

Kuwait Food Bank, KASCO join hands to help needy families



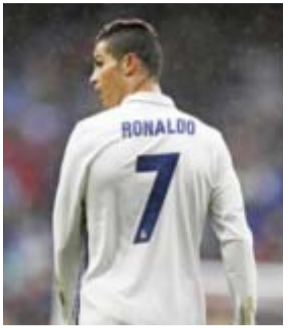
Kuwait eyes fish self-sufficiency to narrow supply, demand gap



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Ronaldo denies tax fraud at court hearing



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AMIR MEETS OMANI FM



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets visiting Omani Minister of Foreign Affairs Yousef bin Alawi at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA

By A Saleh and Agencies

KUWAIT: Health Minister Jamal Al-Harbi announced yesterday that non-Kuwaiti children below the age of 12 suffering from cancer will be exempt from diagnosis, treatment and medicine charges. The decision covers children with valid visas who were diagnosed in Kuwait, and covers the costs of diagnosis, treatment and medicine at public hospitals and polyclinics. Harbi also announced that the increase in health service fees will go into effect for visiting and resident expats within two days. Directors of health zones and hospitals and their deputies will be reshuffled too.

Harbi was speaking during the launch of the Sour Al-Watan blood donation campaign. He said the ministry plans to open a large building of the blood bank in Al-Sabah specialized area to serve donors and reduce the pressure on rest of the branches. He added that the blood bank is the first Arab blood bank to receive an international recognition certificate from the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB) since 1989. It has also received an outstanding performance recognition from the College of American Pathologists (CAP) since 2001, and categorized as an international reference bank for blood and immunity diseases since 2014.



KUWAIT: Health Minister Jamal Al-Harbi donates blood during the launch of the Sour Al-Watan blood donation campaign yesterday. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

Separately, a high ranking government official said final preparations are underway to impose 5 percent value added tax next year, denying the possibility of postponing it and dispelling doubts about difficulty in imposing it due to administrative and technical obsta-

cles in the private sector. The official told Al-Anbaa daily the VAT agreement's rules are ready and the National Assembly is expected to approve them during the next parliamentary term.

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QATAR SLAMS HAJJ CURBS, DENIES AIR 'CORRIDORS' OPEN

DOHA: The Qatari authorities have accused Saudi Arabia of jeopardizing the annual hajj pilgrimage to Makkah of Qatari pilgrims by refusing to guarantee their safety. Saudi Arabia and its allies have been boycotting Qatar since June 5, accusing it of backing extremist groups and of ties to Iran, in the region's worst diplomatic crisis in years. On July 20, Riyadh said that Qataris wanting to perform this year's hajj would be allowed to enter the kingdom for the pilgrimage, but imposed certain restrictions.

The Saudi hajj ministry said Qatari pilgrims arriving by plane must use airlines in agreement with Riyadh. They would also need to get visas on arrival in Jeddah or Madinah, their sole points of entry in the kingdom. The Qatari Islamic affairs ministry, in a statement published by the official QNA news agency on Sunday, said the Saudi side had "refused to communicate regarding securing the pilgrims safety and facilitating their hajj".

The ministry accused Riyadh of "intertwining politics with one of the pillars of Islam, which may result in depriving many Muslims from performing this holy obligation". According to the statement, 20,000 Qatari citizens have registered to take part this year. The ministry said it denied Saudi claims that Doha had suspended those registrations. "The distortion of facts is meant to set obstacles for the pilgrims from Qatar to Makkah, following the crisis created by the siege countries," the Qatari ministry added, referring to Saudi Arabia and its allies.

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PAKISTAN HINDUS FIND LITTLE REFUGE IN INDIA

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'DESPACITO' TOURISTS DISCOVER LA PERLA

PAGE 31

TRUMP INSISTS NO WHITE HOUSE CHAOS

RUSSIA DEFENDS SLASHING 755 US DIPLOMATIC STAFF

WASHINGTON: John Kelly was sworn in yesterday as the new White House chief of staff, as US President Donald Trump looked to the retired Marine general for leadership after a shake-up of his top staff. Kelly, 67, is replacing Reince Priebus, who was forced out last week after the spectacular failure of Trump's bid to repeal Obamacare and as an ugly in-house feud spilled into the open. "We just swore in General Kelly - he will do a spectacular job, I have no doubt, as chief of staff," Trump said after the Oval Office ceremony. "What he has done in terms of homeland security is record-shattering, if you look at the border, if you look at the tremendous results we've had," Trump said.

Trump accentuated the positive in an early morning tweet: "Highest Stock Market EVER, best economic numbers in years, unemployment lowest in 17 years, wages raising, border secure, S.C.: No WH chaos." Republicans are hoping Kelly, who served as Homeland Security secretary for

the first six months of Trump's presidency, will succeed in imposing discipline on a White House whipsawed by controversy.

The chief of staff traditionally manages the president's schedule and is the highest ranking White House employee, deciding who has access to the US leader. But many question whether anyone can rein in the mercurial, Twitter-happy Trump, who has appeared to encourage the infighting among various factions vying for influence in his administration. Under pressure from a widening probe into his campaign's contacts with Russia last year, Trump last week attacked his own attorney general for disloyalty, alarming his conservative base, before turning on Priebus.

In another tweet yesterday, Trump hinted that Congress's own health insurance plan should be replaced for its failure to repeal Obamacare, his predecessor's signature reform of the US health care system. "If Obamacare is hurting people & it is, why

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WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump (right) shakes hands with newly sworn-in White House Chief of Staff John Kelly at the White House yesterday. — AFP

YEMENI EXECUTED FOR CHILD RAPE, MURDER

SANAA: Thousands of people gathered in the rebel-held Yemeni capital yesterday to witness the public execution of a man convicted of raping and murdering a three-year-old girl. Mohammed Al-Maghrabi, 41, was sentenced to death for the June 25 rape and murder by a court run by the Shiite Houthi rebels who control Sanaa. The gruesome crime coincided with the first day of Eid al-Fitr, and sparked anger among the population. Moghrabi was first given 100 lashes and then made to lie flat, his face on the ground, and killed by multiple gunshots by security forces to cheers from the crowd.

"Security was very tight, because authorities were fearing a revenge attack by armed men from the Bani Matar tribe to which the girl's family belong," said Reuters photographer Khaled Abdullah who witnessed the scene. The police van transporting Maghrabi to Sanaa's Tahrir Square was escorted by five police patrol vehicles. The execution drew a large number of onlookers, some perched on telegraph poles and many watching from rooftops.

The crowd started to shout "Allah is the greatest" when Maghrabi arrived. "The man was escorted from the van to the middle of the square, and then the place turned to a complete chaos and I fought for a position to take pictures," Abdullah said. "He tried to talk to the executioner, a police officer who was calmly smoking a cigarette as he stood next to him before pointing his AK-47 to his back

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SANAA: Yemeni security forces prepare to execute a man convicted of raping and murdering a three-year-old girl in the Yemeni capital's Tahrir Square yesterday. — AFP

IS MILITANTS ATTACK KABUL IRAQI EMBASSY, ALL KILLED

KABUL: A suicide bomber blew himself up outside the Iraqi embassy in Kabul yesterday and militants breached the compound, Afghan officials said, in a complex hours-long attack claimed by the Islamic State group. All the attackers had been killed and the compound secured roughly four hours after the assault began, Afghanistan's interior ministry said, adding that all embassy staff were safe and only one policeman wounded "slightly".

There were conflicting reports about how the attack unfolded. The interior ministry said at least four militants had attacked the embassy, beginning with a suicide bomber who detonated his vest at the compound entrance. "The quick-response police forces arrived in time and evacuated the Iraqi diplomats to safe place. No embassy staff have been harmed, only one policeman was wounded slightly," a ministry statement said.

An Afghan security official at the site of the attack and a number of witnesses however suggested the attackers were dropped by a car nearby, who then stormed the Iraqi embassy building with hails of bullets, before penetrating and detonating themselves inside. Black smoke billowed into the air above the neighborhood in northwestern Kabul as the sound of gunfire, blasts and ambulance sirens could be heard. Panicked residents, including women and children, could be seen fleeing the area.

The Iraqi foreign ministry in Baghdad said the charge d'affaires was among those evacuated and that it was monitoring the situation with Afghan authorities, without giving further details. The Afghanistan affiliate of the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack, according to a statement by its propaganda agency Amaq.

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KUWAIT FOOD BANK, KASCO JOIN HANDS TO HELP NEEDY FAMILIES

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Under the patronage of Kuwaiti businessman Bader Al-Kharafi, Kuwait Food Bank signed a joint cooperation agreement with Kuwait Aviation Services Company (KASCO) yesterday at the food bank's headquarters in Kuwait City to provide meals and fresh food items to needy families. During the press conference, Meshal Al-Ansari, Deputy Chairman of Kuwait Food Bank, said the agreement is based on the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to continue charity and humanitarian work in Kuwait.

He added that the bank aims to be one of the first to serve the needy internationally, regionally and globally by providing food and basic needs to beneficiaries through a structured system. It also aims to increase awareness in the community over reducing wastage of food and provide assistance to less fortunate families.

KASCO is one of the leading providers of food services in the private sector. He pointed out that the food bank will deliver fresh KASCO meals to needy families on a daily or weekly basis in order to cover all areas in Kuwait.

"KASCO's products are considered to be of the best and highest quality in the region, and very nutritious too," Ansari said. He stressed that this joint agreement will strengthen the bank's contributions to the food sector through the provision and distribution of best food products to needy families.

Ansari told Kuwait Times that needy families can apply through the food bank's website, where their cases will be studied to provide the right program for them. "Kuwait Food Bank will not only support families with food supplies, but will also have several programs to create new jobs for the community and motivate all seg-

ments of society to volunteer. The food bank will try to treat the problem of thirst and hunger and contribute to relief campaigns for famines, wars and disasters around the world," he said. Ansari revealed that Kuwait Food Bank will expand in other Gulf countries through partnership with food banks there.

Kuwait Food Bank has signed a number of agreements with major food companies in Kuwait, including the distribution of coupons for basic foodstuff for 5,700 needy families. It also signed a contract with Quaker, a multinational international company that specializes in food products. It also provides for clothing and blankets to the needy in winter.

KASCO Chairman Ahmed Nasser Al-Bannai said this agreement is in compliance with the values of Islam, and follows the call by His Highness the Amir in support of charity work. "We hope that our company to be at the forefront of charitable activities," he said. Bannai expressed satisfaction that the deal will benefit the labor sector in Kuwait, especially low-income households. "The partnership reflects our commitment to good work, especially among the less-fortunate families in Kuwait."

Bannai said KASCO is one of the leading food companies specialized in the preparation and delivery of meals and buffets. The company produces more than 40,000 meals for more than 81 carriers in all levels required.

Notably, Kharafi established Kuwait Food Bank in 2016 in order to reduce food waste and help families in need by providing them with basic foodstuff and other items. Kuwait Food Bank accepts donations by sending an SMS with the amount of money you are donating (KD 1, KD 5 or KD 10) to the following numbers (Viva at 50487 and Zain at 94122) or through the website www.kuwaitfoodbank.org.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and members of his accompanied delegation to the emergency meeting of Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union.

AMIR COMMENDS NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY STRATEGY



Chairman of the Central Agency for Information Technology Salem Al-Uthaina presents Kuwait's 2017-2020 national cyber security strategy to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Technology Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and Chairman of the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) Salem Al-Uthaina. During the reception, they gave an explanation about Kuwait's 2017-2020 national cyber security strategy aiming at setting out a roadmap for promoting information security and taking all relevant necessary

measures. His Highness the Amir hailed those who are in charge of the strategy which is considered a pioneering step in the cyber security field, wishing them more progress and success.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, who was accompanied by the parliamentary delegation that took part in the emergency meeting of Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU) on Al-Aqsa Mosque, which concluded recently in Rabat, Morocco. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Cabinet Affairs Minister and Acting Information Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and Chairman of the Central Agency for Information Technology Salem Al-Uthaina. — Amiri Diwan photos



KUWAIT: Meshal Al-Ansari, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Kuwait Food Bank (left), and Ahmed Al-Bannai, KASCO's Chairman of the Board attend the press conference. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait Times

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FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS WITH OMANI COUNTERPART

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received yesterday, in presence of Kuwaiti Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Technology Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, the visiting Omani Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yousef Bin Alawi, at Kuwait International Airport.

The reception was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Khaled Suleiman Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's Office Affairs Ambassador, Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocols Ambassador Dhari Al-Ajran, and several other senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah welcomes the Omani Minister of Foreign Affairs Yousef Bin Alawi. — KUNA

KUWAIT CONTINUES MEDIATION EFFORTS TO RESOLVE GULF CRISIS: DEPUTY FM

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait has been continuing its mediation efforts aiming to contain the Gulf crisis "amongst brothers," Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah stressed on Sunday. "We are pinning big hopes on efforts by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in this matter," he said in a remark to reporters.

Jarallah, on the sidelines of Moroccan Embassy's celebration on the Throne Day, said Morocco's Foreign Minister visited Kuwait last June to express his country's support for efforts by the State of Kuwait and His Highness the Amir. Kuwait's strategic relationship between the GCC member states and Morocco requires such move, he said. He expressed his gratitude to brothers in Morocco for their initiatives and visit to the region facing such differences.

Jarallah affirmed the distinguished relations between Morocco and GCC states, referring to honorable stances by Morocco supporting the Gulf. Such stances embody the strategic partnership with Morocco, he said. There is continued cooperation with Morocco on all levels, he said, referring to common coordination and understanding between the two countries. The two sides have common stances regarding regional and international issues, he stated.

The State of Kuwait and His Highness

the Amir have been making strenuous efforts for two months to make closer views between Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt on one

hand, and Qatar on the other hand. His Highness the Amir's mediation received overwhelming support from the Arab and Western countries. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Ministers Khaled Al-Jarallah (right) and the Moroccan Ambassador to Kuwait Jaafar Hakeem cut the cake during a ceremony to celebrate Morocco's national day on Monday. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

LAWMAKER DEMANDS STRIPPING ABDALI CELL CONVICTS OFF NATIONALITIES

NO LAWSUITS FROM EXPAT TEACHERS: MINISTER

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: MP Dr Waleed Al-Tabatabae suggested yesterday that the governments withdraws the Kuwaiti nationality from citizens convicted in the Abdali cell case, saying that their crimes amount to acts of treason. "The cassation court's ruling states that the convicts planned to overthrow the ruling system, contacted foreign parties, and promoted the Iranian Revolution's ideologies, which all are considered acts of trea-

revocation as a weapon against adversaries," Nisf said. The lawmaker argued however that should revoking the citizenships of Abdali cell convicts be considered, then the same should be applied to convicts who were found guilty for joining the Islamic State (IS) and Al-Qaeda "and threatening the state's national security."

National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem had announced Sunday that he sent invitations to MPs and Cabinet members to attend a meeting today to "discuss the issue of fugitives from justice," in reference to the Abdali cell convicts who remain at large. "The meeting has been requested by a number of MPs to mull over regional developments, including the Al-Abdali terror cell and all those escaping justice," Ghanem said.



MP Dr Waleed Al-Tabatabae



MP Rakan Al-Nisf

Expat teachers
Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Fares

son," he said in a statement yesterday, arguing that the convicts "do not deserve the honor of holding the Kuwaiti nationality."

Square one

Meanwhile, MP Rakan Al-Nisf criticized Tabatabae's call and said that citizenship should be kept away from political struggle. "Calls to revoke the nationalities of convicts in the Abdali cell case take us back to square one when the government used the

denied reports which speculated that a number of expatriate teachers working in public schools in Kuwait have filed cases in international courts demanding being paid equally with their Kuwaiti counterparts. The reports had suggested that the teachers sought to be paid retroactively the same payments that Kuwaiti teachers receive from the government. Fares said however that no actual complaints were lodged as far as the ministry's knowledge.



KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti man observes fish baskets displayed at the main fish market in Shaq. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT EYES FISH SELF-SUFFICIENCY TO NARROW SUPPLY, DEMAND GAP

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) seeks to achieve self-sufficiency of locally-consumed fish as part of its ambitious strategy aimed at narrowing the gap between supply and demand. The strategy tends to expand and enhance several operations and projects such as fish farming, natural fish reserve in territorial waters, all listed in the 2018-19 development plan.

For the past 10 years, PAAAFR has accomplished a very notable development in all its sectors, particularly in expanding arable lands, bolstering livestock production, and launching projects to enrich natural fish reserve in territorial waters, Ghanim Al-Sanad, PAAAFR's Deputy Director General for Ornamental Horticulture Affairs said.

Recent statistics showed that Kuwait's fish and prawn production during the 2015-16 period was estimated at between 4,000 to 6,000 tons annually, boosting fish farming production to between 300 and 600 tons, Sanad noted.

Meanwhile, Youssef Al-Najem, PAAAFR's Deputy Director General for Fish Resources Affairs, shed light on current gap between supply and demand of fish and local production, noting that the current total demand of fish and prawn surpasses local production, and that the available fish resources shape up between 33-49 percent of total local consumption. One individual's average share of total consumption estimates at around five kilos a year, which is very low compared to the international average share, estimated at around 18.6 kg a year, said Najem. Fish farming could fill 50 percent of fresh fish deficit by the year 2025 if the Authority completes implementation of all its planned projects, he said, noting that PAAAFR focuses on activating and re-boosting fish farming in Kuwait. The Authority also plans to build the National Hatchery (2008) in Wafra area to support fish farms authorized in breeding Tilapia fish with a production capacity of 80,000-90,000 annually.

It also seeks to provide fish feed to farms that breed black seabream and yellow-fin bream fish, organize annual training courses for citizens, and offer scientific and technical consultations to fish farmers, Najem said.

Ideal option

Salem Al-Hai, Head of Fish Farming Department at PAAAFR, affirmed that fish farming would be the ideal option for beating the current fish deficit in Kuwait, pointing out its capability in narrowing the gap between supply and demand, and in producing 4,000 tons of popular fish for the next 10 years. The government is currently heading towards encouraging fish farming in the county, giving PAAAFR a bigger motivation to accomplish that goal, Hai mentioned. He added that the Authority has developed a carefully studied strategy that include a number of future projects aimed at providing consumers in Kuwait with sufficient quantities of fish and limiting price increases in

markets. The economic fish farming project, listed in the government's 2018-19 development plan, is geared towards enhancing methods and ways of fish production, increasing production quantities, and improving the quality of farmed fish, he said. A number of current fish farms are to be selected, in accordance with the quality levels of their construction, design, and fish farming techniques, for the project implementation, he added.

This project aims at attaining an annual production of 10 to 15 tons of fish for each farm, training around 10 of PAAAFR's staff on modern techniques of fish farming, enhancing techniques and systems of the integrated fish farming in arable lands, guiding fish farmers to methods and ways of intensified fish farming, and promoting fish farming techniques to increase production in farms, said Hai. Enriching natural fish reserve in territorial waters project aims at producing and releasing 1.3 million juvenile fish of three types; spotted grouper, black seabream, and yellow-fin bream into Kuwaiti waters after conducting an accurate survey on the sites where the fish to be released, said Najem.

About 25 percent of these seasonal juveniles will be colored with fluorescent elastomer in order to follow them and evaluate the outcome of their release, and thus rehabilitate fish reserve after two years from the release, he added. The three-year project's budget is about KD 1.6 million, equaling \$4.8 million, Najem said, adding that the project includes 13 tasks divided into two main activities; producing and releasing juvenile fish. He also pointed out the project's significance as a main core for rehabilitating fish reserves in Kuwait after suffering severe drainage due to illegal fishing and environmental changes. Najem also noted that such a program would contribute highly in narrowing the gap between supply and demand of fish, decreasing prices, and providing consumers with sea products in sufficient quantities and appropriate prices.

Floating cages

Furthermore, PAAAFR also plans to launch another important project aimed at farming sea fish in floating cages in Khairan area in southern Kuwait, Najem added. The floating cages are to be set on a 10,000 square meter-sized area in the waters, in addition to another 20,200 square meter-sized area for building a fish hatchery, and 5,000 square meter area to build a supervision and following unit for the floating cages, he explained.

The PAAAFR official also forecasted the production capacity for the project to reach over 10,000 tons of fish annually by 2040, compared to the current 2,000 tons. The project would breed fish inside floating cages, and that the production's main targets of fish are spotted grouper, black seabream, yellow-fin bream fish, and European black seabream, he noted. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the cabinet's meeting yesterday. — KUNA

CABINET URGES KUWAITIS TO RECALL INVASION LESSONS TO PRESERVE NATIONAL SECURITY

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti cabinet yesterday urged the Kuwaiti people to recall the "bitterness of injustice and tyranny" they experienced during the 1990 Iraqi Invasion, to take lessons from the occasion and further preserve the security and stability of the nation.

During its weekly meeting held at the Bayan Palace, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah two days before the 27th anniversary of the heinous crime, the cabinet recollected the bitter and harsh memories of the savage invasion that took place in the early hours of August 2, 1990, said cabinet Secretary General Abdullah Al-Roudhan. Hundreds of Kuwaitis, and also from friendly and sister countries, were martyred and many others have been missing during the invasion. The cabinet referred to the huge devastation and sabotage afflicted on Kuwait at the hands of the intemperate invaders, besides the numbers of people who went homeless.

The ministers called to mind, with pride, the sincere efforts and sacrifices generously offered by His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the His Highness late Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salim Al-Sabah and all Kuwaiti people to face the treacherous aggression, and preserve the dignity of their nation. The cabinet highly appreciated the honorable stances of friendly and sister countries that supported the Kuwaiti legitimacy and rights, Roudhan added. Inspired by lessons of the invasion, Kuwaitis are urged to join forces to enhance national unity, and to proceed with building the present and the future of the dear nation, carrying on with the march of their ancestors. The cabinet prayed Allah Almighty to perpetually bless Kuwait with security and stability under His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Amir's efforts

At the onset of today's customary meeting,

the cabinet welcomed praise by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt of the sincere efforts lavished by His Highness the Amir to solve the Gulf row, according to a statement issued after a meeting of foreign ministers of the four countries in Manama on Sunday. His Highness the Amir's positive endeavors to heal the rift among the "brothers" reflect keenness on the Arab and the Gulf unity.

The ministers hoped that His Highness the Amir's efforts would help contain the differences and reaffirm the unity of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and peoples, Secretary General Roudhan noted.

Meanwhile, the cabinet approved a recommendation by its economic affairs committee on the symbolic prices for the housing welfare lots of land in South Khaitan, block 3 and 4; KD 15,000 (\$49,600) for each lot. It tasked the Public Authority for Housing Welfare with taking the relevant measures.

A beneficiary will only be free to cede, exchange of sell a plot of land after 10 years. Then, the cabinet asked the Touristic Enterprises Company to submit a quarterly report on the measures and steps taken for the implementation of affiliate projects, and the challenges they face.

Al-Aqsa Mosque

Reviewing the political developments on the Arab and international scenes, the cabinet voiced relief over the end of Al-Aqsa Mosque crisis, and the reopening of the complex gates, removing all restrictions previously set by the Israelis. The cabinet lauded the efforts exerted by Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and stressed the significance of the Arab coordination in that respect. It also highlighted the Palestinian brothers' steadfastness and defense of Al-Aqsa and all Islamic holy places.

The ministers reiterated Kuwait's stance in support of the Palestinian people against the Israeli occupation, urging the international com-

munity to work on an end to the Israeli practices and plans, and to maintain the identity of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa.

In the meantime, the cabinet expressed Kuwait's strong condemnation of the missile attack by the Yemeni Houthi militia and the forces loyal to ousted president Ali Abdullah Saleh, targeting Makkah. Attacking Makkah for a second time shows how the Houthis insist on aggression and disregard of the holy sites, the cabinet stressed.

The attack also demonstrates anew that the Houthis are unserious about responding to the ongoing international efforts to end the conflict in Yemen peacefully. The cabinet lauded Saudi Arabia's great efforts to serve the holy sites and pilgrims. By the same token, the ministers voiced Kuwait's strong condemnation of the "terrorist" attack that targeted a security patrol in the Saudi Qatif Governorate Sunday, which left a security man dead and six others injured. The cabinet reaffirmed Kuwait's support to the Kingdom and all the measures Riyadh may take to maintain the country's security and stability. It also reiterated Kuwait's initial and firm stance that rejects all forms of violence and terrorism, offering condolences to the victim's family.

Undersecretary

Meanwhile, Minister of Justice and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Faleh Al-Azab said that the cabinet approved a draft decree appointing Ali Fahad Al-Adwani as Undersecretary of the Ministry of National Assembly Affairs.

The cabinet also consented to a draft decree choosing Sheikh Firas Saoud Al-Malik Al-Sabah as Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of National Assembly Affairs, Azb said after the meeting. The cabinet further approved a draft decree appointing Masoud Mohammed Abdullah Al-Fuhaid as Deputy Director General of the General Authority for Minors Affairs, he added. — KUNA

UNION SOUNDS CONCERN AS SHRIMPING SEASON STARTS

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Head of Kuwait Fishermen Union Thaher Al-Suwayan announced yesterday the beginning of the shrimping season which starts today, and wished fishermen a good harvest. Meanwhile, he said that the union was shocked to learn that the Interior Ministry went back to a previous order to allow fishermen to leave territorial waters and return back from international borders only using their original passport, instead of their civil IDs. According Suwayan, fishermen are now required to take their passports with them during their fishing trips, and have the exit stamp on it when they leave to

international waters then have it stamped again when they reenter territorial waters. This practice was stopped before the start of this year's shrimping season because it caused many problems to fishermen last year, Suwayan, noting that the reinstatement of this practice means that many expatriate fishermen will abandon their jobs, thus causing huge losses to Kuwaiti fishermen.

Annual leaves

MP Mubarak Al-Hajraf submitted a proposal by which state employees are paid compensations in exchange for their annual leaves as long as they have at least 60 days in their leave bal-

ance not counting the current year's leave. This practice is already followed with uniformed employees, Hajraf, said, demanding that civilian workers be treated equally in this respect.

Transfers

Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah issued a decision appointing Major General Farraj Al-Zubi as the Director General of the Sentences Implementation Department. He also transferred Major General Majid Al-Majid and his Assistant Major General Salem Al-Ehaimer to the Ministry's Diwan from the General Directorate for Internal Security.

KIB AWARDED 'DISTINCTION IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN ISLAMIC BANKING'

KUWAIT: In recognition of its achievements and efforts within the local community, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently received the 'Distinction in Social Responsibility in Islamic Banking 2017' award during the 2017 Social Responsibility in Islamic Banks conference. The conference was organized by the Regional CSR Network and was held in Bahrain under the theme "Commitments of Islamic Banks Towards its Beneficiaries". The conference took place under the patronage of Bahraini Minister of Finance, Sheikh Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al-Khalifa, and was attended by Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bahrain Association of Banks, Global Social Responsibility Ambassador, Adnan Ahmed Yousif.

During the conference, Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, received this prestigious award on behalf of the Bank. This latest accolade reflects the Bank's strong commitment to the highest standards of social responsibility, which has led it to continuously contribute to charitable initiatives, prioritize financial inclusion, as well as embed community-based initiatives within the Bank's operations. Additionally, KIB is keen on issuing a social responsibility report and organizing a wide range of initiatives and activities that serve all segments of the local community. The bank's executive management has also put in place a clear and comprehensive social responsibility policy.

The Regional CSR Network is part of the United Nations Global Compact, an independent international advisory framework with offices in several countries across the globe. The network aims at spreading awareness regarding social responsibility and encouraging its implementation in both the public and private sector. Additionally, KIB's training program titled 'Social

Responsibility Specialist in Islamic Banks' was launched during the conference.

Accordingly, several discussions focusing specifically on social responsibility in Islamic banking took place, including: the exchange of experiences and standard practices, criteria for successful implementation and the importance of social responsibility in meeting the diverse needs of the community.

On this occasion, Najia expressed his delight at KIB winning yet another award, especially one that underscores the bank's exceptional success in several fields of Islamic banking, and in particular its outstanding efforts within the field of social responsibility.

Furthermore, he pointed out that every success achieved by KIB acts as a powerful motivator, propelling the bank towards many more successes and achievements in the future.

At the end, Najia noted that KIB continues to shine in the realm of social impact, as it provides ongoing financial and moral support for a number of key areas, including: youth, healthcare, sports, nationalism, humanitarianism, religion and culture. Through its all-encompassing social responsibility strategy, KIB has managed to garner a number of prestigious awards throughout the years, setting it apart from other local Islamic banks as a leader within the banking sector.



Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB (center) receives the award.



OOREDOO ORGANIZES 24-HOUR CHALLENGE FOR PROTÉGÉS

TO ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS

KUWAIT: Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, organized a 24-hour challenge to the Protégés students last week in the company's head office, aimed at encouraging students' critical thinking and team work efforts.

The 24-hour challenge included a number of presentations by Ooredoo Kuwait representatives from a variety of departments, in addition to workshops and inspirational talks by guest speakers. The challenge culminated in a presentation prepared by the students demonstrating their understanding of the telecom market in Kuwait, where they were asked to launch a mock product with a full-fledged campaign.

Commenting on this initiative, Ooredoo Kuwait's CSR, Sponsorship and Social Media manager Yousef Al-Shallal, noted the success of the 24-hour challenge, lauding the commitment of the students and the dedication of the organizers from the Protégés program. "We're always seeking new ways to challenge youth, and provide them with tools that empower them. We had a successful partnership with the Protogés, who embody a number of great values that we strongly believe in, such as challenging and connecting."

He added: "The program focuses on a number of core values and skills such as tolerance, critical thinking, and creativity, which are important assets in creating future leaders. It has achieved unparalleled success throughout the years, and we look forward to meeting the graduates of 7th generation of the Protégés."

Shallal also reiterated that Ooredoo is keen on supporting initiatives aimed at youth development, and emphasized on the importance of the partnership with various state sectors to accomplish this target. Ooredoo has recently announced renewing its sponsorship of the Protégés youth development program in its seventh season. The unique program, which focuses on developing and training a cohort of 25 students between the



ages of 16 - 24, will include a trip to the European cities of Prague and Berlin.

Eman Al-Rasheed, Executive Manager of the Protégés expressed her pride in partnering with Ooredoo for a second consecutive year, which underscore Ooredoo's commitment to supporting youth and providing them with skills that create unique leaders. "We look forward

for more partnerships and support in creating a more aware generation of young innovative and creative thinkers," she added.

The Protégés program was launched in 2010 to mentor youth between the age of 16 and 24 by local iconic figures in different fields. For more information about the program, please visit www.theprotoges.org.



84.7% OF RESPONDENTS FIND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH ONLINE JOB SITES

DUBAI: The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) area is large, vibrant and diverse and attracts many young job seekers and recent graduates every year who rigorously compete for internships and entry level jobs. In order to measure the market and availability of internships in the region, Bayt.com - the Middle East's #1 Job Site - conducted a poll titled "Internships in the Middle East and North Africa," in which more than eight in ten respondents (84.7 percent) claimed that they are able to find many internship opportunities using online job sites.

Availability of internships

From the companies' perspective, more than four out of five (86.9 percent) respondents claimed that their companies "always have interns", this was followed by a small number (5.4 percent) who said they do have interns but "not always", 3.3 percent said they don't have interns but are "planning to start", and only 4.4 percent said they are "not interested" in having interns.

Nearly eight out of 10 respondents surveyed (78.1 percent) said that there are "enough internship opportunities available" in the Middle East region. Only 21.9 percent of respondents disagree with this statement. In fact, more than seven out of ten respondents (73.1 percent) found an internship in their country of residence "easily" as students, compared 26.9 percent who felt that it was difficult to find an internship.

There is always room for improvement, nonetheless. Almost all (98.8 percent) of those surveyed believe companies should work with universities to create more internship programs, compared to just 1.2 percent who disagreed.

Governments seem to have a big role as well. 97.4 percent of those surveyed agreed that local governments should encourage and support developing internship programs, compared to just 2.6 percent that disagreed.

The value of internships

The majority (88.2 percent) of respondents in the region believe that interns are "very useful" to their businesses. 9.2 percent of respondents believe that interns are "somewhat useful" and only 2.6 percent said that interns are "not useful."

Those surveyed said there were several benefits for having an intern. More than seven out of ten respondents (73.6 percent) stated that internships allow them to identify talent for future positions. Other benefits that were discussed include the ability to "quickly fill temporary and seasonal positions" and "providing extra help for small teams or departments."

Job Seekers' views on internships

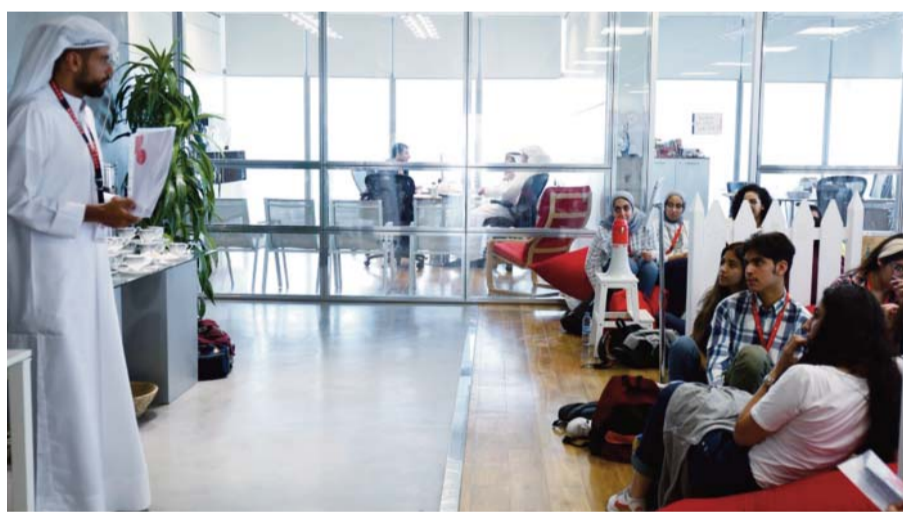
More than seven out of ten (71.5 percent) respondents said that, while at university, it was required for them to complete an internship or any type of practical training. At the same time, respondents understand the value of internships for the intern. 56.2 percent of respondents said it helps them "gain hands-on work experience", 4.6 percent said it helps them "develop new skills and knowledge", 4.2 percent said it helps them "explore their field of interest and career potential", "1.4 percent said it helps them "network and build professional connections", and more than a third (33.6 percent) said it provides all of these benefits.

On top of that, more than three quarters of respondents (76.2 percent) agree that internships "increase the job candidate's chances of getting hired." When it comes to what makes an internship more attractive, nearly two thirds of respondents (65.2 percent) said that the "type of company / field of work" was the main factor, 29.4 percent said that it depends on the "type of projects and job responsibilities", and 2.6 percent said that it depends on the "ability to obtain university credit."

Only, 2.8 percent said that compensation was the most attractive factor for an internship. In fact, 79.3 percent of those surveyed said that they are willing to complete an unpaid internship, compared to only 20.7 percent who disagreed.

"Young talent and fresh graduates looking to secure their first role should take advantage of the many internships, entry level jobs, as well as the job search tools and information available on Bayt.com," said Suhail Masri, Vice President of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "Internships are a great asset for those trying to start and grow in their career and should be a priority when it comes to gaining experience and standing out in the competitive job market. Today, and on any given day, over 10,000 jobs are available on our job site, nearly 5,000 of which are suitable for young job seekers and fresh graduates. We are also launching a new job section of Bayt.com that is fully dedicated for students and fresh graduates to help them get an early start on their career planning and job hunting."

Data for the 2017 Bayt.com 'Internships in the Middle East and North Africa' poll was collected online from May 24th, 2017 to July 30th, 2017. Results are based on a sample of 9,250 respondents. Countries that participated are the UAE, KSA, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Iraq and others.



In Brief

AMIR OFFERS CONDOLENCE

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman Bin Abdulaziz over the "martyrdom" of a Saudi security man and injury of others in a terrorist attack in Al-Masora neighborhood in Qatif province. In the cable, His Highness the Amir voiced Kuwait's strong condemnation of this heinous terrorist attack that aimed at disrupting security and stability in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. —KUNA



AID TO JERUSALEMITES

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) offered food parcels to Jerusalemites stationed at the gates of the city since the beginning of Al-Aqsa crisis, KRCS Secretary General Maha Al-Barjas said. She added that KRCS has been of great support to the Palestinian people in various humanitarian relief aspects. The meals and cold drinks were offered to the Palestinians stationed at Al-Aqsa Mosque gates on a daily basis, as the meals reached 5,000. —KUNA



US DOLLAR RATE STABLE

KUWAIT: The rate of the US Dollar remained stable at KD 0.301, as so did the Euro at KD 0.354, said the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) yesterday. The rate of the Sterling Pound also remained unchanged at KD 0.396. The Swiss Franc steady at KD 0.311 and the Japanese Yen remained at KD 0.002. —KUNA



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: An aerial view of Al-Shaheed Park in downtown Kuwait City. —KUNA



KUWAIT: NBK General Manager, Human Resources Group, Imad Al-Abalani poses for a group photo with the students.

NBK LAUNCHES THE THIRD SESSION OF SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM 2017

KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) launched the third session of Summer Internship Program 2017. A two week courses custom-made for high school and college students aged between 15 and 20 years. The Summer Internship Program is made up of four different sessions, five-hour daily over two weeks each. The Fourth session starts on the 13th of August as scheduled in the program.

It is worth mentioning that since the inception of the program, LOYAC is participating in NBK's annual summer internship program for the first time this year. LOYAC will be offering students educative training programs that aim at developing knowledge and responsibility towards society.

The Summer Internship Program features a mixture of theoretical and practical training dedi-

cated to provide the interns with valuable knowledge on a variety of subjects such as: teamwork, creative thinking, the means of self-expression and modern banking, in addition to helping them having a greater exposure to daily banking work procedures.

This annual program demonstrates NBK's longstanding social involvement as well as its national commitment towards providing young generations with the appropriate opportunities to experience how the actual professional banking issues and transactions are handled and processed. It has been 16 years since the establishment of this program. NBK views the Summer Internship Program as an extension to its educative initiatives and as part of its corporate social responsibility.

TWO MILLION BARRELS OF KUWAITI CRUDE OIL TO BE SHIPPED TO VIETNAM REFINERY: OIL MINISTER

KUWAIT: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is preparing to ship two million barrels of Kuwaiti crude oil to the Vietnam refinery to supply it with quantities required for operations today. Through the marketing sector, the company will continue sending other shipments later in accordance with agreements concluded in this regard, Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq said in a press statement yesterday. The Vietnam refinery, built in the Nghi Son area, is one of Kuwait Petroleum International Q8 vital projects outside Kuwait, designed to refine Kuwaiti crude oil by 100 percent, and with a refining capacity of



Essam Al-Marzouq

200,000 barrels per day, Marzouq added. The implementation of this project began in July 2013 and took 43 months to complete, the minister noted. Marzouq stressed the importance of Q8's project to strengthen Kuwait's international oil relations with Vietnam and global partners, also to meet KPC's objectives of providing a secure outlet for Kuwaiti crude oil in the long run. The project of the Vietnam refinery reflects the vision of KPC and its firms to reach a leading position in the refining, marketing and petrochemical industry and to excel at performance levels as well as enhancing the benefit of Kuwaiti crude oil. —KUNA

CBK CONCLUDES FIRST WEEK OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR MY FIRST ACCOUNT CUSTOMERS

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the conclusion of the first week of the exciting educational and cultural activities organized by the Bank in cooperation with That Al-Salasil Bookstore exclusively for My First Account customers aged five to 14 years at the bookstore's branch in Avenues Mall. These activities were meant to encourage kids to read more and highlight the importance of reading in developing and upgrading the culture and general knowledge of kids. Further, the activities encompassed numerous fun and educational activities such as a bookstore tour, crafts and a story telling lesson by the writer Munirah Al-Eidan in addition to games, competitions and giveaways distributed to My First Account kids who visited the Bookstore.

Parents and guardians of My First Account customers who could not register their kids in the activities of the first week can register them in the upcoming events that will be held tomorrow and August 9th through the bank's website www.cbk.com under the 'promotions section' or by contacting the Bank's Call Center. It is worth to mention that My First Account is a savings account designated for children from birth to 14 years old. The account contributes in a perfect way for parents who want to secure a better future for their children and saving money for them from an early age.





Venezuela braces for new protests after deadly vote

TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2017

AFGHAN CHILDREN BEING SMUGGLED TO PAKISTAN MADRASSAS

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JODHPUR, Rajasthan: This photo taken on June 16, 2017 shows Dhanki (C), 32, who has been living in India for 16 years, at an artisan shop in an unauthorized settlement for Pakistani Hindus in Jodhpur in India's western state of Rajasthan. (Inset) This photo shows Pakistani national Jogdas, 81, in an unauthorized settlement for Pakistani Hindus in Jodhpur. — AFP photos

PAKISTANI HINDUS FIND LITTLE REFUGE IN INDIA

FOR MANY, THE PARTITION IS NOT OVER

JODHPUR: For decades, Jogdas dreamed of moving to India to escape the persecution he suffered as a Hindu in Muslim Pakistan. But the reality of life over the border is a far cry from those dreams. Seventy years after partition unleashed the largest mass migration in human history, Hindus are still moving from Pakistan to India, where tens of thousands languish in makeshift camps near the border with no legal right to work.

Many have no choice but to toil illegally in the stone quarries near where they live because their movements are strictly controlled by the authorities, suspicious of anyone from across the border. It is not the welcome most of them expected in Hindu-majority India. "No job, no house, no money, no food. There, we were working in the fields, we were farmers. But here people like us are forced to break rocks to earn a living," said 81-year-old Jogdas, who goes by just one name.

"For us the partition is still not over.

Hindus are still trying to come back to their country. And when they come here, they have nothing," he told AFP from the camp on the outskirts of the western city of Jodhpur where he lives. More than 15 million people were uprooted following India's independence from Britain in 1947, which triggered months of violence in which at least a million people were killed for their faith.

Amid the bloody chaos, Hindus and Sikhs fled the newly formed Pakistan, as Muslims moved in the opposite direction. Despite the exodus, Hindus remain one of Pakistan's largest religious minorities. Estimates vary, but they are believed to account for around 1.6 percent of the population of roughly 200 million. Many say they face discrimination and even risk abduction, rape and forced marriage. "Soon after partition, the harassment started," said Jogdas, whose family had only moved to what is now Pakistan a few months before partition to escape a devastating drought. "There was not even a single

day when we could live in peace. I wanted to come back to live with my Hindu brothers."

'We are alone'

Most of the migrants to India come from Pakistan's Sindh province, taking a four-hour train journey through the Thar desert to Jodhpur in the arid western state of Rajasthan. That they share the culture, food and language of Rajasthan should make it easy for them to assimilate in their adopted homeland. In reality, they live in isolated camps, far from local communities and are treated with suspicion by authorities.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government has said it wants to make it easier for persecuted adherents of the faith to find refuge in India. Last year it changed the rules to allow immigrants to apply for citizenship in the state where they live, rather than having to go through the central government.

Hindus from Pakistan qualify for a fast

track to citizenship after seven years in the country. But bureaucratic delays have meant the process of getting it can take longer to complete. Khanaramji, 64, became an Indian citizen in 2005 after fleeing Pakistan in 1997. He said many others had given up and returned to Pakistan, disillusioned by life in India. "There is no assistance from the government. We are just like cattle with no owners. We are just surviving on our own," he said.

'Life becomes hell'

Worse even than the poverty is the suspicion from authorities. "Those who do not have citizenship are harassed by (intelligence) agencies. They are always treated like suspects and agents of Pakistan," said Khanaramji, who goes by only one name. "They spend most of what they earn on going to police stations and agency offices."

Hindu Singh Sodha, who runs a charity in Jodhpur for Pakistani Hindus seeking to set-

tle in India, said they had high hopes of Modi when he came to office in 2014, but had been disappointed. The migrants still come under increased scrutiny whenever tensions flare between India and Pakistan—a frequent occurrence under the Modi government. "Their life becomes hell," he said. "Because everything is affected. Their shelter, health-care, access to education, their livelihood." But some feel even that is worth tolerating.

Horoji fled to India with his two adult sons two years ago after receiving death threats from the family's Muslim neighbors in Pakistan. "To save our lives, we had to run to India," said 65-year-old Horoji, whose grandparents were originally from present-day India but found themselves on the wrong side of the border at partition. "My grandfather had gone to the other side for work. But he had told us to move to India when the right time comes as he had sensed times would not be safe for Hindus in future." —AFP

AUSTRALIAN PLANE PLOT MAY HAVE INVOLVED BOMB OR GAS: REPORTS

SYDNEY: Four men accused of plotting to bring down a plane planned to use poisonous gas or a crude bomb disguised as a meat mincer, reports said yesterday, with Australian officials calling preparations "advanced". The men—reportedly two Lebanese-Australian fathers and their sons — were arrested in raids across Sydney on Saturday evening.

