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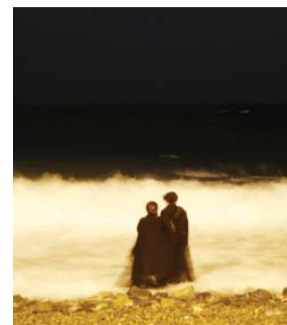
Kuwait marks
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NEW HEALTH FEES FROM OCTOBER 1

KD 100 AUTO INSURANCE?

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Health Minister Jamal Al-Harbi yesterday issued two ministerial decisions to increase health fees that will go into effect from Oct 1 in all hospitals and health centers. The move is part of the government's plan to revise service fees due to the rising cost of medicine and medical services, and as per the recommendations of technical committees that evaluated health service fees at hospitals and health centers for expatriates and visitors, as these fees have not changed since 1993.

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KUWAIT: (From left) Defense Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem attend an emergency meeting yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has urged MPs to shoulder responsibilities toward national unity, abstain from meddling in Kuwait's ties with regional states and support the state's mediation to resolve the Gulf crisis, the National Assembly speaker announced yesterday. Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, speaking to reporters following a scheduled meeting with MPs and government officials at the parliament bureau, said he conveyed a letter from HH the Amir to the legislators during "the very positive meeting" attended by five ministers and 28 deputies.

"I presented to the meeting the message from His Highness the Amir in which he signaled the critical and extraordinary regional circumstances," he said, emphasizing that the MPs must shoulder their responsibilities and refrain from getting involved in Kuwait's external ties with regional states. The Amir, Ghanem added, urged lawmakers to shoulder the national responsibility of safeguarding national unity and abstaining from action that might cause disarray among the people. A lot of information can neither be publicized nor explained to the public, "however His Highness is well aware of the hazards and fears preoccupying MPs and the Kuwaiti people," he said.

In response, the Assembly members affirmed their commitment to preserving the society's unity and pledged not to make inflammatory statements. The speaker expressed pride of the Kuwaiti people who enjoy significant freedoms and democracy, "yet during hard times, we close ranks behind our political leadership".

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GOV SLAMS LOOSE LABOR 'EPIDEMIC' AFTER TWIN KILLINGS

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Farwaniya governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah renewed his warning against "marginal laborers" in the country, pointing to two killings in two days and an increase in the crime rate. Yesterday, a bloody fight in

Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh between Bangladeshis resulted in the death of one of them. Police arrested eight Bangladeshis who were involved in the fight, while the body of the deceased was recovered by the coroner. On Monday, an Arab in his 40s stabbed his wife to death in their Nugra flat, then left the house and threatened

passersby. Police found the suspect with a knife in his hand, and he was controlled and arrested. Investigations are underway in both incidents.

Sheikh Faisal blamed such crimes on the presence of marginal workers, "who are a burden on the state from all aspects", and described them as an epidemic that

must be uprooted. "Is it realistic to have two crimes in a small society in one day?" he asked, adding that the presence of this group has negative political, security and social repercussions. He called for serious and quick moves to remove this group that has "contributed to the worst alien crimes in our Kuwaiti society".

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KUWAIT BEGINS PREPARATIONS FOR IRAQ DONORS' CONFERENCE: DEPUTY FM

KUWAIT: Kuwait said Monday it started contacts with world countries, the World Bank and Iraq to prepare for hosting a donors' conference to rebuild areas liberated from so-called Islamic State (IS) in Iraq, expected to be held in first quarter 2018.

"Kuwait has always stood by Iraq via the international coalition (fighting IS) and bilaterally," Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled

Abadi said on July 11 Kuwait was ready to host an international conference on reconstruction of liberated areas in Iraq. His Highness the Amir made the remarks during a phone call with Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi to congratulate him on the "historic victory" on IS in Mosul. His Highness the Amir hoped the victory would give a boost to unity of Iraqi people, boost security and stability.

Abadi expressed gratitude for His Highness the Amir for this "noble initiative." The World Bank had said it would shore up support for the long-term reconstruction of areas in Iraq liberated from the clutches of IS.

World Bank Regional Director Saroj Kumar said the international lender was keen to support the government's economic reform plans, and the reconstruction and development of Iraqi cities. Meanwhile, Jarallah said Kuwait and Iraq were coordinating over all issues of mutual interest. He congratulated the Iraqi people for the victory in Mosul.

Kuwait's support

In Baghdad, Iraqi Vice President Nouri Al-Maliki has expressed his gratitude to Kuwait's stance supporting his country in the face of terrorism. This came on Monday during Maliki's reception of Kuwait's Ambassador to Iraq Salem Al-Zamanan, said a statement by Maliki's office.

Maliki extolled Kuwait's contribution to providing relief and humanitarian support for displaced Iraqis, the statement added. He voiced his hope that the State of Kuwait would continue its efforts to resolve the region's problems in order to achieve stability and economic prosperity, it noted. During the meeting, the two sides discussed the bilateral relations and developments in Iraq as well as efforts seeking to achieve national consensus amongst the Iraqi segments, the statement concluded. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah speaks during a reception held by the Iraqi Embassy to celebrate the liberation of Mosul. — KUNA

Al-Jarallah told reporters during a reception held by the Iraqi Embassy to celebrate liberation of Mosul, northern Iraq. No date has been set for the donors' conference, said Jarallah.

But he stopped short to say it would most probably be held within the first



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with members of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). — KUNA photos

AMIR MEETS KFAS MEMBERS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan palace Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) Dr Adnan Shihab Eldin. His Highness the Amir also met KFAS members of Board of Directors Dr Faiza Al-Kharafi, Hani Abdulaziz Hussein, Dr Salah Abdullatif Al-Ateeqi, Engineer Khalid Khudair Mashaan Al-Khudair and Advisor at Amiri Diwan Dr Yousef Hamad Al-Ibrahim.

During the meeting, they presented to His Highness the Amir the newly appointed Deputy Director General of the KFAS for Scientific Affairs Dr Salem Al-Hajraf and the newly appointed Deputy Director General of the KFAS for supporting departments and programs Dr Amani Al-Bedah.

The members, during the meeting, also briefed His Highness the Amir on KFAS' achievements in 2016. His Highness the Amir welcomed the newly appointed members and praised the KFAS achieve-

ments. Meanwhile, the KFAS Director General expressed honor to meet His Highness the Amir on this occasion.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. In other news, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace early yesterday Chairman and members of Social Reform Society (SRS). — KUNA



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with members of the Social Reform Society.



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti divers look for pearls in shells that were picked from the sea during the annual pearl diving season yesterday off the coast of the port city of Khairan, 100 kilometers (62 miles) south of Kuwait City. Pearl-diving trips are held annually under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in order to keep alive traditions that accompanied the once important national trade of pearl diving, prior to the discovery of oil. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

PARTIAL LUNAR ECLIPSE EXPECTED NEXT WEEK

KUWAIT: Sky-gazers in Kuwait should be on the lookout for a partial lunar eclipse on August 7th, Kuwait Science Club's (KSC) department of astronomy said yesterday. The partial lunar eclipse, when only part of the moon's surface is obscured by the center of the earth, will start at 8:21 pm local time and will remain in sight for around two hours, read a statement issued by the department. The astronomical phenomenon will be visible to the naked eye starting at 9:20 pm, the statement added. A total lunar eclipse, the most dramatic form of the astronomical wonder, occurs when the earth's shadow falls directly on the moon. — KUNA

Hajj preparations complete

KUWAIT: The Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Yousef Al-Fouzan confirmed yesterday the completion of all the necessary preparations for this year's Hajj season. In a statement to KUNA, Al-Fouzan said that the administration is keen on developing efforts in the operational sectors with direct support from the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh. He added that the Hajj plan was adopted early under the guidance of the Chairman of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Saleem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, in order to avoid any obstacles that may occur. He said that Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) would hold a meeting next week with representatives from several government bodies to discuss efforts to facilitate movements of Hajj missions this year. — KUNA

New LNG prices

KUWAIT: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced yesterday new prices for liquefied gas (propane and butane) for August. Propane will be sold for \$420 per metric ton this month, up \$75 compared to last July where it was sold at \$345, KPC said in a statement. Meanwhile, butane will be sold at \$460 per metric ton, up \$95 compared to July where it was recorded at \$365, it added. Propane and butane are used in petrochemical industries and they are also used for heating and as cooking fuel. The price of these gases is affected by oil prices and the performance of the US dollar against other main currencies. It is also affected by geopolitical factors, natural disasters and economic crises. — KUNA

Medical care

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Jamal Al-Harbi yesterday affirmed his keenness on providing all needed care for citizens seeking medical care abroad and taking into consideration their proposals and ideas in this respect. Minister Harbi, in a statement ahead of a planned official visit to the United States of America, said he would inspect the Kuwaiti health office in Washington and a number of American hospitals and medical centers. Harbi said he would meet Kuwaiti patients undergoing treatment and ask them about treatment they get from the Kuwaiti medical offices. He would also examine the offices' technical conditions, their contracts with local hospitals, medical centers and other matters. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Damage left by a fire reported yesterday in a Rabiya house.

