUND, Antigua and Barbuda: Virat Kohli stroked a commanding 12th Test century to put India in control at 302 for four when stumps were drawn on the opening day of the first Test against the West Indies on Thursday. Having chosen to bat first on winning the toss, the Indian captain led the way with a thoroughly authoritative innings of 143 not out, decorated with 16 fours that has so far occupied just over four hours off 197 deliveries.

He put on 105 for the third wicket with Shikhar Dhawan, the opening batsman missing out on a three-figure innings of his own when he fell lbw for 84 sweeping at Devendra Bishoo on the stroke of the tea interval. Bishoo's mixture of leg-breaks and googlies were the greatest threat to the Indians throughout a long, tiring day for the home side at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium although his three wickets were more the result of poor shot-selection by Dhawan, Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane. He ended the day with figures of three for 108 off 27 overs.

Surprisingly he was not called upon by his captain, Jason Holder, in the first period of play, when even debutant batsman and part-time off-spinner Roston Chase delivered eight overs. However his dismissal of Pujara via a horribly miscued pull in the first over after lunch ushered in Kohli who proceeded to transform the rest of the day into a testament to his

ever-increasing stature as a batsman of the highest class. In stark contrast, the usually destructive Dhawan was content to play the supporting role.

Attacking instincts

Famed for his adventurous attacking instincts in all forms of the game, the left-handed opening batsman displayed admirable restraint in the early exchanges against bowling that lacked any real pace and potency, with the notable exception of Shannon Gabriel, who caused alarms for the Indian opening pair with his raw pace. "I enjoyed my knock. I just had to take the punches (early on) and I was happy I had the persistence to keep going," said Dhawan. "It's not every time I'll keep getting boundaries from the start. I had to grind it out."

Gabriel removed Murali Vijay for just seven after half-an-hour's play when the right-hander fended at a lifting delivery for Kraigg Brathwaite to take the catch at the second attempt at second slip. Pujara looked untroubled on joining Dhawan at the crease with the pair putting on 60 before the middle-order player's error of judgement at the start of the afternoon session. Having opted to go into the match without uncapped fast-medium bowler Miguel Cummins, the only other pace threat available in the West Indies pre-match squad of 13, it

was left to Holder, fellow medium-pacer Carlos Brathwaite and Chase to do the bulk of the early work in support of Gabriel before Bishoo got into his work after lunch.

Nevertheless, those bowling resources were made to appear decidedly inadequate on a placid pitch and against batsmen prepared to keep the scoreboard ticking over. Early in his innings, Kohli passed 3,000 career Test runs and later on reached 1,000 as Test captain. But the most important figures were the partnerships built around his excellent innings. His century stand with Dhawan was followed by a further 60 put together with Rahane followed by a fifth-wicket stand so far worth 66 with Ravichandran Ashwin.

With two Test centuries against the West Indies on the Indian sub-continent, the lower-order player will resume on the second morning unbeaten on 22 alongside Kohli. While the West Indies have packed their side with batting, India opted for a bowling attack comprising three pacers and two spinners, omitting Ravindra Jadeja in preference for Amit Mishra to work in tandem with Ashwin as specialist slow bowlers. West Indies have not defeated India in Test cricket for 14 years since the end of the 2002 series in the Caribbean and are the decided underdogs for the first meeting with these opponents on home soil for five years. — AFP