The Sydney Daily Telegraph said they allegedly planned to carry the device on board a commercial flight from Sydney to a Middle East destination as hand luggage. It said the idea was to use wood scrapings and explosive material inside a piece of kitchen equipment such as a mincing machine. The Sydney Morning Herald also reported that a mincer was being examined, while The Australian newspaper cited multiple sources as saying it was a "non-traditional" device that could have emitted a toxic sulphur-based gas.

This, it said, would have killed or immobilized everyone on the aircraft. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said the plans were "advanced" but refused to comment on the conflicting claims over the method of attack. "I have to respect the integrity of the investigations," he said. "But I can say that certainly the police will allege they had the intent and were developing the capability. "There will obviously be more to say over com-

ing days. It will be alleged that this was an Islamist, extremist terrorist motivation." Australian Federal Police Commissioner Andrew Colvin on Sunday said the aviation industry was potentially a target and that an improvised explosive device was involved.

Seamless cooperation

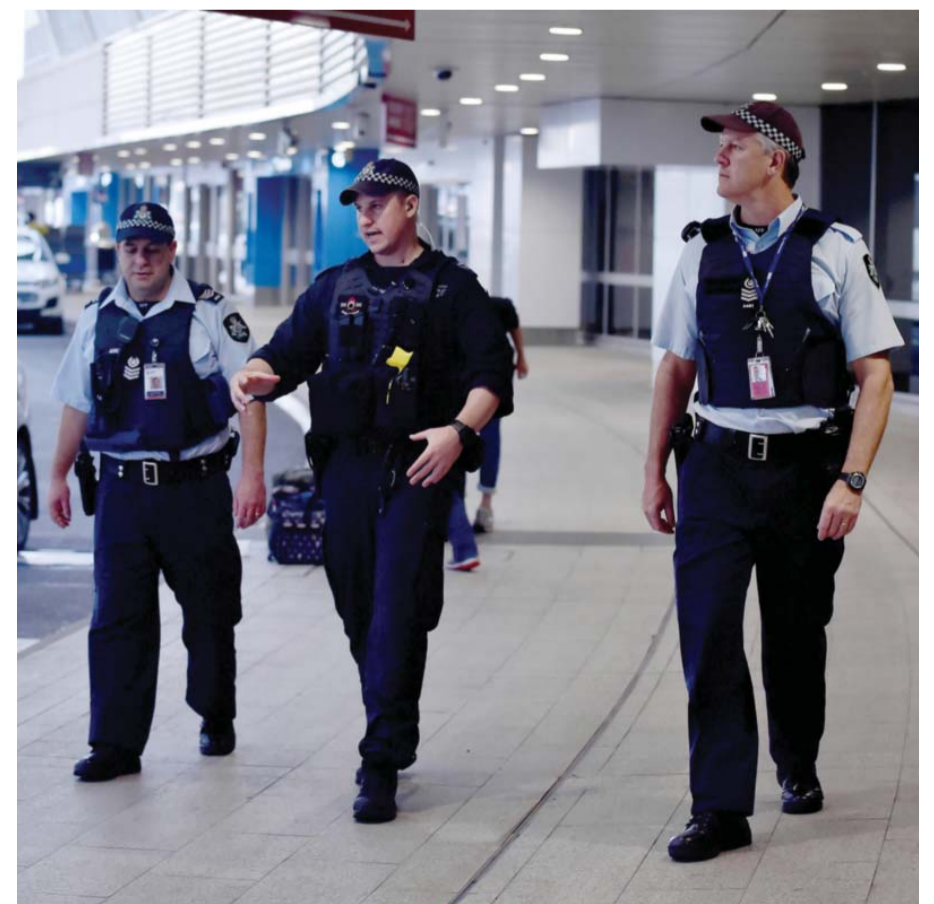
Justice Minister Michael Keenan on Monday called the plans "quite sophisticated". "It was a plot to bring down an aircraft with the idea of smuggling a device on to it to enable them to do that," he said. A magistrate late Sunday gave police an additional seven days to detain the men, who have not been officially named, without charge. Police continued to gather evidence Monday at the five homes raided, warning the investigation would be "very long and protracted".

TV footage on Saturday showed riot police moving on a terraced house in the inner-city suburb of Surry Hills, with a man with a bandage on his head being led away by authorities, draped in a blanket. A woman at the address denied they had any link to terrorism. Police reportedly acted after receiving information from an overseas intelligence agency, suggesting the men may have been directed by someone else.

Turnbull would not confirm this, but said "nowhere is far away from anywhere else these days". "In an age of the internet and the age of social media and the age of instant messaging applications, Syria is not a long way away from Sydney," he said. "And so that's the criticality of it—seamless cooperation."

Security has been strengthened at major domestic and international airports across Australia since the raids, with passengers asked to arrive early and to limit their baggage. This prompted long queues at Sydney's domestic terminal on Monday morning, with officials saying extra checks were likely to continue for some time. Australia's national terror alert level was raised on September 2014 amid concerns over attacks by individuals inspired by organizations such as the Islamic State group.

Canberra has become so worried that it announced the creation of a super ministry this month combining its security agencies including the domestic spy service, border force and national police to better tackle terrorism. A total of 12 attacks, before the latest one, have been prevented in the past few years, while 70 people have been charged. Several terror attacks have taken place in Australia in recent years, including a Sydney cafe siege in 2014 that saw two hostages killed. — AFP



SYDNEY: Police walk outside the international terminal as they patrol Sydney Airport yesterday. — AFP

ICRC PRESIDENT LEAVES YEMEN, ISSUES URGENT PLEA FOR HELP

I am leaving Yemen profoundly concerned for the plight of its people. The cholera outbreak remains alarming. With the rainy season approaching, we expect more than 600,000 cases by the end of the year. This is unprecedented. This outbreak is manmade. It is a direct consequence of more than two years of warfare. The health care system has collapsed, with people dying from easily-treatable chronic diseases. Key services like garbage disposal have ceased to function, as I saw all too clearly in Taiz.

Unless the warring parties improve their respect of the laws of war, I am afraid we must expect more epidemics

in the future. Yemenis are resilient people, but how much more must they resist? We have seen, in Syria and elsewhere, how two years of conflict turns into six, ten. Yemen's fate can be different, but I see few signs of hope. The suffering of its people only grows in intensity. I've met families forced to make impossible choices about whether to buy bread, water or medicine for their children.

Thousands of people have been detained by parties to the conflict, languishing in prison unable to contact their loved ones. Yesterday, some of their families protested outside our offices in Sana'a,

demanding answers. Their wellbeing is our priority, but to help them we must be allowed to visit detainees. I've seen for myself this week how war is destroying cities, communities and families.

This, then, is an urgent plea for behaviours to change. It is imperative that parties to the conflict stop the attacks on hospitals, and electricity and water plants. Otherwise, more tragedy will ensue. The warring parties, including coalition states, should take concrete steps, now, to alleviate the situation. They must Stop holding humanitarian action hostage to political ends. Instead, facilitate the flow of aid - and

essential supplies like medicine - into and across Yemen.

Guarantee access for humanitarian agencies to the most vulnerable populations. Give the ICRC regular access to all conflict-related detainees. We received encouraging commitments from both sides this week, and hope these will materialize in the weeks to come. Ease import restrictions so economic activity can resume. Moreover, others providing support to the warring parties in Yemen have the responsibility for making sure the laws of war are respected.

Humanitarian funding is more needed than ever. But the international com-

munity must go a step further. It must actively seek out solutions to this enormous crisis, and wield influence over the behavior of warring parties as a matter of urgency. The ICRC has doubled its Yemen budget this year to over USD100 million. We will continue to fight cholera and do all we can to help the most vulnerable people in Yemen. I call on others to step up their efforts and do likewise. The people I met this week in Yemen are counting on us to come to their aid. Let us prove to them that we care about their plight. —Statement by Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

THOUSANDS TO BE EVACUATED FROM LEBANON-SYRIA BORDER

OFFENSIVES LEAVE AL-QAEDA FIGHTERS BESIEGED

BEIRUT: Scores of buses and ambulances arrived at the Lebanon-Syria border yesterday for the second phase of an exchange between Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group and Syria's Al-Qaeda affiliate that would lead to the resettlement of thousands of refugees in Syria. It was not immediately clear if the evacuation will go

northwest Idlib province and the central Qalamoun region.

As part of the deal, the two groups on Sunday exchanged the bodies of their dead fighters. Hezbollah handed over the bodies of nine al-Qaeda fighters in exchange for the bodies of five of its own. Under the second phase, about 9,000



This photo released yesterday by the government-controlled Syrian Central Military Media, shows ambulances of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent gathering in the Syrian border village of Fleeta. —AP

ahead as scheduled, or will be delayed, because the registration of thousands of Syrians who want to return home is taking longer than expected.

The evacuation deal followed a military offensive by Hezbollah fighters and Syrian troops during which they captured border areas between the two countries and left hundreds of Al-Qaeda fighters besieged in a small rugged mountainous area. The fighting ended with a cease-fire Thursday for negotiations to allow refugees, fighters, and family members to leave to Syria's

Syrians, including hundreds of al-Qaeda fighters, are to return to Syria. In exchange, eight Hezbollah fighters held by Al-Qaeda's Syria affiliate, Fatah Al-Sham Front, will be returned home.

Also to be evacuated are members of the Levant People's Brigades rebel group whose members did not take part in last week's battles. Those fighters will head to the government-held town of Ruhaiba, about 50 kilometers northeast of the Syrian capital Damascus where they will benefit from an amnesty by the state and return to normal life, according to Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV.

Major difficulties

The government-controlled Syrian Central Military Media released video and photos of the buses and ambulances near the Lebanese border town of Aarsal and the Syrian village of Fleeta preparing for the evacuations. SCMM said the convoy heading to Idlib will drive through the central province of Homs then to the northern province of Aleppo before reaching Idlib.

In the northern city of Raqqa, at least two people were killed when a mine planted by members of the Islamic State group exploded, Syrian opposition activists said. The explosion in Nazlet Shehadeh struck some people who were trying to flee violence in the city, said the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and the activist-run group Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently.

The US-backed Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces have been on the offensive in the de facto capital of IS since June 6, capturing almost half of the city. Nearly two months of fighting have left hundreds of people dead and wounded. The international medical organization Médecins Sans Frontières, or Doctors Without Borders, said in a statement yesterday that sick and injured civilians within and outside Raqqa are facing major difficulties obtaining urgent life-saving medical due to the fighting.

"Patients tell us large numbers of sick and wounded people are trapped inside Raqqa city with little or no access to medical care and scant chance of escaping the city," said Vanessa Crumond, MSF medical coordinator for Turkey and north Syria.

The MSF statement said that since the SDF offensive began, its medical teams in northeast Syria have treated 415 patients from Raqqa and surrounding villages. Most patients are civilians with conflict-related injuries caused by bombs, land mines, unexploded ordnance, shrapnel and gunshot wounds, the statement said. The limited number of patients treated by MSF who managed to flee Raqqa city say that the only way to leave is by being smuggled out, causing dangerous delays in accessing urgent medical treatment. —AP



BERATZHAUSEN: In this July 29, 2017 photo transgender US army captain Jennifer Sims poses prior to an interview with The Associated Press. — AP

TRANSGENDER SOLDIER FEARS LIFE SETBACK AFTER TRUMP'S TWEET

BERATZHAUSEN, Germany: The US Army soldier took a deep breath before hitting the button that sent the email to more than 200 fellow troops. "All considered, I am, and have been, traversing what is essentially a personal matter, but is something I must address publicly," the email stated. "I am transgender."

The April 13 email officially ended the secret that burned inside Capt. Jennifer Sims, who was known as Jonathan Sims. But the feeling of relief swiftly turned to unease last week after President Donald Trump tweeted that transgender people were no longer welcome in the US military. "I read the tweets while I was at work and you know it was devastating because I still have work to do and here I am reading basically what sounds like the president of the United States - who is the commander in chief, he is the ultimate boss of the military - telling me and anybody else that is transgender that we are fired," Sims said.

Pentagon officials say the policy will remain unchanged without official White House guidance. But for Sims, the uncertainty has been upsetting. "So in the initial moments after the tweet, I saw myself forced into the state that I was in before I started transitioning - a state of depression, exhaustion and inability to enjoy things," said Sims, 28, who spoke to The Associated Press on her own behalf and not on that of the Army.

Expensive transitions

The reversal of the Obama administration policy that allows transgender people to serve openly and receive military medical coverage for transitioning from one gender to another also could affect her physically. Sims has been on hormone therapy by her military doctor since November. If she interrupts the treatment, her body will revert to being male.

"It would be very difficult to have to go through that," said Sims, who is based at Hohenfels, a US Army garrison in the German state of Bavaria. Growing up in Minnesota and Florida, Sims, a high school football player, never felt comfortable being male. The son and grandson of military veterans quietly came to terms with identifying as a woman a year after joining the Army R.O.T.C., but outwardly kept it a secret "because I wanted to continue serving," Sims said. Sims stopped socializing, feeling drained over worries about being masculine enough, and instead focused on work, serving in Afghanistan, Indonesia and Germany. Her sister, Natasha Sims, 24, said she saw "emptiness" in her eyes.

After the Defense Department announced in 2015 that it was considering allowing transgender troops to serve openly, Sims told Natasha and their parents. When the policy became official in June

2016, Sims said she felt the meaning of the word freedom personally after spending years fighting for it for her country. "It was the best day of my life really," Sims said.

Sims made an appointment with the behavioral health office, was given a diagnosis of gender dysphoria and started hormone therapy in November. Five months later, she decided to tell fellow troops. She first told her two closest colleagues, Capt. Brandon Shorter and another infantry officer. They were at a loss for words. After Shorter got home, allowing it to sink in, he texted Sims about how that was brave.

"Infantry officers are best described as brutish. So Capt. Sims pulled me and another brute aside face to face. That took a lot of courage and that's the first thing that went through my mind, mixed in with surprise," Shorter said. Sims then announced the "personal change" to more than 200 other troops. It was not an emotional email. The seasoned military officer wrote how a lifetime of discomfort had peaked three years ago. Sims meticulously explained gender dysphoria, announced she was Capt Jennifer Sims, not Jonathan, and outlined the steps she would take to fully transition to a woman.

"Officially in DEERS, my gender will remain male until my medical transition is complete, which means I will still comport to male standards and use male facilities," she wrote, referring to the acronym for the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, a kind of HR database for US military personnel. "While it is my preference for people to refer to me with female pronouns, if you are uncomfortable with this, there is no requirement to do so, I only respectfully request you refer to me by my proper name, Captain Sims," the email stated.

Two personas

Sims assured her unit the change "if anything, will only make me more productive and capable, as I no longer have to live two personas." Five soldiers sent emails back with words of encouragement. Most didn't respond. For a few days, there were murmurs of "hey did you see the email?" The force had just undergone training explaining what was expected in regards to transgender soldiers.

Sims is the first transgender person Shorter has known. The unit is basically full of "young men wanting to chew on nails and prove how tough they are and rightly so since they are infantry men," Shorter said. There are only about eight women among the 500 soldiers in the battalion. He had a lot of questions "being naturally curious and wanting to be a good friend because we didn't really have a personal relationship. He's, excuse me, she's - see I still slip up sometimes - a single captain, I'm married with two daughters. — AP

CANADA PROBES SAUDI USE OF ITS EQUIPMENT

MONTREAL: Canada warned Saturday it was reviewing reports that Saudi Arabia is using Canadian armored vehicles in a crackdown in the Sunni-ruled kingdom's Shiite-majority east. "We are looking at these claims very seriously... and have immediately launched a review," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, speaking in French, said in during a visit in central Canada.

The Globe and Mail reported earlier that light armored vehicles sold by Canada to Saudi Arabia had been used against Shia civilians in a major operation that left several people in the town of Awamiya in Eastern Province. Experts told the newspaper that vehicles appearing in photos and videos of the Saudi operations were Gurkha RPVs produced by Terradyne Armored Vehicles near Toronto.

Earlier, a spokesman indicated that Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland was "deeply concerned about this situation and has asked officials to review it immediately." "If it is found that Canadian exports have been used to commit serious violations of human rights, the minister will take action," added spokesman John Babcock.

"The government is actively seeking more information about Saudi Arabia's current efforts to deal with its security challenges, the reports of civilian casualties, and the reports that Canadian-made vehicles have been used by Saudi Arabia in its current security operations," he said in a statement. "Canada will review all available information as it determines an appropriate course of action." Babcock said Ottawa had shared its concerns with Saudi Arabia, demanding that "its internal security operations be conducted in a manner consistent with international human rights law."

Controversial deal

The controversial \$13 billion US contract to supply Riyadh with light armored vehicles was struck by the previous Conservative government. Trudeau's Liberal government has had to defend this contract against criticism that it may have violated Canada's export control rules that bar arms exports to countries with a poor human rights record and the prohibit using these weapons against civilians.

Freeland's predecessor, Stephane Dion, had stated in April 2016 that the government would halt or revoke the export license for the military equipment if credible information showed it was being used inappropriately. "We have contracts in which people commit to respect Canadian laws, the terms of the contract and Canadian values, and we expect these contracts to be respected," Trudeau said. Earlier this week, Canada had already expressed concerns about the growing violence in Saudi Arabia, and urged Riyadh to "defuse tensions." "All such challenges must be addressed in a manner that abides by international human rights law," the statement added. —AFP



AL-NASHABIYAH, Syria: A picture taken on July 30, 2017 shows aid packages from the United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) being delivered to locals in the rebel-held town. —AFP

FOOD ACCESS IN SYRIA'S RAQA AT 'CRITICAL TURNING POINT': NGOS

BEIRUT: Food access in Syria's battle-torn Raqa is now at "a critical turning point," aid organizations said yesterday, with markets shuttered and residents depending fully on their dwindling stockpiles. Raqa has been gripped by fierce fighting for nearly two months and the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces have ousted the Islamic State group from half of the northern city.

An assessment released yesterday by REACH, a network of humanitarian organizations operating around Raqa, painted an increasingly dire picture. "While in previous weeks residents were able to purchase some food at markets, the majority of key informants reported that residents are now relying entirely on food stored from previous weeks," it said. "Food markets, which were functioning sporadically three weeks ago, are generally no longer in operation."

Bread was consistently found in 15 of Raqa's 24 neighborhoods several weeks ago. Now it is no longer regularly available anywhere in the city. Food prices have also skyrocketed, forcing residents to eat smaller meals or skip them entirely, the report said. Raqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS), an activist collective publishing news from inside the city, has also warned of food problems.

"The bakeries are closed because there's

no fuel or flour, and the shopowners have fled. Whatever flour is here is spoiled and full of worms." RBSS activist Husaam Eesa told AFP earlier this month. "People can't store things in the refrigerators because there's no electricity. They can't cook because there's no water." The United Nations estimates that between 20,000 and 50,000 people are still in Raqa, but REACH said the number could be as low as 10,000. It estimated that the most densely populated district was Al-Hurriya in the north, with at most 5,000 residents, and that 14 out of the 24 neighborhoods were abandoned or almost abandoned.

According to REACH, only one wing of Raqa's state hospital is still functioning but offers just basic first aid. Medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) echoed those concerns yesterday, saying wounded civilians were often trapped in the city for days or weeks without medical care. "In Raqa city, if you don't die from airstrikes, you die by mortar fire; if not by mortars then by sniper shots; if not by snipers, then by an explosive device," a 41-year-old with shrapnel wounds to his chest told MSF after he fled Raqa. "And if you get to live, you are besieged by hunger and thirst, as there is no food, no water, no electricity." — AFP

EX-WARLORD, FOOTBALLER TO CONTEST IN LIBERIA PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

MONROVIA: Twenty candidates will contest presidential elections in Liberia in October, among them a former warlord, a footballer and a fashion model, as Ellen Johnson Sirleaf steps down after two terms, the electoral commission said yesterday. There is no obvious frontrunner to replace the Nobel Prize-winning Sirleaf as head of the fragile west African state she was elected to lead in 2005 following a long civil war, one that has left deep scars on its economy and social fabric.

Elections for the presidency and House of Representatives take place on October 10 — the first time since the end of the conflict in 2003 that Liberia will be holding a vote without the presence of UN peacekeepers. Ahead of the opening of campaigning yesterday, the UN appealed for the ballot to go ahead smoothly, urging all "to spare no effort in their pursuit of peaceful elections." Among the president/vice-

president tickets put forward by political parties, key figures from the civil conflict loom large. Senator Prince Johnson—a one-time rebel fighter filmed drinking beer during the notorious murder of former president Samuel Doe in 1990 — is standing for president for the Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction (MDR).

Football superstar and Senator George Weah will stand for the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) with Jewel Howard-Taylor, 54, the ex-wife of Charles Taylor, as his vice-president pick. Charles Taylor, once Liberia's most feared rebel fighter, is serving a 50-year sentence in a British jail for his role in fuelling neighboring Sierra Leone's own long civil conflict. Two prominent businessmen, Coca-Cola executive Alexander Cummings and telecoms tycoon Benoni Urey, are standing on pro-jobs and pro-growth platforms as they aim to bring corporate expertise to the presidency. — AFP

TRUMP TO DECIDE SOON ON ENDING HEALTH PAYMENTS

WASHINGTON: The White House is insisting that the Senate resume efforts to repeal and replace the nation's health care law, signaling that President Donald Trump stands ready to end required payments to insurers this week to let "Obamacare implode" and force congressional action. "The president will not accept those who said it's, quote, 'Time to move on,'" White House adviser Kellyanne Conway said.

Those were the words used by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., after the stunning early Friday morning defeat of the GOP bill to repeal former President Barack Obama's signature legislative achievement. McConnell is already moving to other business, having scheduled Senate consideration on a judicial nomination.

Conway said Trump was deciding whether to act on his threat to end cost-sharing reduction payments, which are aimed at trimming out-of-pocket costs for lower-income people. "He's going to make that decision this week, and that's a decision that only he can make," Conway said. Trump vented his frustration on Twitter yesterday. He said: "If ObamaCare is hurting people, & it is, why shouldn't it hurt the insurance companies & why should Congress not be paying what public pays?"

Crashing efforts

For seven years, Republicans have promised that once they took power, they would scrap Obama's overhaul and pass a replacement. But that effort crashed most recently in the Senate Friday. Republicans hold a 52-48 majority in the Senate, where no Democrats voted for the GOP bill and three Republicans defected in the final vote Friday. One of the GOP defectors, Sen. John McCain, has since returned to Arizona for treatment for brain cancer. "Don't give up Republican senators, the World is watching: Repeal & Replace," Trump said in a tweet. White House budget director Mick Mulvaney, when asked Sunday if no other legislative business should be taken up until the Senate acts again on health care, responded "yes."

While the House has begun a five-week recess, the Senate is scheduled to work two more weeks before a summer break. McConnell has said the unfinished business includes addressing a backlog of executive and judicial nominations, coming ahead of a busy agenda in September that involves passing a defense spending bill and raising the government's borrowing limit. "In the White House's view, they can't move on in the Senate," Mulvaney said,

referring to health legislation. "They need to stay, they need to work, they need to pass something."

Trump warned over the weekend that he would end federal subsidies for health care insurance for Congress and the rest of the country if the Senate didn't act soon. He was referring in part to a federal contribution for lawmakers and their staffs, who were moved onto Obamacare insurance exchanges as part of the 2010 law. "If a new HealthCare Bill is not approved quickly, BAILOUTS for Insurance Companies and BAILOUTS for Members of Congress will end very soon!" Trump tweeted. The subsidies, totaling about \$7 billion a year, help reduce deductibles and copayments for consumers with modest incomes. The Obama administration used its rule-making authority to set direct payments to insurers to help offset these costs. Trump inherited the payment structure, but he also has the power to end them.

Bailout

The payments are the subject of a lawsuit brought by House Republicans over whether the health law specifically included a congressional appropriation for the money, as required under the Constitution. Trump has only guaranteed the pay-

ments through July. Sen Susan Collins of Maine, one of the three Republican senators who voted against the GOP health bill on Friday, said she's troubled by Trump's claims that the insurance payments are a "bailout." She said Trump's threat to cut off payments would not change her opposition to the GOP health bill and stressed the cost-sharing reduction payments were critical to make insurance more affordable for low-income people.

"The uncertainty about whether that subsidy is going to continue from month to month is clearly contributing to the destabilization of the insurance markets, and that's one thing that Congress needs to end," said Collins, who wants lawmakers to appropriate money for the payments. "I certainly hope the administration does not do anything in the meantime to hasten that collapse," she added.

Trump previously said the law that he and others call "Obamacare" would collapse immediately whenever those payments stop. He has indicated a desire to halt the subsidies but so far has allowed them to continue on a month-to-month basis. Conway spoke on "Fox News Sunday," Mulvaney appeared on CNN's "State of the Union" and Collins was on CNN as well as NBC's "Meet the Press." —AP

VENEZUELA BRACES FOR NEW PROTESTS AFTER DEADLY VOTE

'WHAT THE HELL DO WE CARE WHAT TRUMP SAYS?'

CARACAS: Venezuela braced for new protests yesterday after a controversial election for an assembly to rewrite the constitution unleashed a wave of unrest that left 10 people dead. Opponents of embattled President Nicolas Maduro vowed another day of nationwide marches, defying an intensifying crackdown on protests that have left more than 120 people dead in four months.

Flouting international condemnation-including the threat of new sanctions by US President Donald Trump's administration-Maduro meanwhile claimed victory in Sunday's election, citing an official turnout figure of 41.5 percent. The leftist leader encouraged the new "Constituent Assembly" to wield its vast powers to scrap opposition lawmakers' immunity from prosecution as one of its first acts. Protesters attacked polling stations and barricaded streets around the country on Sunday, drawing a bloody response from security forces, who opened fire with live ammunition in some cases. Despite the unrest and an opposition boycott, the National Electoral Council said there had been "extraordinary turnout" of more than eight million voters.

Dressed in bright red, his fist clenched and face beaming, Maduro hailed it as a win in a speech to hundreds of cheering supporters in central Caracas early yesterday. "It is the biggest vote the revolution has ever scored in its 18-year history," he said, referring to the year his late mentor, Hugo Chavez, came to power. "What the hell do we care what Trump says?"

Members of the new assembly will include his wife Cilia Flores, his pugnacious right-hand man Diosdado Cabello, and other staunch allies. The socialist president is gambling his four-year rule on the 545-member assembly, which will be empowered to dissolve the opposition-controlled congress and rewrite the constitution.

There was blistering international condemnation of the vote, led by Washington. The constituent assembly aims to "undermine the Venezuelan people's right to self-determination," US State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement. It threatened further "strong and swift" sanctions on Maduro's government, after the US slipped sanctions on 13 current and former officials last week.

High noon

The election was also condemned by the European Union, Canada and Latin American powers including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico. Senior opposition leader Henrique Capriles called on Venezuelans to continue defying the deeply unpopular Maduro with new protests against the election and the "massacre" he



CARACAS: Anti-government activists drag a police motorbike burnt after the explosion of an explosive device during a protest against the elections for a Constituent Assembly. — AFP

said accompanied it. "We do not recognize this fraudulent process," he said, calling for nationwide marches yesterday at noon (1600 GMT) and a mass protest in Caracas tomorrow, the day the new assembly is due to be installed.

Maduro has banned protests over the vote, threatening prison terms of up to 10 years. The death toll in Sunday's protests included a candidate for the new assembly, a regional opposition leader, two teenage protesters and a soldier in the western state of Tachira, which saw some of the worst violence. In eastern Caracas, seven police were wounded when an improvised explosive targeted their motorcycle convoy. National guard troops used armored vehicles, rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse protesters blocking roads in the capital and other cities.

'A sham'

According to polling firm Datanalisis, more than 70 percent of Venezuelans oppose the idea of the new assembly and 80 percent reject Maduro, whose term is meant to end in 2019. Venezuelans also protested in Miami, Madrid and various Latin American cities. The number of Venezuelans living abroad has soared as the once-booming oil producer has descended into a devastating economic crisis marked by shortages, runaway inflation, riots and looting.

The US envoy to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, condemned the vote as a "sham"—a word also used by Britain's junior foreign minister, Alan Duncan, and many experts. "The vote means the end of any trace of democratic rule. Maduro's blatant power grab removes any ambiguity about whether Venezuela is a democracy," said Michael Shifter, head of the Inter-American Dialogue research center. —AFP

SESSIONS INTENDS TO HOLD ON TO THE JOB HE LOVES

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador:

America's top law enforcement officer wandered through a Salvadoran jail, sizing up the tattooed gang members who sat with their backs to him on the concrete floors of their cells. His soft voice was barely audible over the downpour pelting the tin roof as he spoke to the local police.

In the midst of a week when his role - and future - in President Donald Trump's Cabinet was in serious doubt, US Attorney General Jeff Sessions could be found thousands of miles away from Washington, surrounded by concertina wire and soldiers with rifles. Belittled by his boss back home, he vowed not to loosen his grip on the job that he loves.

For Sessions, leading the Justice Department is an opportunity to make tangible progress on issues he long championed, sometimes in isolation among fellow Republicans, during two decades in the U.S. Senate: hard-line immigration policies and aggressive prosecutions of gangs, drugs and gun crime. His priorities mark a departure for a department that, during the Obama administration, increasingly focused on preventing high-tech attacks from abroad, white-collar crime and the threat of homegrown violent extremism.

Yet Sessions' policy focus is often overshadowed by the expanding investigation into Trump campaign ties to Russia. Sessions, whose own campaign contacts with Russia's ambassador to the U.S. have been questioned, has stepped aside from the investigation. That unnerved Trump, who subjected his attorney general to almost daily public humiliation this past week.

Sessions was trying to weather the storm in San Salvador, where on a balmy afternoon his attention turned



SAN SALVADOR: US Attorney General Jeff Sessions walks past a cell during a tour of local Police Station and Detention Center. — AP

to the notoriously brutal street gang MS-13, whose violence in the U.S. has become a focal point in the immigration debate. Here was the former Alabama senator, traveling El Salvador's streets in a motorcade alongside leaders of the Justice Department's criminal division, buoyed by reassurances from congressional Republicans in Washington after Trump's tirade.

The trip was planned before the firestorm, but Sessions hoped his work on MS-13 would help mend his tattered relationship with Trump. "It hasn't been my best week for my relationship with the president," Sessions told The Associated Press. "But I believe with great confidence that I understand what's needed in the Department of Justice and what President Trump wants. I share his agenda."

Rebel with a cause

Sessions cut his teeth as a federal

prosecutor in Mobile, Alabama, at the height of the drug war, an experience that has shaped his approach to running the Justice Department. Allegations of racially charged remarks cost him a federal judgeship, but he went on to become the state's attorney general. He was elected to the Senate in 1996 and developed a willingness to break with fellow Republicans in ways that sometimes left him on the sidelines.

He fought against efforts to overhaul the criminal justice system last year, a rare area where conservatives and liberals had found unity. He also was a leading opponent of the 2013 bipartisan bill that sought to ease immigration restrictions. That issue drew him to Trump. Sessions was the first senator to endorse the businessman-turned-politician. Trump rewarded that support by naming Sessions as attorney general. — AP

News

in brief

Prince Philip to retire this week

LONDON: Prince Philip, the 96-year-old husband of Queen Elizabeth II, will retire this week, conducting the last of more than 22,200 solo public engagements, the palace said yesterday. The Duke of Edinburgh, who served as a naval officer during World War II, will attend a parade of Royal Marines at Buckingham Palace on Wednesday. He is captain general of the commando force. "This concludes the duke's individual program of public engagements. But he may choose to attend engagements alongside the queen from time to time," a spokeswoman said. The prince, the longest-serving consort in British history, announced in May that he would retire from public duties later this year.

Top Kenya election official found dead ahead of vote

NAIROBI: An official charged with overseeing IT in Kenya's election commission was found dead just over a week before the country goes to the polls, the commission's chairman said yesterday. The body of Chris Msando, a top information technology manager at the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), has been identified at the city morgue, according to IEBC chairperson Wafula Chebukati. "There was no doubt he was tortured and murdered. The only question in our mind is who (killed him) and why he was killed a few days to elections," Chebukati told reporters.

Philippine militants behead 7 loggers

MANILA: Islamist militants in the Philippines have beheaded seven local loggers they kidnapped last week in their stronghold in the strife-torn south, police said yesterday. The bodies of the loggers were found on Sunday in a mountainous village on the island of Basilan, local police chief John Cundo told AFP, blaming the killings on a faction of the Abu Sayyaf kidnap-for-ransom group based there. The group of senior Abu Sayyaf leader Furui Indama abducted and killed the loggers apparently over a local business row rather than for its typical ransom activities, Cundo said.

Uganda says 12 killed in Somalia Shabaab attack

KAMPALA: Uganda's military said yesterday it had lost 12 soldiers in an attack claimed by Shabaab militants in southern Somalia. The Al-Qaeda linked insurgents ambushed Ugandan troops that are part of an African Union force as they patrolled a supply route in the hotly-contested Lower Shebelle region, the military said in a statement. "From the battlefield, it is now confirmed that UPDF lost 12 gallant soldiers with seven sustaining injuries," the statement from the Uganda People's Defence Forces said. The attack occurred in the village of Golweyn, some 120 kilometers from the capital Mogadishu. The AU mission said an improvised explosive device (IED) was used in an ambush.

Algerian army kills six armed Islamists

ALGIERS: The Algerian army yesterday killed six armed Islamists during an ongoing security operation west of Algiers, the defence ministry said. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered, it said. The six suspects were killed in the Safsafa area near Tipaza. Algerians had hoped that a 2005 peace and reconciliation charter would turn the page on a 1991-2002 civil war that cost 200,000 lives. But Islamist groups remain active in some areas, largely targeting security forces. At least 71 armed Islamists have been killed by Algerian security forces this year, according to an AFP tally of official figures.

5 African farmers on trial for forcing black man into coffin

JOHANNESBURG: Two white South African farmers yesterday pleaded not guilty to all charges after an online video allegedly showed them pushing a black man into a coffin and threatening to burn him alive. Willem Oosthuizen and Theo Jackson, both 28, stood trial on charges of kidnap, assault and attempted murder over the incident last year at a farm near Middelburg in the eastern province of Mpumalanga. They were arrested after the video, apparently shot on a mobile phone by one of them, spread rapidly on the internet. The clip showed an assailant shoving laborer Victor Mlotshwa, who was clearly in distress, into the wooden coffin and trying to force down the lid.

France ordered to supply water for Calais migrants

PARIS: France's highest administrative court yesterday rejected the government's appeal against an order to provide water and sanitation facilities for hundreds of migrants sleeping rough in the northern port of Calais. In a written decision seen by AFP, the Council of State said the state's failure to provide for the migrants' basic needs "exposed them to inhuman and degrading treatment, dealing a serious and clearly illegal blow to a basic right." The council noted that migrants, "who find themselves in a state of destitution and exhaustion, have no access to running water, showers or toilets and cannot therefore wash themselves or their clothes."

DAUGHTER GAVE UP FATHER TO S AFRICA APARTHEID PROBE

PRETORIA: The daughter of a South African policeman present when an anti-apartheid activist died suspiciously revealed his whereabouts to the inquest probing the death, the victim's family said yesterday. Joao Rodrigues, a sergeant in the apartheid regime's security branch, was present in the room when communist campaigner Ahmed Timol plunged to his death from a Johannesburg police station window in 1971.

A 1972 inquest found he had taken his own life, a verdict Timol's family have fought ever since. "She made contact with us and said she was inspired that we were still looking for answers," Timol's nephew Imtiaz Cajee told AFP yesterday ahead of Rodrigues' evidence to the inquest into the death. "The last line of her email (to Timol's family) said she hoped we'd find closure. This is what we'd wanted for all this years. She's helping us out—we were surprised."

Cajee's account of how Rodrigues was revealed to be alive and located so that he could be ordered to attend yesterday's proceedings in Pretoria was confirmed by a source close to the police. Timol, a 29-year-old anti-apartheid volunteer, was arrested in Johannesburg in October 1971 and after five days in detention died after plummeting from the tenth-floor of the city's police headquarters.

Timol's case is being re-examined following a campaign to expose the truth led by his family. "It's taking it to a new dimension—we never thought we'd get Rodrigues," added Cajee. "He was the last person in the room with my uncle. We were lucky when this email came." Timol's brother Mohammad, who was in court, called the email from Rodrigues' daughter a "very big development."

"He's now got to come to court and tell us if he stands by his story that Timol jumped even though the pathologist said he bore signs of torture and a trajectory expert said there is no way he jumped," Neville Els-a former security branch officer who specialized in explosives and inspected Timol's yellow Ford Anglia car after his arrest-gave evidence on Monday. The judge in the case Billy Motlue warned police witnesses that they could face prosecution based on the inquest's findings and their evidence to the court. Els, 82, repeatedly told North Gauteng High Court he could not recall details of case. Els was one of the commanders of Paul Erasmus, a security branch officer who told the court last week that torture of detainees suspected of anti-apartheid activities was routine. — AFP

CHINA POLICE ARREST 230 OVER PYRAMID SCHEME

BEIJING: Chinese police have arrested 230 members of a suspected pyramid scheme, a week after a rare demonstration in Beijing protesting a crackdown on the group. The scheme, known as Shanxinhui or "philanthropic exchange", is under investigation and the group's founder Zhang Tianming, along with several employees, was arrested earlier this month. But in an unusual display of public disobedience, hundreds of protesters affiliated with the scheme gathered in the capital Beijing last Monday and 67 of them were detained.

Photos and videos on social media showed a large group chanting slogans and holding red banners urging President Xi Jinping to stop the investigation into the group, which they described as a legitimate platform being "persecuted". Protests of such size are rare in Beijing, where ruling Communist party has little tolerance for public demonstrations and is particularly sensitive to activity in the country's capital.

On Sunday, the Guangdong public security bureau said on its official social media account that 230 members of the scheme

had been arrested, with 142 facing criminal charges. It added that 55 companies suspected of involvement in the scheme have been put under investigation, and pledged to "maintain the high pressure crackdown". Shanxinhui is "the Falun Gong of a new era," one social media user said Monday, referring to the banned religious group that has been brutally suppressed by the Chinese government for nearly two decades after it staged a major protest in Beijing's centre.

Shanxinhui registered as a business par-taking in "cultural activities" in the southern

metropolis of Shenzhen in 2013, Chinese language publication The Paper cited government records as stating. Its official Weibo microblog account has blank since last week, with no posts shown, and its website is not accessible. A cached version of the website described the organization as an equity investment group founded in 2013 that promotes causes such as forestry conservation and poverty alleviation.

As of June, as many as 2.3 million participants had not received a pay-out in the scheme involving billions of yuan, according

to Chinese state broadcaster China National Radio. Founder Zhang and the employees were arrested on charges of defrauding "a huge amount of property" from victims "under the guise of 'helping the poor and achieving common wealth'", according to a police statement. Pyramid schemes have become increasingly popular in China in recent years, with promotional material spreading rapidly on social media networks. Police investigated 2,826 pyramid scheme cases in 2016, nearly 20 percent more than in 2015, according to the Ministry of Public Security. — AFP

BJP STEPS UP ASSAULT ON RIVALS, EYES SUPREMACY

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling alliance is stepping up its assault on the opposition Congress party as it looks to expand its national dominance and moves closer to securing a majority in the upper house of parliament. Modi won the biggest mandate in 30 years in the 2014 general election, giving him control of the lower house. But his nationalist coalition still lacks a majority in the upper house that represents India's 29 states and has proven to be a stumbling block for its legislative agenda.

His Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been chipping away at that problem. It recently won the backing of some opposition lawmakers to secure the election of its candidate Ram Nath Kovind as president. The party also joined a coalition in the big northern state of Bihar, in the process demolishing an opposition alliance that had dealt it its only major election defeat since 2014. With Bihar, Modi gained 10 more upper-house seats. That brings his nationalist alliance's tally to 89 seats - still short of, but increasingly within reach of, a simple majority of 123 seats.

Now, the BJP has turned its attention to a fight that could increase its strength in the upper house and deal Congress another blow. BJP President Amit Shah and another Modi loyalist are running for re-election to the upper house from Gujarat, the prime minister's western home state. They are also aiming for a third seat from

the state, held by Ahmed Patel, Congress President Sonia Gandhi's closest aide, for the past 24 years.

Wresting away Patel's seat could finally consign to the history books an era in which the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty of the Congress party produced three Indian prime ministers. "If her main man can't get the support of Congress, it means that Sonia Gandhi's grip over the party is gone," Rajdeep Sardesai, a leading television anchor and Modi biographer, told Reuters. Patel was not available for comment.

"The results of the Gujarat election will prove that Congress is broken, dismantled and they have nothing to offer to their members and to the country," said Bhupender Yadav, the BJP's national general secretary. "We are in the best possible scenario." Half a dozen Congress lawmakers from the state have defected ahead of the Aug. 8 vote in which they will elect three upper house members.

In response, the Congress evacuated more than 40 of its lawmakers from Gujarat to a golf hotel outside the southern city of Bengaluru. They are at the Eagleton country club, which bills itself "a luxury country club and world-class resort".

Shankar Singh Vagela, one defector, derided Congress as a "rudderless ship" unable to win elections. "Discontent has been simmering for a long time, but no one from Congress headquarters was paying attention," he said. — Reuters



KABUL: In this photo taken on Tuesday, July 25, 2017, Mohammed Naseer, with black turban, and three children wait for their food in the prayer area of a Pizza Restaurant. — AP

AFGHAN CHILDREN BEING SMUGGLED TO PAKISTAN MADRASSAS: OFFICIALS

TAKEN IN TO EDUCATE A NEW GENERATION IN THE WAYS OF THE TALEBAN

KABUL: It was a routine check. Two vans, both without license plates, were stopped earlier this month by police in Afghanistan's eastern Ghazni province, where Taleban hold sway in large swaths of the countryside. Inside, police found 27 boys between the ages of 4 and 15, all being taken illegally to Pakistan's southwestern Baluchistan province to study in seminaries called madrassas, according to a police report acquired by The Associated Press. The authorities told the AP that the children were being taken to Pakistani madrassas to educate a new generation in the ways of the Taleban, with the intention of returning them to Afghanistan to enforce the same rigid interpretation of Islam practiced by the radical religious movement until its ouster by US-led coalition forces in 2001.

The police called it child trafficking and threw the drivers and the only other adults, two men who organized the convoy, into jail. But the parents said they wanted their children to study in Pakistan and had willingly sent them to Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's sparsely populated Baluchistan province on the border with Afghanistan. Quetta is significant to Afghanistan's Taleban, many of whom graduated from madrassas there. It is also considered the headquarters of the Taleban leadership council, which is widely referred to as the "Quetta shura."

Future generations of Taleban

An Afghan counterterrorism official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because revealing his identity could endanger him, said Afghan intelligence has identified 26 madrassas in Pakistan where it suspects future generations of Taleban are being trained and in some cases instructed in carrying out suicide bombings. Several of the 26 madrassas he identified were in Quetta.

Sheikh Abdul Hakim madrassa was among the Quetta schools the Afghan official identified as a Taleban recruitment center. The AP went to the madrassa and was told the director, after whom

the madrassa is named, was on a missionary sabbatical to preach Islam, but a teacher, Azizullah Mainkhail, said some students at the madrassa were from Afghanistan. The majority, however, he said are Pakistanis from villages throughout Baluchistan. He denied affiliation with the Taleban or Pakistan's powerful intelligence agency known by the acronym ISI and accused by Afghanistan of supporting the Taleban. The madrassa is massive, surrounded by high walls that shelter several buildings of mud and cement. Mainkhail said 350 students live and study there.

A separate attempt in Ghazni province to move children across the border, also for religious education, was foiled by police about two weeks ago, the Afghan official said. The 13 children, from neighboring Paktika province, were also destined for religious studies, this time in seminaries in Pakistan's sprawling Arabian Sea port city of Karachi. Traffickers "wanted to take our innocent children to the terrorist centers on the other side of the border under the pretense of Islamic studies," Ghazni Police Chief Mohammad Mustafa Mayar said.

War, poverty, insecurity and a lack of understanding by families of the dangers awaiting their children all combine to drive the child trafficking trade in Afghanistan, said Mohammed Musa Mahmoodi of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. Each year there are at least three or four cases of children being smuggled from province to province or across the international borders, sometimes to be used as cheap labor, other times to be recruited by the Taleban under the guise of religious education and other times for sexual abuse, says Mahmoodi.