OLD WOMAN, CHILDREN RESCUED FROM BURNING HOUSE IN RABIYA

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Fire broke out in a Rabiya house yesterday, prompting firemen from the Ardiya and Farwaniya fire stations to respond. The fire was on the ground floor, while an elderly woman and three children were trapped on the first floor. They were rescued and sent to hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation. The fire was put out before it could spread further. Separately, a citizen suffered several bruises when his vehicle collided with trees near Al-Zour fire station. Paramedics took him to hospital.



KUWAIT: Emergency medical personnel tend to a driver following an accident reported near Al-Zour fire station.

Unlicensed cosmetics

The Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Information Department said residency detectives arrested three Asian women, two of whom have article 20 residency permits (domestic helpers) and the third an article 18 (private sector employee) visa, and charged them with trading in unlicensed cosmetics. They were sent to concerned authorities.



KUWAIT: A total of 751 baskets of shrimp were supplied to the main fish market in Sharq yesterday, after a seven-month ban on shrimping in Kuwaiti waters. The prices ranged between KD 58 and KD 63 per basket on the first day. — By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT'S CRUDE OIL EXPORTS TO JAPAN JUMP 37.9 PERCENT

TOKYO: Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan in June surged 37.9 percent from a year earlier to 6.94 million barrels, or 231,000 barrels per day (bpd), up for the second straight month, government data showed. As Japan's fifth-biggest oil provider, Kuwait supplied 8.2 percent of the Asian nation's total crude imports, the Japanese Natural Resources and Energy Agency said in a preliminary report. Japan's overall imports of crude oil fell 10.4 percent year-on-year to 2.81 million bpd in June, declining for the second

month in a row. Shipments from the Middle East accounted for 84.6 percent of the total, down 5.1 percentage points from the year before. Saudi Arabia remained Japan's No.1 oil supplier, but imports from the kingdom dropped 3.4 percent from a year earlier to 979,000 bpd, followed by the United Arab Emirates with 737,000 bpd, down 10.8 percent. Russia ranked third with 284,000 bpd and Qatar fourth with 237,000 bpd, respectively. Japan is the world's-third biggest oil consumer after the US and China, importing virtually all its fossil fuels. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Birds perch on a lamp post near Al-Zour power plant in the background yesterday off the coast of Khairan, 100 kilometres (62 miles) south of Kuwait City, which is a popular tourist destination during the summer. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait Times

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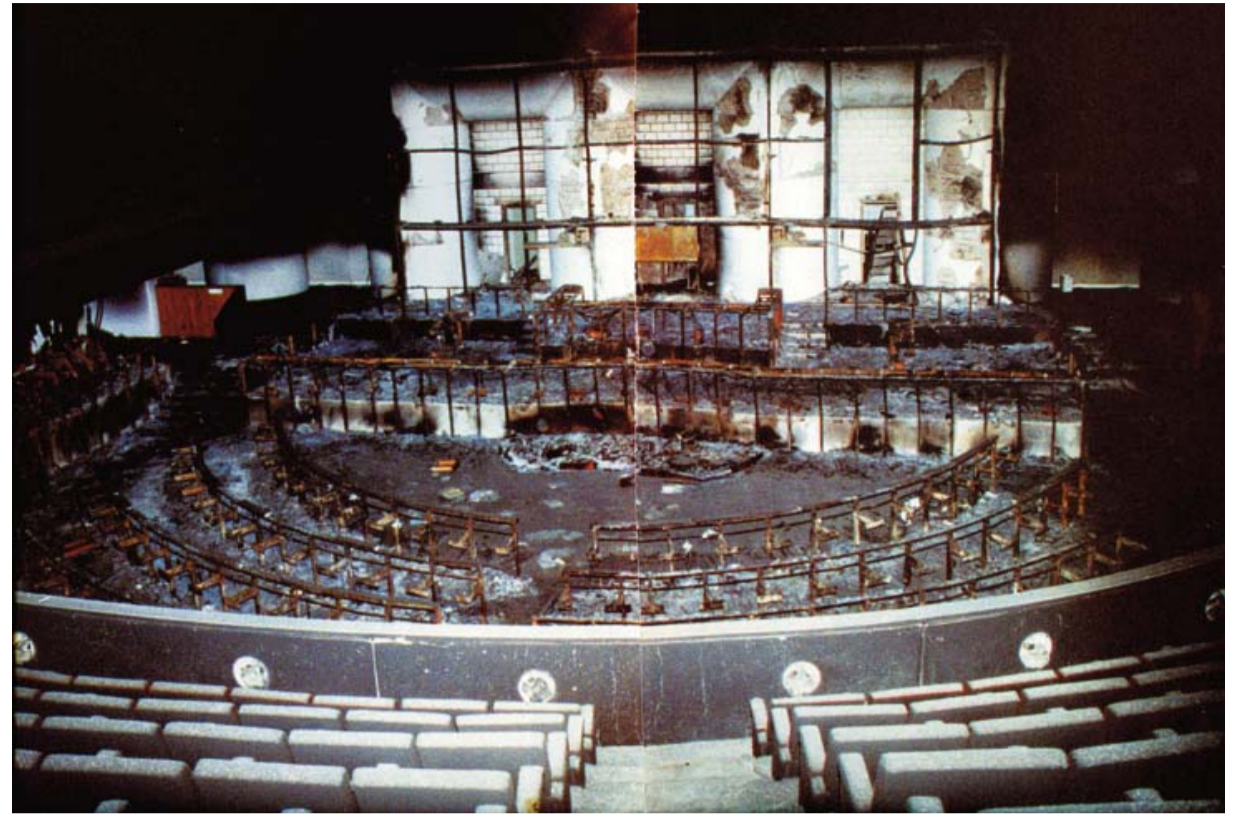
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KUWAIT: Destruction left by the invading Iraqi army at Al-Seif Palace. —KUNA photos



Total destruction inside the National Assembly's main hall.

KUWAIT MARKS 27TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1990 IRAQI INVASION

KUWAIT: Kuwait marks today the 27th anniversary of the Iraqi 1990 brutal invasion, that severely and harshly sought to efface the identity of the country. Since the early hours of the invasion, the Kuwaiti government and people utterly rejected the flagrant aggression, and Kuwaitis, both at home and overseas stood by the side of their legitimate leadership to defend their country, freedom and sovereignty. During the invasion, the Iraqis adopted a scorched-earth policy, setting fire to 752 oil wells, digging trenches and filling them with oil as a barrier against the US-led international coalition troops.

But thanks to the wise leadership of the late Amir His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the late Father Amir His Highness Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah - who was a Foreign Minister - and with the assistance of the Kuwaiti people, Kuwait was able to gain support of the international community and to achieve liberation.

As soon as the aggression took place, the world condemned it and the UN Security Council issued a host of decisive resolutions, starting with Resolution 660, which demanded an immediate withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Then other ones followed under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The Arab and international stances adopted similar stances, demanding immediate withdrawal of aggressors, and holding the Iraqi regime accountable for all the damages caused by the invasion.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, being in charge of the foreign ministry portfolio, played a key role for mobilizing the Arab and international support to Kuwait's legitimacy, thanks to his long experience as Kuwait's chief diplomat since 1963. Over the long years, he had managed to establish strong ties with the UN, its affiliate organizations and member states. Sheikh Sabah's hard and sincere efforts for the nation proved fruitful, as he managed to gain the world's support for ousting the aggressors, liberating Kuwait and restoring the nation's legitimacy and sovereignty.

Policy towards Iraq

In the years that followed the invasion, more precisely 1990 to 2001, Kuwait's foreign policy towards Iraq was based on certain constants, mainly established in line with the UN Security Council resolutions issued before and during the crisis. One of these was the council's Resolution 687 of 1991. Until 2003, the main features of this policy were: Saddam Hussein's regime could not be trusted or dealt with; the Iraqis were victims of a dictatorial regime; and Kuwait would stand by the side of the Iraqis, as Arabs and Muslims. "We distinguish between the Iraqi regime and the Iraqi people, and we are outraged that the people of our neighboring country must endure poverty and starvation," His Highness Sheikh Sabah had remarked. He stressed that Kuwait would carry on with helping the Iraqi people



Al-Shuwaikh Beach during the invasion.

after the invasion, especially for the refugees in the north and south. His Highness Sheikh Sabah's famous proclamation on August 4, 1998 was in response to allegations by the Iraqi regime that Kuwait was behind the international sanctions on the government of Baghdad. "We are not a super power to force the (UN) Security Council to lift, or to keep sanctions on Iraq," His Highness Sheikh Sabah said, noting that "Iraqis residing in Kuwait live with dignity and respect."

On November 23, 1998, during a visit by Egypt's former minister of foreign affairs Amr Moussa, His Highness Sheikh Sabah said: "Kuwait does not plan inflicting any harm on Iraq or its people, and overthrowing the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is an internal affair that Kuwait will not interfere with."