A lucrative and fairly safe trade

Still, he said the problem is much greater than the few busloads of children intercepted would indicate, but corruption and a lack of training in the ways of child traffickers makes it a lucrative and fairly safe trade in Afghanistan. Several years ago a child

trafficking ring that had taken children to Saudi Arabia to be used as cheap labor was busted, he recalled. "Parents often agree to send their children but they don't know what is awaiting the child. Sometimes they are told they will be educated or will get a good job and be looked after," said Mahmoodi. "But when they get there they are beaten, forced to work as cheap labor, taken by Taleban as new recruits." Mohammed Naseer spent several weeks arranging for his son, a nephew and several other children from his district of Ander in Ghazni province to go to Quetta to study the Quran. His son Mohammed Yaseen is just 9 years old but he said he was excited to be going to Quetta. His dream: "I want to be a mullah (cleric)." Naseer, who wore a black turban and a long black unkempt beard, said his son had studied three years in a village school but he still could neither read nor write, not even at a rudimentary level, in his native Pashto language. He said the village school even offers English lessons but the teacher doesn't speak English.

But even more worrying for Naseer is the lack of a quality Islamic seminary to school his son in Islam's holy book. Several children from nearby villages were home on vacation from a madrassa in Pakistan and Naseer said he heard them recite the Quran and "their words were so sweet." He decided then to send his son to Pakistan. Naseer said he wanted a madrassa with a dormitory that would house and feed his child. They don't exist in his area, he said.

He loaded his son along with 26 other children into the two vans, gave his son a change of clothes and gave some money to the men taking his child to Pakistan "but only for transportation." But senior police official Fazlur Rahman Bustani in Kabul said the movement of children is a business and a dangerous one, regardless of whether parents willingly send their children. "Those involved in the transport of children are part of a dangerous network and it is a criminal act," said Bustani. "It doesn't matter if the parents approve." — AP



DAKAR: An election helper sits next to an urn filled with ballots at a polling station. — AFP

SENEGAL'S RULING COALITION CLAIM ELECTION LANDSLIDE

DAKAR: The ruling coalition of Senegal's President Macky Sall won a widely expected landslide in a legislative election, his prime minister said yesterday, bolstering Sall's prospects for re-election in 2019. The Benno Bokk Yakaar (BBY) coalition swept all except three of the country's 45 electoral departments, said Prime Minister Mohammed Boun Abdallah Dionne, speaking to the public Senegalese press agency APS ahead of the official release of results.

The ruling coalition "emerged victorious" following the vote on Sunday, Dionne said, while the turnout was 54 percent among Senegal's 6.2 million registered voters, an increase on voting in 2012. Dionne said opposition coalition lists were likely to be ahead in the departments of Kedougou, Saraya and possibly Mbacke, but otherwise the BBY list of candidates "had been voted in by the Senegalese people".

The official results are expected later this week. Some complained of being left off the electoral rolls on Sunday, and there were delays to voting in several places, partly due to bad weather. Sall's main threat to increasing his power in parlia-

ment was posed by ex-leader Abdoulaye Wade, 91, who was aiming to drum up support for his own list of candidates and his son, Karim, who is not on the ballot but has ambitions for the presidency.

His other serious opponent, Dakar Mayor Khalifa Sall (no relation), is in jail awaiting trial for what supporters say are politically motivated embezzlement charges, and headed a list while campaigning from his jail cell. The mayor had been seen as a key contender for 2019 and a potential threat to the president in parliament until he was charged in March with allegedly misappropriating 1.83 billion CFA francs (\$2.85 million, 2.7 million euros) in city funds.

There were a record 47 lists of candidates contesting the election, with 165 lawmakers due to take seats in parliament. Police fired tear gas and arrested dozens during at times violent campaigning that left several injured in a country normally known for its peaceful democratic traditions. Controversy also erupted over the failure to deliver enough new biometric ID cards needed to vote, which hundreds of thousands of Senegalese did not receive in time. — AFP

MYANMAR POLICE DETAIN JOURNALIST AHEAD OF HIS DEFAMATION TRIAL

YANGON: Police in Myanmar have detained a prominent journalist, accusing him of attempting to flee the country shortly before his trial on defamation charges brought by a follower of a Buddhist monk who has stirred up anti-Muslim hatred. The detention of Swe Win, the editor of the non-profit online news outlet Myanmar Now, is the latest in a recent series of actions against journalists in the country that rights advocates say violate freedom of expression.

"Swe Win is a principled journalist with a towering reputation for exposing injustice," Matthew Smith, head of the group Fortify Rights, said in an emailed statement. "This is yet another feeble attempt to criminalize journalism. Journalism is not a crime." Swe Win was taken by police yesterday to the central city of Mandalay.

His lawyer said he was detained Sunday as he prepared to board a flight to Thailand to make arrangements for the news service's operations while he is involved with his trial.

Kyaw Thu, a Mandalay police officer, said that Swe Win was released on bail and that the court will begin hearing his case on Aug. 7, several days after it had been scheduled earlier. The complaint against him was made by a follower of Wirathu, a Mandalay-based Buddhist monk best known for his provocative speeches about Myanmar's Muslim minority. An organization led by Wirathu, Ma Ba Tha, has been accused of stirring up sentiment against Muslims, leading to deadly violence.

Swe Win criticized Wirathu on social media, accusing him of violating the Buddhist code of monastic discipline for his comments about the killing of a prominent Muslim lawyer who was a legal adviser to the ruling National League for Democracy. Last week, a court began proceedings against three journalists who have been charged with violating a law that provides up to three years' imprisonment for people who assist groups that are deemed illegal. — AP

MODI SAYS FLOOD-HIT GETTING AID, BLAMES CLIMATE CHANGE

NEW DELHI: Authorities across India are taking steps to help millions of people hit by floods and to prepare for future disasters, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, adding that climate change and new weather patterns were having a "big negative impact". At least 130 people have died in western and northeastern parts of India and millions of people have been affected by floods that have submerged villages, washed away crops, destroyed roads and disrupted power and phone lines.

Heavy monsoon rains have caused mighty rivers like the Brahmaputra river and their tributaries to burst their banks forcing people into relief camps in states such as Gujarat, Assam, Rajasthan and West Bengal. "Mother Nature gives us life and nurtures us, but at times natural catastrophes such as floods and earthquakes wreak havoc on a massive scale," Modi said in his monthly radio address to the nation on Sunday. "Climate change, altered weather cycles, and transformations in the environment, are also having a big negative impact."

India usually experiences monsoon rains from June to September, which are vital for its agriculture — making up 18 percent of its gross domestic product and providing employment for almost half of its 1.3 billion population. But in many states across the country, the rains frequently cause rivers to overflow and flooding forces millions into temporary camps, devastates standing crops, destroys homes and exposes people to diseases such as diarrhoea.

The torrential rains this year have not only triggered landslides in hilly regions like

Nagaland, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, they have also flooded national parks, forcing wildlife, including the rare one-horned rhinoceros, to flee. The fast-flowing waters have also breached embankments and eroded dikes in some areas, leaving some roads inaccessible, compounding efforts to rescue marooned villagers.

Rains have been 4 percent above average since the four-month monsoon season began in June, according to the state-run India Meteorological Department. Modi said relief

efforts were being carried out on an "extensive scale" with camps set up for the displaced and search and rescue teams deployed.

"Life goes completely topsy-turvy as a result of the floods. Crops, livestock, infrastructure, roads, electricity, communication links - everything gets affected," said Modi. "In particular, our farmer brethren have to bear a lot of losses because of the damage to their crops and fields." Modi said pre-emptive measures were put in place ahead of the monsoon season. — Reuters



ALLAHABAD: In this Tuesday, July 25, 2017, file photo, Indian rickshaw pullers wade through a waterlogged street following heavy rains. — AP

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Focus

GAME OF THRONES IN PAKISTAN'S DYNASTIC POLITICS

Pakistan's ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif has passed the leadership baton to his brother, ensuring the continuation of a dynastic political system in a country where government has long been run as a family enterprise. In Pakistan's stratified, semi-feudal society, patronage and kinship play a huge role in politics, often dominating ideology. Some analyst estimates say that more than half of seats - at both national and provincial level - have been passed from father to son, brother to brother, keeping the business of politics firmly within the family.

Sharif named his younger brother Shahbaz as his successor to the country's top office in a defiant speech the day after he was disqualified by the Supreme Court on corruption charges. The move maintains the eponymous Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party's hold on power, with Nawaz continuing to act as puppet master from his position as head of the party. "The subtext in all this is that Nawaz Sharif will still have an influence in how things are carried out until the next election and perhaps through the next election," said political analyst Umair Javad. "This was his (Nawaz's) way of convincing the party that this brand still exists."

Shahbaz - currently chief minister of Punjab province, the family's power base - is expected to slide into his brother's vacated National Assembly seat before being rubberstamped as prime minister in a parliamentary vote. Meanwhile local media has reported that Shahbaz is lining up his son Hamza to take his position as Punjab chief minister, though he too must first be elected to his father's provincial assembly seat in a by-election.

"It's the confidence of a political dynasty in its power that's allowing it to make all these moves," said Badar Alam, editor of the Herald magazine. "They feel that in certain parts of the country their dynastic hold is so strong that no challenge can uproot them." But some warn that the PML-N will not rally behind Shahbaz - considered less charismatic than his older brother - in the same way that it did Nawaz, possibly fracturing the party. "Nawaz has personal political appeal in a way that his brother doesn't. I think that the dynasty will fray under his brother," said journalist and commentator Omar Waraich.

'Stronger brand'

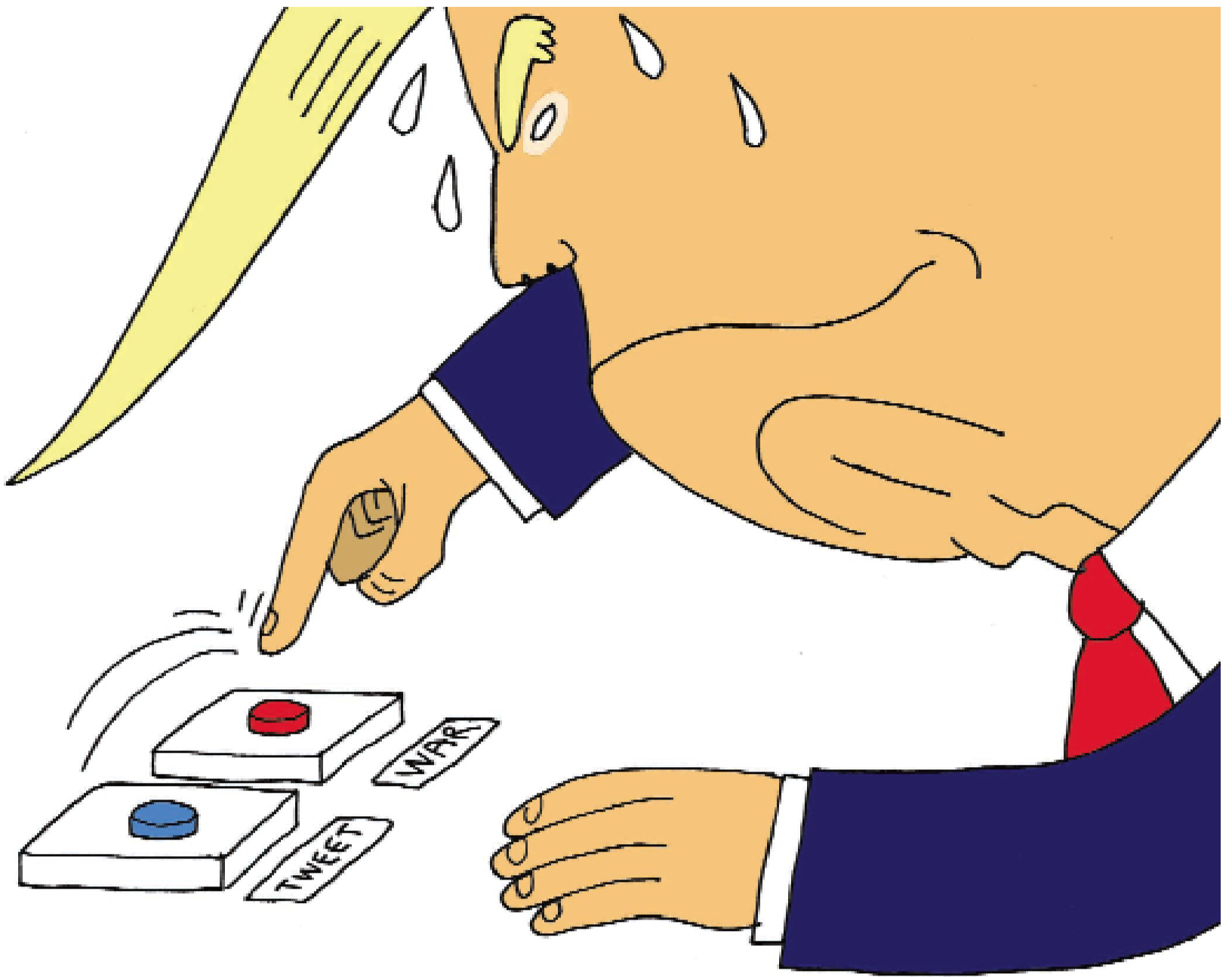
Another power dynasty, the Bhutto family and its Pakistan People's Party (PPP) lost its footing after the 2007 death of its leader, the country's first female prime minister Benazir Bhutto. Founded by her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the PPP was once a formidable political force, dominating Pakistani politics for nearly four decades. But since Benazir's assassination and despite being nominally led by her son Bilawal, the PPP has become a shadow of its former self, and lost 76 seats in the last general election in 2013.

"The leaders have a much stronger brand than the parties. Benazir was always a much stronger brand than the Pakistan People's Party. Nawaz Sharif is a much stronger brand than what the PML-N will be without him," said Waraich. Similarly the country's main opposition party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, which paints itself as a grassroots movement, is ultimately centred around the personality of its leader, cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan. "One of the appeals of Imran Khan is that he breaks this dynastic hold. But he only does it through the form of a personality cult," said Waraich.

Khan has led the PTI since its inception over two decades ago, seeking to galvanize the youth vote and the urban middle class with a promise to root out corruption. But observers say he has still failed to turn PTI into a truly national party - and challenger to the PML-N dominance. Khan held a rally attended by thousands of dancing, celebrating supporters late Sunday in which he criticized the dynastic nature of the Sharif transfer of power. "Is there no one else in your (Sharif's) party to make prime minister?" he asked the festive crowd. "It's not democracy, it's a kingdom."

The outgoing Sharif now has to face down corruption allegations that have swept up three of his children, including his daughter Maryam Nawaz who had long been touted as his presumptive political heir. The family will likely be in and out of court for the next six months as investigators pick over every detail of their luxury lifestyle and extensive wealth. "It is a serious blow to dynastic politics that has been the biggest impediment to the development of democratic institutions and values in the country," said political commentator Zahid Hussain in a recent column for the leading English-language daily Dawn, referring to the Supreme Court judgement that ousted Sharif. — AFP

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THOUSANDS TO LOSE 'GOLDEN TICKET' TO US

Yemen is urging the US government to take in dozens of Yemenis who traveled to Malaysia in recent months expecting to immigrate to the United States, only to find themselves stranded by President Donald Trump's temporary travel ban. The ban, which was blocked by lower courts before being partially reinstated by the Supreme Court in June, temporarily bars citizens of Yemen and five other Muslim-majority countries with no "bona fide" connections to the United States from traveling there.

The Supreme Court ruling sharply limited the number of people affected by the ban. Largely unreported has been the fate of one group - thousands of citizens of the six countries who won a randomized US government lottery last year that enabled them to apply for a so-called green card granting them permanent residence in the United States.

In a stroke of bad luck for the lottery winners, the 90-day travel ban will expire on Sept 27, just three days before their eligibility for the green cards expires. Given the slow pace of the immigration process, the State Department will likely struggle to issue their visas in time. A recent email from the US government to lottery winners still awaiting their visas warned "it is plausible that your case will not be issuable" due to the travel ban.

The lottery attracts about 14 million applicants each year, many of whom view it as a chance at the "American Dream." It serves as a potent symbol of US openness abroad, despite the fact that the chance of success is minuscule - about 0.3 percent, or slightly fewer than 50,000, of lottery entrants actually got a green card in 2015. The program helps to foster an image of America "as a country which welcomes immigrants and immigration from around

the world, but also especially from Africa," said Johnnie Carson, a former US assistant secretary of state for African affairs during the Obama administration.

Some former diplomats worry the travel ban's impact on the lottery could tarnish that image of inclusiveness. "Taking this away from people who have won it is the cruelest possible thing this administration could do," said Stephen Pattison, a former senior State Department consular official. "It makes us look petty and cruel as a society."

Reuters spoke to dozens of lottery winners from Yemen, Iran and Syria, including about 20 who are still waiting for their visas to be issued. Many declined to be named so as not to risk their applications but provided emails and other documents to help confirm their accounts. They described having spent thousands of dollars on the application process, and many said they had delayed having children, sold property and turned down lucrative job offers at home because they assumed they would soon be moving to the United States.

An Arduous Journey

For Yemenis, the situation is particularly difficult. Because the United States does not maintain a diplomatic post in Yemen, its citizens are assigned to other countries to apply for their visas, and many of them travel to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The journey to a country 6,400 km away can be expensive and arduous for Yemenis, whose country, the Middle East's poorest, is embroiled in a two-year conflict.

Most of the Yemenis who come to Malaysia make their first stop at a high-rise apartment building on the outskirts of the capital, where they have built a small community. Because of immigration restrictions, they are not allowed to work and are slowly running out of money. Most survive

from funds donated by other Yemenis or sent by relatives back home. "Imagine you get notified you got the golden ticket, only to have it yanked away," said Joshua Goldstein, a US immigration attorney who advises lottery winners.

The so-called "diversity visa" program was passed in its current form by Congress in 1990 to provide a path to US residency for citizens from a range of countries with historically low rates of immigration to the United States. Because it has relatively few educational or professional requirements, it tends to attract people from poorer countries. In Ghana and Sierra Leone, for instance, more than 6 percent of the population in each of the West African nations entered the lottery in 2015.

Yemeni officials in Washington launched talks with the State Department this month to find a way to get dozens of Yemeni lottery winners into the United States despite the travel ban, said Yemen's ambassador to the United States, Ahmed bin Mubarak. "They've been in Malaysia for more than six months and sold everything in Yemen," bin Mubarak said. "We are doing what we can."

US officials said they would work with Yemen's government to help those who qualify for exceptions to the travel ban to be allowed in on a case-by-case basis, said Mohammed Al-Hadhrani, a diplomat at Yemen's embassy in Washington. A State Department official declined to comment on how the United States was working with Yemen on the issue.

'Yanked Away'

It is unclear exactly how many lottery winners are now caught up in the travel ban, which affects Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, but in 2015, more than 10,000 people from the six countries won the lottery, and 4,000 of them eventu-

ally got visas. Yemeni officials provided Reuters with a list of Yemeni lottery winners, mostly in Malaysia, which they have also given to the State Department. It showed 58 Yemenis still waiting for a response to their applications, including some who have been stuck in security checks for more than eight months.

The State Department declined to comment on the figures, but departmental data shows that 206 Yemenis received diversity visas between March and June. Following the June 26 Supreme Court ruling, State Department officials told lottery winners from the six countries that their visas would not be granted during the 90-day period the travel ban is in place unless they can demonstrate close family ties or other approved connections to a person or institution in the United States, according to an email seen by Reuters. Yemeni officials are scrambling to help the country's lottery winners demonstrate how they might qualify for an exemption and are also pushing to get a waiver for those who don't have any relationships, Hadhrani said.

Rafek Ahmed Al-Sanani, a 22-year-old farmer with a high school education, is among the Yemenis stuck in Malaysia. He traveled there in December via a route that included a 22-hour bus ride followed by flights to Egypt, Qatar and finally Malaysia. "I was the first one to apply for the lottery in my family," said Sanani, one of nine children in a family from Ibb governorate in Yemen's north. "I want to come to the United States to learn English and continue my studies." Sanani said he had to borrow \$10,000 to pay for his trip to Malaysia and living expenses. As he waits to hear the outcome of his application, he is resigned to his fate. "What can I do?" he said. "I will accept reality." — Reuters

LAST CHANCE FOR GERMANY'S FAVORITE ENGINE?

Germany hosts a debate on the future of diesel engines as pressure grows on the government and automakers to curb or ditch a technology tarred by a reputation for pollution and cheating. The "national diesel forum" takes place in Berlin tomorrow amid renewed suspicions of emissions-fixing and a clamor for diesel-powered vehicles to be banned from cities to reduce pollution. "The reputation of cars 'made in Germany' risk being damaged and that's something that would be dreadful," said Transport Minister Alexander Dobrindt in an interview with Bild daily. "The automobile industry has driven itself into difficult territory"... and it "has a responsibility to win back trust," he added.

With its engineering prowess, profitability and role as an employment powerhouse, the car sector traditionally wields massive political clout in Germany. But both parties in the governing coalition, the centre-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) led by Martin Schulz and Chancellor Angela Merkel's centre-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU/CSU), are keeping the industry at arm's length as September parliamentary elections loom.

"Mrs Merkel is trying to calm things down before the elections, that's the main reason for this summit," Ferdinand Dudenhofer of the CAR automobile research center told ARD public television. Breaking with a political habit of cozying up to carmakers - which provide more than 800,000 jobs in Germany's largest industrial sector - Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks said Thursday that overfamiliarity had been a mistake, as it allowed company bosses to believe they were untouchable.



German Transport minister Alexander Dobrindt attends a press conference in Berlin on July 27, 2017 amid scandals around diesel emissions and a suspected carmaker's cartel. —AFP

'In danger'

Hendricks and Dobrindt will lead a summit packed with carmakers active in Germany, including VW with its Audi and Porsche subsidiaries, Mercedes-Benz maker Daimler, BMW, Opel and Ford, whose European HQ stands in Cologne. On Thursday, Dobrindt ordered Porsche to recall 22,000 vehicles across Europe after what he called "illegal" software disguising the true level of emissions had been discovered in its Cayenne and Macan models. Because the affected models are still being manufactured, the government will also deny any permits for the vehicles "until new software is available," he said.

The VDA auto industry federation, the car importers' association VDIK, powerful

trade union IG Metall and the local and regional governments most affected by air pollution are all invited to tomorrow's talks. SPD lawmaker Johannes Kahrs took Merkel to task over her absence at the meeting. "When millions of diesel engines have been manipulated, and one of the biggest industries of the country is in danger, the chancellor should be present at the diesel summit," he told business weekly Handelsblatt.

'Anything but a ban'

Topping the agenda at the talks will be the task of reducing air pollution from diesel technology. But Dudenhofer expects nothing but a "pretend solution" that will not go far enough. Consumer and

environmental organizations are meanwhile incensed that they have not been invited. Even so, widening public concern about pollution provides a powerful spur for the auto industry to rethink its commitment to diesel.

Germany has already been warned by the European Commission about its bad air quality. On Friday, a court in Stuttgart, the home of Mercedes-Benz and Porsche, found that a ban on older diesel vehicles would be the most effective way of reducing the pollution and protecting public health. Such restrictions could be a massive blow to those using the cars, which make up around one-third of the total on German roads. The Stuttgart ruling also piles pressure on politicians to abandon their support for a voluntary approach by the car industry to fix the problem.

Other countries have announced drastic measures - even if implementation remains decades away. Both Britain and France will stop sales of fossil-fuel vehicles from 2040, but the move appears extremely unlikely in Germany, which has deep historic connections to diesel. The technology can be traced to a German inventor, Rudolf Diesel, in the 1890s. Part of the problem is that some foreign manufacturers invested heavily on hybrid or all-electric vehicles to reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, but Germany's car industry largely bet on diesel.

The fuel contributes less climate-altering carbon dioxide (CO2) gas than petrol-burning motors. But it emits more NOx, which contributes to the formation of harmful smog, as well as fine particles that can hurt respiratory and cardiac health. — AFP



Lightning illuminates the night sky over the village of Cully surrounded by the vineyard terraces of Lavaux on the bank of Leman Lake from Chexbres late Sunday. — AFP

MOH EXEMPTS EXPAT CHILD CANCER PATIENTS...

Continued from Page 1

The official said more than 30 basic products and services are exempt from VAT, including: Baby milk and dairy products; products prepared from dairy; food preparation products for children; eggs; tea, sugar and rice; milled products; macaroni; fresh meat and poultry; frozen meat products; fresh, cooled or frozen fish; agricultural products that are sold as is; local fruits and vegetables; cereals, table salt and spices; open land, building and housing unit sales; equipment for those with special needs; bank operations that are limited only to banks; sale and purchase of currency at exchange companies; insurance and re-insurance serv-

ices; education, training and scientific research; health and medical services; mass transport and taxis, medically equipped vehicles for the handicapped; government education services.

The Gulf Cooperation Council has been planning the adoption of VAT for a long time in order to increase non-oil revenues. VAT is an indirect form of consumption tax imposed in more than 150 countries. It was first imposed by France. Governments impose indirect taxes on certain products such as cigarettes, alcohol, fuel and retail sales. Collection of tax is done through companies that collect it from the consumer before paying to the government, so that it is borne by the end user.

TRUMP INSISTS NO WHITE HOUSE CHAOS

Continued from Page 1

shouldn't it hurt the insurance companies and why should Congress not be paying what public pays?"

Since taking office six months ago, Trump's tumultuous administration has seen a succession of negative headlines and brewing scandals. Fueling the fire, the billionaire Republican has parted with a number of top officials including his national security advisor, deputy national security advisor and FBI director, among others - an unparalleled turnover for such a young presidency.

Meanwhile, Moscow yesterday sought to justify its decision to purge US diplomatic personnel in the country, as the Kremlin appeared to give up on hopes of improving ties anytime soon under Trump. President Vladimir Putin announced Sunday that Washington will have to cut its diplomatic mission in Russia by 755 employees, as Moscow struck back against new sanctions passed by the US Congress. The move represents one of the biggest single reductions of US personnel by Moscow, with Putin warning he could retaliate further. "We have waited long enough, hoping that the situation would perhaps change for the better," the Kremlin strongman said. "But it seems that even if the situation is changing, it's not for any time soon."

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov yesterday insisted that any hopes of mending Russia-US ties rest on "curing the worsening political schizophrenia" in Washington, but admitted the two sides appeared "far away" from any improvement. He did insist Russia remained keen on "continuing cooperation in the areas that correspond to our interests", suggesting Moscow remains open to working together on Syria after agreeing a ceasefire with the US in the south of the war-torn country.

The US State Department earlier called Moscow's move "regrettable and uncalled for" and said it was "assessing the impact of such a limitation and how to respond". US Vice President Mike Pence while on a visit to Estonia yesterday said: "We hope for better days, for better relations with

Russia." He stressed that "recent diplomatic action taken by Moscow will not deter the commitment of the United States of America to our security, the security of our allies."

Last Thursday the US Senate overwhelmingly approved a bill to toughen sanctions on Russia for allegedly meddling in the 2016 US presidential election and its intervention in Ukraine. Iran and North Korea are also targeted in the sanctions bill. The White House said Trump intends to sign off on the legislation, despite complaining earlier it would cut off the president's room for diplomatic maneuvering.

Russia's foreign ministry on Friday struck preemptively by ordering Washington to reduce its diplomatic presence to 455 by September 1 to match the size of Russia's missions in the US. It also froze two embassy compounds - a Moscow summer house and a storage facility in the city - from Aug 1. The US embassy has refused to state how many staff it has at its embassy in Moscow and consulates in the cities of Saint Petersburg, Yekaterinburg and Vladivostok.

But Putin confirmed that the move means 755 US diplomats and local Russian personnel will be forced to stop working. It looks likely that the bulk of those impacted will be Russians. A State Department document from 2013 said that of the 1,279 people then employed by the US mission, 934 were "locally employed" positions. Peskov said it was now a "choice for the US" on which staff Washington chooses to axe from its missions around the country, adding he did not know if this would now make it harder for Russians to get US visas.

"Hopes for improvement in relations between Russia and the US have definitively dissipated," Vedomosti business daily wrote in a front-page editorial yesterday. "The Russian leadership up to the last moment kept hope that it would be possible to somehow build cooperation with the US," Dmitry Suslov from Moscow's Higher School of Economics told Kommersant FM radio. "But in the light of the Congress decision, it is absolutely obvious that this is impossible." — Agencies

IS MILITANTS ATTACK KABUL IRAQ EMBASSY...

Continued from Page 1

It said two of its members attacked the embassy killing at least 27 guards and other embassy staff. The militant group is known to often exaggerate its claims on the number of casualties inflicted.

The Iraqi embassy is located in northwestern Kabul, in a neighborhood that is home to several hotels and banks as well as large supermarkets and several police compounds. "I heard a big blast followed by several explosions and small gunfire," said Ahmad Ali, a nearby shopkeeper. "People were worried and closed their shops to run for safety. The roads are still blocked by security forces."

The attack is the latest to rock Kabul, which is regularly devastated by bomb blasts and militant assaults, often killing many civilians. The resurgent Taliban claim many of the attacks as they step up their bid to drive out foreign forces with a series of assaults across the country. But the Islamic State group, recently ousted from the Iraqi city of

Mosul, have been expanding their footprint in eastern Afghanistan and have claimed responsibility for several devastating attacks in Kabul.

First emerging in 2015, the group's local affiliate Islamic State Khorasan Province (IS-K), overran large parts of eastern Nangarhar and Kunar provinces, near the Pakistan border, where they engaged in a turf war with the Taliban. US forces in Afghanistan have repeatedly targeted the group, killing its head Abu Sayed and several senior advisers in a July 11 strike in Kunar, the Pentagon has said.

The decision to deploy the so-called Mother of All Bombs (MOAB) also targeted IS hideouts in Nangarhar, according to the Afghan defense ministry, though fighting in the area has continued. Pentagon officials say the group now numbers fewer than 1,000 in Afghanistan. "We will be relentless in our campaign against ISIS-K. There are no safe havens in Afghanistan," said General John Nicholson, commander of US forces in Afghanistan, in a statement Sunday confirming some of the deaths in the July 11 strike. — AFP

QATAR SLAMS HAJJ CURBS, DENIES AIR ...

Continued from Page 1

Some Gulf media claimed the Qatari statement was a call for the "internationalization" of the management of the hajj season, which is run by the Saudi authorities. "Any call to internationalize (the management of) hajj is an aggressive act and a declaration of war," Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir told Arabiya news channel on Sunday. But Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani described the claims as "media fabrications". "There has not been a single statement by a Qatari official concerning the internationalization of hajj," he told Al-Jazeera news channel.

Qatar's National Human Rights Committee yesterday said it will complain about the Saudi restrictions to the United Nations, the Arab League and the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation. "Anti-Qatar rhetoric... threatens the security of Qatari pilgrims," the committee said in a statement. The hajj, a pillar of Islam that capable Muslims must perform at least once in a lifetime, is to take place this year at the beginning of September.

Saudi Arabia and its allies Bahrain, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates cut diplomatic ties and imposed sanctions on

Doha in June, including the closure of their airspace to Qatari airlines. The move forced state-backed Qatar Airways, one of the region's biggest airlines, to reroute many of its flights and scrap frequent routes to major regional destinations such as Dubai.

But the four states said yesterday that they have opened up air routes that Qatari planes can use in case of emergency. The United Arab Emirates' foreign ministry said that nine corridors were being opened in coordination with the International Civil Aviation Organization, or ICAO. The official Saudi Press Agency issued a similar statement. Qatar denied that any new routes had been made available, however.

In a statement citing its Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority, it said no navigation announcements have been released outlining the new corridors. The ministry and QCAA alleged that the anti-Qatar bloc was trying to "leak incorrect news" ahead of a meeting of the ICAO council yesterday. The ICAO did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The Emirati foreign ministry said the emergency routes include overseas areas managed by the UAE and one over the Mediterranean, managed by Egypt. — Agencies

YEMENI EXECUTED FOR CHILD RAPE, MURDER

Continued from Page 1

the crowd out of the square."

Yahya al-Matari, the father of the murder victim, Rana Al-Matari, told reporters after the execution he was satisfied. "This is the first day in my life," he said. "I am relieved now." The public execution was widely aired on Houthi-run media in Yemen, framed as an example of the rebels' efforts to combat crime in their areas. — Agencies

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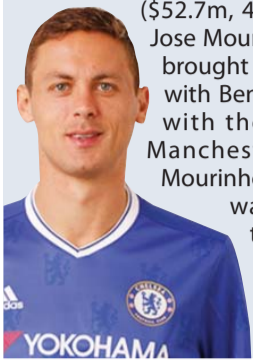
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MANCHESTER UNITED SIGN NEMANJA MATIC

LONDON: Serbian international midfielder Nemanja Matic signed for Manchester United yesterday from Premier League champions Chelsea, the buying club announced, for a reported fee of £40 million (\$52.7m, 44.7m euros). It is the second time United manager Jose Mourinho has invested in the 28-year-old's talents having brought him back to Chelsea in 2014 after a successful spell with Benfica. Matic signed a three-year contract with United with the option to extend it by a year. "Nemanja is a Manchester United player and a Jose Mourinho player," Mourinho told the club website. "He represents everything we want in a footballer: loyalty, consistency, ambition, team player. I would like to thank him for his desire to join us because without that, it would be impossible to have him here. I am sure our players and supporters will love him." —AFP



JUDGE GRANTS BAIL FOR SPANISH SOCCER FEDERATION PRESIDENT

MADRID: A Spanish judge granted bail yesterday to the suspended president of the Spanish Football Federation, who is in jail for suspected corruption. Angel Maria Villar was denied bail by National Court judge Santiago Pedraz on July 20, two days after the 67-year-old Villar, his son and two other soccer officials were arrested during police raids. But Judge Pedraz granted bail to Villar, his son Gorka Villar and suspended federation vice president Juan Padron yesterday. The bail for Villar and Padron was set at 300,000 euros (\$352,000), and for Gorka Villar at 150,000 euros (\$176,000). Judge Pedraz confiscated their passports and ordered that the three suspects make weekly appearances at the court and provide a phone number to reach them at all times. A statement by the court said the judge made the decision to grant them bail because "the steps that have already been taken ... make it difficult for them to interfere with the investigation." —AP

JONES BANNED FOR TWO EURO GAMES FOR INSULTS

LAUSANNE: Manchester United defender Phil Jones will miss the European Super Cup clash with Real Madrid on August 8 after UEFA banned him for two matches for insulting a doping control officer following May's Europa League final. Jones has been banned for two European matches and fined 5,000 euros (\$5,873) for "insulting and directing abusive language towards the Doping Control Officer" and a "lack of cooperation and respect towards the doping control procedure". His fellow United defender Daley Blind was also fined 5,000 euros for "violation and non-compliance" with an order to report to a doping control "immediately", UEFA said in a statement. United, who beat Ajax 2-0 in Stockholm to win the Europa League, were also fined 10,000 euros for failing to ensure their players were taken "to the doping control station straight from the pitch as soon as the match is over". —AFP



RUGBY

WIGAN BOSS WANE ISSUES CHALLENGE CUP WARNING

WARRINGTON: Wigan coach Shaun Wane has told his side they must raise their game if they are to win a record 20th Challenge Cup when they face holders Hull in next month's Wembley final. Wane's men won through to the showpiece match with a 27-14 semi-final win over Salford at fellow northwest club Warrington's Halliwell Jones Stadium on Sunday.

Oliver Gildart scored two tries for Wigan in a match where Sam Tomkins was outstanding for the Warriors. "To get back to Wembley is fantastic, but we have got there and that is it, there is another job to do," said Wane, whose side won the Super League title last season but lost in the Challenge Cup semi-finals to Hull. Cup-holders Hull overpowered Leeds 43-24 in Saturday's first semi-final and Wane added: "We are going to have to improve on that today if we are going to beat Hull."

"This feels fantastic compared to last year, last year was tough to take," he added.

'UNACCEPTABLE'

Wigan shot themselves in the foot at times on Sunday, losing both Sam Tomkins and Anthony Gelling to yellow cards. But Willie Isa and Michael McIlorum both crossed in addition to Gildart's double while Sam Tomkins added a late drop goal as he did in the previous round.

"We did 20 minutes with 12 men, which is unacceptable and something we will fix," insisted Wane. "But I thought Salford did a great job in testing conditions, it just shows you what a great game rugby league is. "For

us to get to Wembley is great and I am so proud for the fans because they will love it."

There will be some interesting split loyalties in the Leulua household for the final as Thomas' dad James played for Hull FC and even scored two tries against Wigan in the 1985 Challenge Cup final.

But for Leulua Jr now in his second spell pulling the strings for Wigan — there is no doubting his own allegiance. "The old man played for Hull back in the day and I grew up there as a young fella, I can't remember much about it but my sister was born up there so both clubs are a big part of our family," he said. "But I am here for Wigan and looking forward to going there and playing Hull."

"It's a special feeling to get to Wembley, we have had a bit of an up and down season but we have got a lot of quality and experience here and I think that showed today (Sunday)." Meanwhile Salford coach Ian Watson will now have to pick his side up for the Super 8s which begin next weekend after this loss despite tries from Greg Johnson and debutant Tyrone McCarthy.

"It was a big effort from our boys, but these are the games that we want to be involved in as a club and we will be involved in them again," he said. "The more experience we can take from these games and learn on the run the better it is."

He added: "We have to learn lessons from this and come back stronger, especially in the Super 8s. But we will be here again and now focus on what we need to do for the rest of the year." —AFP

GOLF

VEGAS RETAINS CANADIAN OPEN TITLE WITH PLAYOFF VICTORY

MONTREAL: Venezuela's Jhonattan Vegas birdied the first playoff hole on Sunday to win the US PGA Tour's Canadian Open for the second straight year. Vegas edged American Charley Hoffman after both finished 72 holes on 21-under par 267. Vegas was in a bunker and off the green as the playoff opened at the par-five 18th at Glen Abbey in Oakville, Ontario. But Vegas chipped his third shot inches from the hole and tapped in for the win.

"I knew I had to stay aggressive," Vegas said of the near-disaster out of the bunker. "I knew I could pull off the shot. A little lucky, to be honest," he added. "Sometimes you need that to win." Vegas, one of the longest drivers on tour, arrived in Canada having missed five straight cuts, but Glen Abbey again proved hospitable. "It's magic, to be honest," he said after capturing his third PGA Tour title.

"I knew that I had to shoot a good round today to have a chance to win again. I just came out with an aggressive mentality, just feeling really good about my game. "When I started making a few birdies, especially the putt for birdie on seven, I started feeling the same chills that I felt last year when I won, and I just knew that something good could happen if I kept that going." In the

midst of his title defense, Vegas said he'd been keeping an eye on the turmoil in Venezuela, where deadly violence marred elections to choose members of a powerful assembly that President Nicolas Maduro has tasked with writing a new constitution.

"It's always on my mind," the US-based golfer said. "I have family that live there. It's my country of birth. It hurts a lot, seeing the country the way it is, seeing a government that treats people that way when they don't deserve it just to remain in power." But Vegas was able to keep his mind on the job, and closed with a seven-under par 65 to overtake third-round leader Hoffman. Hoffman was on the green in two at 18 in regulation, needing an eagle to win. He finished with a birdie that capped a 68 and forced the playoff. Vegas, who started the round three shots off the lead, had powered up the leaderboard with six birdies in his first 11 holes.

He had taken the lead with a birdie at 16, but couldn't find a birdie that would have given him more of a cushion at the par-five finishing hole. England's Ian Poulter was alone in third after firing eight birdies in his eight-under 64 for 268. American Gary Woodland carded a final-round 68 for 269. —AFP



OAKVILLE: Jhonattan Vegas of Venezuela poses with the trophy following the final round of the RBC Canadian Open at Glen Abbey Golf Club on July 30, in Oakville, Canada. —AFP



ATLANTA: John Isner returns a forehand to Ryan Harrison during the BB&T Atlanta Open at Atlantic Station on July 30, 2017 in Atlanta, Georgia. —

TENNIS

ISNER BEATS HARRISON TO WIN ATLANTA OPEN TITLE

ATLANTA: John Isner rode an overpowering service game to his fourth Atlanta Open title and second consecutive ATP tournament, beating fellow American Ryan Harrison 7-6 (6), 7-6 (7) on Sunday before a friendly crowd at Atlantic Station.

Having won eight straight matches all in straight sets since bowing out in the second round at Wimbledon earlier this month, the second-seeded former University of Georgia star said he thoroughly enjoys playing in Atlanta, where's he's made the finals in seven of the eight tournaments.

He also won titles here in 2013-'15, and is 27-4 on the courts near his alma mater. The 32-year-old Isner won the Hall of Fame Open last week on grass in Newport, Rhode Island. "This is always going to be my favorite time of year," he said about the hard-court season. "I couldn't ask for a better start, obviously ... I landed yesterday, had a practice last night and things felt good right away. I was on a good roll."

The match followed service in the first set to force a tiebreaker. Harrison, the fourth seed, rallied from a 2-4 deficit to level the breaker at 6-6 only to see Isner win with a sizzling forehand to the deep right corner. Isner fired 23 aces to Harrison's 10, but after 75 straight service games without being broken he was passed on the forehand side early in the second set to trail 2-0. That ball, at 40-30 Harrison, was originally called out but, after Harrison challenged a replay revealed that it just caught the line.

Isner broke back in the next game when Harrison sent what looked like an easy forehand long. From there, the friendly foes remained on serve to reach another tiebreaker upon Isner's 18th ace. He attributed his winning streak partly to his loss at Wimbledon, where in the second round he fell 7-6 (5), 6-7 (5), 7-5, 6-7 (5), 3-6 to Dudi Sela of Israel.

"The match I lost to Dudi Sela was a blessing. I had a sit-down with my staff and hashed

things out," Isner said. "I was playing tentative and scared, not to win. "I told myself that's not the way to play ... you have to learn from your losses, and I did that."

Trailing 6-7 in the second tiebreaker, Isner whistled consecutive 137 mph aces, and then took the title when Harrison couldn't get to a quick corner shot to his backhand. After winning the first stop on the U.S. Open Series, Isner sounded like he's ready for the year's last Grand Slam event, although he'll have to wait a little more than a month before the pros gather in New York for the Open. "This winning streak is more a product of me playing well, not my opponents," he said after capturing his 12th career ATP Tour title. "In my opinion, I could've beaten a lot of top 10 opponents. I have a level of confidence that's hard to get."

American brothers Bob and Mike Bryan won the doubles title with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Wesley Koolhof of The Netherlands and Artem Sitak of New Zealand. —AP

CYCLING

ITALIAN AMATEUR DENIES MOTORISED BIKE ADMISSION

ROME: An Italian amateur cyclist has denied using a motorised bicycle after being disqualified from a race for mechanical doping, according to Italy's Gazzetta dello Sport. Acting on a tip-off, organisers used a thermal camera to identify the motor and claimed that 53-year-old Alessandro Andreoli had even admitted to cheating. But in an interview in yesterday's Gazzetta, Andreoli denied either having a motor in his bike or having admitted to using it.

"We had a tip off. When we looked, we saw that in the seat tube of one rider it looked as though there was a fire," Emiliano Scalfi, vice president of the amateur sports body that organised the race, told the paper. It is the second instance of mechanical doping after then Belgian teenager Femke Van den Driessche was caught with a motorised bicycle at the Cyclo-cross world championships in Belgium in 2016.

Andreoli finished third in Saturday's race in Bedizzole, near Brescia, after which he was asked to bring his bike to be inspected. Scalfi, of the Centro Sportivo Italiano, claimed he then owned up, but Andreoli, declined to join organisers in taking apart the bike to check the tube, denied any such admission.

"I had to go to a wedding, it was getting late," he said as explanation for refusing to have the bike taken apart. "But I didn't admit to anything. They looked for a switch but couldn't find one," Andreoli told Gazzetta, although the newspaper published a photo of the bike in question purporting to show the switch.

Asked why he had been disqualified given his version of events, Andreoli replied: "I don't know, maybe because they said I had a motor. "In that case those who finished alongside me had motors. There were a lot of riders at the front and no-one bothered them." Andreoli suggested he was the

victim of a stitch-up motivated by jealousy over his "high standard of living".

"Obviously someone doesn't like me," he said. "I've been a tiler for many years and I earn a lot."

Asked where he had bought the bike, Andreoli said it was from an acquaintance, whose name and phone number he'd forgotten. "We met in the street, I liked the bike, he gave me a great price and I took it," he said.

Asked about claims that he'd recently started riding much faster than before, the 53-year-old

gave a simple explanation. "Before I had back pain but I'm better now and training hard." Rumours have been rife for years that motorised bicycles were being used to gain an unfair advantage at major cycling races but until 2016 none had ever been found in competition.

Van den Driessche was banned for six years and thermal cameras have since been used at the Tour de France to try and weed out technological fraudsters, although none have been found among the professional ranks. —AFP



LONDON: Poland's Jakub Kaczmarek (R) riding for CCC Sprandi Polkowice during the "Prudential RideLondon-Surrey Classic 2017", UCI World Tour cycle race in London on Sunday. —AFP

NEWGARDEN DOMINATES AT MID-OHIO FOR 2ND STRAIGHT INDYCAR WIN

LEXINGTON: Josef Newgarden knew he had a good car and didn't waste time showing it. Newgarden dominated at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course to win the Honda Indy 200 on Sunday for his second straight IndyCar victory. He moved from fourth to first in the series points standings, seven points ahead of Helio Castroneves.