Humanitarian principles

Thanks to the humanitarian principles that Kuwait and the people have adhered to, the Kuwaiti relief aid have been flowing into Iraq since 1993. Prompted by His Highness Sheikh Sabah's directives, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) provided assistance to the refugees at home and in Iran in April, 1995. Following the liberation war of Iraq in 2003, Kuwait hurried with relief and humanitarian aid to the refugees there, as a major donor to the country. In April 2008, Kuwait donated \$1 million to the UN refugee agency to support its operations for alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people who lacked basic needs, food, water and health care. Then, in November 2010, Kuwait announced

providing \$1 million to the agency to offer aid to the homeless Iraqis who were forced to seek safer places. During the 65th session of the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural and Social Committee of the UN General Assembly, Kuwaiti diplomat Hassan Shaker Abulhassan, stressed the prime importance of the humanitarian side in the issue of the Iraq refugees. Providing those with protection and ensuring their safety and security is a shared responsibility of the international community, Abulhassan said then. Amid the rise of the number of displaced Iraqis and the deterioration of their conditions, Kuwait on July 11, 2014, donated \$3 million to the UN refugee agency in humanitarian aid for Iraq, and in 2015 presented \$200 million for the same purpose. In 2016, and ahead of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, Kuwait distributed 12,000 food packages through its charity organizations in Iraq's Kurdistan region. The same year, the KRCS offered 40,000 rations of food to the displaced Iraqis in the region. Also during a conference for Iraq's donors in Washington, July 2016, Kuwait pledged \$176 million to the Iraqi people. The UN Security Council highly appreciated Kuwait's continued support to realize stability in Iraq.

Most recently, after the Iraqi government announced the liberation of Iraq's city of Mosul from the so-called Islamic State (IS), July 2017, Kuwait expressed readiness to host an international conference for the reconstruction of the liberated regions, in line with the country's long-established principles of supporting "Arab brothers." —KUNA



Destruction left at the historic Mubarakiya Market.



Kuwaiti oilfields set on fire by invading Iraqi troops during the 1990 invasion.



Heavy damage at Kuwait International Airport.

KUWAITI MARTYRED WOMEN AND CHILDREN: A STORY OF SACRIFICE IN HOMELAND'S DEFENSE

KUWAIT: Many stories of courage and sacrifice highlight the fight for Kuwait's liberation from the brutal August 2, 1990 Iraqi occupation, where martyrdom was a shared duty amongst men and women in the resistance movement.

Asrar Al-Gabandi, Wafaa Al-Amer, and Suad Hasan are a few of the women known for their heroic and active stances in defiance of occupation, who dedicated their lives to the freedom of their home from brutal oppressors. Official figures provided by the Martyr's Office show that 89 women in total sacrificed their lives amid the terrible six-month ordeal, including 67 Kuwaitis, eight bedoons (stateless), two Bahrainis and one national from each of Egypt, Jordan and India. According to Fatima Al-Ameer, Amiri Diwan secretary and the office's director-general, Sanaa Al-Fodari was shot dead by Iraqi soldiers just six days after Baghdad launched an offensive to capture its tiny neighbor to the south. Fodari is regarded as the first woman to have lost her life in the occupation after taking to the streets to protest her country's right of independence under the leadership of the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. "She (Fodari) was speaking on behalf of all Kuwaitis, generally speaking, and women, in particular, as she shouted 'Kuwait is for the Kuwaitis, our Amir is Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah,'" Ameer said.

Kuwaiti women were mostly involved in the ad hoc administration of several utilities like hospitals and grocery stores, earlier in the conflict, and later, helped in



Asrar Al-Gabandi



Wafaa Al-Amer



Suad Hasan



Sanaa Al-Fodari



Abdullah Al-Fuzai

Martyred children

efforts to distribute food and money to struggling Kuwaiti families. These included Asrar Al-Gabandi, Wafaa Al-Amer and Suad Hasan, said Ameer. The office listed another 77 women as martyrs, who died as a result of inadequate healthcare, explained Al-Ameer.

The mother of Suad Hasan said that she, along with her daughter, a devout Muslim, were arrested by Iraqi soldiers in January of 1991. The Iraqi soldiers released the mother but kept Suad behind bars in light of her role in the distribution of food to families. Suad spent a month being transferred across several prisons before she was found dead on the ground in a square in the Kuwait City suburb of Kaifan after receiving the penalty of execution.

Twenty seven years after the invasion, Kuwaitis still remember the 41 young and innocent souls of children who were killed by the hands of Iraqi soldiers. The children, considered as martyrs, were the purest example of how Kuwaitis sacrificed everything to maintain their identity against the Iraqi aggression. Speaking on the issue, Ameer said that the children were brutally murdered by invading Iraqi troops who did not recognize the sanctity of the human beings. Amongst those martyred were Mansour Al-Ibrahim, Abdullah Al-Fuzai, Sulaiman Al-Luhaib, Mansour Al-Mansour, and others who were teenagers at the time of their martyrdom, said Ameer who indicated that some of them were executed simply because they were chanting in

favor of the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the lawful Kuwaiti government.

Children paid the price of their loyalty to Kuwait such as in the case of Luhaib who protected a resistance cell by claiming the ownership of arms and thus was executed, said Al-Ameer who indicated that the Iraqi troops did not discriminate between infants or teenagers when they committed their crimes.

Remembering the sacrifice made by his brother Abdullah Al-Fuzai, Hamad Al-Fuzai said that Abdullah was killed on January 15, 1991 after being recruited by a resistance group. Abdullah was 14 when he was killed, said his brother, noting that his sibling was tasked with helping people in Farwaniya area and also worked at the cooperative society in the area.

The bodies of Abdullah and his childhood friend Mansour Al-Mansour were discovered at Kaifan area, a sight which was very common in Kuwait during the heinous invasion, said Hamad Al-Fuzai. Despite the passage of time, Kuwaiti martyrs of all ages are still remembered for their sacrifices by all people living in the free and sovereign State of Kuwait. —KUNA

Crime

Report

HOMICIDE PROBE IN FIRE VICTIMS' DEATH

KUWAIT: A homicide investigation was opened in the death of a citizen in his thirties and an 11-month-old girl, who died in a Sabah Al-Ahmad house fire. Firemen found highly combustible material in the area, based on which the case was classified as arson. Meanwhile, forensic experts found traces of blood in the area of the fire and in the man's car. Detectives are also working on the case. The child is the man's niece.

Smuggling

Border security men arrested a Pakistani who hid a quantity of heroin in a truck at Nuwaiseeb border outlet. Police were able to trace him as there was blood from cuts he suffered after climbing over barbed wire. The Pakistani driver escaped while customs officers were searching the truck. The drugs were hidden in a fire extinguisher. Separately, Kuwait International Airport customs officers foiled an Egyptian man's attempt to smuggle 20,000 Tramadol tablets hidden in a vest he was wearing. Officers noticed he was very nervous near the luggage pick-up area, so they stopped and searched his luggage, but did not find anything. But he was getting more tense, so they searched him physically and found the drug in the lining of his vest. The suspect was arrested and sent to concerned authorities.

Arrests

A girl was not allowed to travel abroad as she was reported missing by her mother 15 days before. The girl will be questioned to find out where she was staying. Meanwhile, a bedoon was arrested to serve a two-year jail sentence in Abdullah Al-Mubarak. Separately, an Arab expat wanted on a KD 4,000 debt was arrested and sent to concerned authorities.

Assault

Criminal detectives arrested two young men after one of them attacked expats without justification following a dispute over the right of way. Social media activists published a clip of the two who stopped an SUV, then one of them attacked the driver. A passerby asked him to stop, so he ran after him and kicked him. Investigations are underway.

Overdose

Paramedics rescued a citizen whose friends dumped him in a Fahaheel yard thinking he was dead. The youth was revived in the ICU following an overdose. Two Arab expats noticed an SUV parked in an open yard with three youth carrying a fourth, placing him on the ground and driving off. The two Arabs called police, who went to the area with paramedics and found him in a very critical condition, so he was rushed to Adan Hospital. Investigations are underway.

—Translated from the Arabic press



Al-Qabas

THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE

By Ahmad Al-Sarraf

I can say for countless reasons that I have lived through the Palestinian cause for a long time, and this allows me to say that for the first time over half a century, Palestinians are standing alone in facing their enemies. The only way they will be victorious is if they could put a halt to their division and stop relying on their Arab brothers.

Some of those in my generation remember Syrian actress and singer Siham Rifqi, and others will know her as the singer who sang "Ya um Al-Abaya", "Hawwel ya Ghanam", "Lao lilgharam Hakem", and "Yabu Al-Zuluf", and few other songs. She had a long career before she married Salahuddin Al-Aseer who withdrew her records from the market. She died in Spain in 2007 aged 85. Siham has a famous song in which she says "Oh Palestine, to you we came... we are all men, we came... to carry your burdens, we came... around you, men who protect you with souls and blood, and protect the Arabian glory and wipe those who are your enemy... etc." The lyrics go on in useless rhetoric, as it does not reflect the reality in tens of setbacks that Palestinians experienced over seven decades since 1948, during which the weak and divided Arab armies fought well-trained Jewish gangs with high fighting spirit.