Newgarden led 73 of the 90 laps on the 2.258-mile course to finish 5.156 seconds ahead of Team Penske teammate and pole-sitter Will Power. He also won at Toronto on July 16 and has six career wins, three this season.

"We had an awesome race. It's what we needed," Newgarden said. "This was

a good day for Team Penske." Newgarden showed his intentions early when he made an inside pass on Power on the 14th lap. Local favorite Graham Rahal took a temporary lead when Newgarden pitted on lap 41, but when Rahal went in the next time around, Newgarden went to the front.

"I felt like we were a little bit stronger (than Will) at the start," Newgarden said. "Will struggled a little bit more than me. I didn't want to wait until the pits. I felt it was time. He gave me race room, which a good teammate does."

By lap 50, the Tennessee native had extended his lead over Power to 6.5 seconds. "We didn't have the machine to

stay with him today," Power said. "It wasn't my race today. I'm very happy with second."

Rahal couldn't get around last-place Carlos Munoz for more than a dozen laps and lost contact with Power. The 2015 winner finished third for Rahal Letterman racing. Last year's champion, Simon Pagenaud (Team Penske), was fourth. The lone caution came in lap 67 when Ed Jones spun out in turn 9. On the reset on lap 70, rookie Estaban Gutierrez, who finished 20th, got between Newgarden and Power and created havoc.

"I thought Gutierrez for a second was going to run into me on turn 4,"

Newgarden said. Five-time winner Scott Dixon, who came in as the series leader, radioed around lap 40 that something was broken and struggled to a ninth-place finish for Chip Ganassi Racing. "It felt like something broke on the car and we made some major front wing adjustments in the race," Dixon said. "We had a problem on the left rear on pit lane and that took some time as well." He is third in the series standings, eight points back.

WHO'S HOT

Newgarden wants to put the hammer down on the series championship with four races. "We want to build the gap. We need to maintain certainly," he said.

WHO'S NOT

During Sunday morning's practice session, Spencer Pigot of Ed Carpenter Racing had the rear of his chassis get loose off the carousel into the front straightaway and crashed straight into the hard barrier near the finish line. Starting 17th, he drove teammate JR Hildebrand's oval car and finished 19th.

THEY SAID IT

Rahal on the driving of Gutierrez and Munoz: "We need to have a closed-door talk and deal with it." Pocono Raceway, Aug. 20. Will Power is the defending champion. — AP

KUBICA'S TEST DRIVE COULD BE ANOTHER STEP TOWARD F1

BUDAPEST: While others do routine Formula One testing this week, it will mean so much more for Polish driver Robert Kubica, who last raced in F1 seven years ago, will drive the Renault F1 car on today in the first of two days of testing at the Hungaroring circuit in Hungary. If he does well, it will be another step toward F1 for Kubica - six years after sustaining serious right arm injuries.

"It's nice to give him the opportunity to get back, get some mileage, see how he can handle it," Renault technical director Nick Chester said. "It's a good opportunity to see what he can do and whether he can come back to Formula One someday."

The 32-year-old Kubica is being touted as a possible replacement for struggling British driver Jolyon Palmer next season, to drive alongside German driver Nico Hulkenberg in a quick-looking lineup for 2018. While the consistent Hulkenberg has scored 26 points with a best finish of sixth, Palmer has yet to score a point.

Kubica has been showing encouraging signs that his remarkable F1 return could happen. Renault's managing director, Cyril Abiteboul, is eager to see what he can do in a 2017 car, having tested out a lighter 2012 F1 model in recent weeks.

Driving in the 2017 F1 car, with increased downforce and wider tires, would be more demanding on Kubica's arm and test his fitness. Still, Renault believes he can cope, albeit with a slightly adapted steering wheel.

"From what we've seen so far his mental fortitude is great, he's pushed very hard to come back," Chester said. "Physically, he's passed all of his fitness tests and we've had to do very little to the car, so he's actually managed pretty well in a modern F1 car."

Kubica, a popular driver in F1 from 2006-10, opted to try his luck at rally driving in 2011. In February of that year, a high-speed crash at the Ronde di Andora rally left him requiring extensive surgery on his right arm. His right hand was partially severed, and he sustained further arm and leg fractures. He was trapped in the car for more than one hour and needed seven hours of treatment after being airlifted to the hospital.

It was initially feared he could lose his right hand, and a promising career came to a brutal halt. Kubica earned 12 F1 podium finishes with his quick, flashy driving and was seen as one of the brightest talents in the sport. He won the Canadian GP driving for BMW Sauber in 2008, after a second-place finish at the Monaco GP in the previous race.

"Robert's one of the quickest drivers I've ever raced against. Raw, natural talent. If he was still racing today he'd be in contention for a world title," three-time F1 champion Lewis Hamilton said. "Not a lot of great, great drivers come through. Then you have real special drivers like him. I'll have a keen eye on how he's doing. It will be great if he's able to (return)." — AP

HAMILTON NEEDS BREAK IN TENSE F1 TITLE FIGHT WITH VETTEL

BUDAPEST: Heading into Formula One's mid-season break, Lewis Hamilton is completely drained. It has been a topsy-turvy 11 races so far, with nine to come after a month off. Hamilton trails F1 leader Sebastian Vettel by 14 points, with both drivers winning four races. But Mercedes has struggled with reliability issues on its tires and problems with car balance, all of which has taken its toll on Hamilton.

He clearly needs a rest before the tussle with Vettel starts again at the Belgian Grand Prix on Aug. 27. "I definitely think it's come at a good time. It's been tough, physically, mentally and emotionally," Hamilton said. "I think this break will be good. Recharge and come back hopefully fresh. I truly believe we have the capability of winning this championship."

Hamilton finished fourth at the Hungarian GP, with Vettel winning from pole position ahead of Ferrari teammate Kimi Raikkonen. Third place was possible for Hamilton, but he stuck to a gentleman's agreement with Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas and let him past at the end. That was because Bottas had allowed Hamilton to overtake him earlier in the race to attack the Ferraris.

The decision raised eyebrows, considering how valuable the points were that Hamilton was essentially giving away to a main rival. "It cost us three points and potentially the drivers' championship, we are perfectly conscious about that," Mercedes head of motorsport Toto Wolff said. "Nevertheless, it is how the drivers and the team operate. We stick to what we say. If the consequences are as much as losing the championship, we take it."

That is quite some admission, but it shows - at least - that Hamilton and Bottas are there for each other. In the three previous years, Hamilton was constantly bickering and feuding with former Mercedes

teammate Nico Rosberg, who retired just days after beating Hamilton to win last year's title.

"The truth is that if you miss out the championship by those three points everybody would point the finger to Budapest," Wolff added. "It was a tough call to make, and probably the most difficult that we had to make in the last five years, but it was the right one in terms of our values."

Ferrari certainly liked it. After the problems of last year, when Ferrari failed to win a race and finished third behind Red Bull and Mercedes in the constructors' championships, things are looking up. Ferrari has not won the drivers' title since Raikkonen's win in 2007, and its last constructors' title came the following year.

Last year, Mercedes finished 367 points ahead of Ferrari, with the Silver Arrows winning 19 of 21 races. The gap this season is only 39, in favor of Mercedes because Bottas has also won two races while Raikkonen has yet to win.

"You mustn't forget where we were last year, and the step that Ferrari has made is bigger than anyone else," Vettel said. "Over the winter, I think we were the team that made the least noise. There was a lot of talk about the new cars ... We just kept to ourselves and did the job."

Ferrari has closed the gap on Mercedes in terms of speed and the car seems more reliable and more flexible than Mercedes, which has struggled on twisting tracks like Hungary and Monaco where overtaking is difficult. There is another one of those coming at the Singapore GP in mid-September.

Before that, there is Belgium and then the Italian GP in Monza - Vettel's home race. "The mission has been to get back to the top," the German driver said. "We got a 1-2 (finish in Budapest) but that's what we want every weekend." — AP



LONG POND: Kyle Busch, driver of the #18 M&M's Caramel Toyota, poses with the trophy in victory lane after winning during the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Overton's 400 at Pocono Raceway on Sunday in Long Pond, Pennsylvania. — AFP

MOTOR RACING

BUSCH ENDS WINLESS SEASON WITH CUP VICTORY AT POCONO

LONG POND: Kyle Busch watched the number of laps he's led this season tick, tick, tick as it crossed 1,000, and he only really cared about the lap he hadn't led: the last one. "We've had speed. We've been right there," Busch said. "We've been able to do what we should be doing and that's running up front."

For all that time up front, Busch also had the longest losing streak of his career, a rare recession over his time building a resume even NASCAR Hall of Famers would envy, with the 2015 Cup championship, 176 wins over three series and an elite ride for Joe Gibbs Racing.

He can add two more feats to the list - 13 straight years with a Cup win and his first checkered flag at Pocono. Busch used a bump-and-run on Kevin Harvick to take the lead with 16 laps left and held on to snap a 36-race losing streak and win the NASCAR Cup race at Pocono Raceway on Sunday. "I never thought this day would happen," Busch said. Busch won from the pole and gave Toyota its 100th Cup win since its 2007 debut. Busch had Toyota's first Cup win in March 2008 at Atlanta Motor Speedway. Busch had never gone a full season without winning a race. Charlotte Motor Speedway is now the only track where he's failed to win a Cup points race.

"I wasn't sure which one was going to be last," he said. Busch had seven top-five finishes this season and was runner-up to Austin Dillon in the Coca Cola 600 at Charlotte. All the near misses have gnawed at Busch, who won the All-Star race - at Charlotte. But the exhibition race doesn't count in the season standings and Busch was in a victory slump that dated to the 2016 Brickyard 400. He was racing for the lead last weekend in the Brickyard 400 when he wrecked with Martin Truex Jr., which led to a pit road altercation between members of both teams. He also won his 176th career NASCAR race over the Cup (39), Xfinity (89) and Truck (48) series. "We've all been fighting all year long and just wasn't sure why," Busch said. "This is something I've been waiting for for a long, long time. It's been a frustrating year but an awesome day today."

Harvick finished second, followed by Truex, Denny Hamlin and Brad Keselowski. Harvick, who hasn't won in 34 career races at Pocono, said he had nothing for Busch down the stretch.

"There was no battle. He was way faster than we were," Harvick said. Crew chief Adam Stevens made the right calls a week after his confrontation on pit road with members of Truex's team. JGR suspended two of Truex's tire changers because of the profane outburst at the Brickyard. JGR provides the pit crew for Furniture Row Racing as part of a technical alliance, giving them the authority to suspend members of the FRR team.

Busch earned a spot in NASCAR's playoffs, a significant victory that left just three open spots with five races left before the 16-driver field is set. JGR had been winless overall until Hamlin won two weeks ago at New Hampshire. "I didn't fear we wouldn't make the Chase with our points position," Stevens said.

Samantha Busch was stressed about her husband's season, tweeting before the race, "160 laps. We haven't even started and I'm a ball of nerves. Please let this be the day for the 18!" It was. She was in tears over the final laps and celebrated in victory lane a win that her husband dedicated to his late grandmother.

Up next, a run at a second championship. "I think our stats and our runs and our speed shows

for itself," Busch said. Other items of note at Pocono:

LOOSE NUT

NASCAR found a loose lug nut on the 18 and Stevens could be fined \$10,000. He does not face a suspension.

THE BIG ONE

An eight-car wreck on the first lap knocked Aric Almirola and Matt DiBenedetto out of the race. Matt Kenseth got loose and spun to trigger the accident. Almirola missed two months of the season with a fractured vertebra suffered in a race at Kansas. "Sort of a bumner not to even make a whole lap," he said.

JOHNSON WRECK

Jimmie Johnson wrecked and did not finish for

the third time in the last four races. Johnson connected with Hendrick Motorsports teammate Kasey Kahne and was spun into the wall. The seven-time Cup champion also crashed out of the first Pocono race in June.

DOUBLE DUTY

NASCAR held qualifying before the race instead of earlier in the weekend. Pocono had no Cup cars on the track Friday during the condensed schedule. NASCAR will try the two-day show again next week at Watkins Glen and Oct. 29 at Martinsville.

"Just thankful for the opportunity to have the two-day shows," Busch said. "We love spending time with our families, and being on the road, that is sometimes difficult." The series shifts to the road course at Watkins Glen. Hamlin is the defending race winner. — AP

VETTEL AND RAIKKONEN SET TO STAY AT FERRARI

BUDAPEST: Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen will head off to enjoy Formula One's European summer break knowing their Ferrari futures have been virtually rubber-stamped following Sunday's Hungarian Grand Prix one-two. Championship leader Vettel, already a four-time world titlist, increased his advantage over three-time champion Lewis Hamilton to 14 points, partly courtesy of the Briton's decision to hand a podium finish to his Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas in Hungary.

The Ferrari duo's easy relationship and shared sense of pragmatism has made them a good fit for the improved Italian outfit this year-a quality not missed at the weekend by Ferrari president Sergio Marchionne. Answering questions from reporters Marchionne hinted that both were likely to stay, with an announcement expected at the Italian Grand Prix at Monza in early September.

"I think I have been public on the Sebastian issue, if he wants to stay he is more than welcome to stay," said Marchionne. "And in the case of Kimi, we are pretty well sure... we know he wants to stay. Hopefully, we will bring them on soon." Asked about a likely statement at the team's home GP, he added: "That's what I've heard-I heard Maurizio (Arrivabene, team boss) was going to do that." The Ferrari president was more coy answering questions about hiring Hamilton in future, though. "It would be a privilege if he ended his career at Ferrari. "But for now, we have not gone far with Lewis... I will not talk about the future. We have two great drivers now and we don't want to talk about alternatives."

The revived Vettel has won four races this year, including Sunday's victory in his 50th outing with the team, and with his championship lead can afford to relax during the August break. "It's a dream," said Vettel after Sunday's win.

"I want to win. It's where you want to be. Our mission is to get back to the top and, obviously, we have had a great year and we have a great car." The German's victory was his first in five outings since the Monaco Grand Prix where, on a similarly slow, twisting and demanding circuit, power was less effective than at such tracks as Silverstone or the upcoming venues in Belgium and Italy.

Hamilton, even in a Mercedes team where the drivers have equal status, will be favoured to shine at both of those and close the gap in the championship before the end of the 'European' season. "This break has come at a good time for all of us," he said. "Everyone needs to re-charge and come back fresh and I truly believe we can win this championship, but it's going to need 100 per cent effort." — AFP



BUDAPEST: Ferrari's German driver Sebastian Vettel celebrates after winning the Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix at the Hungaroring racing circuit in Budapest on Sunday. — AFP



BUDAPEST: Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton races at the Hungaroring circuit in Budapest on Sunday, during the Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix. — AFP



LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles Dodgers' Justin Turner, center, scores the winning run on a double by Kyle Farmer as San Francisco Giants catcher Buster Posey, left, reaches for an off-center throw while Corey Seager celebrates during the 11th inning of a baseball game, Sunday, in Los Angeles. —AP

BASEBALL

RANGERS' BELTRE NOTCHES 3,000TH CAREER HIT

ARLINGTON: Adrian Beltre doubled for his 3,000th career hit, reaching the milestone in the Texas Rangers' 10-6 loss to the Baltimore Orioles on Sunday. The Rangers already were down 4-0 when the 38-year-old third baseman, who went 1 for 5 in his 2,771st game, had a hard hit down the line past third base in the fourth inning. Beltre became the first player from the Dominican Republic, and 31st overall, to join the 3,000-hit club in the major leagues. Jonathan Schoop and Wellington Castillo homered in a five-run fifth for a 9-2 Orioles lead. Castillo also had the last of three consecutive RBI singles off lefty Martin Perez (5-9) in the fourth. Wade Miley (5-9) went five innings and one of the four hits he allowed being to Beltre, who grounded a 3-0 pitch that went past the bag and then ricocheted off the side wall into left field.

DODGERS 3, GIANTS 2, 11 INNINGS

Kyle Farmer's two-run double in the 11th inning in his first major league at-bat lifted the Dodgers to their eighth straight win. Corey Seager doubled down the right-field line with one out for his third hit of the game and Justin Turner was walked intentionally. Farmer then lined a 3-2 pitch from Luis Suarez (0-1) down the right-field line, scoring both runners for the Dodgers' 31st comeback victory. Joe Panik had given the Giants a 2-1 lead in the top of the inning with a single up the middle through a drawn-in infield that scored Kelby Tomlinson from third. The Dodgers won for the 39th time in 45 games, and completed their 14th sweep this season. Los Angeles turned a franchise-record six double plays as it improved to 26-3 at home since June 7. Pedro Baez (3-1) got the last two outs in the top of the 11th.

CUBS 4, BREWERS 2

Victor Caratini hit his first career home run, a solo shot that broke a tie in the seventh and backed John Lackey's solid six-inning start to help Chicago beat Milwaukee. Caratini homered to straightaway center off a 1-2 fastball from Zach Davies (12-5) with one out in the seventh for a 3-2 lead, delighting the bevy of Cubs fans who made the trek north from Chicago. The Cubs took two of three games in an important series at Miller Park. With the non-waiver trade deadline looming Monday, the Cubs increased their lead in the National

League Central over the second-place Brewers to 2 1/2 games. Lackey (8-9) struck out seven and allowed five hits over six innings, including Domingo Santana's game-tying, two-run homer in the sixth that just landed beyond outfielder Jason Heyward's outstretched glove in the right-field corner.

TIGERS 13, ASTROS 1

Justin Verlander pitched six scoreless innings in what could be his last start with Detroit. Justin Upton matched a career best with six RBIs for the Tigers, who handed the Astros their first back-to-back losses since June 12-13. Upton had four hits, including a seventh-inning grand slam, and scored twice. In his last start before Monday's trade deadline, Verlander (6-7) gave up five singles and three walks while striking out six. The subject of trade rumors since last winter, Verlander received a long standing ovation from the crowd of 31,970 when he walked off the mound after the sixth inning. Lance McCullers Jr. (7-3), whose dad pitched for the Tigers in 1990, allowed five runs on eight hits in five-plus innings.

MARINERS 9, METS 1

James Paxton tossed six scoreless innings, becoming the first Mariners pitcher to win six games in a single month, and Nelson Cruz had a three-run homer to pace Seattle. Cruz provided Paxton with an early cushion with a three-run shot in the first inning and Leonys Martin, recalled earlier in the day from Triple-A, homered in his first at-bat and saved a possible run with a diving catch in right field. Paxton (11-3) had runners aboard in each of his six innings. The lefthander scattered six hits, striking out eight and walking none, with two hit batters in a 108-pitch outing. Paxton, sidelined most of May with a left forearm strain, was 6-0 in six July starts, allowing six earned runs in 39 1/3 innings with no home runs. Seth Lugo (5-3) allowed five runs on eight hits in five innings, striking out five and walking none.

PIRATES 7, PADRES 1

Andrew McCutchen hit three home runs for the third time in his career to lift Pittsburgh over San Diego. McCutchen's big day backed Gerrit Cole (9-7), who pitched seven innings of five-hit ball for the Pirates. It was just the sec-

ond win in eight games for the Pirates, who ended the Padres' four-game winning streak. McCutchen has 22 homers. He connected with two outs in the first off left-hander Clayton Richard (5-12), with the ball clearing the fence just out of the reach of center fielder Manuel Margot. He went deep again in the eighth off rookie Jose Torres and then homered off the right-field foul pole with two outs in the ninth. It was McCutchen's third multi-homer game of the season and 15th of his career. He also made a nice diving catch in center field to end the eighth.

RAYS 5, YANKEES 3

Corey Dickerson hit a go-ahead, two-run single in a three-run third, and Tampa Bay's bullpen allowed one hit over five scoreless innings to salvage the finale of a four-game series. Sergio Romo, Dan Jennings, Steve Cishek and Tommy Hunter pitched hitless relief after rookie Jacob Faria started just four of 20 batters with strikes and got only 12 outs on his 24th birthday. Cishek (2-1) pitched 1 2/3 innings, and Colome got three outs for his 30th save in 35 chances. Brett Gardner singled with one out in the ninth, advanced on a wild pitch and Clint Frazier walked. Colome then retired Aaron Judge on a flyout and Matt Holliday on a groundout. Tampa Bay, which had been 0-6 at Yankee Stadium this year, won despite striking out 16 times. The Rays had lost eight of their previous 10 games. Ronald Torreyes homered and drove in a career-high three RBIs for the Yankees, who had won six straight and eight in nine.

ROYALS 5, RED SOX 3

Alex Gordon's two-run triple capped a four-run eighth inning, and Kansas City rallied to beat Boston a day after its season-high, nine-game winning streak was snapped. Alcides Escobar added a two-run single in the eighth and drove in three runs for the Royals, who lost in extra innings on Saturday after taking the series opener. Rookie Rafael Devers hit a solo homer for Boston and starter Drew Pomeranz gave up one run on seven hits in 6 2/3 innings in his 100th career start. Jason Hammel (5-8) allowed three runs on seven hits to end a six-start winless streak. His last victory also came against the Red Sox, at home on June 19. Kelvin Herrera got the final three outs for his 23rd save, getting Mookie Betts to fly out with the bases loaded.

BLUE JAYS 11, ANGELS 10

Steve Pearce hit his second game-ending grand slam in just four days Toronto pulled off the biggest ninth-inning comeback in team history, rallying for seven runs to beat Los Angeles. Pearce connected with one out off Bud Norris (1-4). On Thursday, Pearce's slam with two outs in the 10th inning lifted Toronto over Oakland 8-4. Matt Dermody (1-0) worked three innings for the win. Albert Pujols hit two home runs for the Angels, who were bidding for their first sweep since May.

WHITE SOX 3, INDIANS 1

Matt Davidson hit a two-run homer in the ninth inning, and Chicago ended Cleveland's nine-game winning streak. Chicago had lost 14 of 15 coming into the game, including seven straight at home, and traded fan favorite Melky Cabrera to Kansas City shortly before the first pitch as part of a roster overhaul. Jose Abreu got the ninth-inning rally started with a double off Bryan Shaw (4-5) to set up Davidson's heroics, the 21st home run of his

rookie season. Tyler Clippard (2-6) pitched a scoreless ninth to earn the win, the first for the White Sox at Guaranteed Rate Field since July 2. That game featured strong pitching from Jose Quintana and David Robertson, both of whom have since been traded.

CARDINALS 3, DIAMONDBACKS 2

Lance Lynn threw six strong innings and Jose Martinez homered and drove in three runs as St. Louis beat Arizona for its fifth win in seven games. Lynn (9-6), the subject of trade rumors the past few days, gave up two runs and four hits. He has allowed no more than two earned runs in each of his last six starts. Lynn retired the last eight batters he faced in improving to 5-0 lifetime against Arizona. Trevor Rosenthal struck out the side in the ninth to pick up his sixth save in eight opportunities. Martinez hit a two-run drive in the fourth to tie it, then had a sacrifice fly in the sixth that scored Jedd Gyorko with the go-ahead run. Taijuan Walker (6-5) allowed three runs on four hits over 5 2/3 innings. He struck out 10.

REDS 6, MARLINS 4

Rookie Luis Castillo pitched a career-best eight innings, Tucker Barnhart drove in three runs and Cincinnati ended a six-game skid. Castillo (2-4) allowed one run on three hits, striking out six and walking one. He out-pitched Dan Straily (7-7) - the right-handers were traded for each last January as part of a four-player deal. The Marlins, who got a three-run homer from Marcell Ozuna in the ninth off reliever Raisel Iglesias, had their four-game winning streak snapped. NL home run leader Giancarlo Stanton was held out of Miami's lineup for the first time since May 31.

PHILLIES 2, BRAVES 1

Freddy Galvis hit a bases-loaded single to right field in the ninth inning to give Philadelphia its second straight walk-off win. Andrew Knapp led off the ninth with a double to left off Rex Brothers (1-2). Manager Brian

Snitker lifted Brothers for Akeel Morris. Morris walked pinch-hitter Ty Kelly to put runners on first and second. Cesar Hernandez was trying to advance the runners with a sacrifice, but his bunt stayed just inside the third-base line and Freddie Freeman's throw was not in time, loading the bases with no outs. Galvis pulled Morris' second pitch into right to score Knapp and lift the Phillies to their fourth straight victory and eighth in the last 11. Kelly's RBI single in the 11th on Saturday night gave Philadelphia a 4-3 win. Hector Neris (4-4) pitched a scoreless ninth.

ROCKIES 10, NATIONALS 6, 1ST GAME NATIONALS 3, ROCKIES 1, 2ND GAME

Adam Lind and Brian Goodwin homered in the fifth inning to help Washington beat Colorado to split a day-night doubleheader. In the first game, Charlie Blackmon had four hits and scored four runs, and the Rockies roughed up Erick Fedde in his major league debut. The Rockies had a 1-0 lead in the second game before Lind's two-run homer off Jon Gray (3-2). One out later, Goodwin followed with his homer for a two-run lead. Edwin Jackson (2-1) allowed four hits in seven innings, striking out six. Sean Doolittle got his third save. In the opener, Kyle Freeland (11-7) went five innings, allowing nine hits and four runs while striking out four.

ATHLETICS 6, TWINS 5, 12 INNINGS

Yonder Alonso homered in the bottom of the 12th inning to lift the Oakland over Minnesota. Alonso's 22nd homer of the season came on the first pitch he saw from Tyler Duffey (0-3) and was his second game-ending home run of his career. Oakland, which won its second straight after a six-game skid, came in tied with the Los Angeles Dodgers for the major league lead with eight game-ending hits. Josh Smith (1-0) pitched two innings to pick up the win. The Twins lost for the sixth time in seven games and fell to 1-5 on a disastrous West Coast road trip in which they've blown leads in every game. —AP

MLB Results/Standings

LA Dodgers 3, San Francisco 2 (11 innings); Washington 3, Colorado 1; Pittsburgh 7, San Diego 1; Seattle 9, NY Mets 1; Oakland 6, Minnesota 5 (12 innings); Baltimore 10, Texas 6; St. Louis 3, Arizona 2; Chicago Cubs 4, Milwaukee 2; Chicago White Sox 3, Cleveland 1; Philadelphia 2, Atlanta 1; Colorado 10, Washington 6; Kansas City 5, Boston 3; Cincinnati 6, Miami 4; Detroit 13, Houston 1; Toronto 11, LA Angels 10; Tampa Bay 5, NY Yankees 3.

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division				
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	Miami	NY Mets	Atlanta	
NY Yankees	56	47	.544	-	62	41	.602	
Boston	57	49	.538	0.5	49	54	.476	
Tampa Bay	54	52	.509	3.5	48	55	.466	
Baltimore	50	54	.481	6.5	48	55	.466	
Toronto	49	56	.467	8	38	64	.373	
Central Division				Central Division				
Cleveland	57	46	.553	-	Chicago Cubs	56	48	.538
Kansas City	55	48	.534	2	Milwaukee	55	52	.514
Minnesota	50	53	.485	7	St. Louis	52	53	.495
Detroit	47	56	.456	10	Pittsburgh	51	54	.486
Chicago White Sox	40	62	.392	16.5	Cincinnati	42	63	.400
Western Division				Western Division				
Houston	68	36	.654	-	LA Dodgers	74	31	.705
Seattle	53	53	.500	16	Arizona	60	45	.571
LA Angels	51	55	.481	18	Colorado	60	46	.566
Texas	50	54	.481	18	San Diego	47	58	.448
Oakland	46	59	.438	22.5	San Francisco	40	66	.377



WASHINGTON: Matt Wieters #32 of the Washington Nationals tags out Charlie Blackmon #19 of the Colorado Rockies trying to advance on Gerardo Parra #8 (not pictured) single in the fifth inning during game two of a doubleheader at Nationals Park on Sunday in Washington. —AFP

SWIMMING

A STAR IS BORN — DRESSEL EMERGES FROM PHELPS' SHADOW

BUDAPEST: With Michael Phelps back in retirement, Caeleb Dressel stepped out of his idol's shadow to match the US legend's tally of seven golds at the world championships in Budapest. Dressel became the first swimmer to win three world gold medals in one session on Saturday, then claimed his seventh of the week in the men's 4x100m medley relay on Sunday to match Phelps' record tally from the 2007 world championships.

Dressel's tally includes three individual titles in the 50m, 100m freestyle and 100m butterfly, plus four relays golds in the 4x100m freestyle, 4x100m mixed

freestyle, 4x100m mixed medley and Sunday's 4x100m medley. It put him level with US legends like Phelps, Ryan Lochte, who won five world golds in 2011, and Mark Spitz, who won seven golds at the 1972 Olympics in Munich.

"This is probably one of the top-five best swim meets ever by an American male—the other four going to Michael Phelps and Ryan Lochte," said the USA's Olympic backstroke champion Ryan Murphy.

"To be in that company is no small achievement, hopefully this is just the beginning for him and he can have a really great career." Dressel's feat-espe-

cially his jaw-dropping treble of golds over 98 minutes on Saturday night—is all the more remarkable given that he was virtually unheard of, even in the swimming community, before these Budapest championships.

HISTORY

"I don't even know if he went to the Olympics last year? He has definitely taken a really big step this year," admitted Sweden's sprint queen Sarah Sjöström. Dressel's performances have been the icing on the cake for the USA, who finished with 38 swimming medals in Budapest—over five times more than

nearest rivals Britain, who have seven.

Katie Ledecky also made history in Budapest as she finished with 14 world golds in her career to eclipse Missy Franklin, who has 11, as the most decorated female in championships history.

The 20-year-old freestyle queen won five golds, but by her own admission the medal which stood out was her silver in the 200m freestyle—her first defeat in 15 finals at a world, spanning three championships.

"That will light some fire under me for the next couple of years," said Ledecky after losing to Italy's Federica Pellegrini over 200m.

Sjöström underlined her status as the world's best sprinter with freestyle world records over 50m and 100m. Sjöström also set a new world record in the semi-finals of the 50m freestyle with a time of 23.67sec bettering the old mark of 23.73sec set by Germany's Britta Steffen in 2009.

"I'm really happy I could erase one of those textile-suit records," said Sjöström. "A lot of people thought those times from 2009 would be impossible to beat." Sjöström claimed two of the seven individual world records which fell at these world championships.—AFP

JUVENTUS TOP ROMA ON PENALTIES IN FRIENDLY

NEW YORK: Juventus closed out the International Champions Cup friendly tournament with a 5-4 win on penalties over Roma after the Italian clubs played to a 1-1 draw. Mario Mandzukic's opening goal for Italian champions Juventus was cancelled out by Edin Dzeko's second-half strike.

The match, between last season's top two teams in Serie A, offered a tantalizing glimpse of the upcoming domestic campaign. Managers Massimiliano Allegri and Eusebio Di Francesco named strong starting lineups.

Juventus were more active in the opening minutes and were rewarded in the 29th when Croatian forward Mario Mandzukic beat Federico Fazio onto a through ball

from Alex Sandro, dribbling around Roma goalkeeper Allison and firing to make it 1-0 in the 29th minute.

Roma's Diego Perotti and Dzeko combined for three promising exchanges but were unable to break through and Roma went into the break a goal down.

But Dzeko delivered the equalizer in the 74th, tapping in a cross from Aleksandar Kolarov from close range.

But in the shootout, Marco Tumminello's miss proved too much to overcome and Juventus handed Roma a second shoot-out defeat of the tournament. The match drew some 33,000 fans to Gillette Stadium, home of the NFL's Super Bowl champion New England Patriots.—AFP

NEYMAR IN SHANGHAI AS TRANSFER RUMOURS GROW

SHANGHAI: Neymar greeted fans in Shanghai yesterday as speculation mounted that the Brazil star could be set to quit Barcelona for Paris Saint-Germain for a world-record 222 million euros.

The 25-year-old striker is at the centre of an apparent tug of war between the two European giants in what would be the most expensive transfer fee in football history. A training spat with new Barcelona signing Nelson Semedo during a pre-season tour in Miami ramped up chatter that Neymar could be about to swap Spain for the French capital.

Neymar, who has remained tight-lipped about the transfer rumours, posted a message for Chinese fans on Weibo, China's equivalent of Twitter, after arriving for a promotional visit. "Ni Hao China! I'm Neymar Jr. and I've just arrived in China," he wrote yesterday.

"I'm in Shanghai at the moment. I would like to send a huge hug to all my Chinese fans, thank you very much for your support." He posted messages in English and Chinese and asked for suggestions as to what he should do while in Shanghai,

where he was scheduled to appear at an event for a fashion brand later.

Separately, China's biggest online travel company Ctrip had said it was cancelling an event with Neymar yesterday in Shanghai because he and his advisers were "busy with transfer issues". People close to the player subsequently told media there had never been an arrangement with the firm.

Even after the training-ground bust-up in the United States, after which Neymar appeared to storm off, his Barcelona teammates said they wanted him to stay at the Camp Nou. "Neymar and I, we are very close and I want him to stay and I know the situation," defender Gerard Pique told ESPN FC.

"Right now he doesn't know what to do and we are trying to help him—the ones (on the team) that are more close to him—to take the right decision." PSG's pursuit of Neymar has angered some in Spain, where football league chief Javier Tebas says he will file a complaint with UEFA for financial fair play breaches by the French club.—AFP



BAVEL: Denmark's players take part in a team training session in Bavel, on Sunday, ahead of Denmark's UEFA Women's Euro 2017 semi-final football match against Austria on August 3, 2017. — AFP

SOCCER

GERMANY WIN NOT ENOUGH FOR US, SAYS DENMARK'S SKIPPER

BAVEL: A day after a stunning win over eight-time champions Germany at the women's Euro, Denmark skipper Pernille Harder said the scalp had left her team were hungry for more. "It was such a nice win, but now we're looking forward also," the 24-year-old forward told AFP at Denmark's training centre in Bavel. "It's not enough for us, just to win against Germany." Having conceded on three minutes, Denmark came back to nix Germany's dreams of a seventh title in a row with second-half headers by Nadia Nadim and Theresa Nielsen.

Harder, who plays for Bundesliga champions Wolfsburg, said this was the biggest win of her career. "When I play in Germany it's more special, but it was just so nice to win the game so we reached the semi-final," she added. Germany were unbeaten at Euro since July 3, 1993 when they lost to Denmark 3-1 in the bronze medal game.

By making the semi-finals, Denmark have equalled their result from 2013. Harder said this was due to "hard work and good discipline in defence and then a lot of speed in the offence."

"As a team we can relax when we have time to relax and think about other stuff than football and then when we're on the field we are doing it at 100 percent," she said. "We're never satisfied, we always want to improve as a team and also as individuals and that's key for us."

Compared with 2013, when Denmark lost to Norway on penalties in the semi-finals, the team is different, Harder said. "We played differently back then, the tactic is different, it was more like we're really good at possession, we had the ball more in 2013, now we're more direct."

Harder also has a new partner in the attacking line, the Afghan-born Nadia Nadim, who was a substitute at the 2013 tournament but has become a permanent fixture up front since then. "She's a really good player, a strong hitter, so it's nice to know that there is a good hitter like her in the box," Harder said. While Nadim scored against Germany, Harder is still waiting for her first goal at the tournament—but she is not bothered by her drought. "It's important that we score as a team, and I will rather like to make assists than to score."

"Of course if the team needs it, I would love to score, but if I could choose whether to win the title or score, I'd rather win the title," Harder said. In the August 3 semi-final in Breda, Denmark are facing Euro newcomers Austria, who won their group ahead of giants France and beat another favourite Spain on penalties after a goalless draw in the quarter-final. "They have been really good," said Harder.

"I think they have been a big surprise of the tournament, they have such a good defence and the high pressure, and they have some really good players in the front when they win the ball."

The two teams met in a friendly on July 6 in Wiener Neustadt, Austria, and the home side earned a convincing 4-2 win. "We lost in the friendly game so of course we want a revenge," said Harder.—AFP

LIVERPOOL SUPPORTERS GIVE THUMBS-UP TO STANDING AREAS

LONDON: English Football fans pressing for standing areas to be re-introduced received a major boost yesterday when Liverpool supporters voted by a landslide majority for it to happen. Their support is especially significant given the 1989 Hillsborough disaster which resulted in 96 Liverpool fans being killed in crushes caused by over-crowding in the Leppings Lane standing area.

In a week-long poll run by the club's biggest independent supporters' group Spirit of Shankly (SoS), 88 per cent of the nearly 18,000 fans who took part voted in favour of rail seating. Rail seating can be flipped down or locked into an upright position, with safety barriers separating each row.

Clubs in England's top two divisions have been legally required to have all-seater grounds since the measure was recommended by the 1990 Taylor Report into Hillsborough. "It's an incredible turnout, we aren't aware of such numbers voting before," said SoS chairman Jay McKenna in a statement.

"It demonstrates to us that we were right to have this discussion and that supporters, families and survivors want to have their say. After nine months of discussion, we have now had the vote and it will be taken as the position for Spirit Of Shankly."

"The size of the turnout majority means that no one can be in any doubt that supporters have had their say and made an informed

decision." However, McKenna added further discussions should take place given the sensitivity of the issue to those who lost loved ones at Hillsborough.

"We say to anyone who is campaigning for this to understand sensitivities and respect the views of those who disagree," he said. "Those who have been through incredible heartache and tragedy have every right to be heard and to ask important questions about safety."

"It was important in our conversations to have these answered. It would be wise for that to take place elsewhere." The vote comes in the wake of last week's approval of third tier English side Shrewsbury's move to create a safe standing area, which would have a capacity of around 500, in their Montgomery Waters Meadow arena.

The Sports Ground Safety Authority gave their seal of approval last Wednesday. Shrewsbury are looking to raise up to £75,000 (84,000 euros) to fund the cost of becoming the first all-seater stadium in England and Wales to introduce safe standing before the end of the 2017-18 season.

The Premier League recently wrote to its 20 clubs asking if they would be interested in taking part in a trial to reintroduce standing sections in their grounds. Scottish Premiership champions Celtic last season installed 2,600 rail seats at Parkhead in a move that was considered a success.—AFP



SHANGHAI: Brazilian footballer Neymar Jr. looks on as he speaks to media at a fashion event in Shanghai yesterday. Neymar hit the red carpet in Shanghai as speculation mounted that the Brazil star could be set to quit Barcelona for Paris Saint-Germain for a world-record 222 million euros.—AFP

BOLT EYES FINAL HURRAH

LONDON: Sprint superstar Usain Bolt will seek a final golden hurrah when he takes to the track at the IAAF World Championships in London this week. Bolt has dominated sprinting since taking double individual gold at the Beijing Olympics in 2008, going on to win a further six Olympic golds and also picking up 11 world titles.

World records of 9.58 and 19.19sec in the 100 and 200m when winning in the 2009 Berlin worlds were followed by the towering Jamaican winning consecutive world golds in the 100, 200 and 4x100m relay in 2011, 2013 and 2015, with the exception of a false start in the 100m in Daegu in 2011.

The 30-year-old scored triple gold at both the 2012 and 2016 Olympics in London and Rio, his sole hiccup being stripped of his 2008 Olympic relay gold after teammate Nesta Carter failed a drug test.

It is a staggering tally for a track athlete who has admitted he wants to go out on a high as athletics seeks to turn a new page. "My main aim is just to win (in London). I just want to retire on a winning note," Bolt said recently in Monaco, where he won the 100m in 9.95sec, dipping under the 10sec barrier after two sluggish outings in

Kingston and Ostrava.

Bolt has opted not to defend his 200m world title, meaning he will not race against South Africa's Wayde van Niekerk, the athlete Bolt has tipped to take over as the next track and field superstar. "That's one of the most disappointing things in my career now," he said. "He came along at this late stage and I didn't get to compete against him, because I think he's one of the best now." World and Olympic 400m champion Van Niekerk, who will attempt an audacious 200-400m double in London, added: "Usain has been a massive inspiration. "But I've still got quite a long way to go before I even get close to the heights that Usain has reached."

One of the stand-out moments of the 2012 Olympics at the same stadium in east London was 'Super Saturday', when Britain won three gold medals in the space of an hour to set the packed stadium alight.

Distance running legend Mo Farah, on an unbroken streak of nine global final wins (the 5000m in 2011, and the 5/10km double in 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2016), will again compete, but there is no Jessica Ennis-Hill, the heptathlete having retired, or long jumper Chris Rutherford, out injured.—AFP



SAN DIEGO: United States defender Julie Ertz (8) scores a goal past Brazil goalkeeper Barbara, left, as Brazil defender Adnressinha (17) defends during the second half of a Tournament of Nations women's soccer match Sunday, in San Diego. The United States won, 4-3.— AP

Sports

John Isner beats Harrison to win Atlanta Open title



Busch ends winless season with Cup victory at Pocono



TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2017

A STAR IS BORN — DRESSEL EMERGES FROM PHELPS' SHADOW

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LONDON: South Africa's Dean Elgar plays a shot off the bowling of England's Toby Roland-Jones on the fifth day of the third Test match between England and South Africa at The Oval cricket ground in London, yesterday. — AP

ALI HAT-TRICK SEES ENGLAND THRASH S AFRICA

LONDON: Moeen Ali became the first bowler in The Oval's 100 Test-history to take a hat-trick as England wrapped up a crushing 239-run win in the third Test against South Africa on Monday.

Victory put England 2-1 up in this four-match series, with just the fourth Test at Old Trafford starting on Friday to come. After having Dean Elgar (136) and Kagiso Rabada (nought) caught at first slip by Ben Stokes with the last two balls of his 16th over, off-spinner Ali ended The Oval's landmark match when he had Morne Morkel lbw with the first ball of his next over-although England had to first review umpire Joel Wilson's not out decision.

"I was very confident it was out, as soon as it hit his pad," Ali told Sky Sports of his hat-trick delivery. "It was a great feeling." Ali's treble saw him become the 13th England bowler to take a hat-trick at this level, with South Africa's second innings the first in the 140-year history of Test cricket to include four first-ball ducks.

South Africa, set a mammoth 492 for victory, were all out for 252 after lunch, with Worcestershire all-rounder Ali taking four for 45. "What a way to celebrate the 100th Test at this ground," said England captain Joe Root.

He added that England's first-innings batting, with man-of-the-match Stokes making 112 and former captain Alastair Cook 88 in a total of 353, had

laid the platform for an emphatic success. "I think the way we batted in the first innings was really important and set a good benchmark for us.

"Alastair Cook's innings was crucial—we could have gone five or six down but the way he played was brilliant." The way this series has seen England win the first Test at Lord's by 211 runs and South Africa took the second at Trent Bridge by 340 runs—will give the Proteas hope of bouncing back in Manchester.

"At no point have we made excuses—we know Trent Bridge wasn't good enough, we've responded," said Root.

PHILANDER BLOW

South Africa were hampered by key seamer Vernon Philander, the man-of-the-match at Trent Bridge, being off the field for much of this Test with a viral infection. "It's obvious to say that someone like Vernon Philander missing out on that first innings was costly, so they got 100 runs too many in that innings, but you have to say the English team batted well," said South Africa captain Faf du Plessis. South Africa resumed yesterday on 117 for four, with left-handed opener Elgar (72 not out) and Temba Bavuma (16 not out) having already helped the Proteas recover from 52 for four on Sunday. Victory was all but beyond South Africa,

with no side having made more to win in the fourth innings of a Test than the West Indies' 418 for seven against Australia at St John's in 2003. Middlesex seamer Toby Roland-Jones, who had followed up his stunning Test debut bowling innings return of five for 57 by dismissing star batsman Hashim Amla cheaply for the second time in the match on Sunday, eventually ended a stand worth 108 runs.

His full-length delivery struck Bavuma on the pad as the diminutive batsman got only half-forward. Aleem Dar ruled not out but England reviewed the experienced Pakistani umpire's decision and Bavuma had to go for 32 after a defiant innings of more than two hours.

There was no need for a review next ball as South Africa's 160 for five became 160 for six when Philander inexplicably padded up to Roland-Jones and was plumb lbw. The 30-year-old Elgar, batting with a bruised finger, battled on for his eighth century in 38 Tests by lofting Ali over mid-off for a 16th four in 149 balls. But Chris Morris, who survived Roland-Jones's hat-trick delivery, fell to the last ball before lunch when he edged Ali to man-of-the-match Stokes to leave the Proteas 205 for seven. Elgar's more than five-and-a-half hours at the crease ended when he prodded forward to Ali and Stokes did the rest. —AFP

SCOREBOARD

LONDON: Completed scoreboard on the fifth day of the third Test between England and South Africa at The Oval yesterday.

England 1st Innings 353 (B Stokes 112, A Cook 88; M Morkel 3-70, K Rabada 3-85)	K. Rabada c Stokes b Ali	0
South Africa 1st Innings 175 (T Bavuma 52; T Roland-Jones 5-57, J Anderson 3-25)	M. Morkel lbw b Ali	0
England 2nd Innings 313-8 dec (J Bairstow 63, T Westley 59, J Root 50; K Maharaj 3-50)	Extras (b4, lb7, nb4)	15
South Africa 2nd Innings (overnight 117-4, target 492)	Total (all out, 77.1 overs, 341 mins)	252
H. Kuhn b Broad	Fall of wickets: 1-21 (Kuhn), 2-47 (Amla), 3-52 (De Kock), 4-52 (Du Plessis), 5-160 (Bavuma), 6-160 (Philander), 7-205 (Morris), 8-252 (Elgar), 9-252 (Rabada), 10-252 (Morkel)	
D. Elgar c Stokes b Ali	Bowling: Anderson 13-3-26-0; Broad 16-4-47-1; Roland-Jones 18-4-72-3; Stokes 14-1-51-2 (4nb); Ali 16.1-5-45-4.	
H. Amla c Root b Roland-Jones	England: Alastair Cook, Keaton Jennings, Tom Westley, Joe Root (capt), Dawid Malan, Ben Stokes, Jonny Bairstow (wkt), Moeen Ali, Stuart Broad, Toby Roland-Jones, James Anderson.	
Q. de Kock b Stokes	Result: England won by 239 runs	
F. du Plessis lbw b Stokes	Series: England lead four-match series 2-1	
T. Bavuma lbw b Roland-Jones		
V. Philander lbw b Roland-Jones		
C. Morris c Stokes b Ali		
K. Maharaj not out		

SANCHEZ SAGA WON'T RUIN ARSENAL, SAYS WENGER

LONDON: Arsene Wenger insists the Alexis Sanchez transfer saga won't be a distraction to Arsenal this season despite the Chile forward's refusal to sign a new contract. Sanchez is out of contract at the end of the forthcoming season and he has shown no signs of accepting Arsenal's offer of a lucrative new deal as he tries to engineer a transfer to a club in the Champions League. Manchester City, Chelsea, Paris Saint Germain, Bayern Munich and Juventus have all been linked with Sanchez, but Wenger appears determined to hold onto the 28-year-old for the last year of his deal in the hope he can persuade him to stay for the long-term.

Arsenal midfielders Mesut Ozil and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain are also in the final years of their contracts, yet when Wenger was asked if he was concerned, he made it clear he expects his players to stay committed. "When you are a player you perform until the last day of the contract. Do you really think you sit in the dressing room before a game and say 'oh I've only got a year to go on my contract so I won't play well,'" Wenger said. "If that was true we would sign everybody for 20 years. I'm not convinced the length of the contract has any impact on the performance. I am amazed that you are surprised by that. It's an ideal situation. Everybody has to perform. In the past, Wenger has sold the likes of Samir Nasri and Robin van Persie to avoid losing them for free when their contracts expired. This time, Wenger is stubbornly sticking to his guns over Sanchez and, against all the evidence, the Gunners boss even claimed it was a good position for player and club to have only one year left.

"In the future you will see it more and more, players going to the end of the contract. Why? Because transfers are so high even for normal players. Nobody will want to pay those fees," he said.

"Nobody knows if Sanchez will extend his contract here. What can I do about that? One day he will go and Arsenal will go on. Of course I think he will stay. How many times do I have to tell you?"

TOUGH START

For the moment, Wenger has to do without Sanchez because the forward has delayed his return to training after going down with the flu. Sanchez has yet to feature in any of Arsenal's pre-season friendlies, including Sunday's 2-1 defeat against Sevilla in the Emirates Cup because he was resting after Confederations Cup duty.

His lack of match action means he is a doubt to feature in next weekend's Community Shield against Chelsea and possibly Arsenal's Premier League opener against Leicester on August 11.

"Sanchez is not back (in the country). He comes back on Monday night," Wenger said. "I don't know (if he can play in the first game of the season). We have to assess his physical state." One player certain to miss the Community Shield is French midfielder Francis Coquelin, who limped out of Saturday's 5-2 thrashing of Benfica with an ankle ligament injury.

"He has a scan tomorrow (Monday). I don't think he will be available for the weekend. It's an ankle ligament, but it doesn't look bad," Wenger said. After making a slow start to last season, Wenger is confident Arsenal will be more prepared this time despite the absence of Coquelin and Sanchez's delayed arrival.

"I'm sure we will have done the needed work. Last season some players had a deficit in minutes played because it was after the European Championships," he said. "We have more players ready now. We should be ready, even though we have a tough start." — AFP

RONALDO DENIES TAX FRAUD AT COURT HEARING

MADRID: Real Madrid striker Cristiano Ronaldo denied hiding millions of euros in income at a court hearing near Madrid yesterday where he was charged with tax evasion, the latest footballer star to fall foul of Spain's taxman. The Portuguese—the world's highest paid sportsman according to Forbes magazine—follows in the steps of his arch-rival, Barcelona forward Lionel Messi, who was found guilty of the same offence last year.

"I have never hidden anything, nor have I had the intention of evading taxes," Ronaldo, 32, told the court, according to a statement from the sports agency which represents him, Gestifute. "I always voluntarily file my tax returns because I think we all must file a return and pay taxes according to our income. Those that know me, know what I ask my advisors: that they have everything up to date and properly paid, because I don't want problems." Accused of having evaded 14.7 million euros (\$17.3 million) in tax, he entered and left the court in Pozuelo de Alarcón, a wealthy suburb of Madrid where he lives, via an

underground garage to avoid the press.

Prosecutors allege he took "advantage of a company structure created in 2010 to hide income generated in Spain from his image rights from tax authorities." They say this was a "voluntary and conscious breach of his fiscal obligations in Spain." Prosecutors accuse the four-time world player of the year of evading tax via a shell company based in the British Virgin Islands and another in Ireland, known for low corporate tax rates. In addition, they say the Real Madrid striker only declared 11.5 million euros of Spanish-related income from 2011 to 2014, while what he really earned during that time was close to 43 million euros. They also accuse him of "voluntarily" refusing to include 28.4 million euros in income linked to the sale of his image rights for the 2015 to 2020 period to a Spanish company.

'LEGAL AND LEGITIMATE'

Ronaldo told the court he did not create a "special structure" to manage his image rights when he

moved to Real in 2009 but simply maintained the one set up in 2004 while he was at Manchester United "long before I thought of coming to Spain."

This structure had been deemed "legal and legitimate" by the British tax office. The affair has taken its toll on Ronaldo. According to press reports, Real's all-time top goalscorer, threatened to leave Spain over the affair, giving supporters a fright. He has since decided to stay on, according to Real coach Zinedine Zidane. If he were put on trial and found guilty, Ronaldo would risk "a fine of at least 28 million" euros and could potentially be jailed for three-and-a-half years, the Gestha union of experts at Spain's Inland Revenue has said.

Since extending his contract last November until 2021, Ronaldo is the highest paid sports star in the world with \$93 million earned in 2016-2017, according to Forbes.

SUPER-AGENT MENDES

Ronaldo is not the only footballer to fall foul of authorities in Spain, which is only just recovering from a damaging economic crisis that saw countless people lose their jobs and inequalities rise. Messi was sentenced to a 21-month jail sentence and 2.09-million-euro fine last year for tax fraud.

His prison sentence has since been replaced by another fine of 252,000 euros, which corresponds to 400 euros for each day of jail. Barcelona's Argentine defender Javier Mascherano, meanwhile, agreed a one-year suspended sentence with authorities for tax fraud last year.

Brazil star Neymar, another Barcelona forward, and his parents are also due to stand trial for alleged corruption over his transfer from Santos in 2013. Real have not been spared either.

Apart from Ronaldo, former player Angel di Maria, Portuguese defender Fabio Coentrao and Jose Mourinho, who coached the club from 2010 to 2013, have all been accused of tax fraud. All are clients of super-agent Jorge Mendes, who was also questioned and put under official investigation last month by a Spanish court investigating alleged tax evasion by Monaco striker Radamel Falcao, another footballer in his stable. — AFP



MADRID: Media wait for Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo to hold a press point after appearing before a court in Pozuelo de Alarcón, a wealthy suburb of Madrid, yesterday to answer on four counts of tax evasion of 14.7 million euro (\$16.5m). — AFP



AL-SAYER LAUNCHES MOTUL LUBRICANTS



TOKYO: A woman looks at a fashion boutique with sales signs at Ginza shopping district in Tokyo yesterday. Japan's factory output rose in June, while unemployment fell to 2.8 percent, as a recovery in global demand helped drive growth in the world's third-largest economy. —AP

EUROPE'S JOBS MARKET IS HEALING, BUT WAGES WEAK

INFLATION IS THE MISSING LINK IN REGION'S ECONOMIC REVIVAL

BRUSSELS: The eurozone economy is healing nicely but inflation remains weak - good news for consumers in the short run but a sign of underlying weakness in wages and companies' pricing power. That's the take-away from economic reports released yesterday that showed while the unemployment rate in the 19-country currency union fell to its lowest in eight years, price increases are modest.

The number of people in work rose by 148,000 in June, the Eurostat statistics agency said yesterday, bringing the unemployment rate to 9.1 percent, from 9.2 percent in May. That echoes reports in recent weeks of rising business activity and confidence across all eurozone countries - even those, like Greece, that have been hit hardest by financial troubles.

Such improvements have emboldened the European Central Bank to consider when it might signal a phasing out of its bond-buying stimulus program, under which it pumps 60

billion euros (\$70 billion) a month into the economy. ECB President Mario Draghi has said it would likely consider such a move in the fall.

But the missing piece in the eurozone's recovery is a significant rise in inflation, which the ECB is tasked with getting to just under 2 percent. While weak inflation can be good for shoppers, it points to fragilities in the economy: wages are not rising quickly enough to spur spending or companies may not be confident enough in consumers to raise their prices. In July, the annual inflation rate was stuck at 1.3 percent. And what gains there were mostly due to energy price increases of 2.2 percent. Excluding volatile items like energy, food, alcohol and tobacco, prices were up a still-modest 1.2 percent. The industrial goods sector saw prices rise a mere 0.5 percent.

The missing link

Economists say inflation is unlikely to rise substantially as long as there remains slack in

the labor market that prevents wages from rising significantly. "While June's unemployment data paint a positive picture of the eurozone labor market, July's (inflation) release confirms that this strength has yet to generate inflationary pressure," said Jennifer McKeown, chief European economist at Capital Economics in London. She expects the ECB to start tapering off its bond-buying program next year, but says "interest rate hikes are a pretty distant prospect."

The inflation rate in particular was "very subdued," said Jennifer McKeown of Capital Economics. "While June's unemployment data paint a positive picture of the eurozone labour market, July's (inflation) release confirms that this strength has yet to generate inflationary pressure," McKeown said. The figures come a week after the IMF said the eurozone economic recovery was broad and strengthening, but warned that low inflation, fragile banks and Brexit remained significant risks.

The Eurostat statistics agency said unemployment fell to 9.1 percent in June compared to a revised 9.2 percent in May. That was slightly better than the 9.2 percent predicted by analysts surveyed for data company Factset. "This is the lowest rate recorded in the euro area since February 2009," Eurostat said in a statement, when the European economy was still in the doldrums after the global financial crisis.

Persistent and patient

The highest unemployment rates were in struggling Greece, at 21.7 percent, and Spain at 17.1 percent. Unemployment across the 28-nation EU was meanwhile stable at 7.7 percent in June, the lowest rate for the bloc since December 2008. Eurozone inflation meanwhile held at 1.3 percent in July, matching estimates by Factset. Inflation is a key indicator of underlying consumer demand. The ECB has a target rate of close to, but

just below 2.0 percent, with the aim of ensuring a modest but sustained increase in prices, which are a sign of a healthy economy.

To achieve this, the ECB has set interest rates at historic lows and poured hundreds of billions of cheap euros into the banking system to stimulate activity. Finally, after years of trying, the economy has shown signs of a modest but broad pick-up this year, leading to calls on ECB chief Mario Draghi to turn off the easy credit tap. Draghi last week played down suggestions the institution might soon wind down the stimulus, saying policymakers must be "persistent and patient" faced with low inflation.

Observers are eyeing the bank closely for signs it may soon end its monthly bond purchases of 60 billion euros (\$69 billion) per month. Just three monetary policy meetings remain before December, when the "quantitative easing" (QE) purchases are presently set to expire. —Agencies

CHINA FACTORY GROWTH EASES, EXPORT DEMAND SLIPS IN JULY

BEIJING: Growth in China's manufacturing sector cooled slightly in July as foreign demand for Chinese goods slackened, but a government-led infrastructure push kept construction humming and helped prop up the world's second-largest economy.

The official Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) held above the 50-point mark that separates growth from contraction for the 12th straight month, as China poured funds into a construction boom that has fuelled demand for everything from cement to steel and other building materials.

But the broad consensus among China watchers is that economic growth will cool in coming months as a government crackdown on financial risks raises borrowing costs for businesses and squeezes profits.

The official PMI stood at 51.4 in July, the National Bureau of Statistics said yesterday, down from the previous month's 51.7 and a touch below the 51.6 forecast in a Reuters poll. Export orders, which helped Chinese factories stage a strong recovery in June, had ebbed this month, with manufacturers reporting slackening foreign demand. Overall factory production expanded less quickly compared with June.

New export orders slipped to 50.9 in July from 52.0 in June, helping drag the index for overall factory orders to 52.8 from

53.1. "The breakdown suggests weaker foreign demand is partly to blame - the new export orders fell by a larger margin than overall new orders," said Julian Evans-Pritchard, a Singapore-based China economist at Capital Economics.

While China's foreign trade faces a mostly positive environment in the second half of the year, uncertainties still exist, Vice Commerce Minister Qian Keming said in Beijing yesterday.

The United States and China failed earlier this month to agree on major new steps to reduce the US trade deficit with China, casting doubt over President Donald Trump's economic and security relations with Beijing. Domestically, the construction sector remained robust as the government stepped up investment in infrastructure projects. Separate data showed China's steel sector in rude health, expanding in July at its fastest pace since April 2016. The PMI reading on the construction sector showed a solid pickup to 62.5 in July from 61.4 in June.

Raw material inventories eased just slightly in July, according to the survey, while imports were almost steady and suggested stable domestic demand. Activity at large factories gathered steam in July, with the sub-index for big manufacturers rising to 52.9 from 52.7. —Reuters

BOE 'SUPER THURSDAY' LOOMS AS STERLING JUMPS

LONDON: Britain's pound traded above \$1.31 yesterday, close to a 10-month high, as investors eyed this week's Bank of England "Super Thursday" for a steer on whether record-low interest rates could soon be lifted for the first time in more than a decade.

Sterling has been supported in recent weeks by expectations the Bank might finally be getting ready for a hike after a series of hawkish comments from policymakers, but Governor Mark Carney and most of his top officials seem set to remain in wait-and-see mode. Data showing Britain's housing market and consumer economy lost a small amount of momentum last month, as mortgage approvals dropped to a nine-month low and unsecured lending growth slowed further, had little impact on the currency.

But the numbers added to a run of weak data which, along with deep uncertainty about the impact of Brexit on the economy, have cooled the speculation that the BoE is poised to start removing its crisis-level stimulus. While sterling was trading less than half a cent away from 10-month highs yesterday at \$1.3131, it was also close to its lowest levels in nine months against the euro, down 0.1 percent on the day at 89.50 pence. The BoE will also publish a quarterly Inflation Report on Thursday, with economists expecting the Bank to push



LONDON: Pedestrians pass the Bank of England in the City of London yesterday. Last-minute talks with staff at the Bank of England began yesterday in an attempt to avert the first strike at the central bank in more than 50 years. —AFP

up its inflation forecasts slightly but to lower its projection for growth after the weak start to the year.

"There is a genuine debate in the bank (over raising rates)... but we're not expecting any hikes in the next year," said Societe Generale currency strategist Alvin Tan.

"There's clear evidence, in our view, that the economy is slowing down, and although inflation is on the high side,

momentum seems to have ebbed."

Sterling support

Some investors see hawkish comments from policymakers at the Bank as attempts to talk up a currency that has lost almost 15 percent against both the euro and dollar since last June's vote for Brexit.

"With other major central banks normalizing their own policy stances, we

expect the MPC (monetary policy committee) to avoid sending an overtly dovish signal this week in order to avoid extended sterling weakness," wrote BMO currency strategists in a weekly note to clients yesterday. But others say with more government unity around Brexit, and with signs that the "hard Brexit" markets fear could be averted, it made sense for the BoE to be moving towards tightening. Three out of eight MPC members voted in favor of a hike at the last meeting.

"We believe that it would be logical for the BoE to signal that it is moving closer to raising rates," MUFG currency analyst Lee Hardman said. "The BoE should be encouraged, as well, by noises from the UK government which supports its assumption for a transitional Brexit agreement."

Finance minister Philip Hammond, who campaigned for Britain to remain in the EU and is seen as a proponent of a relatively "soft Brexit", last week lent some support to sterling by saying he backed the transitional Brexit deal that Prime Minister Theresa May wants.

Hammond told a French newspaper over the weekend that Britain does not intend to lower taxes far below the European average in order to remain competitive after Brexit, but rather will keep a socio-economic model that is "recognizably European". —Reuters

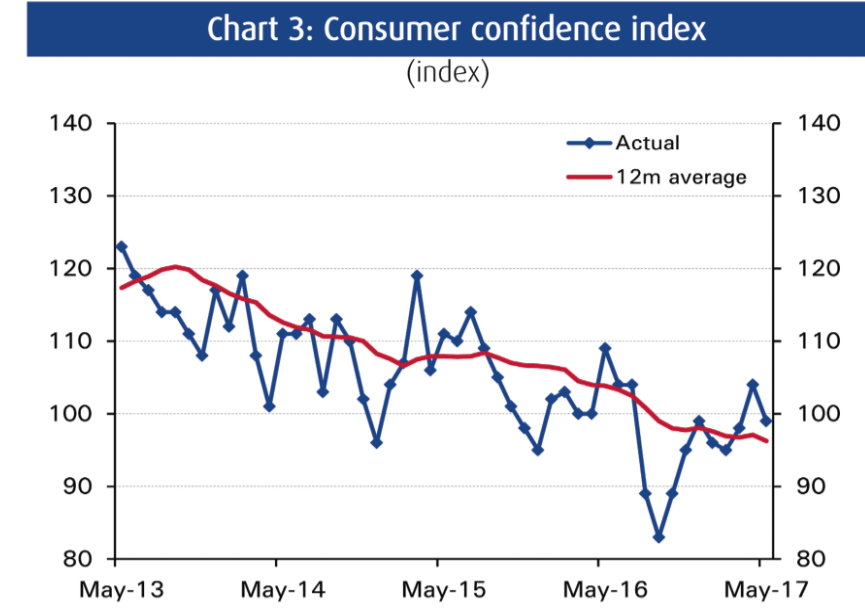
KUWAIT CONSUMER SECTOR STABILIZING IN 2017

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

KUWAIT: The consumer sector is seen stabilizing so far in 2017, following significant moderation in the previous year. Despite robust household income and employment growth, most consumer indicators softened during 2016, including consumer confidence, which remained noticeably weak in 2017. However, growth in card spending has bounced back though it remains far below the double-digit growth of the previous years. Meanwhile, employment among Kuwaitis continues to provide support to the sector, thanks in large part to steady government hiring.

Consumer spending continued to moderate in 1Q17, but maintained a decent pace. Spending growth on credit and debit cards at point-of-sale machines slid back to 6.9 percent year-on-year (y/y) during the first quarter, down from 9.1 percent y/y back in 4Q2016. Total spending including ATM withdrawals growth was improved slightly at 4.3 percent y/y.

Moderation in the sector was also felt in weaker import growth. Consumer imports were flat in 1Q17, growing by just 0.2 percent y/y. Imports of motor vehicles has been particularly weak, though a 3 percent y/y decline in 1Q17 was an improvement on the deeper decreases seen in recent quarters and pointed to some stabilization. The auto market has been struggling and sales are estimated to have retreated by 20-25 percent in 2016. More generally,



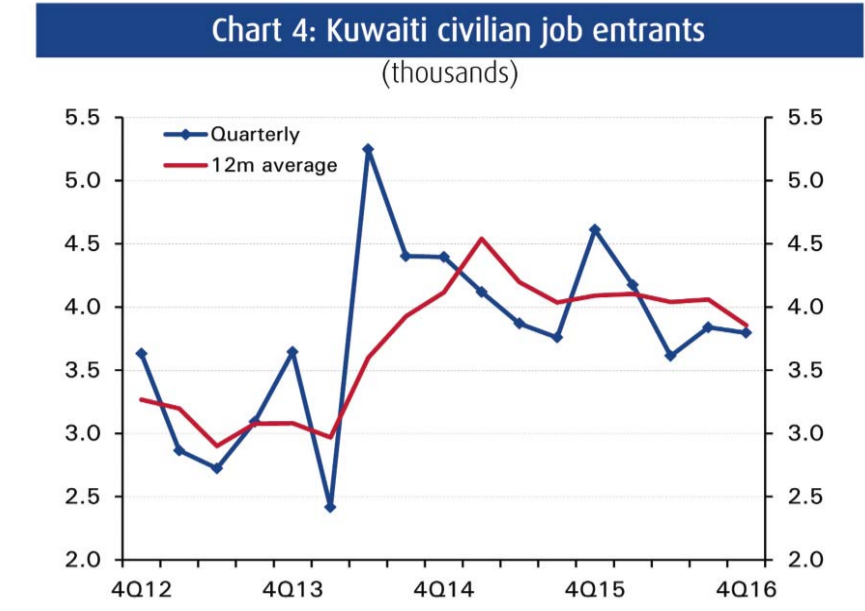
Source: Ara Research & Consultancy

there has been noticeable weakness in consumer durable goods purchases as reflected in the Ara consumer confidence index.

Indeed, while consumer confidence has improved in recent months, it remains somewhat soft. Though confidence weakened in May to 99, it has been improving since 3Q16. The index has been on a downward trend for four years and fell more rapidly in 2016 after the government hiked fuel prices. It has

since recovered somewhat, though the general index's 3-month average in May was still down 2.5 percent y/y. The durable goods component has remained particularly disappointing, with the 3-month average down 9 percent y/y.

Household lending growth has firmed up slightly since the beginning of the year. Growth in personal facilities excluding credit for the purchase of securities slipped to 6.9 percent y/y April 2017, compared to 11.6 percent growth



Source: Public Institution For Social Security (PIFSS), NBK estimates

a year ago. The average monthly gain in such loans rose to KD 70 million so far in 2017, compared to a KD 59 million average in 2016.

Public sector hiring in 2016 continues to support national employment growth. The number of Kuwaiti civilian job-entrants averaged nearly 3,900 a quarter during 2016, supported by strong hiring during 1Q16. This represents a marked rise from around 3,000 job entrants two years earlier. Around 70

percent of these new jobs were in the government. While offered new public jobs have retreated slightly, they continue to be an important driver of job gains in the post-\$100 oil era.

The consumer sector is likely to stabilize further in 2017. The recent decision to implement more moderate hikes in utility prices, combined with a government commitment to limit its spending cuts, should continue to provide decent support to the consumer sector.

HSBC PROFITS RISE IN H1 ON COST-CUTTING, SOLID MARKETS

PERFORMANCE PLEASING AFTER TURBULENT 2016: FLINT

HONG KONG: HSBC's profits rose in the first half of the year as it slashed costs and won support from favorable market conditions, the banking giant said yesterday. Net profit jumped 10 percent to almost \$7.0 billion (7.8 billion euros) in the first six months of the year compared to the first half of 2016, the group said in an earnings statement.

Pre-tax profit for the six months rose five percent to \$10.2 billion. Outgoing chairman Douglas Flint described the performance as "extremely pleasing"-coming after a turbulent 2016 that resulted in huge writedowns and restructuring costs for the London-headquartered bank as it laid off thousands of staff.

The Asia-focused giant has been on a recovery drive over the past two years, streamlining its operations and exiting unprofitable businesses. Like many global banks it has struggled to boost profits as China's economy slows and uncertainty caused by Britain's looming exit from the European Union casts a shadow over the sector.

In addition, HSBC has grappled with stricter capital rules, low interest rates despite fresh tightening-and scandals stemming from its own misbehavior. However following yesterday's results, chief executive Stuart Gulliver expressed confidence in the outlook despite strains including Brexit uncertainty. "There is still engines for growth if you believe in the long term story of China, Asia-Pacific, the ASEAN, the Middle East," he told a conference call.

"There is still further upside and actually we're still probably at the beginning of a (rate) tightening cycle," he said. Higher interest rates are good for banks as it leads to increased returns on the interest they make from products including home mortgages and credit card purchases.

HSBC also benefitted in the first half from improving performances on global markets, including record-highs for indices on Wall Street.

"Markets-based revenues benefited... commercial banking customer activity was robust, wealth management and insurance revenues were notably stronger in Hong Kong, and credit experience globally remained remarkably sound," HSBC said in its earnings release. "As central bank interest rates edged higher, led by the US, we began to benefit from improved mar-



HONG KONG: A security guard shows the direction to a woman at the HSBC building in Hong Kong yesterday. —AP

gins on our core deposit bases, providing a welcome enhancement to the group's revenue mix," the lender added.

Share buyback

HSBC also announced yesterday a share buyback of up to \$2 billion, expected to be completed in the second half of the year-helping its share price to rise 2.0 percent to 758.80 pence in London afternoon deals. In Hong Kong, its shares closed up 2.62 percent at HK\$78.45 (\$10.06).

"HSBC's earnings are definitely better than market expectations," said Dickie Wong of Hong Kong-based Kingston Securities. He described the bank as being in "very good shape" after wide-ranging restructuring programs. The half-year results showed operating expenses dropped 12 percent to \$16.4 billion, partly stemming from a sell-off of its Brazil operations.

Flint said there were still uncertainties owing to increasing geopolitical tensions and "ambigu-

ous predictions" around Britain's future relationship with the EU post-Brexit, but described HSBC's performance as resilient. In his last statement as chairman before stepping down in October 2017, Flint warned over the possible repercussions of the Brexit deal.

Gulliver added there was still a risk that HSBC may need to relocate some jobs out of London over Britain's EU departure. "Certain activities that have to be done under the EU law will be unlawful to do from the UK," he told a conference call.

"That's the up to 1,000 jobs that we would move to France" to protect a potential loss of revenue totalling about \$1.0 billion. The bank also announced yesterday that British national Mark Tucker, chief executive of insurance group AIA, will replace Flint as chairman. It is part of a management overhaul that will see the bank also choose a new chief executive to replace Gulliver, who is expected to leave in 2018. — Reuters

GLOBAL FUNDS RAISE EUROZONE ASSETS TO OVER TWO-YEAR HIGHS

LONDON: Global investors have raised their holdings of eurozone equities and bonds to the highest levels in more than two years, a Reuters poll showed, reflecting a conviction that the European Central Bank will not rush to raise interest rates.

Investors have sought signals as to when the ECB will start reducing its asset-purchase scheme, but the bank left its ultra-easy monetary policy unchanged at its July meeting and did not even discuss winding down stimulus. That probably gave fresh impetus to investor bullishness on Europe. Reuters' monthly asset allocation survey of 49 fund managers and chief investment officers in Europe, the United States, Britain and Japan, showed assets from the single currency bloc continued to be favored.

The poll, conducted between July 17-26, showed funds boosting eurozone equity allocations to an average 20.1 percent, the highest level since April 2015 and up 3.4 percentage points since the start of the year.

They also raised euro zone bond holdings by two percentage points to 29.2 percent, the highest since March 2015. European equities are up 5 percent year-to-date though they are set to end July flat, possibly spooked by the euro's surge to near two-year highs.

Over two-thirds of poll respondents who answered a question on monetary policy said they did not expect all four major central banks - the ECB, Bank of Japan (BOJ), the US Federal Reserve and the Bank of England - to be in policy-tightening mode by end-2018. The ECB and the BOJ were most often named as the central banks likely to lag the other two. Alain Zeitouni, senior portfolio manager at Russell Investments, was amongst those who cited the ECB.

"We expect a slow and gradual tapering in the course of 2018 in order not to scare global capital markets," he said. "Inflation remains sub-2 percent in the euro area and with potential uncertainties around Italian elections in 2018, it is very unlikely the ECB will act before the end of the year." Trevor Greetham, head of multi-asset at Royal London Asset Management (RLAM), said their highest conviction view was that the BOJ would

not raise rates. "The recent downgrade in their inflation outlook confirms our view that the underlying inflationary pressures remain low. We expect yen weakness to boost Japanese equities," he said.

Investors increased Japanese equity exposure to 17.7 percent in July, the highest since November 2016, whilst raising Japanese bonds by over 1 percentage point to 13.5 percent.

The BOJ kept policy unchanged in July and pushed back the timing for achieving its inflation target. Some managers also doubt the Bank of England will be able to tighten any time soon, with Justin Onuekwusi, a fund manager at Legal & General Investment Management, citing fragile consumer demand and uncertainty over Britain's upcoming exit from the EU. "The MPC will have to balance a slowing economy and rising inflation - a mild form of stagflation," he said.

In contrast, the US Federal Reserve is expected to tighten further and to start reducing its bond holdings soon, a step it alluded to at its July meeting.

Vulnerable

Investors cut their US equity holdings to 39.3 percent in July, the lowest level since Donald Trump's election as US President in November.

Although US stock markets have rallied to record highs, some investors expressed concern about stretched asset prices. With Trump's promised tax cuts and higher spending already priced in, the market is viewed as vulnerable to disappointment. Some 85 percent of poll participants who answered a question on Trump predicted he would see out his four-year term, notwithstanding an ongoing investigation into possible collusion between his presidential campaign and Russia.

Several asset managers saw impeachment as difficult unless the Democrats made substantial gains at 2018 mid-term elections. Robeco strategist Peter van der Welle, however, put Trump's odds of survival at 50/50. "If (special counsel Robert) Mueller manages to keep the investigation on track and presents compelling evidence, it is not unthinkable he has cleared enough smoke for Congress to trigger impeachment," he said. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.736
Indian Rupees	4.722
Pakistani Rupees	2.870
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.967
Nepali Rupees	2.956
Singapore Dollar	224.640
Hongkong Dollar	38.758
Bangladesh Taka	3.727
Philippine Peso	5.987
Thai Baht	9.106

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.774
Qatari Riyal	83.194
Omani Riyal	786.642
Bahraini Dinar	804.300
UAE Dirham	82.468

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.500
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.830
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.216
Tunisian Dinar	125.860
Jordanian Dinar	427.420
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.018
Syrian Lira	2.158
Morocco Dirham	32.374

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.700
Euro	358.090
Sterling Pound	399.560
Canadian dollar	244.900
Turkish Lira	86.490

Swiss Franc	315.310
Australian Dollar	244.730
US Dollar Buying	301.500

GOLD

20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfr Selling Rate

US Dollar	303.100
Canadian Dollar	240.555
Sterling Pound	395.155
Euro	354.530
Swiss Frank	289.630
Bahrain Dinar	803.920
UAE Dirhams	82.920
Qatari Riyals	84.135
Saudi Riyals	81.720
Jordanian Dinar	427.420
Egyptian Pound	16.954
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.972
Indian Rupees	4.715
Pakistani Rupees	2.877
Bangladesh Taka	3.746
Philippines Peso	5.976
Cyprus pound	167.275
Japanese Yen	3.710
Syrian Pound	2.415
Nepalese Rupees	2.950
Malaysian Ringgit	71.725

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.280
Thai Baht	10.050
Turkish Lira	86.255

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY BUY SELL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.390964	0.400964
Czech Korune	0.005619	0.017619
Danish Krone	0.043684	0.048684
Euro	0.349699	0.358699
Norwegian Krone	0.034286	0.039486
Romanian Leu	0.077647	0.077647
Slovakia	0.009020	0.019020
Swedish Krona	0.032989	0.037989
Swiss Franc	0.311711	0.322711
Turkish Lira	0.080857	0.091157
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.235201	0.247201
New Zealand Dollar	0.221889	0.231389
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.238000	0.247000
Georgina Lari	0.136713	0.136713
US Dollars	0.298600	0.303020
US Dollars Mint	0.299100	0.303020
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003381	0.003965
Chinese Yuan	0.043407	0.046907
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036676	0.039426

Indian Rupee	0.004243	0.004931
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002641	0.002821
Kenyan Shilling	0.002907	0.002907
Korean Won	0.000262	0.000277
Malaysian Ringgit	0.067311	0.073311
Nepalese Rupee	0.002975	0.003145
Pakistan Rupee	0.002654	0.002944
Philippine Peso	0.005900	0.006200
Sierra Leone	0.000037	0.000043
Singapore Dollar	0.217821	0.227821
South African Rand	0.017455	0.025955
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001597	0.002177
Taiwan	0.009913	0.010093
Thai Baht	0.008736	0.009286

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.795818	0.804318
Egyptian Pound	0.015110	0.021018
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000189	0.000249
Jordanian Dinar	0.422330	0.431330
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250
Moroccan Dirhams	0.019623	0.043623
Nigerian Naira	0.000390	0.001025
Omani Riyal	0.779814	0.785494
Qatar Riyal	0.078854	0.083794
Saudi Riyal	0.078633	0.080933
Syrian Pound	0.001283	0.001503
Tunisian Dinar	0.122426	0.130426
Turkish Lira	0.080857	0.091157
UAE Dirhams	0.080989	0.082689
Yemeni Riyal	0.000984	0.001064



AL-BABTAIN WINS 2016 NISTEC GLOBAL AWARD

DEMONSTRATION OF HIGHEST LEVELS OF SKILL AND PROFESSIONALISM IN AFTERSALES SERVICE

KUWAIT: Al-Babtain Group is proud to announce that its champion technician Ramesh Rajan has been officially awarded the highly coveted 2015-2016 Nissan Service Technician Excellence Competency Global Award (NISTEC). Rajan won the NISTEC gold medal in the regional contest in Dubai in February; his performance there was judged to be among the top performing technicians among over 44,000 technicians globally, leading to the global award. Nissan Motor

Co Ltd, Japan's then-President & CEO conveyed his compliments to Rajan in an appreciation letter applauding his outstanding achievement. A felicitation meeting was held at Al-Babtain in the attendance of Al-Babtain Group CEO Saleh Al-Babtain, COO Mohamed Shalaby, CHRO Abdulmohsen Al-Babtain and senior managers to congratulate Rajan. Speaking on the occasion, Saleh said, "It brings us great pride to applaud one of our own as he demonstrates superior skills and an

indomitable drive to excel. We are on a constant road to enhanced performance which requires the right talents as they help to meet the company's operational and strategic goals."

"We congratulate Ramesh Rajan for advocating our groups long standing principles modelling passion, integrity and commitment. At Al-Babtain, we heavily invest in our staff as they are the key to meeting customer's demands in a competitive environment. As a winner of pre-

vious regional qualifications as well, it gives us great pride to support his continued growth and fulfilment as he continues to surpass customer expectations," Shalaby remarked.

Al-Babtain Group was founded in 1948, to present a model of honesty, integrity and total dedication, gaining a solid reputation in the State of Kuwait and the Middle East area.

Today, Al-Babtain Group has licensing rights for some of the world's leading

brands stretching the globe from the USA to the Far East. For more than 60 years, Al-Babtain Group has experienced continued success and a large measure of this success came from the Group's advanced flexible management style and long-term vision. These astounding results were achieved due to a versatile strategic formula focusing on growth amongst its sphere of activities; including automotive, technology, investment, information technology, industrial and Finance.



NAIROBI: Customers shop in a Nakumatt supermarket in Nairobi yesterday. Once a Kenyan success story, homegrown Nakumatt supermarkets were grappling with product shortages so severe even the country's best-known cartoonist has taken notice, lampooning the company's slogan in a recent drawing as, "You need it, we don't have it". — AFP

TURMOIL ENGULFS SUPERMARKET SUCCESS NAKUMATT IN KENYA

NAIROBI: The butcher is closed, metres of shelves are empty save for a single brand of shampoo and, worst of all, the toilet paper is out-of-stock. Once a Kenyan success story, homegrown Nakumatt supermarkets are grappling with product shortages so severe even the country's best-known cartoonist has taken notice, lampooning the company's slogan in a recent drawing as, "You need it, we don't have it".

The dizzying fall of East Africa's largest retailer has been blamed on a combination of bad management, misguided expansion plans and increased competition, and many industry insiders say the damage wrought on the company is so severe that it may not survive.

"It's what I call a perfect storm, where a series of events have come together to create the position that we're in," said Andrew Dixon, a former executive with Britain's Tesco supermarket recently hired to head up Nakumatt's marketing.

The chain's position today is indeed a tenuous one: Nakumatt has become so bad at paying its bills that some suppliers demand to be paid upfront or refuse to deliver. The landlord of one supermarket recently raided the premises and seized merchandise in lieu of unpaid rent.

It wasn't always like this. Nakumatt's transformation from a one-store mattress retailer into a region-spanning grocery empire is a fairy-tale saga in a country where entrepreneurship is a cardinal virtue.

The chain's story starts in 1979 in Kenya's Indian community, when a father, fresh off of the bankruptcy of another business, started a mattress store with his two sons in the Rift Valley town of Nakuru. The store was named "Nakuru Mattresses," which was later contracted to Nakumatt and what would become one of the best known brands in East Africa. The shop flourished and by the mid-1980s the family opened their first store in the capital Nairobi. The current difficulties have seen two Nairobi stores and three in Uganda shuttered.

However the business still employs 7,000 people and has 45 stores in Kenya, eight in Uganda, three in Rwanda, five in Tanzania and does annual sales of \$600 million (\$11 million euros), according to Dixon.

Nakumatt has had to commit to opening new markets years in advance, and sometimes, when they finally do open, they end up not being as successful as expected.

The final blow is Kenya's economic growth, which, while strong, is less than Nakumatt anticipated.

"We had originally put together a business plan which had assumed a certain growth in the economy. That growth has now slowed," Dixon said, adding that the retail sector's share of GDP has dropped from 12 percent to 6 percent. Sources among Nakumatt's competitors point to a fourth reason: the company's acquisition at the end of 2016 of minority shareholder John Harun Mwaui's stake in the chain for a sum Kenyan media reported to be at least \$30 million.

In 2011, American investigators froze Mwaui's assets in the United States over allegations that he was involved in drug trafficking, a charge he denies. The businessman and politician's scandalous reputation was seen as hampering Nakumatt's quest to convince investors to inject \$75 million into the company.

The giants in waiting

The time for Nakumatt to sort out its affairs is running out. Wholesalers, who have relied for years on Nakumatt's business to connect them with Kenya's rising middle class, are losing patience.

So, too, are mall owners, who have watched the balance of unpaid rent from the stores grow by the month. The landlord of one shopping centre in Nairobi's northern outskirts grew so tired of waiting that in early July they raided the Nakumatt on their premises, seizing trucks, televisions, trolley and refrigerators to auction in a bid to recover 51 million shillings (\$491,000) in unpaid rent.

Julien Garcier, managing director of market research company Sagaci, said Nakumatt did not only need new investors, but fresh ideas and outside expertise. "Yes, they have been around for a long time, but above all, it's a family business and they are now facing a fairly sudden rise in competition and their lack of know-how is making them make expensive mistakes," Garcier said.

That competition is not just from local brands like Tusksys, Chandarana and Naivas, but also from France's Carrefour and American chain WalMart, both of which have recently emerged-albeit on a small scale-on the scene in Kenya. At the opening of a WalMart-owned Game supermarket in 2015, a local television station came across Nakumatt boss Atul Shah browsing the aisles, who made what seemed to be an admission of weakness. "The biggest trouble I go through is, what next?" he told the journalists. "Always, we're looking for ideas." — AFP

MEMAC OGILVY PARTNERS WITH ZAIN IRAQ TELECOM

AGENCY TO MANAGE ITS AD, PR AND SOCIAL MEDIA

KUWAIT: Memac Ogilvy, the leading advertising and public relations agency in MENA, succeeded to partner with Zain Iraq, part of Zain Group - the leading telecom and mobile data service provider across MENA, to offer communication services following a lengthy review with competitors. Held at Zain Iraq headquarters in Baghdad, the signing ceremony was attended by senior executives from Zain Iraq and Memac Ogilvy Beirut marking the strategic communication partnership including advertising, public relations and social media.

Based on tough standards and lengthy review, Memac Ogilvy Beirut was selected for its team's dedication, passion in addition to common strategic vision and enthusiasm in presenting a creative and strategic full-fledged proposal in line with Zain Iraq business and communications objectives. As part of the partnership, Memac Ogilvy Beirut will create a custom roadmap for Zain Iraq tapping into the competitive landscape to create a recognizable telecom brand across Iraq.

"Memac Ogilvy stood out from competition showing an absolute understanding of our business and market needs as well as challenges. The team grasped our objectives and managed to translate them into a creative approach," said Ali Al-Zahid, CEO of Zain Iraq. "We look forward for their fresh thinking in line with the local community evolution, to meet our subscribers' aspirations and exceed the Iraqis expectations," he added.

As part of this partnership, Memac Ogilvy Beirut will develop a custom roadmap for Zain Iraq, handling its communication strategy, corporate reputation management, advertising, activation, public relations and social media.

"Zain Iraq is committed to provide innovative services that meet the Iraqi consumers' needs especially its subscribers," said Mohammed Samir Ban, Chief Commercial Officer at Zain Iraq. "Memac Ogilvy will help us achieve this goal by developing communication strategies including solutions that will enable us to reach our subscribers efficiently and keep them informed about our latest services and offerings," he added.

"We are proud to partner with Zain Iraq. The demand for our services is stronger than ever



Ali Al-Zahid, CEO of Zain Iraq with Naji Boulos, MD of Memac Ogilvy Beirut

and this is evident by increasing the breadth of our practice areas and growth in our professional staff. Zain Iraq chose Memac Ogilvy for our solid strategy developed based on a market research and insights discovered by our team members," said Edmond Moutran, CEO and Chairman of Memac Ogilvy MENA.

"The addition of Zain Iraq to our clients' portfolio in Beirut represents the next chapter in our "ambitious growth story". Our team challenged themselves to outperform in developing a full-fledged proposal around Zain Iraq role in the Iraqi telecom sector with-

in a challenging timeline," said Naji Boulos, Managing Director of Memac Ogilvy Beirut. "We believe that our partnership with Zain Iraq and its team will help us provide the support required to achieve their marketing objectives and meet subscribers' aspirations across Iraq," he added.

The strategic partnership between Zain Iraq and Memac Ogilvy harnessing the power of a wide-array of communication tools - including advertising, marketing and PR - to propel the brand positioning as a telecom leader setting a new benchmark in quality standards.

HAMMOND: BRITAIN WILL NOT CUT TAXES BELOW EUROPEAN AVERAGE

LONDON: Britain does not intend to lower taxes far below the European average in order to remain competitive after Brexit but rather expects to keep a recognizably European economic and social model, finance minister Philip Hammond said. Hammond himself had suggested in January that Britain may have to change its economic model to remain competitive in the event that it left the European Union without having secured an agreement on market access.

Hammond, who had campaigned for Britain to remain in the EU ahead of last year's referendum, is seen as a proponent of a relatively "soft Brexit", sometimes putting him at odds with cabinet colleagues who yearn for a cleaner break with the bloc.

Senior ministers have given conflicting signals over key issues such as whether free movement of people could continue after Brexit, with divisions coming out into the open since the ruling Conservatives lost their parliamentary majority in June. In an interview with French newspaper Le Monde published over the weekend, Hammond was asked whether Britain would play the low-tax card to remain economically attractive after Brexit.

"It is often said that London would consider launching into unfair competition in terms of fiscal regulation. That is not our project or our vision for the future," Hammond was quoted as saying in response. "The amount of tax that we raise, measured as a percentage of GDP, is within the European average and I think we will remain at that level. Even after we

have left the EU, the United Kingdom will keep a social, economic and cultural model that will be recognizably European."

Deviation

The comments were markedly different from Hammond's responses in his January interview with German newspaper Welt am Sonntag, which were seen as a thinly veiled threat to use corporate tax as a form of leverage in Brexit negotiations. Asked directly whether Britain would lower corporate tax, Hammond had said that while he hoped Britain would remain a European-style economy with corresponding tax and regulation systems, it may have to change its model if it left the EU without agreement on market access.