They are facing a defeat after another, especially after being forced one time after another, and mostly under pressure from "brothers" to reject all solutions, as we are "people who accept no concessions," "we are either on top or in the grave," and we remained in our graves lamenting our luck. Nobody, of course, responded to sister Siham's call, and went to liberate Palestine, even the most extreme clergy-men who previously sent thousands of young men to face death in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Chechnya, then in Iraq and Syria. They kept their mouths shut and remained silent; not to mention even the condemnation of the latest events, as if Jerusalem was not the pride of our Arabism, nor the first Qibla or the third haram.

The truth which many do not want to admit is that Palestinians did not only suffer from brutality and terrorism of the Israeli war and media apparatus, but also suffered more by the hands of their 'brothers.' Most of their Arab brothers contributed to dividing them into groups, parties, fronts and organizations, and each is loyal to the area that pays for them. During that time, Palestine was torn piece by piece and Arabs forgot about its cause in the past few years, and its tragedy became just a memory in the imagination of only a number of people. What the Palestinians are facing today, regardless of their stand towards Saddam's invasion of my country, is a tragedy as the entire world unanimously forgot their cause and their sufferings. It is time that Palestinians become aware that their country will only return with their efforts and sacrifices, as there is no ability nor an interest for many in its liberation.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

Al-Anbaa

KUWAIT 324

By Nermin Al-Houti

August 2nd is here once again with all its painful memories to the people of Kuwait. We remember our martyrs and prisoners of war who will always be living in our memories. They are a beacon of a free Kuwait that was liberated from this heinous invasion.

Despite the pain and sadness that resides in Kuwaitis, Arabs and many people around the world, Kuwait remains with its steadfastness, hopes and men. That is the pearl of the Arabian Gulf, Kuwait with its knights who resisted the invading forces then, and continue to defend their homeland today to build a bright and a prosperous future for our generations. What happened on August 2, 1990 was not the first ordeal that Kuwait witnessed, and it was not the beginning of its men's resistance movement, as many events happened before where Kuwait faced ordeals and remained standing as a minaret of peace and freedom for the entire world. This is Kuwait, and those are its men who sacrificed their lives for the sake of its freedom and sublime status under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the guardian of Kuwait's security. His men remain vigilant to keep its stability so it remains an oasis of safety and security for the world.

Three hundred and twenty four months elapsed since the heinous invasion, and Kuwait has moved on with its march on the road of development and advancement. Furthermore, we have witnessed the developmental projects according to immediate, to medium and long term plans to fulfill the vision of HH the Amir of turning Kuwait into an attractive international financial center. This has been done by men who learned from the past and were wise in dealing with all types of circumstances. Men who have the decisiveness of the leader and the kindness of the father under the leadership of our father HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who is now known as the Humanitarian Leader of the world. Twenty seven years after the invasion, and we will always revive the memories of men and women who sacrificed their lives in defense of their countries, and Kuwait still has men who resist every day for the sake of Kuwait and its people.

A Final word: "I pray to Almighty Allah to guide you and protect our dear country, and preserve the bounty of security, safety and prosperity, and to bestow His mercy on the martyrs of our homeland." - His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on June 4th, 2017.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

NBK SUPPORTS JIDARIYYAT INITIATIVE IN RENOVATING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE AND ARTS' WALL AS PART OF ITS PHILANTHROPIC ROLE AND SOCIAL OUTREACH

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) supported the new Jidariyyat Volunteer Group initiative in transforming the wall at the National Council for Culture and Arts to a colorful painting featuring the letters of the Arabic language and more specifically the Arabic letter 'Dhaad'.



Abdul Mohsen Al-Rushaid

This initiative comes as a part of a wider philanthropic scheme that includes involvement of NBK in a series of cultural activities meant to encourage our community to follow suit the influential message of art and support young Kuwaiti talents.

NBK volunteers participated in this initiative which was held in cooperation with the Kuwaiti artist Fareed Al Ali who designed the piece which aims to glorify the Arabic language and its beauty with the unique letter 'Dhaad'.

Commenting on the occasion, NBK's Public Relations Executive Manager, Abdul Mohsen Al-Rushaid said that NBK's commitment to the community, which by far exceeds the role normally expected from a banking institution and embraces a broad spectrum of social and philanthropic involvement.

"NBK has a long tradition in the adoption and support of social and cultural initiatives. Our vision has met with Jidariyyat, and here came this cooperation which we look through it to see a beautiful and colorful Kuwait signed by talented and ambitious young Kuwaitis," he added.

It is worth mentioning that NBK has undertaken several major initiatives to demonstrate its full support for society, including the creation of the NBK Children Hospital at Al-Sabah Medical Area to provide medical attention for children suffering from chronic and incurable ailments, in addition to the annual budgets allocated for supporting the various charitable and philanthropic projects.



KUWAIT: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met yesterday with members of the 'Hayat' voluntary wildlife protection team, and discussed their activity in protecting wildlife around the governorate.

CLEAN FUEL PROJECT 86 PERCENT COMPLETE

KUWAIT: Kuwait National Petroleum Corporation (KNPC) completed 86 percent of its Clean Fuel Project at the end of June, said the company's Deputy CEO for projects Abdullah Al-Ajmi. KNPC has completed the fifth gas pipeline by 57 percent as part of the project and the project's electric network is ready by now, Al-Ajmi said in an interview with Al-Jareeda newspaper. The current fiscal year, ending in March 2018, will see the completion of the project's main vital parts including gas reserves in Al-Ahmadi port, he noted. The project is set to be fully launched by 2019, he added.

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Farmer suicides rising in India as climate warms, study shows



ISLAMABAD: Pakistani supporters of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party celebrate outside the Parliament House after the election of a new prime minister. (INSET) Pakistan's premier-designate Shahid Khaqan Abbasi is seen outside the Parliament house. — AFP/AP photos

PAKISTAN ELECTS ABBASI AS NEW PM

A PLACEHOLDER FOR SHARIF'S DESIGNATED SUCCESSOR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's parliament elected ruling party loyalist Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as Prime Minister yesterday, days after Nawaz Sharif was ousted by the Supreme Court after a corruption probe. Abbasi is seen as a placeholder for Sharif's designated successor, his younger brother Shahbaz, who must first be elected to the 342-member National Assembly before taking the top office.

Nominated by Sharif's ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Abbasi secured 221 votes, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq announced on live television. Despite his election minutes before, the new premier used his maiden speech to declare Nawaz Sharif "the prime minister of the people of Pakistan". "Inshallah (God willing) one day the real prime minister of this country will come back and sit on this chair," he said.

Sharif supporters in the assembly chanted slogans and waved placards bearing larger-than-life images of the deposed premier. Absent from the assembly was opposition leader Imran Khan, the cricketer-turned-politician who spearheaded the push against Sharif. Abbasi, a long-time ally of Sharif, easily won the majority required to become prime minister in the PML-N dominated parliament, putting into motion a process that is expected to ultimately see a Sharif once again as Pakistan's premier.

"Whether it's 45 days or 45 hours, I am the prime minister of Pakistan and I am here to work, not keep the seat warm," Abbasi continued, referring to the time limit on a by-election for Sharif's old seat, which Shahbaz Sharif is expected to fill. Listing PML-N trademark issues

such as infrastructure projects, he also vowed to crack down on tax evaders and private ownership of automatic weapons.

Nawaz Sharif was the 15th prime minister in Pakistan's 70-year history—roughly half of which has been spent under military rule—to be ousted before completing a full term. The top court sacked him Friday after an investigation into corruption allegations against him and his family, bringing his historic third term in power to an unceremonious end and briefly plunging the nuclear-armed nation into political uncertainty. Observers have said it is unclear whether the court's ruling will allow the ousted Sharif to run for office again in the future.

Placeholder PM

Abbasi is the former federal minister for

petroleum and natural resources, and a businessman who launched the country's most successful private airline, Air Blue. Educated in the United States at George Washington University, he worked overseas as an electrical engineer before joining politics and being elected to the National Assembly six times.

He was arrested after the 1999 military coup led by General Pervez Musharraf, which ended Nawaz Sharif's second term as PM, and was imprisoned for two years before being released. Prime Minister-in-waiting Shahbaz Sharif went into exile in Saudi Arabia along with Nawaz after the coup.

Shahbaz returned to Pakistan in 2007 and was elected chief minister in the family's power base of Punjab in 2008, becoming the longest serving top official in the province. A tough

administrator with a reputation for passionate outbursts, he is known for using revolutionary poetry in speeches and public meetings and considered by some to be a workaholic. His scandalous relationships fuelled headlines in the past, but his marriage to author Tehmina Durrani, his fifth wife, in 2003 has since dampened the media frenzy.

Shahbaz has been so far largely unscathed by claims about the lavish lifestyles and luxury London property portfolio of the Sharif dynasty, which have played out for months in the raucous news media. It was an investigation into the claims, which first erupted with the Panama Papers leak last year, that eventually saw the Supreme Court oust Nawaz Sharif. He and his family have denied the accusations. —AFP



CAIRO: In this Tuesday, July 25, 2017, file photo, Al-Azhar clerics wait to answer commuters questions inside a Fatwa Kiosk, at the Al-Shohada'a metro station. — AP

CAIRO CLERICS OFFERING RELIGIOUS EDICTS IN METRO STIRRING DEBATE

CAIRO: Reda el-Sebaay was taking the subway while on a short business trip to Cairo from a Nile Delta city when he stumbled upon clerics offering religious advice or fatwas - answers to any question a Muslim follower might have. The 45-year-old civil servant had been pre-occupied for weeks about how he and his sisters would settle their inheritance. He wanted it to be fair and act according to Muslim teachings but he didn't want to have to call a religious hotline and wait endlessly for an answer.

Now he lined up behind a handful of people standing in front of a booth set up at one of the main Cairo subway stations - and 10 minutes later he got his answer. Fatwas are religious edicts or pronouncements, often on major issues related to Islamic teachings. But they also provide guidance on matters of everyday life, including starting up a grocery store or any other private business, who to marry and whether it is permissible under Islam to accept banks' interest rates.

Fast Islamic teachings

The booth in Cairo's Al-Shohada subway station was set up earlier this month by Egypt's Al-Azhar, the Sunni Muslim world's foremost religious institution, with the idea to offer Muslim worshippers a way to plug in fast to Islamic teachings - even while commuting to work. More booths are planned for

later, at other subway stops. The idea, however, is also part of a broader push to correct misconceptions and misinterpretations of religious texts seen as fostering Islamic militancy in the country.

The move came after militants killed at least 28 security personnel in two separate attacks in early July in the restive Sinai Peninsula and near some of Egypt's most famous pyramids outside of Cairo. More than 100 Copts have been killed in four separate attacks - including church suicide bombings - by Egypt's Islamic State affiliate since December. "It's surely a good idea. It saves a lot of time and effort for people," el-Sebaay told The Associated Press just before stepping into the booth, where three Al-Azhar clerics in white turbans were waiting to hear his question.

But the institute's decision to set up the booths has sparked a wide controversy, both on social media and offline. Critics argue that rooting out extremist ideology will not happen in metro stations. Many have slammed Al-Azhar for setting up the booth in a public place, used by all sectors of the Egyptian society, to spread the teachings of Islam. "This is not its place at all," said Beshoy Mikhail, a 24-year-old Coptic Christian. "I am completely against the idea."

Religious interference

Mikhail believes that if Muslim clerics can set

up advice booths in subways, Coptic priests should be allowed to do the same. Several human rights activists said the move is somewhat discriminatory. "We see the government feeding more religious education and interference of religion in the day-to-day life," activist Sherif Azer said.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi has repeatedly blamed what he says is outdated religious discourse for the rising Islamic militancy in the country that has targeted mainly security personnel and Coptic Christians. He has called on Al-Azhar, which touts itself as the voice of moderation, to lead the "modernization of religious discourse" since he took office in 2014, following the 2013 ouster of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi whose one-year rule proved divisive.

The Ministry of Endowments, which handles religious affairs in Egypt, has taken some measures to exert more control. Imams have been asked to read standardized government-written sermons during Friday prayers, the high point of the Muslim week. Some small mosques across the country have been closed and any cleric labelled a hard-liner has been barred from preaching in mosques.

Al-Azhar has also tasked a number of clerics to preach in coffee and tea houses across the nation. Amr Ezzat of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights said Al-Azhar is trying to "market itself in attempts to reach out to people." —AP

CLOONEYS PLAN TO HELP 3,000 SYRIAN CHILDREN IN LEBANON

UNITED NATIONS: George and Amal Clooney plan to help nearly 3,000 Syrian refugee children go to school this year in Lebanon, where the United Nations says around 200,000 Syrian refugee children are out of education. More than one million Syrians—including over 500,000 children—are registered as refugees in Lebanon after fleeing the devastating

war that has lasted more than six years in neighboring Syria.

UNICEF said Monday that close to 200,000 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are out of school. Human Rights Watch estimates the number at more than 250,000. The nearly 3,000 Syrian children's education will be funded through a \$2.25 million partnership

announced by The Clooney Foundation for Justice with Google, in addition to a \$1 million technology grant from HP.

The partnership with UNICEF will help seven public schools educate the students, who are not currently in school, and will support a pilot of technology tools in these schools for refugee and Lebanese children, the Clooneys said.

"Thousands of young Syrian refugees are at risk—the risk of never being a productive part of society. Formal education can help change that," the couple said in a statement. "We don't want to lose an entire generation because they had the bad luck of being born in the wrong place at the wrong time," they added.

More than 330,000 people have been

killed in Syria since war broke out in March 2011 with anti-government protests that have evolved into a complex proxy war. The Clooneys welcomed their first children—a twin boy and girl—in Britain last month. Amal Clooney, a prominent British-Lebanese human rights lawyer, married her Hollywood movie star husband in 2014. —AFP

EGYPT ACTIVISTS CHALLENGE MENTAL DISABILITY STIGMA

CAIRO: Ghada Tosson waits anxiously outside an Egyptian high school in the Helwan district south of Cairo as her daughter with Down's syndrome sits her end-of-year exam. Winning the chance to sit standard high school tests took years of fighting in a country where people with mental disabilities are often marginalised and receive little assistance. "I'm so proud. We've been fighting for 18 years for this moment. She sat the exam like any other high schooler," says Tosson. "No matter the result, it's proof that it can happen."

She is visibly moved as her daughter comes out of the school, smiling and looking serene. Out of Egypt's population of around 93 million, an estimated 14 million have some form of disability, says Eglal Chenouda, director of the SETI Center, a section of Catholic charity Caritas which supports the disabled. Three-quarters of them have a mental disability, she says. The organizations helping them are few and far between.

"Most of them are staying at home, deprived of any services," she says, adding that only two to three percent of them receive the services they need. But activists are working to tackle public ignorance around mental disability and the stigma it carries—something they say is as important as providing services.

Integration

That is a core part of the mission of SETI, which stands for "Support, Education, Training for Inclusion". Fighting stigma is a big part of the battle. Tosson says that when she was looking for nursery schools she had to contact at least 50 before she found one that would enroll her daughter. At SETI's toddler section, four-year-old Yassin does learning activities under the care of his mother Hoda Abdelkhalik and a Caritas trainer.

Focused, the young boy with Down's syndrome stacks colored rings around a cone. Abdelkhalik says the family found out about his disability the day he was

born. "It was very hard," she says. "(The doctor) told us 'your son is Mongolian,' a term used in many countries for people with the syndrome but which many consider derogatory. Hospital staff advised her to isolate the baby in a separate room several times a day and limit his contact with his older brothers.

At SETI, she was taught the opposite. Staff urged her to integrate Yassin into the daily life of his family and the neighborhood. Chenouda says it is important to change public attitudes, convince people that disability is a rights issue and to "include the disability issue in all services". But the services provided by organizations like SETI fall far short of the huge demand.

'Not enough

Egypt has just 68 institutions able to provide care for the mentally disabled, says Khaled Aly, who heads the rehabilitation department of the ministry of social solidarity. "It's not enough compared to the number of mentally disabled people, but we're on the right track," he says. Aly says a new bill set for a parliamentary vote next year will give the government more responsibilities and improve communication between the health and education ministries.

He adds that the ministry already organizes workshops in villages in rural Upper Egypt to "inform and sensitize" people to issues of mental disability. Other initiatives in the country have shown that integrating the disabled into Egyptian society is both possible and beneficial. Olfat Salem has been organizing cultural and sports activities for the mentally disabled at the Alexandria Sporting Club for 20 years. "The families used to be ashamed; they would come at the club late at night, sit in a dark corner," she says. Playing sport transformed the children, she adds. "Receiving a medal gives them happiness you could not imagine. It gives them self-confidence. And now the families are proud of them as well." —AFP



ANKARA: Defendants Kemal Batmaz (first row, C) and Akin Ozturk (second row, C) and other defendants are accompanied by gendarmes as they arrive for their trial at Sincan Penal Institution at the 4th Heavy Penal Court. —AFP

ALMOST 500 SUSPECTS ON TRIAL IN TURKEY'S BIGGEST COUP CASE

FACING CHARGES OF CONSPIRING TO OUST THE GOVT

SINCAN: Nearly 500 people appeared in court yesterday in the biggest trial yet of suspects from Turkey's failed coup, facing charges of conspiring to oust the government from an air base seen as the plotters' hub. Forty-one of those held were marched into the court outside Ankara one-by-one in a long line in front of television cameras and the public, with each suspect held by two members of the Turkish gendarmerie and flanked by an armed soldier.

People chanted "we want the death penalty!" and some threw nooses towards the suspects. The death penalty has been abolished in Turkey since 2004. There were also chants of "martyrs don't die, the nation won't be divided". Some people threw water bottles, an AFP reporter said. Nazan Aytog, who came to court to make sure the blood of the 249 victims of the coup "was not given in vain" said she hoped the "accused will be given the sentence they deserve."

A total of 486 suspects have been indicted in the case and almost all—a total of 461 — are held in custody while seven are still on the run and the remainder charged but not in jail. During the tense opening hearing, veterans and relatives of those killed on the night of the coup bid booed the suspects' lawyers, Dogan news agency reported. Some lawyers hit tables to protest the "physical intervention" by some of the victims' families as they walked past them, the agency said.