"In this case, we could be forced to change our economic model and we will have to change our model to regain competitiveness," Hammond said. "We will change our model, and we will come back, and we will be competitively engaged." In his Le Monde interview, Hammond was also asked to comment on the prospect of banks potentially moving part of their activities after Brexit from the City of London to EU cities such as Frankfurt, Paris or Dublin. Hammond responded that it would be "very dangerous for Europe" to fragment the financial services market based in the City, which he described as an important component of the British and European economies. "The big winner would not be Paris or Frankfurt, but New York. — Reuters

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Duplex & Triplex Villas 3/4 Bedrooms + 3/4 Bathrooms + Big Salon + Separate pool All Master Bathrooms is Marble

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HSBC, MINERS LIFT EUROPEAN SHARES, ASIA UP

LONDON: Forecast-beating profits at HSBC and strong gains for miners on the back of a two-year high in copper prices lifted European shares yesterday while the dollar edged up off 13-month lows against other major currencies. Wall Street looked set to open higher, according to stock index futures.

HSBC, Europe's biggest bank, unveiled a 5-percent rise in profits in the first six months of this year and its third share buyback in a year, underlining progress in its turnaround plan.

Its shares gained as much as 3 percent in London, helping lift an index of European banks by 0.3 percent. However, the standout performers were mining companies, with an

index of their shares up 1.3 percent, as industrial metal copper hit a fresh two-year peak after Chinese data showed that while manufacturing growth cooled slightly this month a push on infrastructure by the government kept construction humming.

Copper on the London Metal Exchange last traded at \$6,388 a ton, up 1.0 percent on the day, having risen as high as \$6,430. The pan-European STOXX 600 share index rose 0.4 percent, having fallen for the last two trading days.

Shares of tobacco companies weighed on the index, underperforming again after the US Food and Drug Administration proposed on

Friday to cut nicotine in cigarettes to non-addictive levels.

British American Tobacco fell 4.7 percent, after dropping 6.8 percent on Friday, and Imperial Brands fell 5.9 percent. Asian shares rose as investors largely shrugged off a new North Korean missile test, focusing instead on a data-heavy week ahead.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan reversed early losses to rise 0.4 percent. Chinese shares rose, buoyed by several leading companies' forecasts for strong mid-year earnings. The blue-chip index rose 0.5 percent and the Shanghai Composite both rose 0.6 percent. North Korea conducted a

missile test late on Friday that it said proved its ability to strike the US mainland. The US responded by flying two bombers over the Korean peninsula on Sunday. But early jitters dissipated somewhat, with the Korean won reversing losses. The dollar was down 0.3 percent at 1,120 won, after jumping almost 0.7 percent on Friday. South Korea's KOSPI rose 0.1 percent. The dollar dipped against the safe-haven yen, which traded at 110.54 to the greenback, up 0.1 percent on the day.

Core inflation

The euro fell 0.2 percent to \$1.1730, little moved by an unexpected acceleration in core inflation to a four-year high this month. The measure is closely watched by the European Central Bank, which has said it will debate later in the year whether to begin winding back its bond-buying stimulus program. Its overall inflation target is close to but below 2 percent.

Yields on some lower-rated bonds fell after the data. In normal circumstances higher inflation would push yields higher. "It's a step in the right direction but not quite enough to make the market reconsider bond prices," said Mizuho strategist Antoine Bouvet.

Sterling fell 0.1 percent to \$1.1316 but stayed near a 10-month high, with investors eyeing "Super Thursday" when the Bank of England announces its latest policy decision and quarterly inflation report. "We expect elements of the rate decision and Inflation Report to contain hawkish tilts, thereby providing some support to the pound," wrote BMO cur-

rency strategists in a weekly note to clients yesterday. The dollar index, which measures it against a basket of major currencies rose 0.2 percent but held close to 13-month lows touched last week on uncertainty over whether US President Donald Trump will be able to push through his economic agenda and questions over the pace of US interest rate rises. Such concerns have seen speculative bets against the dollar rise to their highest since early 2013, by one broad measure. "Our short-term positions indicators are flashing red in terms of extreme bets against the dollar, especially against the euro and the Aussie and in this kind of environment, a small negative surprise in data elsewhere can trigger a washout," said Viraj Patel, an FX strategist at ING in London.

Oil up on OPEC meeting

Oil prices hit two-month highs. An OPEC announcement of a meeting next week of producers from the group and elsewhere to discuss compliance with their oil supply reduction pact added to upward pressure on prices from a threat of US sanctions against Venezuela.

This was in response to Sunday's election of a constitutional super-body that Washington has denounced as a "sham" vote. Brent crude last traded down 5 cents at \$52.47 a barrel, having risen as high as \$52.60 earlier yesterday. "The sentiment in the oil market became very bullish after OPEC said it will meet with partners in Abu Dhabi next week to discuss compliance," said Frank Schallenger, head of commodity research at LBBW. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Monday 31 July 2017

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing
Price Index	▲ 56.38	6,851.62	6,795.24
Weighted Index	▼ -2.27	413.29	415.56
KSX 15	▼ -5.77	943.17	948.94

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	330	▲ 0.0
NAPESCO	950	850	7,346	6,255	8	950	▲ 100.0
ENERGYH	37.4	35.5	121,081	4,352	15	35.5	▼ -0.7
GPI	42.7	42.0	196,100	8,332	9	42.3	▼ -0.3
ABAR	91	90	150	14	2	90	▲ 0.0
Oil & Gas			324,677	18,953	34	1082.17	▲ 64.80

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	289	▲ 0.0
BPCC	570	568	533,969	304,354	29	570	▲ 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	590	▲ 0.0
ALQURAIN	350	347	255,601	88,701	22	347	▲ 0.0
Basic Materials			789,570	393,055	51	1261.42	▲ 0.00

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KCEM	425	425	9,264	3,937	1	425	▼ -10.0
CABLE	430	426	55,835	23,896	5	427	▼ -2.0
SHIP	209	206	21,400	4,412	3	206	▲ 0.0
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	950	▲ 0.0
PAPER	290	290	11,500	3,335	1	290	▲ 0.0
MRC	95	92	4,510	424	13	94	▲ 2.0
ACICO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	270	▲ 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	208	▲ 0.0
KBMM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	136	▲ 0.0
NICBM	185	162	1,146	194	8	185	▲ 25.0
EQUIPMENT	51	49.1	90,025	4,424	4	51	▼ -0.1
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	98	▲ 0.0
GYPESUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	▲ 0.0
SALBOOKH	64	60	71,200	4,331	9	64	▲ 2.6
AGLTY	849	840	286,710	242,468	64	840	▼ -10.0
EDU	375	355	242,084	88,000	42	375	▲ 15.0
CLEANING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	52	▲ 0.0
KGL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	▲ 0.0
KKPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	155	▲ 0.0
HUMANSOFT	4,300	4,200	237,746	999,471	21	4,300	▲ 50.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	195	▲ 0.0
GFC	75	75	1,000	75	1	75	▲ 0.0
MAYADEEN	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
CGC	568	565	25,100	14,182	2	568	▲ 3.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	▲ 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	698	▲ 0.0
ALAFCCO	346	346	17,615	6,095	3	346	▼ -2.0
MUBARRAD	76	74	250,019	18,733	11	74	▼ -2.8
LOGISTICS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	51	▲ 0.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	▲ 0.0
GCEM	77	76	3,747,935	283,351	3	76	▲ 0.4
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	▲ 0.0
FCEM	82	82	1,142	94	1	82	▲ 5.9
RKWC	89	82	28,515	2,382	5	89	▲ 0.0
SPEC	97	95	188,600	17,968	11	95	▲ 0.0
Industrials			#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	▲ 18.60

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
PAPCO	90	90	100	9	1	90	▲ 9.9
CATTL	233	223	15,000	3,349	5	223	▼ -1.0
DANAH	73	73	20,000	1,468	2	73	▲ 0.0
FOOD	2,100	2,100	1	2	1	2,100	▲ 200.0
Consumer Goods			35,101	4,828	9	1021.99	▲ 29.10

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
MHC	480	350	526	184	2	480	▲ 80
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	▲ 0.0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	▲ 0.0
Health Care			526	184	2	1683.91	▲ 173.40

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,350	▲ 0.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	▲ 0.0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	▲ 0.0
CABLETV	28.2	25.5	11,521	296	5	27.9	▼ 0.0
EYAS	850	850	17,408	14,797	7	850	▼ -20
OUFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	285	▲ 0.0
ILAFUEL	123	121	119,999	14,713	27	121	▼ -1
MUNTAZAHAT	77	75	78,000	5,852	3	77	▲ 0.0
JAZEERA	500	485	68,284	33,638	9	500	▲ 10
SOOR	125	123	131,280	16,339	24	123	▼ -1
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	106	▲ 0.0
ALRAI	121	119	85,000	10,220	6	119	▼ -1
Jiyad	54	51	79,410	4,067	4	54	▲ 1
Mezzan	902	902	24,800	22,189	4	902	▼ -13
Consumer Services			615,502	122,113	89	1035.62	▼ -5.60

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
ZAIN	453	444	2,563,509	1,149,881	108	444	▼ -10
OOREDOO	1,165	1,055	20,393	23,191	17	1,164	▲ 4
HITSATEL	43.0	42.5	298,401	12,713	26	43.0	▼ -1
VIVA	806	801	96,859	77,757	75	801	▼ -5
Telecommunications			2,979,162	1,263,542	226	603.53	▼ -5.60

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
NBK	703	697	1,322,573	925,805	46	697	▼ -6
GBK	248	246	526,200	129,755	18	247	▲ 0
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	▲ 0
ABK	319	313	44,001	13,808	5	319	▼ -1
ALMUTAHED	423	410	9,706	4,041	5	420	▼ -7
KIB	247	243	324,222	79,927	15	247	▲ 3
BURG	356	351	652,097	230,512	18	351	▼ -10
KFIN	545	535	5,773,128	3,112,984	313	535	▼ -13
BOUBYAN	417	413	663,119	274,893	39	414	▼ -3
AUB	219	212	6,992,439	1,507,958	186	212	▼ -4
ITHMR	44.3	44.0	1,755,958	77,550	39	44.3	▼ 0
WARBANK	268	264	214,128	56,791	124	268	▲ 2
Banks			18,277,571	6,414,025	808	946.12	▼ -8.30

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	260	▲ 0.0
GINS	600	600	60,000	36,000	4	600	▲ 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	430	▲ 0.0
WINS	89	78	1,112	87	2	89	▲ 10.7
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	186	▲ 0.0
FTI	52	48.4	2,734	137	5	48.4	▲ 0.8
WETHAQ	54	50	1,000	52	2	54	▲ 2.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	▲ 0.0
Insurance			64,846	36,276	13	1042.48	▲ 21.50

Security	Trades						Change
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	
SOKOUK	47.0	46.7	232,854	10,913	7	47.0	▼ -0.3
KRE	60	60	514,968	30,975	16	60	▼ -0.5
URC	88	82	3,086	253	5	88	▲ 0.0
NRE	127	124	1,299,018	162,994	30	127	▲ 2.0
SRE	371	365	40,200	14,824	6	371	▲ 1.0
TAM	400	400	8,533	3,413	1	400	▼ -10.0
AREEC	137	137	9,900	1,356	1	137	▼ -9.0
MASSALEH	41.0	41.0	30,000	1,230	1		

AL-SAYER LAUNCHES MOTUL LUBRICANTS

World Class lubricants from France with international presence across 160 countries



KUWAIT: Al-Sayer engineering one of the ALSAYER Group Holding Companies held a launch event at Jumeriah Hotel to introduce MOTUL lubricants from France. The event was attended by Al-Sayer Board of Directors, delegates from Al-Sayer Group Senior Management, senior management representatives from MOTUL France Headquarters, leading dealers from Kuwait, distinguished members from press and media along with team members from the Group's Tires, Oil, Paint & Garage Equipment Division and Marketing division.



Sayer Group are about providing high-quality products with the best after sales services to our customers. Today, with Motul, a French lubricants brand teaming up with us, Al-Sayer Group marks a new milestone of achievement in its outstanding record of success by becoming an authorized distributor of Motul lubricants in Kuwait. We will keep ensuring we provide our customers with the best facilities and services in cooperation with the team at Motul."

One of the world's leading brand of lubricants

Motul is a world-class French company specialized in the formulation, production and distribution of high-tech engine lubricants. It is the first lubricant manufacturer to use the ester technology for the formulation of its 100 percent synthetic car oils by capitalizing on an innovation first invented for the aeronautical industry.

Motul products are used from the very first moment when a complex component is casted in a casting machine to the moment it is drilled and processed in a sophisticated computer controlled machine tool to the moment an engine is filled with the best of Motul.

Brand promise of Motul

Motul targets and occupies a strong presence within the automotive and industrial lubricants market, supported by a technology driven pole position. Independently-minded with customers at the very heart of its drive for excellence, Motul designs and provides to its customers and partners admirable maintenance products and solutions that fully meet their expectations. By keeping its promises to provide a desirable brand primarily promoted through motor-sports and premium spheres.



According to Olivier Montange, Executive Vice President Motul, "We are pleased to be here today to mark the launch of Motul brand in Kuwait in association with Al-Sayer. With a heritage spanning 160 years and presence currently in 160 countries, the brand is driven by 6 core values: Premium, Specialist, Passionate, Authentic, Brotherly, and Ingenious."

"Motul is one of the world's leading brands in high-tech motor oils, as well as being an official supplier to many of the racing teams, which includes the Toyota Racing Division" and other leading European automobile manufacturers who are collaborating with them to further technological development" commented Jordi Peiró Marketing Manager Motul.

Mid-SAPS - ACEA C2 & C3 - specially designed to bring Fuel Economy (FE) and maximum protection. Suitable for the latest generations of Gasoline and Diesel engines EURO 4, EURO 5 and EURO 6. Compatible with catalytic converters and Diesel Particulate Filters (DPF). Approved GM-OPEL dexos2.

"We are confident that this new partnership between us, ALSAYER Group and MOTUL, being the world's leading manufacturer of high-tech motor oil production and distribution, will capture the hearts of Kuwaiti customers with its outstanding performance and a product range that meets every requirement of the customer. Once again, we wish to emphasize our support and commitment to providing the best service at all times to our customers," said Bengt Schultz Chief Operating Officer Al Sayer Group Holding.

As a specialist in synthetic oils, Motul has become the partner of many manufacturers and sports teams for its technological developments in mechanical sports, car and motorcycle racing. Motul is present in many



international competitions as official team supplier: MotoGP, Road racing, Trial, Enduro, Endurance, Superbike, Supercross, Rallycross, World Rally Championship, FIA GT, Le Mans 24 Hours, Spa 24 Hours, Le Mans Series, rally raid, Paris-Dakar, F3, etc.

Motul lubricants will be available for customers through ALSAYER Engineering's wide network of five centers for tires, oils and paints as well as in authorized dealers, co-ops, garages and Auto-repair shops across the State of Kuwait.



KFH LAUNCHES 'SUMMER OFFERS' CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched summer offers campaign to its customers. This campaign offers exclusive discounts that perfectly address customers' expectations in the summer season. The campaign encompasses all banking tiers; "Al-Ruwad" Program, "Al-Tamayoz" Program, "Al-Rubban" Program for Men, "Al-Sundus" Banking Program, "Hesabi" Program, and "Baiti" Program when using their debit cards.

Customers are entitled to avail up to 50 percent discounts at highly distinguished package of stores and international brands including restaurants, hotels, clinics, clothes shops, accessories shops, furniture, electronics etc. The offers are available at any of the marketing outlets on the bank's website KFH.com, KFHonline application and Instagram.

KFH is always keen to reward its customers and offer them unique and distinguished privileges, while ensuring that all services fulfill various expectations, needs and requirements of all customers.

KFH was established in Kuwait in 1977 and is enlisted in the Kuwait Stock Exchange. KFH Group is a global pioneer

in the field of Islamic banking services, where it offers a wide array of Islamic products and services, not to mention a high standard of innovation and client service.

KFH manages its operations in the GCC, Asia, and Europe through over 480 branches, including KFH-Turkey, in order to offer services for the bank's clients in Turkey, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Germany, Jordan, and Dubai.

KFH's mission is to achieve highest levels of excellence and innovation in the field of client service, while developing common interest for all those concerned with the financial institution. KFH's vision is to spearhead the global development in Islamic financial services, and to upgrade the bank into the level of becoming the most sustainable profitable Islamic bank in the world.

KFH's values include cementing leadership through all its businesses, including leadership in the Islamic banking services worldwide, through innovation and in client service and the development of its employees. In addition, KFH is committed to all its procedures, and to setting up long-life partnerships with the concerned authorities.

GULF BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-DANAH DAILY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws on 30 July 2017 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 23 July - 27 July 2017. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

The winners are:

- (Sunday 23/7): Abdulmohsen Yousef Al-Duaij, Haya Hamid Al-Enezy
- (Monday 24/7): Najat Ali Al-Mulla, Eid Mesyar Waker Husain
- (Tuesday 25/7): Hesham Mohammad Yaseen Ebrahim, Mariam Hussain Nassar Othman



(Wednesday 26/7): Khaled Mohammad Habib Al-Matrouk, Nawaf Fahad Mubarak Al-Newayef

(Thursday 27/7): Essa Mohammed Najem Mohsen, Abdullah Abdulsool Abdullah Al-Bather

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2017 draw lineup includes daily draws (Two winners per working day and each receive KD1,000). Al-Danah's 3rd quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be held on 28 September. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1 million will be held on 11 January, 2018 whereby the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

Online and Mobile Banking.

Five reasons why the Al-Danah account is the best:

- 1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million and the largest international bank prize according to Guinness World Records
- 2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD 500,000
- 3) Two winners of KD 1,000 every working day
- 4) The most chances to win
- 5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from the previous year to the current year

Only Al-Danah makes millionaires. Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount must be maintained as for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD 200 at any given time, a KD 2 charge will be made on a monthly basis to the account until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the daily draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2017 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw; customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, transfer on line, or call the Customer Contact Center for assistance and guidance.

AUB OFFERS INSTANT DISCOUNTS AND ADDED VALUE PROMOTIONS

KUWAIT: In line with the 2017 summer travel season and holidays, Ahli United Bank (AUB) is reminding its customers to take advantage of instant discounts and added value promotions that are provided through the Bank's Pearls Rewards Program, which include a wide range of exciting and valuable discounts covering a broad array of purchases - which have been tailored to meet customers' needs.

As part of the Bank's commitment to offering an extensive range of products and services that satisfy customers' demands, and ones which provide multiple shopping options, AUB is focusing on its successfully launched Pearls Points Program which offers customers the chance to earn 3 Pearls Points for every KD 1 spent across any of the retail shops included within the program around the world. The points are then converted to air miles and can be used on any of the following leading airlines: Kuwait Airways, Qatar Airways and Gulf Air.

The more customers use their cards while shopping, the more points they receive. Air miles can be used to enjoy free flights amongst these three airlines. Moreover, customers can also enjoy a cabin class upgrade, in addition to free accommodation in world-class hotels



along with a host of other added value benefits provided by the program in line with the Bank's terms and conditions.

Furthermore, AUB is leveraging the 2017 summer season to communicate a variety of diversified discounts for customers across more than 100 well renowned international and local brands, when they use their AUB Credit or Postpaid Cards.

This year's promotional package is unique and has been provided by world-class hotels and restaurants, cafes, travel agencies, medical centers, hospitals, dental clinics and pharmacies. It also includes fitness centers, fashion and sportswear, cosmetics, fragrances, retail products, car rentals, and home services. The new promotion reflects AUB's desire and underlying commitment to provide comprehensive benefits that add more value to customers' lives.

AUB's customers can also receive full travel and health insurance free of charge when using their AUB Credit Cards while purchasing their airline tickets.

The Pearls Rewards Program provides true added value to AUB's cardholders, allowing them to receive an unprecedented amount of exclusive benefits without having a minimum or maximum spend cap from major retailers around Kuwait.

CISCO APPOINTS DAVID MEADS VICE PRESIDENT FOR MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA

DUBAI: Cisco yesterday announced the appointment of David Meads as Vice President for its Middle East and Africa operations. In the current era of digital disruption, Meads, in this newly created role, will oversee the execution of Cisco's strategy in these two regions, ensuring the technology leader maintains its momentum at the forefront of digital transformation efforts. As digital adoption gathers pace in the Middle East and Africa, the new geographical setup under Meads will allow for greater synergies, relevancy and sharing of best practices across the two regions.

"David Meads' appointment to lead Cisco's business in the Middle East and Africa comes at a time of tremendous potential for the region to reap the benefits of digital transformation, supported by the prioritization of digitization in both government and business agendas," said Edwin Paalvast, President, Cisco EMEAR. With more than 30 years' experience in the IT industry, Meads joined Cisco in 1996 and was most recently Cisco's Vice President for

Africa, where he was responsible for partnering with organizations across the continent to help them implement strategies to unlock the full potential of the digital era.

Over the years he has developed a reputation as a trusted advisor to enterprises and governments, partnering with them to deliver competitive advantages and efficiencies gained by adopting digital technologies. Meads will



David Meads

be based in Dubai, Cisco's hub for the Middle East. "As we deepen the commitment to the region, we're excited to have someone of David's caliber at the helm to spearhead our strategy and support customers along their digitization journey. One of David's priorities will be helping Cisco's customers and partners create value in a highly connected, digital world, while enabling greater responsiveness to emerging market and customer needs," concluded Paalvast.

Cisco has longstanding government partnerships across the Middle East and Africa, including a Country Digitization Acceleration (CDA) program with Saudi Arabia, with several other similar programs in the pipeline. In addition, Cisco is working closely with relevant government entities in the region on multiple initiatives that support IT skills training and education, as well as the development of entrepreneurship, business and innovation ecosystems. "I look forward to taking on the additional responsibility of a fast-evolving, dynamic region

and to working with the phenomenal team we have in place," said David Meads, Vice President, Cisco Middle East and Africa.

He added, "Combined, the Middle East and Africa region has the world's youngest demographic and presents a significant market opportunity, where new business models and innovative technology adoption are addressing unique market needs. Cisco's expansive portfolio allows us to partner with our customers and support their digital journey." A veteran business leader, David Meads has rich sales leadership and general management credentials. He has held various leadership positions within Cisco, including a three year stint as Managing Director for South Africa, based in Johannesburg. During this time, he achieved exceptional levels of employee engagement within the organization and helped the country develop its e-skills initiative, aimed at harnessing the power of technology for inclusive socio-economic development.

30 DAYS AFTER WANNACRY, WHAT CAN THE KUWAITI FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR LEARN?

By Charles Habak and Wayne Loveless

WannaCry or Wcry represents the latest version of a growing threat called Ransomware - a tailored piece of malware designed to exploit specific vulnerabilities in the operating systems of its victims' computers. Malware outbreaks are not infrequent, but Wcry spread so rapidly that it revealed vulnerabilities in the business planning, employee preparation and internal procedures of organizations all over the world. A majority of affected systems were running outdated versions of software, with no access to updates because the vendor had phased out support to these legacy systems.

The financial services industry sector is no stranger to the phenomenon of outdated software. Many of today's financial systems still run on UNIX based platforms developed in the 1980s and 1990s, which often are no longer supported by vendors. What the financial sector can learn from the Wcry fallout is the importance of investing in a sound risk management framework that involves technology change management as well as updated software - all of which could have prevented Wcry.

Investing in a sound backup and continuity plan can also enable organizations to quickly rebuild and recover systems in the event of a cyber-attack or ransomware impact and eliminate any need to pay ransom. Most law enforcement agencies and cyber experts would caution against paying the ransom as it may open the victims up to further exploitation and potential identify theft.

Financial services organizations and their leadership have a duty to protect their customers' financial interests as well as their own institutions. This begins with a dedicated cyber agenda at the Board level along with the formation of a cybersecurity action committee reporting directly to the CEO. Bank-wide vulnerability assessments across all of the business units that are C-level driven and business-aligned should



Charles Habak, Vice President at Booz Allen Hamilton MENA



Wayne Loveless, Principal at Booz Allen Hamilton MENA

be prioritized.

Additionally, a dedicated cyber security business unit should be formulated with the goal of assessing and implementing new types of capabilities, processes and functions to combat growing threats. Finally, encouraging bilateral and multilateral communication mechanisms with other banks in the marketplace, and interfacing with regulators to inform of threats and share information of potential breaches as well as threat intelligence from local, regional, and international partners can provide the contextual understanding needed to proactively defend institutions from future threats.



CALIFORNIA: Star Wars robot character R2-D2 stands in front of the audience at the Princess Leia Star Wars Fan Club Tribute Presentation during the 2017 Comic-Con International in San Diego, California. —AP

CYBERSECURITY STARTS WITH TRAINING YOUR EMPLOYEES

By Mohammed Basheer, IT Security Practice Head, ISYX Technologies

The Petya ransomware attack that hit computers around the world recently, the second in two months, is yet another reminder that computers play key roles in most enterprises, and that it does not take much to disable those computers. Irrespective of how robust your information security systems are, users are still the weakest link in your company's cybersecurity.

It's a business cliché that staff is a company's greatest asset and potentially its greatest risk. And while that has always been true in the area of customer relations, it's now equally applicable to data security. Users are the first line of defense against cyber-attack, and also - potentially - a business's most glaring vulnerability. People are just a very large attack surface but organizations can reduce the attack surfaces by implementing an effective organization wide security awareness program.

Untrained employees are the linchpins for most data breaches. Those who attack businesses have no wish to spend a lot of time and money defeating its technology. Instead they would pre-

fer to infect the user with ransomware, their favorite bait - "spray & pray" phishing attacks, which involves spamming with email that carries malicious content.

It has become increasingly important to embed ICT security awareness at all levels of an organization. While awareness is the key, there also needs to be a balance struck. Employees need to know the risk their online activities pose and how to manage it, without being rendered unproductive by overly complex procedures.

Computer security training isn't just a matter of giving employees information. Knowing best practices and organization policy is important, but it helps only if employees understand that they make a difference and should feel they are part of the organizations information security. The truth is that user ignorance to security make most malware attacks possible, and that employees who are aware can avoid most of the attacks.

Information Security Awareness should be part of an organization culture, business leaders need to make sure their awareness programs cover all the important aspects of cybersecurity which ensure that their employees are well trained to

tackle the current security threats. At the end of an education and awareness initiative, all users should be able to understand:

How to identify security threats?

The user should be able to identify the difference between normal emails and malicious email. They should understand best practice in internet usage and understand the organizations security policies.

Response to the security incidents

The user must be aware of the security incident response procedure. Should they suspect a security incident in progress, they should be able to follow the security incident management procedure to curtail the incident from spreading across the organization. As they say people are the weakest link in the information security chain, hence employee involvement is crucial for the success of an organization's security strategy.

There is often a disconnect between what employees know they should do security-wise and what they actually do in practice. Organizations which continue to implement and reinforce effective awareness programs, have seen reduced number of security incidents, in turn maintaining better uptimes for the IT environment supporting the business processes, helping the organizations to upkeep their reputation resulting in better financial rewards.



Mohammed Basheer

AT HACKER SUMMIT, A NEW FOCUS ON PREVENTING BRAZEN ATTACKS

LAS VEGAS: Against a backdrop of cyberattacks that amount to full-fledged sabotage, Facebook chief security officer Alex Stamos brought a sobering message to the hackers and security experts assembled at the Black Hat conference in Las Vegas. In effect, he said, it's time to grow up. Too many security researchers, he suggested, are focused on "really sexy, difficult problems" that don't address the common vulnerabilities that allow malware attacks to wreak havoc.

And too many security-minded hackers seem intent on demonstrating newly discovered hacks, such as making an ATM spit out cash or taking remote control of an internet-controlled car, rather than shoring up more mundane defenses. While part of that reflects the healthy intellectual curiosity of hackers, it's also driven by marketing and eco-

conomic incentives, Stamos said. "I appreciate the showmanship, but we need a little more thoughtfulness, a little less showmanship in our field," he told reporters after his speech.

Global attacks, serious damage

Since May, the world has been rocked by two major international cyberattacks - the ransomware WannaCry and a likely state-sponsored attack called NotPetya that spread out of Ukraine. Those and other recent digital assaults have paralyzed hospitals, disrupted commerce, caused blackouts and interfered with national elections. Stamos himself was formerly the chief security officer at Yahoo, which last year disclosed breaches of more than a billion user accounts that dated back to 2013 and 2014.

Black Hat, now in its 20th year, has matured since

what Stamos, a longtime attendee of the computer security conference, described as its "edgy and transgressive" early days. It has grown more professional and corporate over time. Stamos called for a culture change among hackers and more emphasis on defense - and basic digital hygiene - over the thrilling hunt for undiscovered vulnerabilities. And he called for diversifying an industry that skews white and male, and generally showing more empathy for the people whom security professionals are tasked to protect.

"It's unfair for us to say that users should be better," said Stamos, challenging his profession to find better ways to help people solve the most common vulnerabilities, such as reuse of passwords, email phishing attempts, and not updating devices to patch bugs. —AP

WANNACRYPT RANSOMWARE: AN ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE YOUR CYBER RESILIENCE DEFENCES

By Steven Malone, Director of Security Product Management at Mimecast

The global reach and considerable impact of the WannaCrypt (WannaCry/Wcry) ransomware is a wake-up call for organizations and governments around the world. This on-going cyber threat will continue to adapt to take advantage of weaknesses in IT systems and procedures. New variants of this malware may cause even more damage if you do not act immediately. At Mimecast our first priority is to help protect our customers against the latest threats. Our services help protect email which has traditionally been the primary attack route for ransomware.

Early samples have revealed that the ransomware is spread over local networks and the internet by abusing Server Message Block (SMB) protocol weaknesses. Although no Wcry 'smoking gun' infection emails have yet been found, it is highly likely that future variants will use email. This short guide is designed to help all organizations complete a review of network security, backup and business continuity systems and processes. We are also providing additional insights into how to make easy and quick configuration changes to ensure your Targeted Threat Protection solution is optimized. As many of you already know, a comprehensive 'defense in depth' strategy is the best approach to mitigation of current and future variants of Wcry and other ransomware.

Patching

Every organization must ensure its IT systems are regularly updated. Microsoft security updates are released on the second Tuesday of each month (Patch Tuesday). Microsoft released a security update back in March which addresses the vulnerability that Wcry is exploiting. For those organizations who have not yet applied the security update, you should immediately deploy Microsoft Security Bulletin MS17-010. If you are using a legacy, now unsupported version of Windows, you should consider upgrading immediately. However, if this is impossible in the short term, Microsoft has taken the unusual measure of releasing a security patch that can buy you time to upgrade. Microsoft has provided its own detailed guidance to defend against Wcry here.

Network hardening

Good security practice dictates removing or disabling unnecessary services to reduce the potential attack surface. WannaCry has spread quickly by abusing vulnerabilities in Server Message Block network protocol. Unless you have a very good reason not to, disable the SMBv1 protocol on your network, while also ensuring SMB cannot be directly accessed from the internet. Disable or block other legacy protocols on your network that you are not using.

For customers of Mimecast Targeted Threat Protection, we advise a number of activities:

URL Protect - configure a policy in line with our best practice guide in Mimecast Central. Ensure a policy is applied to all users. Rewriting all URLs to scan for unsafe content at time-of-click is the best approach to preventing inbound URL-based phishing.

Attachment Protect - configure the "Safe Files" option for all users to ensure inbound Microsoft Office files are converted to a safe

and benign format. For users who require editable documents, ensure Attachment Protect's sandboxing is configured. Refer to the best practice guide in Mimecast Central for details.

Internal Email Protect - this service provides protection for URLs and attachments in both outbound email and also mails sent internally. Ensure policies are applied to all users and ensure remediation capabilities are enabled. Refer to our best practice guide for configuration recommendations.

Mimecast customers using Mimecast's secure email gateway, we advise using the most up to date attachment management definition as there are reports of executable files masquerading as Excel files with an administrator hold on dangerous file types. This in conjunction with the Suspected Malware policy with the ability to hold Office files containing macros provides another layer of detection, but does not provide the analysis provided by Attachment Protect. Mimecast's ARMed SMTP (Advanced Reputation Management) combines malware, reputation and anti-spam checks to reject unwanted email.

Since a very high percentage of ransomware is spread by email attachments, we urge organizations to consider using sandboxing and/or safe file conversion services. DNS authentication capabilities such as DKIM and SPF can help stop attackers from spoofing or hijacking the email domains of trusted senders, thus effectively taking away one method attackers use to fool their intended victims. DMARC, the combination of these two services adds an extra layer of defense. To learn more about Mimecast's DMARC implementation and DNS Authentication policies please check out this document in Mimecast Central community.

Data backups and business continuity

Preventive measures alone can't keep up with the fast-evolving nature of ransomware attacks and as this attack highlights, there are many ways for an infection to enter an organization. It's vital you regularly backup critical data and ensure that ransomware cannot spread to backup files. Ransomware can take time to encrypt large volumes of files, particularly across a network share. It is imperative to ensure your back-up window is long enough to go back before any infection begins. Backup and recovery measures only work after an attack, and cost organizations in downtime and IT resources dealing with the attack and aftermath. Organizations must be able to continue to operate during the infection period and recover quickly once the infection has been removed.

Should firms ever pay a ransom?

We advise organizations never to succumb to the pressure to pay the ransom to regain access to their applications and data. There is no guarantee this will unlock files and further motivates and finances attackers to expand their ransomware campaigns. This notification provides external links as a convenience to our users. This does not constitute endorsement by Mimecast of any linked websites, or the information, products or services contained therein. Mimecast does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these websites. Mimecast does not take responsibility for pages maintained by external providers.



Steven Malone



PLOEMEUR: An employee of Aqstream company looks at marine worms through a microscope, in Ploemeur, western France.



PLOEMEUR: An employee of Aqstream company presents a marine worm, in Ploemeur, western France. — AFP photos

IN US FIRST, SCIENTISTS EDIT GENES OF HUMAN EMBRYOS

NEW YORK: For the first time in the United States, scientists have edited the genes of human embryos, a controversial step toward someday helping babies avoid inherited diseases. The experiment was just an exercise in science - the embryos were not allowed to develop for more than a few days and were never intended to be implanted into a womb, according to MIT Technology Review, which first reported the news.

Officials at Oregon Health & Science University confirmed Thursday that the work took place there and said results would be published in a journal soon. It is thought to be the first such work in the US; previous experiments like this have been reported from China. How many embryos were created and edited in the experiments has not been revealed. The Oregon scientists reportedly used a technique called CRISPR, which allows specific sections of DNA to be altered or replaced.

Designer babies

It's like using a molecular scissors to cut and paste DNA, and is much more precise than some types of gene therapy that cannot ensure that desired changes will take place exactly where and as intended. With gene editing, these so-called "germline" changes are permanent and would be passed down to any offspring. The approach holds great potential to avoid many genetic diseases, but has raised fears of "designer babies" if done for less lofty reasons, such as producing desirable traits. Last year, Britain said some of its scientists could edit embryo genes to better understand human development.

And earlier this year in the US, the National Academy of Sciences and National Academy of Medicine said in a report that altering the genes of embryos might be OK if done under strict criteria and aimed at preventing serious disease. "This is the kind of research that the report discussed," University of Wisconsin-Madison bioethicist R. Alta Charo said of the news of Oregon's work. She co-led the National Academies panel but was not commenting on its behalf Thursday. "This was purely laboratory-based work that is incredibly valuable for helping us understand how one might make these germline changes in a way that is precise and safe. But it's only a first step," she said. "We still have regulatory barriers in the United States to ever trying this to achieve a pregnancy. The public has plenty of time" to weigh in on whether that should occur, she said. "Any such experiment aimed at a pregnancy would need FDA approval, and the agency is currently not allowed to even consider such a request" because of limits set by Congress.

Germline changes

One prominent genetics expert, Dr. Eric Topol, director of the Scripps Translational Science Institute in La Jolla, California, said gene editing of embryos is "an unstoppable, inevitable science, and this is more proof it can be done." Experiments are in the works now in the US using gene-edited cells to try to treat people with various diseases, but "in order to really have a cure, you want to get this at the embryo stage," he said. "If it isn't done in this country, it will be done elsewhere." There are other ways that some parents who know they carry a problem gene can avoid passing it to their children, he added. They can create embryos through in vitro fertilization, screen them in the lab and implant only ones free of the defect.

Dr. Robert C. Green, a medical geneticist at Harvard Medical School, said the prospect of editing embryos to avoid disease "is inevitable and exciting," and that "with proper controls in place, it's going to lead to huge advances in human health." The need for it is clear, he added: "Our research has suggested that there are far more disease-associated mutations in the general public than was previously suspected." Hank Greely, director of Stanford University's Center for Law and the Biosciences, called CRISPR "the most exciting thing I've seen in biology in the 25 years I've been watching it," with tremendous possibilities to aid human health. "Everybody should calm down" because this is just one of many steps advancing the science, and there are regulatory safeguards already in place. "We've got time to do it carefully," he said. —AP

THE STORY OF HOW A WORM TURNED INTO A BRINGER OF MEDICAL MIRACLES

WORM BLOOD COULD SAVE LIVES, HELP TRANSPLANT PATIENTS

PLOEMEUR, France: For centuries, the only use humans found for the lugworm-dark pink, slimy and inedible-was on the end of a fish hook. But the invertebrates' unappreciated status is about to change. Their blood, say French researchers, has an extraordinary ability to load up with life-giving oxygen. Harnessing it for human needs could transform medicine, providing a blood substitute that could save lives, speed recovery after surgery and help transplant patients, they say.

"The hemoglobin of the lugworm can transport 40 times more oxygen from the lungs to tissues than human hemoglobin," says Gregory Raymond, a biologist at Aqstream, a fish-farming facility on the Brittany coastline. "It also has the advantage of being compatible with all blood types." Raymond and his team, which specializes in fish egg production, joined forces with biotech firm Hemarina in 2015 in the hope of securing a reliable means of lugworm production.

The facility now churns out more than 1.3 million of the creatures each year, each providing tiny amounts of the precious hemoglobin. "We started basically from zero. Since the worm had never been studied, all parameters needed inventing from scratch, from feeding to water temperature," says project researcher Gwen Herault. Medical interest in the lugworm-Arenicola marina-dates back to 2003, when the outbreak of mad-cow disease in Europe and the worldwide HIV epidemic began to affect blood supplies.

The problem was that animal hemoglobin's, as a substitute for the human equivalent, can cause allergic reaction, potentially damaging the kidneys. In lugworms, though, hemoglobin

dissolves in the blood and is not contained within red blood cells as in humans-in other words, blood type is not an issue and its structure is almost the same as human hemoglobin. In 2006, the worm's potential was validated in a major study. Scientists at Roscoff, close to Ploemeur, extracted and purified hemoglobin from local-caught lugworms and tested it on lab mice.

The rodents were fine and showed no sign of the immune response that dogged other animal substitutes. If proven safe for humans, the researchers said, the worms' oxygen-rich blood could tackle septic shock-a crash in blood pressure that can cause fatal multiple organ failure-and help to conserve organs for transplantation. Clinical trials of the blood product began in 2015. Lugworm hemoglobin was used last year in 10 human kidney transplants at a hospital in the western French city of Brest and 60 patients are currently enrolled in tests of the blood product across France.

Male or female?

The secrets of lugworm hemoglobin lie in its ability to survive in extreme conditions, burrowing into sand at the edges of the tide. The worm grows to about 25 centimeters in length and has several bushy external gills along its body. At high tide, submerged in water, the worm builds up stocks of oxygen that, astonishingly, allow it to survive more than eight hours out of the water at low tide. Anyone who has walked along a sandy beach at low tide will see evidence of lugworms, from the tiny coiled casts of sand they throw up from their burrow, 10 cms

below the surface. But, apart from anglers who dig up the creatures for bait, lugworms are rarely seen-and breeding them is a novel challenge. "The main difficulty is working with a small animal that lives its life hidden," explained Raymond. Aqstream struggled at first with basic rearing problems-including how to tell a male lugworm from a female. After nine months of testing, "50 percent of adult worms survived and a good deal of them produced eggs," said Herault.

The larvae start out around 1mm in length and the worms are transported to Hemarina's testing site once they reach 5mm. Aqstream director Nathalie Le Rouilly said that her firm's collaboration with Hemarina could provide the world of medical science with a sustainable supply of the worms. "There is nowhere else in France or the world that has the capacity to produce lugworms in a controlled environment to ensure a supply of their hemoglobin," she says.

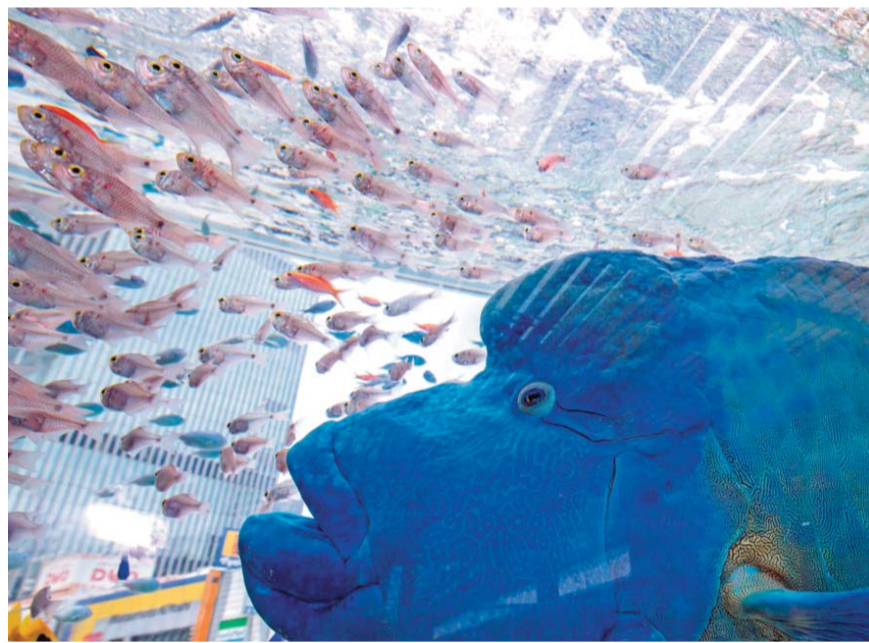
Scientists are excited by the potential of lugworm hemoglobin-although they also point to a rigorous testing procedure before the molecule can be certified as safe and effective for humans. "The properties of extracellular hemoglobin extracted from the lugworm could help protect skin grafts, promote bone regeneration and lead to universal blood," says Raymond. If this vision turns real, lugworm blood may also allow donor organs to live longer outside the bodies, potentially helping thousands of recipients each year. And, one day, freeze-dried lugworm blood could be a crucial backup for standard blood supplies-a boon in combat zones or disasters. — AFP

SUGAR NOT SO SWEET FOR MENTAL HEALTH

PARIS: Sugar may be bad not only for your teeth and your waistline, but also your mental health, claimed a study Thursday that was met with skepticism by other experts. Researchers at University College London (UCL) compared the reported sugar intake of more than 8,000 people in a long-term British study, to their mood. The study participants, civil servants, were monitored from 1985-1988, and filled out a questionnaire every few years thereafter. Researchers examined data from that study for an association between sugar intake and "common mental disorders" (CMD) such as anxiety and depression. The UCL team found "an increased likelihood" for men with a higher intake of sweet foods and drinks to develop CMD after five years, and a general "adverse effect" on mental health for both sexes. And they concluded, in a study published in the journal Scientific Reports, that "lower intake of sugar may be associated with better psychological health."

But dietician Catherine Collins, a spokes-

woman for the British Dietetic Association, said this recommendation was "unproven". Problems with the study, she said, included that sugar consumption was self-reported, and that sugar intake from alcohol was not counted. The researchers, she said, appeared to confuse naturally-occurring sugar from foodstuffs such as milk, and "free sugars" added to hot drinks or in sweets. "The dietary analysis makes it impossible to justify the bold claims made by the researchers about sugar and depression in men," Collins said via the Science Media Centre in London. "Reducing intake of free sugars is good for your teeth, and may be good for your weight, too. But as protection against depression? It's not proven." Nutrition expert Tom Sanders agreed the results should be interpreted "with caution". "From a scientific standpoint it is difficult to see how sugar in food would differ from other sources of carbohydrate on mental health as both are broken down to simple sugars in the gut before absorption," he said. — AFP



TOKYO: A humphead wrasse, transported from Japan's southern island of Okinawa, swims with other tropical saltwater fish on display in a tank for the Sony Aquarium 2017 exhibition in Tokyo. — AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT NEWS IN THE ARABIAN GULF





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AA, RIMSCO CONCLUDE TRAINING DIPLOMA COURSE

The Australian Academy (AA) Institute for Studies and Training, in collaboration with Risk Management and Security Consulting Company (RIMSCO), concluded a diploma training course in programs pertinent to security and defense affairs (Security Management). AA was initiated to be an effective partner to the national efforts aiming to upgrade the quality of education and training, in addition, AA is keen to provide international educational standards of training, and develop a curriculum in line with the professional labor market requirements.

The training course delivered aims at developing the security management skills of the participants by providing the tools, abilities and knowledge that enable them to manage security crises, emergency plans during

evacuations, so are qualified prior taking over their roles and official duties in operating and managing the overall security systems at the Kuwait Ministry of Electricity & Water (MEW). The course covered a set of topics related to quality planning, implementation and development in the security training process.

It addresses the importance of developing the security awareness and disseminating the culture of maintaining security, the law and order, as well as planning strategies to manage and confront security crises, and the advanced technology in preparing and implementing the emergency and evacuation plans. It also contains principles of evaluating the risks and designating the weaknesses in the facilities and installations, and the role of security manager in risk management and preven-

tion, and the systemic approach for security decision-making and crisis management.

Training lasted for nine months, where the training strategy was divided into five modules, including the concept and principles of modern security environment, security awareness, security threats, emergency and crisis management methodologies, how to manage and assess risks, Kuwaiti labor law and legislation, as well as the management tasks and responsibilities of the security manager. It is worth mentioning that AA has been keen to hire a team of local and regional experts to benefit from their expertise and enrich knowledge at different levels of work, aiming to provide distinct training services that help achieve development and upgrade efficiency in the long run in the Kuwait labor market.

Organizing such courses is due to the commitment of AA towards the various entities in the State of Kuwait, to achieve leadership in human investment, and upgrade the level of education in the State of Kuwait. Participants to the diploma course in special programs relating to security and defense affairs (security management) were awarded international certification of Perpetuity Training Institute - UK, and a certificate approved by AA.

In conclusion of the training program, AA held a ceremony in the auditorium of the Australian College, where they delivered honoring trophies and certificates of appreciation to the participants, in the presence of representatives of a committee to monitor the security resolutions of the cabinet,

Colonel Mohammad Al-Farsi, Advisor of Security Planning Affairs, Colonel Nabeel Al-Safi, Director General of Security Projects, Colonel Salah Al-Sumait, Training Director.

From MEW, Eng. Sheikh Abdulla Naser Al-Sabah, Training Coordinator for Plants Security Affairs for Power Generation. From RIMSCO, Counsel Meshari Najeeb Al-Dhubaib, Deputy GM, and Bill Rhynd, Operations Manager. From the Australian Academy Institute for Studies and Training, Eng. Sager Al-Sharhan, Deputy Partner for Industrial Affairs Management at the Australian College, Ali Mubarak, Director of Corporate Training Department, Hanan Haloush, Senior Manager Corporate Training Department at the Australian College and Sahar Al-Malak, Manager of the Australian Academy Institute.

Zitaat

MCDONALD'S DELIVERY NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH ZITAAT

In a strategic move aimed at enhancing and expanding the Brand's current delivery capabilities, McDonald's Kuwait announced yesterday that its delivery services will now be available exclusively through Zitaat General Trading Company and Delivery Service; which owns and operates Zitaat, the newest online food delivery platform. By migrating its delivery services to a dedicated external company, McDonald's meals will now be available for delivery to a greater number of customers, covering a significantly larger geographical area.

Starting from August 1st (today), the existing in-house McDonald's delivery service will be suspended and all placed orders will be delivered via Zitaat's dedicated fleet of delivery vehicles, which are equipped with special carrier bags that preserve heat and food quality. In addition to ordering directly through Zitaat's app and website, customers will still be able to place their orders through the existing McDelivery platforms, including the smartphone app, the online delivery platform and the delivery hotline.



"Since we launched our McDelivery service back in 2015, we have seen the

demand for delivery continue to grow at a rapid pace. Therefore, in an effort to take our delivery services to the next level and better serve our customers, we made the strategic decision to partner with Zitaat in order to streamline our delivery process and greatly expand our current reach," said Luai Al-Kilani, Vice President of McDonald's Kuwait. Al-Kilani added: "Now, customers all across Kuwait will be able to enjoy our delivery services, and we are excited to be bringing to them the McDonald's experience they love right to their doorstep, wherever they may be."

Speaking on behalf of Zitaat, Najlaa Karam, General Manager of Zitaat General Trading Company and Delivery Service said: "As a newer entrant into the market, our partnership with McDonald's is an extremely strategic one and undoubtedly a major milestone for our company. McDonald's remains one of the biggest and most popular names in the country, and we are confident that as we continue to collaborate with partners of this caliber, Zitaat will quickly establish itself as a force to be reckoned with in the food delivery market in Kuwait."



THE PALMS BEACH HOTEL & SPA ORGANIZES 'SMILE TO BE HAPPY'

The Palms Beach Hotel & Spa organized a "Smile to be Happy" initiative for Hotel Staff under the slogan "Smile to be Happy" with the participation of the members of the board in order to create an atmosphere of Joy and Happiness. The aim of the initiative is to increase their knowledge and importance of smiling on the psychological and personal level of individuals and how to reflect the positive spirit created by smile on the general atmosphere of work, which will bear fruit on the two main parties of the work environment; both employees and customers.

The initiative reflects the interest of the management of The Palms Beach Hotel & Spa; may affect the personal status of the staff by learning more about the culture of openness, flexibility and acclimatization; which is an integral part of the success of the Hotel and its excellence in the State of Kuwait.

On this occasion General Manager of Palms Beach Hotel & Spa, Hossam Abu Al-Lughd stressed the importance of smile and its reflection on the working environment, saying: "Happiness is a long journey that does not end, but today we have begun. Today we have gathered to share together as one body and one entity; and the Hotel to follow the policy of diversity and difference; however smile is the only thing that expresses a unified language among all workers and also smile is a language and an influential tool understood by any client,

whatever his language and his country from where he comes."

He explained that all religions have urged smile, which is considered to be true in Islam, and that other religions have come up with explicit texts demanding their followers to smile. he added: "We can imagine the amount of insomnia and suffering experienced by a guest as soon as he arrives at a new location after a long journey that might have taken few hours and imagine that you are welcoming that guest by smiling and telling him that everything is fine; the guest feels safe and comfortable."

The "Smile to be Happy" initiative, the first of its kind in the hotel, included variety of celebrations and activities for employees throughout the day; including distribution of valuable prizes to the winners of the monthly competition launched during the initiative to choose the most beautiful smile and the management managed to involve all employees of the hotel regardless of sections they work or tasks that they perform.

This employee-led initiative is expected to significantly improve the balance between their personal and professional lives. It is also expected that there will be more initiatives of a similar nature to establish communication relationships among employees, increase their interaction and focus on their well-being.



ZAFRAN'S NEW SIZZLING SATURDAY BRUNCH MUST-DO FOR FAMILIES

Spoil you and your loved ones by indulging in Zafran Mahboula's brand new Sizzling Saturday Brunch. This fabulous dining experience is a must-do for families and features fabulous food, family-friendly entertainment further enhanced by the popular Indian bistro's cozy and inviting ambiance. Zafran's signature breads and condiments complement a lavish buffet featuring soups, salads, biryanis and curries.

The restaurant is also introducing for the very first time Zafran Sizzlers, dishes featuring delicious cuts of meat served on a traditional hot stone plate at one's table. A wide range of refreshing Zafran signature mocktails and desserts complete the brunch offering. The Sizzling Saturday brunch also features a kiddie corner guaranteed to be a hit with children with face painting, balloons, art sessions and other fun surprises every week. Brunch at Zafran Indian Bistro at Light Complex Mahboula is on from 12 pm to 5 pm every Saturday and costs a reasonable KD 8.000 for adults and KD 4.750 for children.



IAK ELECTS NEW OFFICE-BEARERS

I dukki Association Kuwait (IAK) held its 8th annual general Body meeting on June 29, 2017 at the High Dine Auditorium, Abbassiya. The following members were elected to the office: Biju P Anto - President, Mathew Arepparambil - General Secretary, Jomon Jacob - Treasurer, Joseph Varghese Makkollil - Vice President, Joby Joseph - Secretary, Vipin Vijay - Joint Treasurer.

Jins Varghese, Bijo Thomas, Ajay T Jose, Hafiz Mustafa, Binoy Joseph Kalayathinal, Tubin Kodamullil, Tintu Mathew Ullattu, Alen Mookenthottathil, Ciju M Chacko and Prince Sebastian were elected as executive committee members and Babu Chacko as auditor. The advisory committee was formed with Jiji Mathew as the Chairman and legal advisor. The advisory committee also has included seven other members. Nine area conveners and media, cultural and sports committees were also elected representing two members each.

The general body meeting was presided over by the President of the association Babu Parayani. General Secretary Preeth Jose Pallickamyalil presented the annual report and the treasurer - Joseph Mookenthottathil Thomas submitted the statement of accounts for the year. Joint Treasurer Ivy Alex delivered the welcome speech and Secretary Jomon Jacob gave the vote of thanks.

The election was Sunny Manarkattu, Jose Thomas Nadakkuzhackal and Thomas Chacko Vezhampasseriyil as the electoral officers. The newly elected office-bearers and executive committee have been introduced to the general body. The newly-elected president and general secretary addressed the gathering and requested the support and cooperation of all members of the association.



Biju P Anto



Mathew



Jomon Jacob



00:45 Animal Cops Philadelphia
01:40 Animal Cops Houston
02:35 Tanked
03:25 Wildest Islands
04:15 Life At Vet University
05:02 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
05:49 Animal ER
06:36 Call Of The Wildman
07:25 Life At Vet University
08:15 Animal Cops Houston
09:10 Wildest Islands
10:05 Tanked
11:00 Life At Vet University
11:55 Animal Cops Philadelphia
12:50 Animal ER
13:45 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
14:40 Wildest Islands
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Untamed China With Nigel Marven
17:25 Dog Rescuers
18:20 Guardians Of Rescue
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Life At Vet University
21:05 Dog Rescuers
22:00 Guardians Of Rescue
22:55 Wildest Islands



00:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
01:00 It Takes A Killer
01:30 It Takes A Killer
02:00 Homicide Hunter
03:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
04:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
05:00 It Takes A Killer
05:30 It Takes A Killer
06:00 Evil Up Close
07:00 It Takes A Killer
07:30 The First 48
08:00 Homicide Hunter
09:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
10:00 The First 48
15:00 Cold Case Files
16:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
17:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
18:00 It Takes A Killer
18:30 It Takes A Killer
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Homicide Hunter
21:00 Cold Case Files
22:00 When Life Means Life
23:00 Evil Up Close



00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
01:20 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
02:10 The Carbonaro Effect
03:00 Destroyed In Seconds
03:25 Destroyed In Seconds
03:50 Alaska Gold Diggers
04:40 How It's Made
05:00 How It's Made
05:30 Dirty Jobs
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Doki
07:25 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
07:50 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
08:40 How It's Made
09:00 How It's Made
09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
10:20 Mythbusters
11:10 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
12:00 Alaska Gold Diggers
12:50 How It's Made
13:40 Dirty Jobs
14:30 Doki
14:55 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
15:20 Destroyed In Seconds
15:45 Destroyed In Seconds
16:10 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
17:00 Driving Me Crazy
17:50 Now That's Funny
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
19:05 Destroyed In Seconds
19:30 How It's Made
19:55 How It's Made
20:20 Mythbusters
21:10 Driving Me Crazy
22:00 World's Funniest
22:50 Destroyed In Seconds
23:40 Alaska Gold Diggers



00:30 The 1980s: The Deadliest Decade
01:20 Scene Of The Crime With Tony Harris
02:10 Is O.J. Innocent? The Missing Evidence
03:00 Murder Comes To Town
07:00 Monsters: When Moms Go Bad
10:20 The Locator
11:10 Blood Relatives
12:00 Murder Comes To Town
12:50 Murder Comes To Town
13:40 Murder Comes To Town
14:30 Murder Comes To Town
15:20 The Locator
15:45 The Locator
16:10 Hate In America
17:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
17:50 Obsession: Dark Desires
18:40 Obsession: Dark Desires
19:30 Obsession: Dark Desires
20:20 Deadline: Crime With Tarron Hall
21:10 Evil Online
22:00 Is O.J. Innocent? The Missing Evidence
22:50 Grave Secrets
23:40 Evil Lives Here

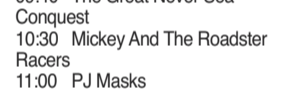


00:00 Hank Zipzer
00:55 Alex & Co.
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Hank Zipzer
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:10 Alex & Co.
04:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:45 The Hive
05:50 The 7D
06:00 Jessie
06:25 Jessie
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
06:55 Lilo & Stitch
07:20 Elena Of Avalor
07:45 Bunk'd
08:10 Stuck In The Middle
08:35 Bizaardvark
09:00 Austin & Ally

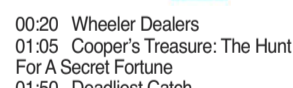
09:25 Austin & Ally
09:50 Good Luck Charlie
10:15 Good Luck Charlie
10:40 Alex & Co.
11:05 Lilo & Stitch
11:30 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
11:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:00 Welcome To The Tonks
12:15 Hank Zipzer
12:40 Dog With A Blog
13:05 Star Darlings
13:10 Good Luck Charlie
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Jessie
14:25 Lilo & Stitch
14:50 The Zhuzhus
15:15 Whisker Haven Tales With The Palace Pets
15:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
15:45 Elena Of Avalor
16:10 Liv And Maddie
16:35 Descendants Wicked World
16:55 Descendants Wicked World
17:40 Girl Meets World
17:55 Stuck In The Middle
17:30 Bunk'd
17:55 Bizaardvark
18:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
18:25 Alex & Co.
18:50 Best Friends Whenever
19:15 Star Darlings
19:25 Liv And Maddie
19:45 Make Mermaids
20:10 Jessie
20:35 Cracked
20:40 Bizaardvark
21:00 Austin & Ally
21:30 Stuck In The Middle
21:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts
22:00 Bunk'd
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
22:50 Lilo & Stitch
23:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 Henry Hugglemonster
00:15 Calimero
00:30 Art Attack
00:55 Zou
01:05 Loopdidoo
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
01:50 Zou
02:05 Art Attack
02:20 The Hive
02:40 Loopdidoo
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:10 Art Attack
03:35 Loopdidoo
03:50 Calimero
04:05 Art Attack
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster
04:45 Zou
05:00 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Loopdidoo
06:00 Zou
06:15 Calimero
06:30 Loopdidoo
06:45 Henry Hugglemonster
07:00 Sofia The First
07:25 PJ Masks
07:50 The Lion Guard
08:15 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
08:40 Doc McStuffins
09:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
09:35 Disney Lights, Camera, Lex!
09:40 The Great Never Sea
10:00 Restaurant: Impossible
10:05 Mystery Diners
10:20 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
10:30 Man Fire Food
10:40 Chopped
10:50 Guy's Grocery Games
11:15 Eat Street
11:45 Eat Street
12:15 Barefoot Contessa
12:30 Barefoot Contessa
12:40 The Kitchen
12:50 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 The Pioneer Woman
13:35 PJ Masks
13:50 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
14:30 The Lion Guard
14:55 Unbreakable
15:00 Goldie & Bear
15:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
16:00 Disney Lights, Camera, Lex!
16:05 The Wizard Of Dizz
16:50 PJ Masks
17:05 Doc McStuffins
17:35 The Lion Guard
18:05 PJ Masks
18:35 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:05 Sofia The First
19:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
20:05 The Lion Guard
20:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
21:00 Goldie & Bear
21:25 Doc McStuffins
22:00 Minnie's Bow-Toons
22:30 Sofia The First
22:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
22:55 PJ Masks
23:20 Henry Hugglemonster
23:35 The Hive
23:45 Loopdidoo



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06:00 Barefoot Contessa
06:30 Barefoot Contessa
07:00 The Kitchen
07:50 The Pioneer Woman
08:30 The Pioneer Woman
09:00 Siba's Table
09:30 Siba's Table
10:00 The Pioneer Woman
11:00 The Kitchen
12:00 The Pioneer Woman
12:30 Siba's Table
13:00 Siba's Table
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Chopped
16:00 The Kitchen
17:00 The Pioneer Woman
17:30 The Pioneer Woman
18:00 Chopped
19:00 Chopped Junior
20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:00 Man Fire Food
21:30 Man Fire Food
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped

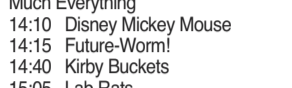


00:20 Wheeler Dealers
01:05 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
01:50 Deadliest Catch
02:35 Outback Truckers
03:20 Fast N' Loud
03:45 Impossible Engineering
04:50 Gold Rush
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Gold Divers
06:45 Wheeler Dealers
07:30 Fast N' Loud
08:15 Impossible Engineering
09:00 Storage Hunters
09:25 How Do They Do It?
09:47 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
10:55 Deadliest Catch
11:40 Outback Truckers
12:25 How Do They Do It?
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17:25 How Do They Do It?
17:50 Storage Hunters
18:20 Storage Hunters
18:50 Impossible Engineering
19:40 How Do They Do It?
20:10 How Do They Do It?
20:35 How Do They Do It?
21:00 Kings Of The Wild
21:50 The Wheel: Survival Games
22:40 Legend Of Croc Gold
23:30 Fast N' Loud



00:00 Milo Murphy's Law
06:25 Disney11
06:50 Mech-X4
07:15 Right Now Kapow

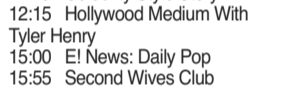
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08:00 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
08:10 K.C. Undercover
08:35 Milo Murphy's Law
09:00 Supa Strikas
09:25 Supa Strikas
09:50 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
10:15 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
10:20 Kickin' It
10:45 Future-Worm!
11:10 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
11:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
12:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
12:30 Atomic Puppet
12:55 K.C. Undercover
13:20 K.C. Undercover
13:45 Garner's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Future-Worm!
14:40 Kirby Buckets
15:05 Lab Rats
15:30 Walk The Prank
15:55 Right Now Kapow
16:25 K.C. Undercover
16:50 Disney11
17:15 Mech-X4
17:40 Milo Murphy's Law
18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
18:10 Gravity Falls
18:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
19:00 Supa Strikas
19:25 Milo Murphy's Law
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
20:10 Jessie
20:35 Cracked
20:40 Bizaardvark
21:00 Austin & Ally
21:30 Stuck In The Middle
21:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts
22:00 Bunk'd
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
22:50 Lilo & Stitch
23:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



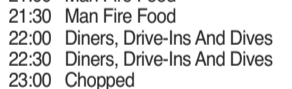
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01:10 The Warfighters
02:00 JFK Declassified: Hunting Oswald
02:50 Storage Wars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Pawn Stars
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Mountain Men
06:00 Leap And Pitbull
06:50 Duck Dynasty
07:15 Duck Dynasty
07:40 Counting Cars
08:05 Counting Cars
08:30 Pawn Stars
08:55 Pawn Stars
09:20 Storage Wars
09:45 Storage Wars
10:10 American Pickers
11:00 Time Team
11:50 Duck Dynasty
12:15 Duck Dynasty
12:40 Counting Cars
13:05 Counting Cars
13:30 Ice Road Truckers
14:20 Mountain Men
15:10 Leap And Pitbull
16:00 Storage Wars
16:25 Storage Wars
16:50 Pawn Stars
17:15 Pawn Stars
17:40 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...
18:30 The Warfighters
19:20 Mountain Men
20:10 American Pickers
21:00 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle
21:50 Alone: Lost And Found
22:40 Swamp People
23:30 American Pickers



00:00 Rob & Chyna
01:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
01:55 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:20 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 So Cosmo
04:40 So Cosmo
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
07:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
08:00 El News: Daily Pop
08:55 Rob & Chyna
09:55 Rob & Chyna
10:50 Rob & Chyna
11:45 Celebrity Style Story
12:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
15:00 El News: Daily Pop
15:55 Second Wives Club
16:45 Second Wives Club
17:35 Second Wives Club
18:30 Celebrity Style Story
19:00 El News
20:00 Botched
04:25 David Rocco's Dolce India
04:50 Places We Go
05:25 Places We Go
05:45 Eat Street
06:15 Eat Street
06:40 Great Escapes
07:10 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
08:05 Wineroads
08:30 Wineroads
09:00 Fish Of The Day
09:25 Maximum Foodie
09:55 David Rocco's Dolce India
10:20 Places We Go
10:50 Places We Go
11:15 Eat Street
11:45 Eat Street
12:10 Great Escapes
12:40 Island Hunter
13:35 Wineroads
14:00 Wineroads
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16:45 Eat Street
17:15 Eat Street
17:40 Great Escapes
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18:35 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
19:05 David Rocco's Dolce India
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20:00 Places We Go
20:30 Eat Street
21:00 Eat Street
21:30 Great Escapes
22:00 Andy And Ben Eat The World
22:25 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
22:55 Island Hunter
23:50 Wineroads



00:15 Cruise Ship Diaries
00:45 Places We Go
01:10 Great Escapes
01:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
02:35 Wineroads
03:00 Wineroads
03:30 Fish Of The Day
03:55 Maximum Foodie
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22:55 Island Hunter
23:50 Wineroads



00:10 Lockdown: Scam City
01:00 Primal Survivor
02:00 Outsiders: Living Off The Edge
03:00 Breakout: Through The Wall
04:00 Lockdown: Scam City
05:00 World's Toughest Fixes
06:00 Science Of Stupid
06:30 Science Of Stupid
07:00 Explorer
08:00 Surgery Ship
09:00 4 Babies A Second
10:00 Continent 7: Antarctica
11:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
12:00 Air Crash Investigation
13:00 Surgery Ship
14:00 Brain Games
14:30 Brain Games
15:00 Explorer
16:00 Continent 7: Antarctica
17:00 Wicked Tuna
18:00 Air Crash Investigation
19:00 Explorer
20:00 Continent 7: Antarctica
20:50 Wicked Tuna
21:40 Air Crash Investigation
22:30 Brain Games
23:20 Brain Games
23:45 Brain Games



00:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Royal Recipes
03:25 Broadchurch
04:20 Victoria
05:15 Seven Days With...
06:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
07:05 Royal Recipes
08:00 Broadchurch
09:00 Victoria
10:00 Seven Days With...
10:55 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
11:50 Royal Recipes
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
15:10 Royal Recipes
16:00 Together
16:30 Together
17:00 Doc Martin
17:50 Seven Days With...
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Royal Recipes
21:00 Together
21:30 Together
22:00 Doc Martin
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Ancient Discoveries
01:00 History's Greatest Blunders
01:30 History's Greatest Blunders
02:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
02:50 Ancient Aliens
03:40 Cities Of The Underworld
04:30 Serial Killer Earth
05:20 Ancient Discoveries
06:10 The Universe
07:00 History's Greatest Blunders

07:30 History's Greatest Blunders
08:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
09:00 Ancient Aliens
10:00 Cities Of The Underworld
11:00 The Universe
12:00 Ancient Discoveries
13:00 History's Greatest Blunders
14:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
15:00 Ancient Aliens
16:00 Cities Of The Underworld
17:00 The Universe
18:00 Ancient Discoveries
19:00 Engineering An Empire
20:00 Ancient Aliens
22:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
23:00 Serial Killer Earth



00:12 Henry Danger
00:36 Get Blake
01:00 Sanjay And Craig
01:24 Rabbids Invasion
01:48 Breadwinners
02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
02:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 The Loud House
07:24 Rabbids Invasion
07:48 Get Blake
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08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 Rank The Prank
09:24 Henry Danger
09:48 100 Things To Do Before High School
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 Regal Academy
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
11:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
12:12 The Loud House
12:36 Breadwinners
13:00 School Of Rock
13:24 Henry Danger
13:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
14:12 Henry Danger
14:36 The Thundermans
15:00 100 Things To Do Before High School
15:24 Rabbids Invasion
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
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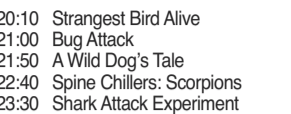
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00:47 The Day Henry Met
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00:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:42 Zack & Quack
01:53 Team Umizoomi
02:25 Olive The Ostrich
02:30 Olive The Ostrich
02:36 Paw Patrol
02:58 Little Charmers
03:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
03:22 Dora The Explorer
03:44 Max & Ruby
04:07 Nella The Princess Knight
04:31 Shimmer And Shine
04:54 Dora And Friends
05:16 Zack & Quack
05:27 The Day Henry Met
05:32 The Day Henry Met
05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
06:00 Rusty Rivets
06:12 Paw Patrol
06:37 Dora The Explorer
07:00 Zack & Quack
07:22 Bubble Guppies
07:45 Blaze And The Monster Machines
08:08 Paw Patrol
08:31 Shimmer And Shine
08:54 Nella The Princess Knight
09:16 The Day Henry Met
09:22 Paw Patrol
09:45 Rusty Rivets
09:57 Bubble Guppies
10:19 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
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11:16 Shimmer And Shine
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14:03 Team Umizoomi
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14:31 Olive The Ostrich
14:36 Paw Patrol
14:59 Little Charmers
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23:38 Shimmer And Shine



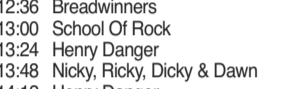
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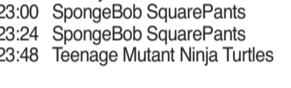
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01:10 Snakes In The City
02:00 Mother Croc
02:50 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER
03:45 World's Deadliest
04:40 Dangerous Encounters
05:35 Mother Croc
06:30 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER
07:25 World's Deadliest
08:20 Dangerous Encounters
09:15 Kingdom Of The Apes: Battle Lines
10:10 Dragon Island
11:05 Ultimate Predators GPU
12:00 Shark Attack Experiment
12:55 The Jungle King Compilation
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 World's Deadliest
15:40 Strangest Bird Alive
16:35 Bug Attack
17:30 A Wild Dog's Tale
18:25 Spine Chillers: Scorpions
19:20 World's Deadliest



00:12 Henry Danger
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22:36 Harvey Beaks
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



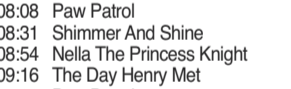
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01:30 Marvel's Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.
02:20 Blindspot
03:20 The Flash
04:10 Once Upon A Time
05:00 Good Morning America
07:00 The View
07:45 The Chew
08:30 Chicago Justice
09:20 The Flash
10:10 Once Upon A Time
11:00 Blindspot
11:45 Chicago P.D.
12:30 The View
13:15 The Chew
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 Once Upon A Time
17:00 The Flash
18:00 Blindspot
19:00 Criminal Minds
20:00 Royal Pains
21:00 Training Day
22:00 Marvel's Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.
23:00 Blindspot
23:50 Grimm



FAMILY
00:45 The Borrowers
02:15 The Last Flight Of Noah's Ark
03:55 Turner & Hooch
05:35 Tinker Bell And The Lost Treasure
06:55 The Last Flight Of Noah's Ark
08:35 The Borrowers
10:05 White Fang 2: Myth Of The White Wolf
11:50 Turner & Hooch
13:30 I'll Be Home For Christmas
15:00 Atlantis: The Lost Empire
16:40 Atlantis: Milo's Return
18:05 Beverly Hills Chihuahua
19:40 D3: The Mighty Ducks
21:25 Atlantis: The Lost Empire
23:05 Beverly Hills Chihuahua



ACTION
01:25 The 5th Wave
03:20 Beverly Hills Cop 3
05:05 Inurgent
07:05 Road Wars
08:35 Grosse Pointe Blank
10:25 I Am Number Four
12:15 Inurgent
14:15 Road Wars
15:45 The Tower
17:50 Sherlock Holmes
20:00 Knight And Day
22:00 Never Back Down: No Surrender
23:45 The Covenant



COMEDY
01:15 The Out Of Towners
02:50 The Golden Child
04:30 Ride
06:00 Ricki And The Flash
08:00 The Golden Child
09:40 Ride
11:20 Ricki And The Flash
13:05 Camp Nowhere
14:45 Fun Size
16:15 Love The Coopers
18:05 Babe: Pig In The City
19:45 Sneakers
22:00 Lies & Alibis
23:40 Cedar Rapids



FESTIVAL
00:00 Experimenter
01:40 The Age Of Adaline
03:35 Grand Central
05:10 Foreverland
06:45 The Age Of Adaline
08:40 Fort McCoy
10:25 Experimenter
12:05 Grand Central
13:40 Fort McCoy
15:25 Steve Jobs: The Man In

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ACROSS

- A recurring sleep state during which dreaming occurs.
- Liquid food especially of meat or fish or vegetable stock often containing pieces of solid food.
- A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
- Large genus of Australian evergreen shrubs or small trees with large daisylike flowers.
- The form of RNA that attaches the correct amino acid to the protein chain that is being synthesized at the ribosome of the cell (according to directions coded in the mRNA).
- Showing your contempt by derision.
- omit a cry intended to attract other animals.
- Having been read.
- Most important element.
- Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
- On a ship, train, plane or other vehicle.
- A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
- A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
- Designer drug designed to have the effects of amphetamines (it floods the brain with serotonin) but to avoid the drug laws.
- Having hidden electronic eavesdropping devices.
- An ancient Egyptian city on the west bank of the Nile opposite Cairo.
- A fictitious name used when the person performs a particular social role.
- A city in the European part of Russia.
- South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
- A United Nations agency created to assist developing nations by loans guaranteed by member governments.
- A modified bud consisting of a thickened globular underground stem serving as a reproductive structure.
- An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
- Of or relating to acetone.
- An elaborate song for solo voice.
- (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
- A small cone-shaped pile of hay that has been left in the field until it is dry enough to carry to the hayrick.
- A short high tone produced as a signal or warning.
- An open receptacle for holding or displaying or serving articles or food.
- The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
- The capital of Guinea-Bissau.
- Lacking a sense of security or affording no ease or reassurance.
- The residue that remains when something is burned.
- An Indian side dish of yogurt and chopped cucumbers and spices.
- A conspicuous disparity or difference as between two figures.
- Of or on or relating to the seashore.
- The month following February and preceding April.
- Being two more than fifty.
- A resident of Indiana.
- A Kwa language spoken by the Yoruba people in southwestern Nigeria.
- A United Nations agency that invest directly in companies and guarantees loans to private investors.

DOWN

- (computer science) A kind of computer architecture that has a relatively small set of computer instructions that it can perform.
- (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
- Any of a group of antidepressant drugs that inhibit the action of monoamine oxidase in the brain and so allow monoamines to accumulate.
- United States choreographer (1930-1988).
- A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
- Amphetamine used in the form of a crystalline hydrochloride.
- A woman's lover.
- Any property detected by the olfactory system.
- An independent agency of the United States government responsible for collecting and coordinating intelligence and counterintelligence activities abroad in the national interest.
- Of or concerning Qatar.
- The dense colorless framework of a chloroplast.
- (Greek mythology) One of the mountain nymphs.
- Take away the weapons from.
- A genus of Ploceidae.
- Make believe.
- Feel admiration for.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- Move out of a curled position.
- The soccer or hockey player assigned to protect the goal.
- The basic unit of money in Poland.
- A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
- A Spanish title of respect for a man.
- Any plant of the genus Erica.
- (of a glutinous liquid such as paint) Not completely dried and slightly sticky to the touch.
- The cry made by sheep.
- How a result is obtained or an end is achieved.
- Type genus of the Noctuidae.
- English monk and scholar (672-735).
- A Bantu language that is one of the two major languages of Zimbabwe.
- Used to refer to cited works.
- Inability to walk.
- (Babylonian) Consort of Anshar.
- Doglike nocturnal mammal of Africa and southern Asia that feeds chiefly on carrion.
- A particular environment or walk of life.
- Marked by or showing unaffected simplicity and lack of guile or worldly experience.
- Surpassing the ordinary especially in size or scale.
- (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
- The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
- Starch resembling sago that is obtained from cuckoo-pint root.
- Hormone secreted by the posterior pituitary gland (trade name Pitressin) and also by nerve endings in the hypothalamus.
- British dominion over India (1757-1947).

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You will be extremely busy today. There will be many times where you will have to supply a solution to a particular problem. Be prepared to work hard. This is not a great time to attempt to plan a noon break with friends as you may find yourself less conversational. It would be good to walk or visit a pet or music store, if possible. Transferring your concentration to a lighthearted arena would wonders for your energy level and enthusiasm as you return to the work expectations. Take care to examine all aspects of your work or dealings today-there is success! A long-awaited dialogue with an older person may take place later. You enjoy keeping up-to-date with the news regarding your friends, relatives or neighborhood events.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Today is a fine day... Your work benefits from your total concentration. This may be a good thing as you will be able to forget about personal plans for a while and relax your expectations of the day. Surprises happen all day long and, you are able to finish what you start in the work world. The noon break is fun with co-worker friends and somewhere in the visit there is talk of metaphysics, horoscopes and telling fortunes. You are also interested in the subject of writers and teachers that talk about self-help techniques. You might spend time in a bookstore after work for a short while. Young people want some of your time this afternoon and you enjoy their company. Later this evening you will want to have a camera handy.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Whether you are working in a place of business or at home, your attention is in getting things completed. If you find yourself working within a group today, you will be productive. You expect praise for your good works but this may not come on your time schedule so do not push. Emotions and feelings of those around you may be very clear allowing you to know what is expected of your energies and your time. If you have things you want to accomplish that might be a separate interest from the people you are with-set reasonable time limits before obligating yourself to new projects. This is a good time to use your writing skills as you can communicate with real originality. Learning ways to release the restlessness is beneficial to your health.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You waste few words when you describe or give instructions. You could be in a hurry, so if someone has a lot of difficulty in understanding what you want, be wise with your response. You have a natural sense of organization and come across as disciplined and careful, perhaps a little too sober. An inner vision, coupled with the ability to see the big picture, may find you working as a go-between with others. You could even have a special gift for spanning the generation gap, bringing older and younger spirits together. A love of animals, children, older people and the needy, is a lifelong trait that is visible today. It is easy for you to work with people in authority. There are opportunities for outdoor activity with friends this afternoon.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Opportunities may go against your own sense of security and you may feel it is best not to take chances. This is a tough call when it comes to business and some compromise is perhaps the best way to a workable solution. Your career, practical vision and skills are of central importance to you now. You feel there is a waste of time if there is no organization and your actions are deliberate in this area of your life. Your reputation and image are a source of concern and you do everything you can to make them solid. You appear perhaps more charming and refined than usual this evening as people gather to celebrate or just simply gather together away from the workplace. Putting your best foot forward may take on a greater importance this evening.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your work or career is in true harmony with the rest of your life. Much can be accomplished. You could gain from subordinates or young people just now as information or help is available for whatever you want to complete. You make your way through ideas and concepts, and you have a good ability to communicate and express them to others. Reading or attending a lecture on law, politics, education, travel or religion may be part of your day, which is productive. Your creative side is showing this afternoon when you help a friend decorate or update an old look. Your home environment, friends and surroundings in general become simplified and receive encouragement. Things may seem almost magical in the way they work out in your favor.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Self-sacrifice and an understanding attitude on your part could have far-reaching effects on your own life-path and career during this time. You have improved your working abilities and higher-ups are taking note. This may mean that you are working more efficiently with others and this helps you to achieve bigger and more encompassing goals. Outer circumstances are favorable and it should be easy for you to push forward with regard to developing your career. You will have no problem moving up the professional ladder. Now is the time when personal insight into your most secret and psychological self may be possible. There is the possibility of new visions or sudden insights into your self-image or into your beliefs and dreams.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your idea of where you want to be in this life and where you really are with your goals are very close. You are progressing well with your goals and you will want to set some new goals soon. Do not be afraid that present goals will be forgotten as you begin to look into toward the future-they will soon be realized. This is a time of good fortune-when things open up in a very natural way for you. Situations are within your reach and it is easy to see which path is the one for you to take. Opportunities to improve and enlarge your friendships are available to you now. You may find yourself wanting to do almost anything today. This is a good time to project your image. Give yourself more credit for the original ways you handle family matters.



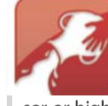
Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

Go with the flow today. Trust in your own instincts. Your ideas are just as good, if not better, than someone else's ideas. Take a chance-try out your new ideas-you will have a feeling of accomplishment. Perhaps you are improving or updating a piece of technical equipment or some new computer software. Your perseverance pays off, particularly when you stop occasionally for a break or two-all work and no play, etc. A person that you were close to in the past may contact you this afternoon. An earnest effort in letting go of hard feelings can free you to move forward. This person has something special to offer you. This is a day of good surprises, opportunities, money and romance. A new game fills your evening hours.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Investigating and examining results and statistics find you at your mental best. Your analytical abilities are at a high. This can be an expansive, creative and successful time-a time you may remember with much fondness. You are your warm, loyal and generous self today and others follow your example as you deal with the public and interact with others in the workplace. Your need for admiration and appreciation will certainly be met as you entertain and visit with friends this afternoon. Others could seek you out for your psychological insight and understanding. This could be a time to make changes in your environment. Any work toward creating a balance in your life will be beneficial. Good vibes are present all week long.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

You will make practical decisions concerning group issues today. A supervisor or higher-up is listening to your intelligent summations about how things should be run. You have a natural sense of what the public wants. You are always making new discoveries. Clear decisions affecting others are requested and triumphant. You have a great appreciation of how your life is going and this afternoon you will be able to enjoy the company of a good friend. You will both enjoy talking about what each of you has accomplished. Perhaps you will even be evaluating and reassessing your plans for the future. Life, like a good painting, has to be looked at occasionally to really appreciate the true essence. Friends may visit this evening.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Money-it seems to occupy your mind much of this day. You could be applying for a loan or looking to purchase a vehicle or home and there is almost a feeling of static electricity in the air. Easy does it, meaning, have more confidence. If you really need this new item to make your life work better, it will be yours! Be aware, however, that time and process may not meet with your own idea of how things should move along. Do not let these thoughts occupy your time-you will want to be attentive to your work. You are valued for your ability to make practical decisions and you could find yourself representing co-workers in sensitive issues. Clear decisions affecting others could be made by higher-ups as a result of your input.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Movie Actresses 1

Find and circle all of the Movie Actresses that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a movie for which Jodie Foster won an Oscar.

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

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| ADAMS, Amy | CUTHBERT, Elisha | LANE, Diane |
| ALBA, Jessica | DAVIS, Hope | LONG, Jessica |
| ALLEN, Joan | DENCH, Judi | MCDORMAND, Frances |
| BARRYMORE, Drew | DIAZ, Cameron | MIRREN, Helen |
| BENING, Annette | FANNING, Dakota | MOORE, Demi |
| BERRY, Halle | FOSTER, Jodie | PALTROW, Gwyneth |
| BIEL, Jessica | GUGINO, Carla | PAQUIN, Anna |
| BLANCHETT, Cate | HATHAWAY, Anne | RICCI, Christina |
| BLETHYN, Brenda | HUNTER, Holly | SWANK, Hilary |
| BLUNT, Emily | HUSTON, Anjelica | TERON, Charlize |
| CLOSE, Glenn | JOLIE, Angelina | THOMPSON, Emma |
| CONNELLY, Jennifer | KEENER, Catherine | WATSON, Emily |
| CUSACK, Joan | | |

Yesterday's Solution

Movie Actors 3

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

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| ARKIN, Alan | GLOVER, Danny | PACINO, Al |
| BALE, Christian | GOODING JR, Cuba | PAXTON, Bill |
| BANDERAS, Antonio | HARRIS, Ed | PITT, Brad |
| BROADBENT, Jim | HAWKE, Ethan | QUAID, Dennis |
| BRODERICK, Matthew | KINGSLEY, Ben | RADCLIFFE, Daniel |
| BRODY, Adrien | MACY, William H. | SINISE, Gary |
| BYRNE, Gabriel | MALKOVICH, John | SLATER, Christian |
| CRAIG, Daniel | MCGREGOR, Ewan | STRATHAIRN, David |
| DAY-LEWIS, Daniel | MURPHY, Eddie | THORNTON, Billy Bob |
| EASTWOOD, Clint | MURRAY, Bill | WALKEN, Christopher |
| FIRTH, Colin | NICHOLSON, Jack | WASHINGTON, Denzel |
| FISHBURNE, Laurence | NORTON, Edward | WHITAKER, Forest |
| FRASER, Brendan | OLDMAN, Gary | WILLIS, Bruce |

The hidden movie title is: THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

MUSIC & MOVIES

French film legend **Jeanne Moreau** dies at 89

'Always rebelled against the established order'

French actress Jeanne Moreau, who lit up the screen in "Jules et Jim" and starred in some of the most critically-acclaimed films of the 20th century, has died aged 89, her agent said yesterday. The gravel-voiced actress epitomized the freedoms of the 1960s and brought daring, depth and danger to a string of cinematic masterpieces from Louis Malle's "Lift to the Scaffold" to Jacques Demy's "Bay of Angels". Moreau, who was still making films at 87, was found dead at her home in Paris early yesterday, the district's mayor told AFP.

Once described by US director Orson Welles as "the best actress in the world", she was a feminist icon and trailblazer for liberated women as well as the face of French New Wave. "Physical beauty is a disgrace," she once said in her characteristic rasp, her voice redolent with strong French cigarettes she smoked. Yet that did not stop her becoming the thinking man's femme fatale with film scholar David Shipman calling her "the arthouse love goddess". Leading tributes to the plain-speaking actress, French President Emmanuel Macron said Moreau had "embodied cinema" and she was a free spirit who "always rebelled against the established order".

Fellow French screen legend Brigitte Bardot told AFP, "Jeanne was a beautiful, intelligent, hugely seductive woman with a voice and a personality that made her an actress with so many sides. I am very sad today." Former culture minister Jack Lang added, "She came into a tightly-corseted society and showed a whole generation of women the path to emancipation."

It was that sparky rebel spirit that brought some of the world's greatest directors to her door, from Welles for his "Chimes at Midnight", to Michelangelo Antonioni for "La Notte", Joseph Losey ("Eva") and Luis Bunuel for his 1964 film "Diary of a Chambermaid". But Moreau turned down Mike Nichols, who wanted her to play Mrs Robinson in "The Graduate".

ed her to play Mrs Robinson in "The Graduate".

Defied her father

Born in Paris 1928 to an English chorus girl from Oldham and a French cafe owner, she took to acting with apparent effortless ease, defying her father by joining the Paris conservatoire at the age of 18, and gaining entry to the elite Comedie Francaise theatre troupe two years later. Her breakthrough came in 1958 when she starred in two films for Malle that challenged the moral certitudes of the times. She played a wife plotting to kill her husband in "Lift to the Scaffold" with its iconic jazz score by Miles Davis, and further ruffled feathers in "The Lovers", her first excursion into the sexual frankness that marked much of her later work.

But it was her tomboy playfulness that won her the hearts of a whole generation of filmgoers in "Jules et Jim", playing the woman at the center of a menage-a-trois with two best friends, one Austrian and one French on the eve of World War I. Francois Truffaut-who directed the film-said "every time I picture her in the distance I see her reading not a newspaper but a book, because Jeanne Moreau doesn't suggest flirtation but love."

Neither pretty nor plain, her features could range in an instant from radiance to lassitude, and audiences and critics found her spellbinding. Her occasional sorties into English-language cinema included Carl Foreman's "The Victors" and John Frankenheimer's wartime epic "The Train".

Loved younger men

But Moreau was most at home in her native land, with a penchant for challenging, literate movies often adapted from works by such writers as Jean Genet and Marguerite Duras. In 1974, her sex scenes in "Les Valseuses" with young thugs played by Gerard Depardieu and Patrick Dewaere caused a scandal. Mostly,



In this file photo French Actress Jeanne Moreau waves to photographers while on her way to the 16th Annual European Film Awards in Berlin. — AFP photos



This file photograph taken on January 24, 1960, shows French actress Jeanne Moreau as she poses in Paris.



This file photo shows French actress Jeanne Moreau as she performs a scene of the play "La Guerre des fils de lumiere contre les fils des tenebres".

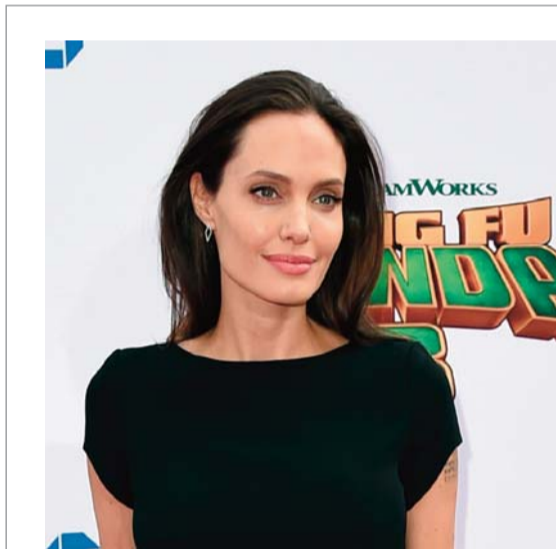
however, she chose to age gracefully, confining herself mainly to secondary roles as in Losey's classic "Mr Klein" or Elia Kazan's "The Last Tycoon" and then, taking in a brief marriage to the American director William Friedkin, tried her hand at directing with "Lumiere" and "L'Adolescente".