'Order to bomb parliament'

The suspects are accused of running the coup bid from the Akinci air base northwest of the capital, which the authorities regard as the headquarters of the plotters where orders were sent out for fighter jets to bomb parliament. They are charged with crimes ranging from murder, violating the constitution and attempting to kill President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. If convicted, they face life imprisonment.

Among the main suspects named in the indictment but still on the run is US-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen, who is accused of ordering the attempted July 15, 2016 putsch. Gulen, who is based in a secluded compound in the US state of Pennsylvania, strongly denies the charges. Those held in custody include former air force chief Akin Ozturk who, like several suspects, is also on trial in another case related to the coup bid.

Another chief suspect is theology lecturer Adil Oksuz, whom Turkish officials accuse of being the so-called "imam" of the plot by coordinating the action on the ground in Turkey with Gulen. Businessman Kemal Batmaz is meanwhile accused of assisting Oksuz. Oksuz was detained following the coup's defeat, but was subsequently released and is now on the run. Batmaz is in custody in Sincan prison outside Ankara.

Batmaz led the line of suspects into court wearing a cream shirt with black trousers followed by Ozturk wearing a grey shirt and black trousers. Chief of Staff General Hulusi Akar and other senior

commanders were held hostage at the base during the coup attempt before they were freed on the morning on July 16. The base was seen as the coup bid headquarters where commands were given for the F-16 fighter jets to attack and fly them above the capital. The Turkish parliament was bombed three times by F-16s.

Largest courtroom

The trial is taking place in Turkey's largest courtroom established inside a prison complex in Sincan to hear coup-related trials and has space for 1,558 people. The courtroom has previously hosted mass trials related to the coup bid including one which opened in February of 330 suspects accused of murder or attempted murder.

And in May, 221 suspects were put on trial accused of being the ringleaders of the failed coup. The attempted coup left 249 people dead, the Turkish presidency says, not including 24 coup-plotters killed on the night. There was heavy security including 1,130 security personnel inside and outside the courtroom, according to state-run news agency Anadolu, as well as snipers, armored security vehicles and a drone. The trial is one of several held across Turkey judging coup suspects, in the largest legal process in the country's modern history. Over 50,000 people have been arrested over alleged links to Gulen in a wide-scale crackdown under the state of emergency imposed following the coup. —AFP



CAIRO: An Egyptian boy with disability does activities at the SETI center (Support, Education, Training for Inclusion), a section of Catholic charity Caritas. —AFP

MALAYSIA SPARKS ANGER WITH BAN ON MODERATE ISLAM BOOK

KUALA LUMPUR: Activists and authors in Muslim-majority Malaysia reacted with outrage yesterday after authorities banned a book aimed at promoting moderate Islam, as concerns mount about growing conservatism. The book, "Breaking The Silence: Voices Of Moderation-Islam In A Constitutional Democracy", is a collection of essays whose publication was organized by a group of prominent Muslim Malaysians pushing a more tolerant form of Islam.

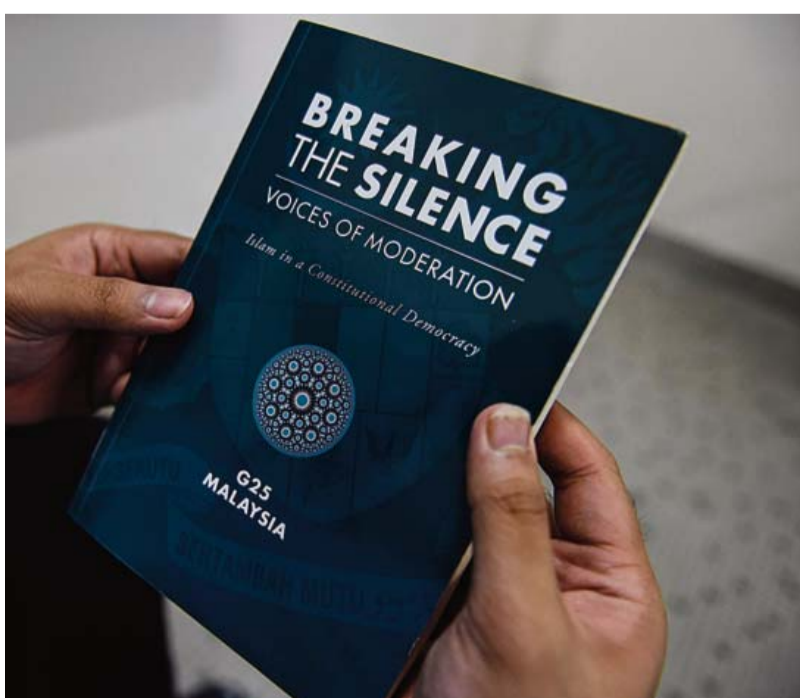
The ban, signed by Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, said that printing or possessing the book was "likely to be prejudicial to public order" and "likely to alarm public opinion". Anyone breaching the ban on the book—which was published in neighboring Singapore—can be jailed for up to three years. Malaysia routinely bans books, movies and songs that may contain sensitive material regarding religion or sex, but critics say the government has been clamp-

ing down harder in recent times.

The book was the brainchild of a group of high-ranking former civil servants and diplomats known as the "G25"—for the number of its founding members—which was formed to push back against intolerance, and some of the essays were written by its members. Chandra Muzaffar, one of the authors featured in the collection, said the ban showed the government's "authoritarian approach to Islam".

"It's a collection of essays which is intended to show that extremists and bigoted thinking on matters pertaining to the practice of Islam in the country should be combated in an intellectual manner," he told AFP. Marina Mahathir, a rights activist and daughter of former long-serving premier Mahathir Mohamad, said the ban-signed last week—was aimed at silencing government critics. "It is about silencing anybody who has a different view," she said.

Critics say the government clampdown on anything deemed un-Islamic has accelerated in recent times as Prime Minister Najib Razak's party seeks to appeal to its Muslim Malay base amid speculation elections could be called in the coming months. In July the hit song "Despacito" was banned on state TV and radio due to its racy lyrics after pressure from an Islamic political party. More than 60 percent of Malaysia's population of over 30 million are Muslim, but the country is also home to significant religious minorities. —AFP



KUALA LUMPUR: In this photo illustration taken in Kuala Lumpur, a man holds the book "Breaking The Silence: Voices Of Moderation - Islam In A Constitutional Democracy". —AFP



SYDNEY: Police direct locals around a block of flats in the Sydney suburb of Lakemba yesterday, after counter-terrorism raids across the city at the weekend. —AFP

UAE'S ETIHAD WORKING WITH AUSTRALIA IN PLANE PLOT PROBE

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates' national airline said yesterday that it is working with Australian police in their investigation into an attempted airplane attack, suggesting it may have been a potential target. Australian authorities have said they thwarted a credible terrorist plot to down an airplane by smuggling a device onboard. They have provided few details, including the precise nature of the threat or any airlines involved.

Ethihad Airways, the smallest of three long-haul Gulf carriers that fly to Australia, confirmed its involvement in the probe in a brief statement. "The Ethihad Airways aviation security (AVSEC) team is assisting the Australian Federal Police (AFP) with its investigation and the matter is ongoing," it said. "Ethihad is complying fully with the enhanced security measures at airports

in Australia and monitoring the situation closely. Safety is the airline's number one priority."

The Abu Dhabi-based carrier refused to elaborate on its role in the probe or confirm whether one of its planes was targeted. Ethihad operates direct flights to four Australian cities: Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. The airline has built strong ties to the country, buying a stake in alliance partner Virgin Australia, featuring down-under stars including Nicole Kidman in advertising campaigns and sponsoring Melbourne's soccer team and its home stadium.

Australian media outlets have reported that the conspirators wanted to target a flight to the Middle East, possibly the Emirati city of Dubai, but they failed to get the device onboard so changed their focus to an Australian

domestic airline. Ethihad's hub in Abu Dhabi is 130 kilometers from Dubai's main airport, the world's busiest for international flights.

Dubai-based Emirates, the largest Mideast carrier, has not responded to requests for comment on the investigation. Police arrested four men in raids in Sydney late Saturday — two Lebanese-Australian fathers and their sons — in connection with the investigation. Australia's Nine Network television reported yesterday that one of the suspects had tried to check in on an international flight, and that might have been a test run to see if they could get a meat grinder on board as carry-on luggage. Officials have refused to comment on media reports that the plot was to conceal explosives or chemicals that would emit toxic gas inside a piece of kitchen equipment. —AP

TRUMP DICTATED SON'S STATEMENT TOWARDS RUSSIA LAWYERS: REPORT

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump personally dictated a misleading statement in which his son Donald Trump Jr said a meeting with a Russian lawyer during the 2016 election was focused on adoptions, The Washington Post reported Monday. It later emerged that during that fateful June 2016 meeting, Trump's eldest son, his son-in-law Jared Kushner and then campaign manager Paul Manafort met with a Russian government attorney who an intermediary claimed had incriminating information about Trump's rival Hillary Clinton.

The subject line of the email from Trump Jr inviting Kushner and Manafort to the meeting read "Russia - Clinton - private and confidential." In his initial statement on the meeting, Trump Jr said the group "primarily discussed a program about the

adoption of Russian children," and insisted that "it was not a campaign issue at the time and there was no followup." The Post said the president dictated the statement to his son while on a flight home from the G20 summit in Germany.