She could also sing with her catchy rendition of "Le Tourbillon de la Vie" from "Jules et Jim" inspired by her tumultuous first marriage to the actor-director Jean-Louis Richard. Never short of male company, she was also romantically linked with Malle, Truffaut, Wells, Tony Richardson and Marcello Mastroianni and the

fashion designer Pierre Cardin among others. Late in life she confessed she had never found "absolute love", telling a biographer that she never tired of looking. "I always liked to be with younger men and luckily for me the older I have got the more younger men I've found."

Despite her many honors including heading the state commission that dispenses subsidies to French filmmakers and chairing the Cannes festival jury she was ever ready to take on daring, even salacious roles. In 1994 she played an exotic half-British, half-Egyptian woman with a flamboyant sexual past in the British television play "The Summer House". She did so, she said,

as a tribute to her mother who had recently died. Having racked up over 130 films over six decades, she continued acting till the end. "Filming with Jeanne Moreau wasn't easy," said Ilmar Raag, who shot her in "An Estonian in Paris" in 2012. "She read the scripts and suggested changes the next day. In general they were good comments." Moreau married twice and had a son, Jerome, from her first marriage to Richard. — AFP



File photo shows Angelina Jolie arrives at the world premiere of "Kung Fu Panda 3," in Los Angeles. — AP

Angelina Jolie says child casting story is false, upsetting

Angelina Jolie says accounts of her casting process for children to appear in her film "First They Killed My Father" are false and upsetting. An excerpt from a Vanity Fair profile of the director sparked backlash online earlier this week from people who criticized the methods as being cruel and exploitative. Adapted from Loung Ung's memoir, the biographical drama centers on her childhood under the brutal Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia. Jolie co-wrote and directed the film, which she talked about in a recent Vanity Fair profile.

The article described a scene in which casting directors in their attempt to find a child actress to play the lead role presented money to impoverished children only to take it away from them as an acting exercise. Jolie and producer Rithy Panh issued joint statements Sunday responding to the outrage and refuting claims that the production was exploitative through a representative from Netflix, which is producing and distributing the film. "I am upset that a pretend exercise in an improvisation, from an actual scene in the film, has been written about as if it was a real scenario. The suggestion that real money was taken from a child during an audition is false and upsetting," Jolie said. "I would be outraged myself if this had happened."

Jolie said parents, guardians and doctors were on set daily to care for the children and "make sure that no one was in any way hurt by participating in the recreation of such a painful part of their country's history." Panh, who himself is a survivor of the Khmer Rouge, added that casting "was done in the most sensitive way possible." He described a process that was informed both by families' preferences and NGO (non-governmental organization) guidelines in which the children understood that they would be acting out a scene. "The children were not tricked or entrapped, as some have suggested," Panh said. "They understood very well that this was acting, and make believe."

The Vanity Fair article went into more detail about the production than the one paragraph that circulated on Twitter, which sparked the initial outrage. A representative from Vanity Fair issued a statement Sunday saying that author Evgenia Peretz "clearly describes what happened during the casting process as a 'game' " and "that the filmmakers went to extraordinary lengths to be sensitive in addressing the psychological stresses on the cast and crew that were inevitable in making a movie about the genocide carried out in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge." Jolie's film will debut on Netflix sometime after showing at the Toronto International Film Festival this September. — AP

Study says films exclude women, Hispanics

In 2016 "Moonlight" won best picture and "Hidden Figures" was the 14th highest grossing film of the year, but popular Hollywood films remained as white and male-dominated as ever. A new report from the Media, Diversity, & Social Change Initiative at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism finds that the representation of women, minorities, LGBT people, disabled characters in films remains largely unchanged from the previous year, despite the heightened attention to diversity in Hollywood. At the bottom of the wrung and most egregiously disproportionate to their US demographics are women, Hispanics and disabled characters. Exclusion, the report says, is the norm in Hollywood, not the exception.

For nine years since 2007, USC has analyzed the demographic makeup of every speaking or named character from each year's 100 highest-grossing films at the domestic box office (with the exception of 2011), as well as behind-the-camera employment for those films including directors, producers and composers. "Every year we're hopeful that we will actually see change," Stacy L Smith, a USC professor and the study's lead author, told The Associated Press. "Unfortunately that hope has not quite been realized."

Race and ethnicity

Women remain vastly underrepresented when it comes to both speaking roles and lead or co-leading parts in films. Of the 4,583 speaking characters analyzed from the top 100 films of 2016, 31.4 percent were female, a number that is basically unchanged since 2007. Also, only 34 of the films depicted a female lead or co-lead - and only three of those were from underrepresented groups. "We see a real stalling out," Smith said. In terms of race and ethnicity, the landscape remains largely white, with Hispanics grossly underrepresented compared to the breakdown of the US population. Of the speaking characters surveyed: 70.8 percent were white; 13.6 percent black; 5.7 percent Asian; 3.1 percent Hispanic; and less than 1 percent American Indian, Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian. According to the latest US

Census, the nation is 61.3 percent white, 17.8 percent Hispanic, 5.7 percent Asian, 13.3 percent black, 1.3 percent American Indian and Alaska Native and 0.2 percent Native Hawaiian. More striking still is the film by film "invisibility"

Hollywood's diversity gap

100 most popular films' representation by group, 2016

GROUP	FILMS WITH NO CHARACTERS	SPEAKING CHARACTERS VS. POPULATION
Female	0	31.4% 50.8%
People with disabilities	38	2.7% 18.7%
Latino	54	3.1% 17.8%
LGBT	76	1.1% 3.5%
Asian	44	5.7% 5.7%
African-American	25	13.6% 13.3%

Graphic shows demographic characteristics of 100 most popular films of 2016. — AP

breakdown, which finds that 25 of the 100 films did not feature a single black character in a speaking role; 54 films had no Hispanic characters (14 higher than in 2015); 44 had no Asian characters (a rare improvement from 2015 which tallied 49 films with zero Asians).

For women of color, it's a bleaker story. "We can't just talk about females in film anymore. What our data shows most

powerfully this year over any other year is the real epidemic of intersectional invisibility in film," Smith said. "If you cross gender with race and ethnicity, you see that the bottom really drops out for females of color on screen." The data speaks volumes: 47 films featured no black females; 66 had no Asian females; and 72 had no Hispanic females.

Also largely invisible are LGBT females, who were excluded from 91 of the top 100 films of 2016. There was a notable increase in films with gay speaking characters in 2016 - 36 up from 19, but zero transgender characters. Most of those - 79.1 percent - were white and 76 of the 100 films had no LGBT characters. Only one, "Moonlight," featured a gay protagonist. The study also examined characters with disabilities - its second year doing so - and found that despite nearly 18.7 percent of the US population identifying as disabled only 2.7 percent of all speaking characters were depicted as disabled.

Female directors

Behind the camera, things continue to be dismal for female directors - in 2016 there were only 5 female directors out of 120 (including co-directors) and none were black. Every year there are indicators of change, however, including this year with the successes of "Wonder Woman," "Get Out" and "Girls Trip" among others, and more on the horizon. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has also recently made strides to diversify its membership. "The question is with all of these high-profile examples, will the memo to Hollywood be read seriously and will they actually start engaging in more inclusive hiring practices," Smith said.

USC has a number of recommendations for changes - including adding five female speaking parts to each top film (which would result in gender equity in just three years) and encouraging A-listers to implement equity clauses into their contracts. The organization is also available to studios and content creators looking for advice, understanding or even lists of working female directors to consider. "Diversity is not just something that just happens," said Katherine Pieper, a research scientist on the report. "It's something you have to think about and aim for as an objective and achieve." — AP



Q-Tip of A Tribe Called Quest performs at 2017 Panorama Music Festival on Randall's Island in New York. — AFP photos

Poignant farewell for rap legends 'A Tribe Called Quest'

Rap legends A Tribe Called Quest announced Sunday they were retiring-at least from playing their native New York-as they bid a poignant farewell to late member Phife Dawg. The group-who, as hip-hop became mainstream in the 1990s, took the music on a more artistic, alternative path-had just reunited when it was shelocked last year by the death of Phife Dawg, a longtime diabetic, at age 45. The surviving members, in one of a handful of shows since Phife's passing, found an enthusiastic hometown crowd at the Panorama Music Festival where Phife was posthumously the star of the show.

Phife, whose real name was Malik Taylor, gazed down at the thousands of fans via an imposing picture of him on stage-where a single microphone symbolically stayed empty. Rather than trying to replace Phife-whose snide one-liners complemented frontman Q-Tip to define the group's sound-A Tribe Called Quest brought in Phife's voice by recording Q-Tip-who knew Phife since they were children in Queens even though their professional relationship had rocky patches-told the crowd that Phife's parents were in attendance and made a surprise announcement.

"This is our last show in New York as Tribe. We've got to honor our brother Phife," said Q-Tip, who has gone on to a successful solo career. The group's last scheduled concert is in September in Britain. Q-Tip has already said that A Tribe Called Quest's last album, "We Got It From Here... Thank You 4 Your Service," would be its swan song. Released eight months after Phife's death, the album features his already-recorded vocals as well as appearances from artists ranging from pop superstar Elton John to acclaimed younger-generation rapper Kendrick Lamar.

A Tribe Called Quest closed its set with a track from the album, "We The People...," a plea for a more inclusive America that sharply attacks President Donald Trump's agenda. Q-Tip led the diverse, fist-raising New York crowd in a chant, "We the people-We are

equal!" As A Tribe Called Quest left the stage, smoke billowed through an opening near Phife's heart on his portrait.

Dhani Harrison goes solo

Panorama, set on grassy Randall's Island which lies in the rivers between Manhattan, Queens and The Bronx, was inaugurated last year by the organizers of California's famed Coachella festival amid a boom in US live music. Among the final day's performers was Dhani Harrison, the rock guitarist inevitably known as the son of Beatles legend George Harrison, who put on one of the first shows of his new solo project. Harrison, who will release his first solo album, "IN//PARALLEL," on October 6, presented his new sound that takes the psychedelic band era as its root but updates it with the soaring whirrs of indie rock. "All About Waiting," his first single from the album, brings layers of sonic texture to a classic rock chorus which erupts with hard-driving guitar and electronic backdrop. Harrison, who sings and plays guitar and ukulele, earlier released albums with his band thewino2 - which also showed an affinity for alternative rock, if of a lower-key variety.

Nine Inch Nails channels Bowie

The festival closed with Nine Inch Nails, architects of aggressive industrial rock popularized in the 1990s. The group has seen a resurgence of creative energy, recently putting out its second EP in less than a year, "Add Violence." Frontman Trent Reznor, whose passion on stage is so palpable he appears to convulse in pain, dedicated a song to rock pioneer David Bowie, whom he described as a friend. "I Can't Give Everything Away" was the final track on "Blackstar," Bowie's last album released two days before his death in January 2016 from an undisclosed battle with cancer. Bowie's song struck many listeners for its undertones of both mystery and joy even as he knew he was dying. — AFP

FASHION

Gigi Hadid is the new face of Missoni



gigihadid

Gigi Hadid

Gigi Hadid has been announced as the new face of Missoni's Autumn/Winter 2017 campaign. The 22-year-old model has been handpicked to front the designer brand's commercial, and the blonde-haired beauty has taken to social media to thank Angela Missoni, who is the daughter of the luxury label's founder Rosita Missoni, for "welcoming" her into the company and her "amazing home". The catwalk icon - who is dating former One Direction band member Zayn Malik - has shared an image from the photoshoot, which took place in Angela's home in Brunello, Italy, on her Instagram account. Gigi, who was captured clasping at a multicolored fur garment across her chest as she wears knee high socks and t-bar strap heels in the photograph, captioned the post: "new @missoni fw17 by @harleyweir , thank you @missbrunello for welcoming us into your amazing home !! (sic)." The fashion muse has admitted she feels honored and inspired to be a part of the Missoni family and to have watched Angela's "creativity come to life". She added: "It's an honor and inspiration to see your creativity come to life in all aspects of your world! big love x (sic)." The brand has also shared a string of images of Gigi in the campaign on their photo-sharing site.

One image read: "1/2 A close shot of our #MissoniFW17 campaign starring @gigihadid, shot by @harleyweir and highlighting the slim, sensual and iconic patterns of our Winter 2017 collection. Discover the campaign in full colour on Missoni.com or through link in bio! Creative Director: #AngelaMissoni@missbrunello Art Direction: #PeterMiles (sic)." And the second part of the photo was captioned: "2/2 Wonder girl @gigihadid is the star of our #MissoniFW17 campaign, shot by @harleyweir in the surroundings of #AngelaMissoni's home in Brunello. This fuzzy, colourful look is enough to make us want to move to the Southern Hemisphere just to wrap up warm! Discover the campaign on Missoni.com or through link in bio. Creative Director: #AngelaMissoni@missbrunello Art Direction: #PeterMiles (sic)." — Bang Showbiz



Jennifer Aniston

Jennifer Aniston's new perfume is a 'sensual' scent

Jennifer Aniston's new perfume is more of a "sensual" scent than her previous fragrances. The 48-year-old actress has launched a new cosmetic product titled Luxe, and the style icon has admitted her latest merchandise is different to her other perfume because it has a "little more depth". Speaking to PEOPLE about her latest venture, the former 'Friends' actress - who released her debut perfume Jennifer Aniston in 2011 - said: "The others were all a little bit more of a California beach girl vibe, [so] I wanted to go in a more sensual direction, because I hadn't really done that before. [It has] a little more depth, base and weight to it. "In this one, I love the fresh, citrus [and] floral notes mixed with the warm base notes like the tonka bean."

Jennifer has previously released J by Jennifer Aniston scene, Near Dusk and Beachscape, and although the American beauty is "playing" with her latest creation, her first perfume is the one she is most "partial" to wearing. She explained: "It's the newest one, so I am playing with that, but I always go back to my original, very first fragrance, which I am partial to." And Jennifer has revealed she will ask her husband Justin Theroux, as well as her friends, for their opinion on her products.

She explained: "He sniffs them, so do my girlfriends. I always have blotters around. I think it's interesting that a perfume will smell different on one arm to another arm and also who sort of responds to certain ones. You are trying to satisfy a wide range which is a little challenging." The 'The Bounty Hunter' star has revealed she will spray her fragrance in the air and run through the mist so she isn't "overwhelmed" by the perfume. Speaking about her method of applying the product, she said: "I usually also love to spray it in the air and run through it, so you have a hint of it, but you're not overwhelmed by it." — Bang Showbiz

GANDY WAS WARNED HE'D 'NEVER' EARN MORE THAN A FEMALE MODEL

David Gandy was "always told" he would "never" earn more than a female model. The 37-year-old model was recently announced as the only male model to make it on the top 10 rich list among catwalk icons, as he was positioned in fourth place after raking in £4 million last year, but the star has admitted he was always warned about the "limitation" for males in the fashion industry, although he doesn't agree with it.

Speaking about his career to The Sun newspaper, the dark-haired hunk said: "We were always told, 'This is your limitation you're never going to earn as much as the women', and I looked at that and I thought, 'Well, that's wrong.' "I'm in the only industry where women are more powerful than men - and earn about five times as much." And David has revealed his father, Chris, finds the fact he is less "powerful" than his female peers "hilarious".

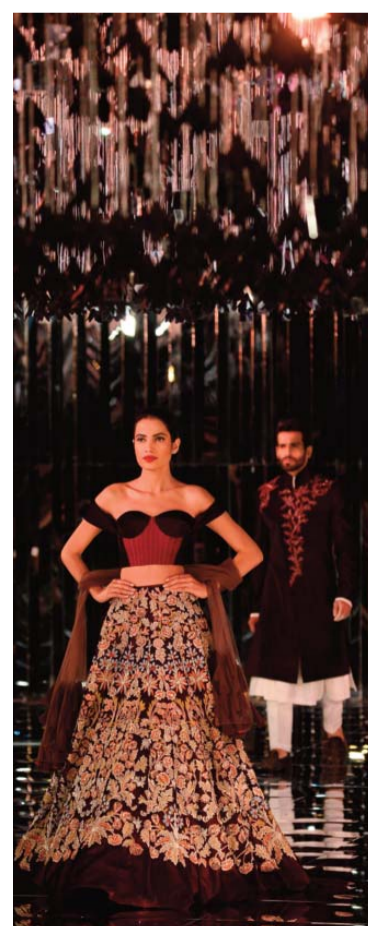
The hunk added: "My dad still finds that hilarious. We're in

the same campaigns, we're in the same coverage, and no one was really building a brand." The fashion muse, who is the face of Dolce and Gabbana's Light Blue men's fragrance, believes the fashion house "changed" the entire business, as it saw the return of the "classic, good-looking guy" and encouraged men to get "fitter". The heartthrob - who has his own line for Marks and Spencer, also known as M&S, titled David Gandy for Autograph - explained: "When I started it was just about the androgynous guy, that's what was 'in'. "With Light Blue it changed again and the classic, good-looking guy came back into modeling. So everyone started working out, training and getting their bodies really into shape - which is god. I like the fact that people get fitter because of it." — Bang Showbiz

David Gandy



THE FDCI INDIA COUTURE WEEK 2017



And Miranda, who founded her skincare company Kora Organics in 2009, has hailed her own beauty products as the reason behind her flawless complexion. And the star will apply numerous items from her range, including the Energizing Citrus Mist, as well as Eye Cream, a face tint, to her face every morning. She explained: "I use all my Kora Organics products and credit it for the health of my skin."

"In the morning, I use the Kora Organics Foaming Cleanser, Energizing Citrus Mist, Hydrating Day and Night Cream, Eye Cream, and Tinted Day and Night Cream (a healthy alternative to foundation). I use the mist as a toner and also throughout the day to keep my skin hydrated."

"At night, I use the Cream Cleanser, Balancing Rose Mist or Calming Lavender Mist (I alternate), Soothing Day and Night Cream, and the newly launched Noni Glow Oil-it contains high levels of antioxidants, essential fatty acids, and vitamins and minerals to smooth, nourish, hydrate, and brighten the skin." Miranda - who has six-year-old son Flynn with her former partner Orlando Bloom - also uses anti-ageing products "once or twice a week", as well as a face mask.

She added: "I use the Age-Defying AHA Exfoliator once or twice a week and also apply the Hydrating or Purifying Mask twice weekly, depending on what my skin needs. Sometimes I apply the purifying mask on the T-zone and the hydrating mask on the cheeks, neck, and décolletage." And the Australian star - who recently married Evan Spiegel - will happily work out whilst wearing a face mask to ensure she fits in time for everything in her busy schedule. She said: "I'm known to do a Pilates workout with a face mask on. Honestly, it's all about planning and scheduling everything in." — Bang Showbiz



Miranda Kerr

Indian Bollywood actors Alia Bhat and Ranveer Singh along with other models present creations by Indian fashion designer Manish Malhotra during the FDCI India Couture week 2017 in New Delhi on Sunday. — AFP

FEATURE



A woman walks on an avenue named after Russian President Vladimir Putin in front of the Grozny city administration's building displaying portraits of Russian President Vladimir Putin (left) and Akhmad Kadyrov (right), former Chechen Republic's president and father of current Head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov, on its facade in central Grozny.



A picture shows the Heart of Chechnya mosque and the avenue named after Russian President Vladimir Putin (left) in central Grozny.



Women attend an Arabic language class inside the Heart of Chechnya - Akhmad Kadyrov Mosque, one of the largest mosques in Russia, in central Grozny.

In strongman's grip, Chechnya looks to become unlikely tourist draw

'It is more beautiful than Las Vegas'

At nighttime in the Chechen capital of Grozny an immense fountain lights up and its jets of water dance to the music of Celine Dion. "It is more beautiful than Las Vegas," says the city's mayor Muslim Khuchiyev. For most people, the Chechnya region in Russia's volatile North Caucasus brings to mind a dark history and grim present. The mountainous republic was the scene of two brutal separatist wars against Moscow that left tens of thousands dead and Grozny devastated. Now, despite sporadic attacks from a lingering Islamist insurgency, mainly-Muslim Chechnya has largely been pacified. But the cost of peace has been placing the region under the iron-fisted control of Ramzan Kadyrov, a former rebel turned Kremlin loyalist who critics say has carved out his own fiefdom through torture and rampant abuses.

Jambulat Umarov. "But this is completely false and we are going to show you that tourists are welcome."

'You're mad'

According to the region's tourist board, some 100,000 visitors came to Chechnya last year. Like many of the claims officials here make that figure is hard to confirm. The authorities routinely manipulate statistics to give a flattering image of Kadyrov's rule. Tourist board official Dagmara Isakova insisted, however, that the region is putting in place the infrastructure to handle an influx of tourists. "We are building a lot of hotels and leisure zones, we are developing tourism on a major scale," she said.

"We are getting prepared to satisfy any demands visitors

pen," said the 49-year-old teacher. But with rebels still operating in pockets around the region, few appear willing to venture outside Grozny and up into the spectacular Caucasus mountains nearby. "We decided not to go up into the mountains in order to avoid any risks," Taplova said.

'A facade'

Sitting in the shade of a parasol, 70-year-old Koka has set up a stall selling souvenirs of Grozny to try to cash in on the nascent flow of tourists. But despite the claims from the authorities, she insists there is still only a tiny trickle of people willing to visit the region from outside. "No one comes, I sell almost nothing," she said. "What is the point of their empty hotels? Why don't the authorities build more factories so that my sons can find work?" "All of this is a facade. Tourists don't see the reality, they don't see how we live."

Ibragim, a student of political sciences in Berlin who fled the war and has come back for the holidays, said that "this story of developing tourism is to please the Russians." The authorities "want to show that everything here is going well and under control," he said. — AFP



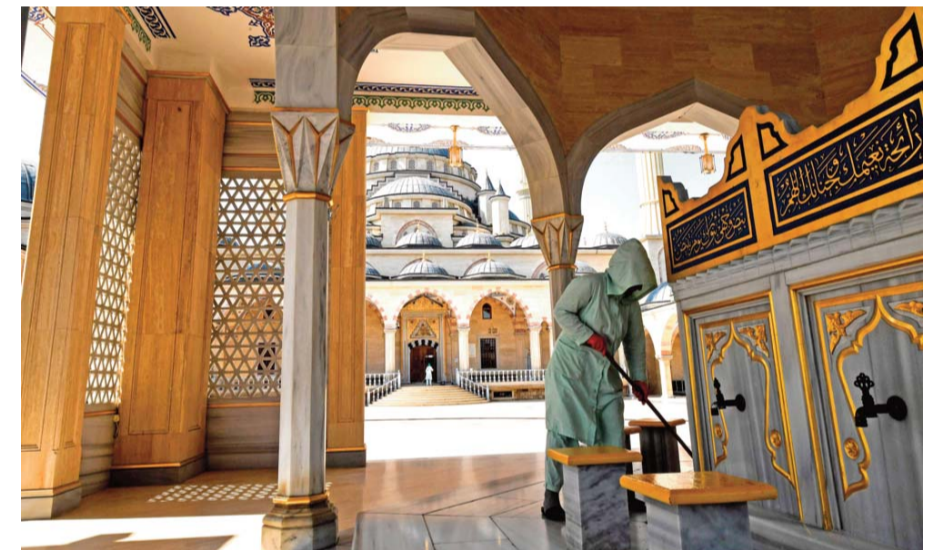
People stand under the dome of the Heart of Chechnya - Akhmad Kadyrov Mosque, one of the largest mosques in Russia, in central Grozny. — AFP photos

The region has undergone major reconstruction fuelled by vast sums of money from the Kremlin that has seen Grozny transformed from an empty shell to a glittering showcase of illuminated skyscrapers and mammoth mosques. And while few may believe it possible, the authorities under Kadyrov now insist they are looking to turn Chechnya into an unlikely tourist draw. On a tightly-controlled visit last week, foreign journalists were supposed to interview Kadyrov after evidence emerged of a crackdown on gay men in the deeply conservative region.

After the strongman leader skipped out of the encounter at the last moment officials instead used the opportunity to push Chechnya's claims as an attractive destination for visitors. "Recently people have been spreading lies about our republic, saying we torture gays, violate human rights and that it is dangerous to come here" said information minister

may have." The few tourists that can be found wandering the streets of Grozny say they thought long and hard before visiting. "My brother was a soldier during the second Chechen war and when he found out I was coming for three days he said 'you're mad, they'll kill you'," Muscovite Nadiya Alyonova, 53, said. Instead, when she arrived Alyonova said that she was "pleasantly surprised" by Grozny.

Despite its physical transformation, it is difficult to escape the insecurity that has swirled in the region. Heavily armed Chechen forces patrol the streets in large numbers and appear always on alert. In December 2016 fierce gun battles with rebel fighters erupted in central Grozny, with a subsequent security operation leaving a reported 11 insurgents dead. Tatyana Taplova, who was visiting from Moscow with her family, said that she felt sure that it was safe to visit the capital city. "There are lots of police in the streets, nothing can hap-



A woman cleans inside the Heart of Chechnya - Akhmad Kadyrov Mosque.



A photo shows clouds in the foreground near a historical Chechen guard tower under construction outside the village of Vedeno, about 60 km from Grozny.



Chechen people perform a traditional dance in the village of Kezenoyam.



A man walks past a banner showing a woman dressed in Islamic clothes on an avenue named after Russian President Vladimir Putin in central Grozny.



A woman walks past the Heart of Chechnya mosque in central Grozny.



A woman walks past a shop selling Islamic clothes for women on an avenue named after Russian President Vladimir Putin in central Grozny.



A Chechen Muslim prays in the Aymani Kadyrova Mosque built in hi-tech style in the city of Argun, second largest city of Chechnya.



A view of the neighborhood of La Perla where the video "Suavecito" was recorded in San Juan. — AFP photos



A woman walks up the stairs in the neighborhood of La Perla.



Jose Vazquez (right) takes a photo of his wife Ana Soto in the neighborhood of La Perla.

Tourists seeking 'Despacito' discover Puerto Rico's La Perla

'I totally came for the tourist video'



A man reads a newspaper in the neighborhood of La Perla.



A man takes a selfie with his friends in the neighborhood of La Perla.



A man walks down the stairs in the neighborhood of La Perla.



A woman touches the water of a makeshift pool in the neighborhood of La Perla.

Something unusual is happening in La Perla, a poor barrio clinging to a steep hillside between Old San Juan and the sea where the video for the pop hit "Despacito" was filmed. "The gringos are coming!" Outsiders were afraid to venture in before, but since Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee's megahit, tourists from all over the world are descending on the narrow streets that wind among La Perla's brightly colored houses. "Despacito?" they inquire.

And the barrio's residents obligingly point out the locations where the video was filmed: the rocks facing the sea where Fonsi sings the refrain, the sea wall where ex-Miss Universe Zuleyka Rivera strolls, the little plaza where men play dominoes-the tables and chairs just as they were in the video. With the video on the verge of becoming the most watched on YouTube (2.9 billion visits since January, fast approaching the 2.98 billion record held by Wiz Khalifa's "See You Again"), a barrio once burdened with a bad reputation is now a tourist hot spot.

"I totally came for the tourist video," said Jennifer Adams, a 28-year-old middle school teacher from North Carolina. "I've seen the music video many times and I knew where I needed to go, I got pictures, I tried to dance." As for Rivera's sexy walk by the sea, she laughed and said, "I tried." Her goal now is to learn the song's lyrics so she can sing it in karaoke. Meanwhile, a Swedish woman took pictures of herself in front of Luis's rocks and a Moroccan tourist ambled along "Despacito coast"-as the area around the sea wall has come to be known in tourist brochures. In a recent interview, Fonsi marveled at the song's impact on the non-Spanish speaking public. "The language doesn't matter," he said. "What's important is the flavor, the rhythm, the music."

'No monster here'

The video's director, Carlos Perez, said Fonsi and Daddy Yankee "had a very clear vision of what they wanted." "The key words were culture, sensuality, color and dance. What we did in essence was to go film in a barrio that had the qualities that supported what we wanted to do," Perez said. "But the evolution of La Perla begins and ends in La Perla." In fact, residents' efforts to improve their barrio are independent of "Despacito." The song's success is a welcome coincidence that "fell from the sky," said community board president Yashira Gomez.

Old San Juan, with its cobbled streets and colonial buildings, sits on a hill on a walled peninsula. The little houses that make up La Perla are clustered on the other side of the wall, where the sea crashes against the rocks. Its residents have fought tooth and nail to preserve it, and artists like Calle 13, Ismael Rivera and Ruben Blades have dedicated songs to it. With 1,600 inhabitants, it is one of the poorest communities in



A woman takes photos of her two daughters in the neighborhood of La Perla.

San Juan. Drug trafficking largely drives its economy, with the government trying in vain to clear it.

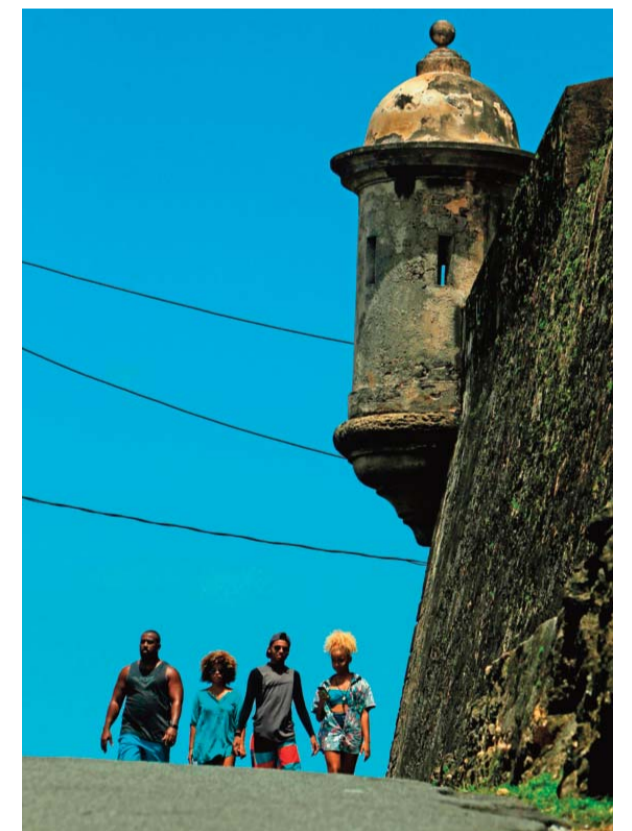
On Yelp, reviewers comment on the dangers outsiders risk going there. "Please don't go there! It is NOT SAFE!" wrote user Gaby G in a three-year-old posting. But that is changing thanks to the efforts of the community, which set up a communal baker, cultivated two vegetable gardens and raised \$80,000 from private donors to paint 402 houses in vivid colors this year. "They always said it was a dangerous barrio because we've been saddled with a history that wasn't the best," said Gomez. "But now you can go in and see that nothing will happen. There is no monster here, no bogeyman, nobody is going to kill you, nobody is going to mug you."

As she spoke, the community board's vice president, Lourdes Lopez, showed a group of tourists around. Later, she explained that the community's next project is to set up a small business offering guided tours. "We take them through the whole community, showing them the most historic things, because we have more history to offer," Lopez said.

Brand recognition

Hotel occupancy in May rose nine percent compared to the same month last year, but there are still no overall figures to confirm the impression that tourist visits are up, said Jose Izquierdo, executive director of the government's Puerto Rico Tourism Company. Puerto Rico hosted 1.7 million tourists in 2015, six percent of its total GDP, according to the US Senate Finance Committee. But even when official figures are available, statistics won't say how many specifically came for the "Despacito" experience. A bump could also be attributable to the end of last year's Zika crisis.

But Izquierdo is sure that "Despacito" enhanced the island's brand recognition. "All the elements are in place for Puerto Rico to top the list for travelers seeking a Caribbean destination," he told AFP. And that is good news for the US territory, which has been hard hit by a financial crisis that resulted in bankruptcy in May. Marwan Badran, Hotels.com's manager for Latin America, said online searches for hotel rooms in Puerto Rico shot up 45 percent this year. "We often see spikes upwards for locations of hit movies or TV series and celebrity weddings," he said. "Puerto Rico is no different now that Despacito has become the world's most streamed song in history." — AFP



A group of people walk by a 17th Century Spanish Fortress stone walls between El Morro and the fort San Cristobal in the neighborhood of La Perla where the video "Suavecito" was recorded.

Italian poster for 'Casablanca' attracts \$478,000 at auction

The only known surviving Italian issue poster for the classic movie "Casablanca" has sold for \$478,000 in Dallas at a public auction of vintage movie posters. The firm Heritage Auctions says the price ties a record for the highest amount paid for a movie poster at a public auction. The 1946 Italian poster - four years after the Oscar-winning movie was made and first shown in the US - measures 55.5 inches (1,409.7 millimeters) by 78.25 inches (1,987.55 millimeters).

It previously was owned by a collector in London. Auction spokesman Eric Bradley says the buyer Saturday chose to remain anonymous. Bradley said Sunday the price equaled the record amount paid in 2014 for a poster for "London After Midnight," a 1927 silent movie where Lon Chaney played a vampire. — AP

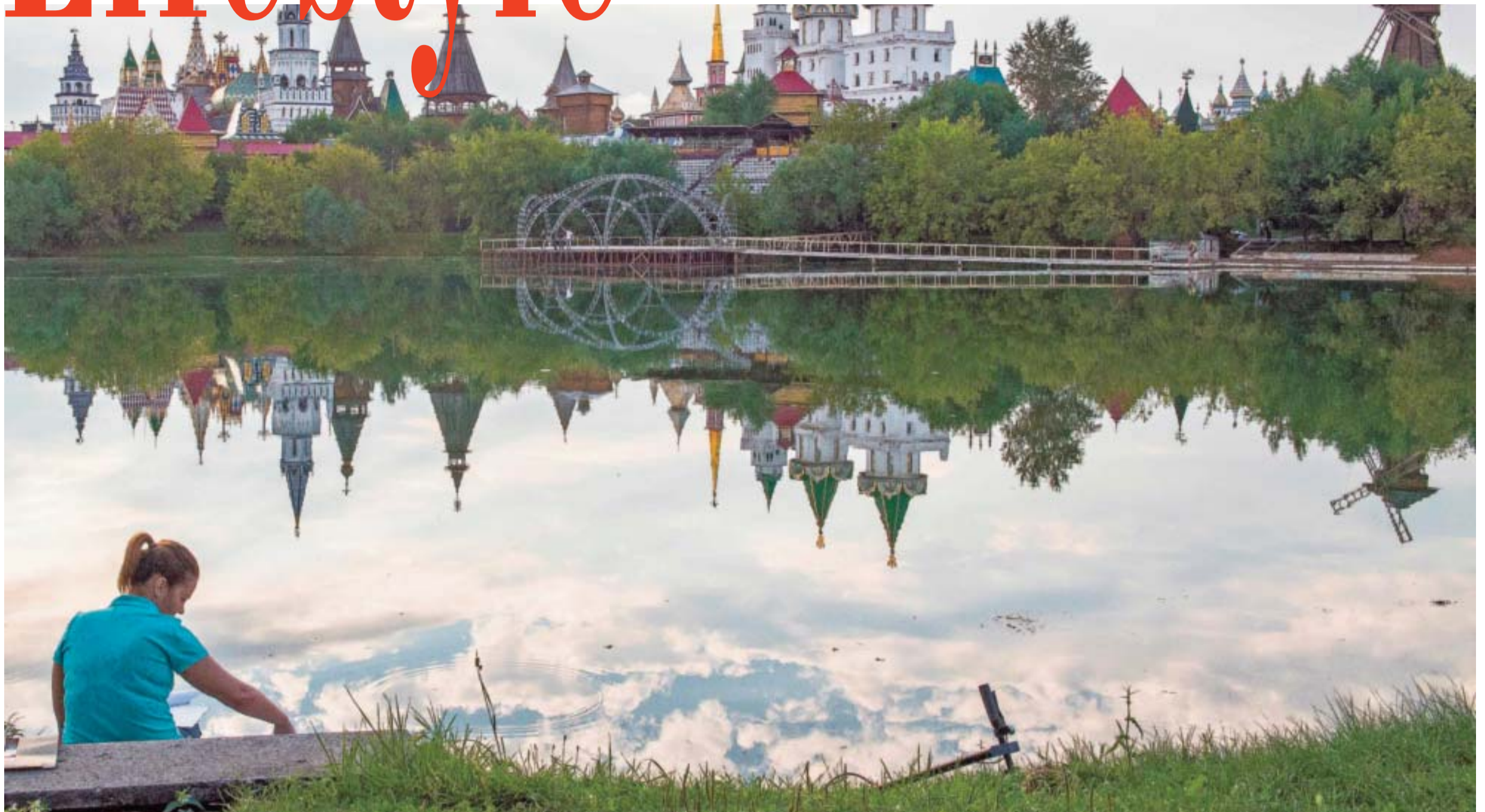


Humphrey Bogart's son Stephen Bogart and Ingrid Bergman's daughter Pia Lindstrom attend the press conference for the 60th Anniversary of 'Casablanca' gala tribute screening and DVD release event at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center in New York. — AFP

THRILL-SEEKING NEWLYWEDS TAKE THE PLUNGE ON ROLLER COASTER

A thrill-seeking Rhode Island couple has taken the plunge at a Massachusetts amusement park, screaming, "I do," as they plummeted 20 stories on a roller coaster. Ashley Schiller and Thom Marchetti, of North Kingstown, were married this month on a Superman-themed roller coaster at Six Flags New England in Agawam. Immediately after the ride was over, they got back on and did it again, with a second batch of wedding guests in tow. The groom's queasiness prevented a third trip.

Schiller is a lifelong amusement park enthusiast who once had her parents buy thick-soled shoes to meet height requirements. She tells The Providence Journal she had dreamed of the moment since she was 8-years-old. For their honeymoon, the couple visited another Six Flags, near Washington, DC. — AP



A young woman enjoys the view of the ethnographic and amusement center Kremlin in Izmailovo reflected in the Serebryano-Vinogradnii lake in Moscow. — AFP

Hair for the Gods ends up on thinning heads in Europe, Africa

For Hindu followers it is an act of devotion, but at the Thiruthani Murugan temple and others across India there are millions to be made from heads that are shaved and smothered with tumeric paste. Some days there are hundreds of disciples waiting before dawn at the hilltop shrine west of Chennai to take part in the centuries-old traditional offering to the gods. As they ask the deities for good fortune and health, temple attendants collect the locks for sale to be used for wigs or fashion industry hair extensions.

India has long been the world's biggest exporter of human hair-in money terms-and businesses say the country earns several hundred million dollars a year from its high quality locks. China and Russia are serious rivals in terms of volume. European countries are the biggest customers, but a lot is also sold in the rest of Asia, the United States and even Africa. There are about 10 major temples, and other smaller ones, in India with a cut of the market. Some villages also collect their inhabitants' hair.

The most expensive type-capturing a quarter of

the overall market-is hair shaved directly from the scalp of one donor. The rest-cheaper cuts sourced from comb waste-fetches a lower price. Some temples make pilgrims braid their hair before it is cut so that the locks all face the same direction. The hair collected at Thiruthani Murugan is auctioned to processing plants which sell the finished product as all-human wigs or hair extensions.

Business has to move quickly at the temple, one among the six holy shrines of deity Lord Murugan. From four in the morning to sundown barbers clip away. Pilgrims queue for hours, sometimes much longer on festival days, to make their sacrifice. Tens of thousands, including women and children, shave their heads here every year, applying a bright yellow paste of tumeric powder before offering their prayers. Pilgrims climb 365 steps to reach the shrine, which is open year round. The profits from the sale of their hair goes towards the upkeep of the temple. — AFP



An Indian Hindu devotee gets her head shaved at the Thiruthani Murugan Temple.



Indian Hindu devotee Ramanama, 45, takes a shower after getting her head shaved.



Indian Hindu devotee Vanaja, 52, gets her head shaved at the Thiruthani Murugan Temple in Thiruthani in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu. — AFP photos



Indian Hindu devotee Punitha (right), 32, gets her head shaved at the Thiruthani Murugan Temple.

Bizarre News

Man who can't afford a toilet is told to sell his wife

A man who has claimed he can't afford to buy a toilet has been told to sell his wife. An Indian official has reportedly urged villagers who are unable to raise enough cash to build loos to sell their spouses. Kanwal Tanuj, a magistrate from the district of Bihar, called for those gathered to obey the campaign's sanitation standards in order to safeguard the dignity of women, according to the Indian Express. He said: "Save the dignity of your women if you can. How poor are you?" But when a man said he was too poor, he replied: "If that is the case then go and sell your wife. If this is the mentality you have then go and sell your wife. So many people talk about advance payment, they get advance and then spend it on useless things." The Clean India Mission - known formerly as the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan - is a scheme launched by the Government of India to clean the country's 4,041 statutory cities and towns.

people, which saw them order scallop sashimi, and BBQ meats, as well as other dishes, although the majority of guests in the party had a gluten and shellfish allergy. The culinary mastermind captioned the image of the tickets, which was shared on his Instagram account: "Can people with dietary requirements start knowing what you can and can't eat? Shellfish allergy but loves oyster sauce. Gluten free but loves gluten as long as it's not a piece of bread. Vegetarians that love a chicken wing. Pescatarians who eat chicken. Sort your shit out and let your waiter know. You make it really damn hard for people with actual allergies and dietaries to go out to eat. (sic)"

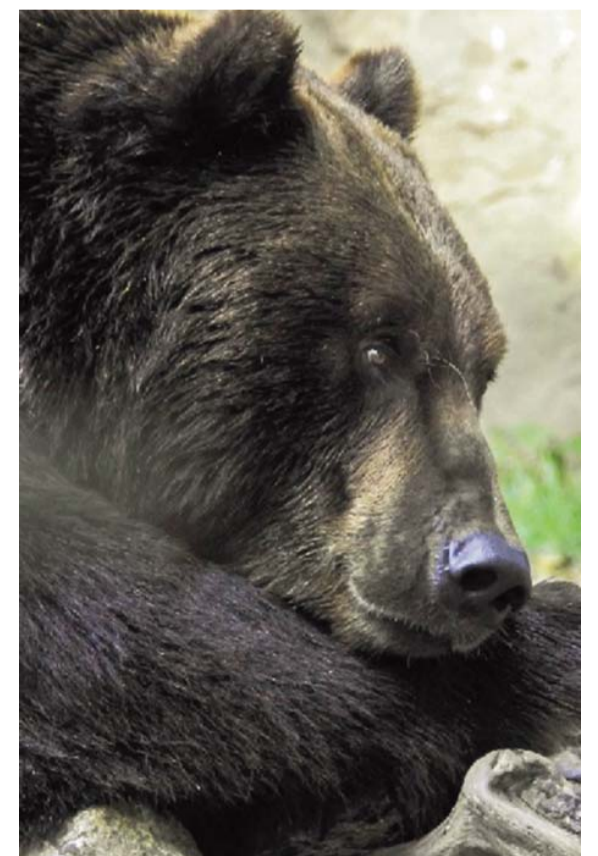
Two squirrels have been caught scrapping in the street

Two squirrels have got caught up in an enormous brawl in the middle of the road. The massive marmots were captured on camera wrestling with one another in the middle of a road in China by a motorist. The footage, which has been obtained by the Mirror Online, shows the aggressive pair standing on their hind legs, and appearing to grab at each other's throats in a bid to win the battle. But by the end of the video neither of the rodents seemed to have trumped the other.



Man gets illusion tattoo that turns his body into a tiny vehicle

A lorry driver has a tiny car and steering wheel inked on his chest to give the illusion that he is driving his own body. Kenny Ollerenshaw, who lives in Silloth, Cumbria shared a photo of the odd inking on social media. The picture went viral after it was shared more than a million times on Facebook. The body art, which was completed at the Immortal Art Studio, took four hours to complete and when the trucker moves around, his tattoo moves with him. Kenny, 36, in a clip of a video getting the piece done: "He (my son) thought it was cool but I wasn't expecting it to go viral, it's all gone a bit mad and my son has told my mum that I'm famous. "I keep looking at it in the mirror and thinking it's just crazy. You should see what happens when I tense my pecs. "My family are all on board with it. The way I look at it is if people don't like it then they don't have to wear it."



A mother bear teaches her cubs to follow the highway code

A mother bear has taught her cubs to follow the highway code. A video of the furry mammal sticking to the road signs and walking to the bear crossing before she led her brood across a busy motorway has gone viral on social media. And the sight touched the hearts of drivers, as well as BBC One's 'Wild Alaska Live' camera crew. The heart-warming footage has been shared on BBC One's Instagram account, which was captioned: "This bear mum led her cubs across the road ... next to a 'bear crossing' sign. Great to see road safety being taught in the animal kingdom. #BBCOne #AlaskaLive # BTS # BehindTheScenes #Alaska # OnLocation (sic)." — BangShowbiz

A chef rants about customers on social media

A chef has ranted about his difficult customer's and their dietary requirements on social media. The head chef at Queen Chow restaurant in Sydney, Australia, has shared a picture of an order placed by a group of eight