Trump Jr later sent shockwaves through Washington by releasing a series of emails that detailed how he had attended the meeting after being promised "very high level and sensitive information" that was "part of Russia and its government's support for Mr Trump." Trump has rushed to his son's defense, and lambasted what he calls a political "witch hunt." In defending his son, Trump said: "I think from a practical standpoint most people would have taken that meeting... Politics is not the nicest business in the world, but it's very standard."

Citing people familiar with the discussions, the Post said the president's legal team planned to present the meeting as a potential setup by Democrats seeking to entrap Trump Jr and thus Trump himself, who at the time was the presumptive Republican presidential nominee. The meeting with lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya has thrust Trump Jr into the center of a growing scandal over whether Trump's associates colluded with Moscow to tilt the 2016 election in the Republican's favor. Former FBI director Robert Mueller is probing, in his capacity as special counsel, the Russia connection independently of the Senate panels.

'Unnecessary'
The Post said advisers worry that the extent of Trump's direct involvement in his son's response

could put the president-already under fire for other efforts to undermine the Russia probe-and key advisers in legal jeopardy. "This was... unnecessary," one presidential adviser told the Post on condition of anonymity. "Now someone can claim he's the one who attempted to mislead. Somebody can argue the president is saying he doesn't want you to say the whole truth."

Suggesting Trump is increasingly acting as his own lawyer, strategist and publicist, the adviser added: "He refuses to sit still. He doesn't think he's in any legal jeopardy, so he really views this as a political problem he is going to solve by himself." One of Trump's attorneys, Jay Sekulow, said in response to the report: "Apart from being of no consequence, the characterizations are misinformed, inaccurate and not pertinent." —AFP

SCARAMUCCI OUT AS A NEW CHIEF OF STAFF TAKES REINS

TRUMP FIRES SPIN DOCTOR AFTER JUST 10 DAYS

WASHINGTON: Foul-mouthed spin doctor Anthony Scaramucci was axed as White House communications director Monday, just 10 days after being named to the post and hours after Donald Trump installed a new chief of staff. The 53-year-old New Yorker—whose profanity-laden rant against colleagues gained him global notoriety—was fired as four-star general John Kelly began his quest to impose order on an administration careening out of control.

During its first six months in office, Trump's White House has been beset by scandal, investigations, infighting, leaks, sackings, resignations, stinging legislative defeats and historically low approval ratings. Scaramucci was brought in a little over a week ago to get the White House

said White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders. Sanders added that everyone in the West Wing—including Scaramucci—reported to Kelly, a return to tradition for a White House that has been anything but.

"General Kelly has the full authority to operate within the White House, and all staff will report to him," said Sanders. "That includes everybody at the White House." Kelly inherits the day-to-day running of an administration that far from marching in lockstep-looks like a regiment pinned down by heavy fire, getting conflicting orders from their commander and squabbling over the way forward.

In previous administrations, the chief of staff has acted as a chief operating officer: organizing

All the president's generals

After an Oval Office swearing-in ceremony before the afternoon theatrics, Trump confidently predicted Kelly, a 67-year-old combat veteran, would do a "spectacular job." "I predict that General Kelly will go down as, in terms of the position of chief of staff, one of the great(est) ever," Trump said. "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."

Kelly replaces Priebus, a Republican Party operative who was ousted last week after the spectacular failure of Trump's bid to repeal Obamacare and as his ugly feud with Scaramucci spilled into the open. It was not immediately clear who would replace Scaramucci. Former spokesman Sean Spicer, who resigned a little over a week ago, refused to comment on whether he will now remain in the White House beyond his planned August departure.

No chaos

Earlier in the day, Trump-never determined to project success—insisted Monday that there was no "chaos" at the White House, which he said was running as a finely tuned machine. "I think we're doing incredibly well. The economy is doing incredibly well, and many other things. So we're starting from a really good base," he told a cabinet meeting. But aside from the economy, there has been little reason for Trump to cheer.

Under pressure from a widening probe into his campaign's contacts with Russia last year, Trump last week publicly shamed his own attorney general Jeff Sessions for disloyalty, alarming his conservative base, before turning on Priebus. In another tweet Monday, 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 shouldn't it hurt the insurance companies and why should Congress not be paying what public pays?" he wrote. The billionaire Republican has parted ways with a number of top officials beyond Priebus and Scaramucci, including his national security advisor, deputy national security advisor and FBI director, among others—an unparalleled turnover for such a young presidency. On the global stage, Trump faces the stark challenge of a North Korea that could be on the verge of marrying nuclear and ballistic missile technology. "We'll handle North Korea. We're going to be able to handle them. It will be handled. We handle everything. Thank you very much," Trump said. —AFP



NEW YORK: In this July 28, 2017 photo, White House communications director Anthony Scaramucci walks down the steps of Air Force One after arriving at Long Island MacArthur Airport. —AP

back on message, but quickly prompted negative headlines of his own. He publicly called then colleague and chief of staff Reince Priebus—who was forced out last week—a "paranoid schizophrenic" and denounced chief White House strategist Steve Bannon in lurid sexual terms.

The White House refused to say whether it was Trump or Kelly who precipitated Scaramucci's shock departure, but it seems clear that both were unhappy with his presence. "The president firmly felt that Anthony's comments were inappropriate for a person in that position,"

staff, managing the president's schedule and deciding who gets access to him when. In Trump's White House, a rotating cast of family and staff with unclear roles and opaque job titles seemed to be able to walk into the Oval Office at will or get the president's ear. Despite Kelly's apparent empowerment, 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.

ITALY FOCUSES ON LIBYA MISSION TO MANAGE ITS MIGRANT CRISIS

MILAN: Italy is putting its hopes for managing the migrant crisis on a new, Libya-requested mission to support the North African nation's coast guard after suffering a rebuke by humanitarian groups. Italian ministers were briefing parliamentary committees yesterday on a mission approved by the Cabinet to deploy the navy to aid the Libyan coast guard in its territorial waters. A vote could come as early as today.

Premier Paolo Gentiloni says the mission could become a "turning point" in Italy's bid to manage the unrelenting flow of migrants across the Mediterranean Sea. The UN migration agency says 94,802 migrants have arrived in Italy this year through Sunday, up 11 percent over last year and 85 percent of the European total. They estimate that 2,221 people have drowned this year alone on the central Mediterranean route.

Italy's bid to get 10 humanitarian groups to agree to new rules of conduct for rescuing people from the Mediterranean failed when at least four, including Doctors Without Borders, refused to sign on Monday. Objections to the Italian demands included rejecting a provision permitting armed police on board the rescue ships and not being allowed to transfer migrants to another vessel in order to continue other rescues, instead being forced back to port.

Doctors Without Borders general director Gabriele Eminentone said her charity would continue to work in the Mediterranean "but at the moment, I don't understand what the failure to sign means." The Italian government has said humanitarian groups who do not agree to the new rules could be refused access to Italian ports.

In Brussels, European Commission spokeswoman Natasha Bertaud also said that if the groups "adhere to some principles and operational standards, in line with international law, then they will have the assurance that they can access Italian ports." But it seems unlikely that Italy could deprive them of access to its ports. Under international law, vessels that have rescued people must not be subject to undue delay, financial burden or other difficulties, according to the UN's refugee agency.

At least three groups accepted the Italian government's rules: Save the Children, Malta's MOAS and the Spanish group Proactiva. The Commission is encouraging more to sign up. Italy drafted the code of conduct after prosecutors in Sicily alleged that some non-governmental organizations had been colluding with the smugglers who send boatloads of migrants out daily from Libya, for example by signaling their presence in one area of the sea. —AP



BERLIN: In this July 5, 2016 file photo Muslims attend the morning prayer on the first day of the Islamic holiday of Eid Al-Fitr, celebrating the end of the fasting month of Ramadan at a mosque in the Arab immigrant neighborhood of Neukoelln. —AP

GERMANY'S IMMIGRANT NUMBER HITS NEW HIGH

BERLIN: The number of people in Germany with immigrant roots rose 8.5 percent last year to a record 18.6 million, powered by the influx of refugees and other migrants up to the spring of 2016, official statistics showed yesterday. The Federal Statistical Office said people with an immigrant background - defined as those who either weren't born as German citizens or have at least one parent who wasn't - made up 22.5 percent of the country's total population of 82.4 million in 2016.

The figure was the fifth annual record in a row and the year-on-year rise the strongest since the measurement began in 2005, the office said. Germany saw a large influx of migrants from the Middle East and elsewhere in 2015 and early 2016. That hurt Chancellor Angela Merkel's popularity for a time and boosted the four-year-old nationalist Alternative for Germany party. Migration has since declined as a politi-

cal issue though Merkel's center-left challenger, Martin Schulz, has sought lately to highlight the risks of a new refugee crisis. Polls indicate that Merkel's conservatives, and her personal popularity, have recovered ahead of a Sept. 24 election in which she is seeking a fourth term, and show Alternative for Germany - which also has suffered from infighting - some distance short of the levels it was reaching last year.

The statistics office said that 52 percent of people with an immigrant background are German nationals. Of those, 42 percent were born as Germans. European countries still account for the origins of the largest number of immigrants in Germany, the statistical office said, though other areas have grown in importance over the past five years. Some 2.3 million people in Germany have roots in the Middle East, around 51 percent more than in 2011. And 740,000 have roots in Africa, an increase of 46 percent. — AP



PARIS: A volunteer member of the non-profit organization Reception and Assistance for Migrants (Bureau d'Accueil et d'Accompagnement des Migrants - BAAM) delivers a French course at the Place de Stalingrad to migrants. —AFP

MIGRANTS LEARN FRENCH ON BANKS OF PARIS CANAL

PARIS: Sitting in rows on a grassy embankment overlooking a Paris square, around 50 asylum-seekers recite the alphabet in French following a young woman pointing to letters on a whiteboard. "Ew," 22-year-old Louise shouts, attempting to make herself heard above the passing traffic and the music spilling out of a nearby bar. "Ooh!" comes the reply from the group of mostly Sudanese and Afghan youths, struggling to pronounce the tricky French 'u'.

The migrants are attending free open-air language classes organised by a refugee support group at a dozen locations around the French capital. On a warm July evening two classes are under way on the banks of the Bassin de la Villette, part of the canals in northeast Paris near where migrants are often found sleeping rough. While Louise, who did not wish to give her full name, teaches beginners, Pierre Piacentini, a retired nurse, instructs Level 2 students on how to describe the various ailments they may find themselves explaining to a doctor.

Many in Piacentini's group are regulars at the daily classes, who show up come rain or shine. "They were here when it was minus five degrees Celsius (23 Fahrenheit), they're here when it rains, when it's hot, when they have the sun in their faces. They're really into it basically," the energetic, white-haired volunteer said. A rare sight anywhere in the world in the 21st century, the teaching taking place under the trees in Paris causes passers-by to stop and stare.

Founded in November 2015 at the height of the migrant crisis in Europe, the association BAAM aims to give asylum-seekers some of the support withheld by the state while their asylum claims are being processed. That includes language classes, with the French government only offering lessons to people who have received refugee status. "The problem is that the asylum processing times are very

long. People want to learn French and they can't," complained Julian Mez, one of the founders of BAAM (French acronym for Office of Reception and Assistance for Migrants). He accused the state of holding up the integration process.

From street to school

President Emmanuel Macron, elected in May, has promised to cut the waiting times for asylum claims from around 18 months at present to six months. By the time the changes take effect the Level 2 students may have graduated on to the subjective tense. Omar, a 28-year-old Sudanese, began classes nine months ago. Before, he said, he knew "nothing." "Now, I speak well," he said proudly, in correct French.

On the evening AFP visited the students were learning the vocabulary for the various parts of the body. "I've got a pain in my back," Piacentini tells the class, pressing a hand to his lower back and wincing with mock agony. The students, all males aged between 15 and 30, repeat the sentence in unison and jot it down diligently on notebooks balanced on their knees.

The open-air classroom in the multi-ethnic Stalingrad neighborhood in northeast Paris is next to an overhead metro line under which a sprawling migrant camp sprouted up last year. In November, police cleared the camp that was home to over 3,000 people and an official shelter was opened nearby, but migrants from across Africa, the Middle East and Asia continue to arrive.

For those who attend the classes, France is the destination and not merely a transit point on the well-worn route to England via the port of Calais. Hissan, a 27-year-old Egyptian in the beginners' class, roamed for years around Europe before deciding to settle in Paris. He has found work in construction and can understand a lot of French. "But I cannot speak it," he said ruefully in English. — AFP

VENEZUELA ARRESTS TWO TOP OPPOSITION LEADERS

CARACAS: The Venezuelan intelligence service arrested two prominent opposition leaders early yesterday, their relatives said, a day after a vote to choose a much-condemned assembly that supersedes parliament. Leopoldo Lopez and Antonio Ledezma were both already under house arrest when they were picked up by the intelligence service known by its acronym Sebin, the wife of Lopez and children of Ledezma said separately.

The two men are Venezuela's most high profile opposition leaders. Both had called for a boycott of Sunday's vote for a so-called and all-powerful constituent assembly tasked with rewriting the constitution. Both of their families said they held President Nicolas Maduro, the driving force behind the vote, responsible for the leaders' lives.

"They just took Leopoldo away. We do not know where he is or where they are taking him," Lopez's wife Lilian Tintori said on Twitter. She released home security camera footage in which four uniformed police officers and three in civilian garb are seen putting her husband into a Sebin car and take off, with other cars escorting them. The children of Ledezma-named Victor, Vanessa and Antonietta-also said on Twitter that the Sebin had taken away their father.

Opposition leaders and local media posted cellphone footage of Ledezma being taken away from his home forcibly while still wearing pajamas. Lopez, 46, was transferred to house arrest in July of

this year after serving three years and five months in prison as part of a 14-year term. He had been convicted of instigating violence during protests against Maduro in 2014 that left 43 people dead.

Ledezma, 62, was arrested in February 2015 on charges of conspiracy and racketeering and was placed under house arrest three months later for health reasons. Opposition lawmaker Freddy Guevara said the arrests were aimed at "frightening us and demoralizing us."

Four months of street demonstrations against Maduro have left 120 people dead, including 10 over the weekend that included the election.

The opposition says the vote was a fraudulent ploy by Maduro to cling to power because, it argues, he is so unpopular he could not win an election. The next one is scheduled for 2018. The new constituent assembly is to start working today. It is made up only of members of Maduro's Socialist party. The opposition has called a big rally for that day.

'Imperial orders'

The United States hit Maduro with direct sanctions today over the weekend vote, calling him a "dictator," while the leader refused to heed what he slammed as "imperial orders." The measures were unusual in that they targeted a sitting head of state, but their reach was mostly symbolic, freezing any US assets Maduro might have and banning people under US jurisdiction from dealing with him. — AFP

INDIAN ARMED FORCES KILL TOP KASHMIR COMMANDER

SRINAGAR: Indian forces killed a top militant commander in Kashmir yesterday, triggering clashes in which one protester was killed and dozens injured. Abu Dujana, a senior fighter from the Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba, was killed during a raid near Srinagar in the disputed Indian-held territory of Kashmir.

Indian troops and police special counterinsurgency forces surrounded the village of Harkipora after a tip off that the militant and an aide were hiding in a house. A fierce gunfight followed, police sources said. The 26-year-old Dujana, who was renowned for evading capture, was considered an "A++" target by security forces, who hailed his death a "major achievement".

A house which the militants used was set ablaze by soldiers and another was blown up with heavy explosives, witnesses said. A police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Dujana's aide was a teenaged local rebel and that bodies of the two militants were charred "nearly beyond recognition". As news of Dujana's killing spread, thousands of Kashmir residents came out onto the streets and clashed with government forces, throwing stones at them.

Troops retaliated by firing tear gas, pellet guns and bullets, killing a young man and injuring at least 70 others, witnesses and a police officer said. A woman nurse was wounded by a bullet inside a hospital in Pulwama town, south of Srinagar, when gov-

ernment forces fired at protesters who had assembled outside, a hospital source said. Hundreds of students and residents clashed with police in Lal Chowk, the main commercial centre of Srinagar, where shopkeepers downed shutters and panicked parents rushed to collect their children from schools. The government ordered all schools, colleges and universities closed for the day.

Hunted for years

Security officials say Dujana, who crossed from Pakistan-administered Kashmir in 2010, was the longest surviving fighter in the Indian-controlled territory and used his popularity to escape military traps and mount attacks on security forces.

He had a reputation for being "a master of disguise" who escaped at least five previous military cordons. "He (Dujana) kept weapons and ammunition stashed away in different areas and moved like a civilian disguised as a student and sometimes as a labourer," a resident of south Kashmir, who declined to be named, told AFP.

The militant also appeared at the funerals of slain colleagues at least twice, but gave police and troops the slip. "He knew the territory like the back of his hand. He was very, very mobile," a police officer said on condition of anonymity. His death is one of the biggest blows to Kashmiri separatists since the death of another commander, Burhan Wani, in July last year.

Wani's killing sparked months of widespread protests against Indian rule and left nearly 100 civilians dead and thousands injured. Since then, stone-throwing civilians, sometimes entire communities, have increasingly gone out onto the streets to support rebels trapped by military cordons in a bid to help them escape. Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since the end of British colonial rule in 1947. Both claim the Himalayan territory in full. Militant groups, including LeT, have for decades fought roughly 500,000 Indian soldiers deployed in the territory, demanding independence or a merger with Pakistan. Tens of thousands, mostly civilians, have died in the fighting. — AFP

N KOREA'S EVOLVING TO GET WHAT IT WANTS AND NEEDS

SEOUL: North Korea has been condemned and sanctioned for its nuclear ambitions, yet has still received food, fuel and other aid from its neighbors and adversaries for decades. How does the small, isolated country keep getting what it wants and needs?

Some put its success down to the extraordinary nuclear blackmail skills of a country whose leaders could be buying food instead of bombs and missiles. Some see the willingness of outsiders to help people in desperate need, regardless of how odious the government that rules them is, and others credit the feeling in South Korea that aid could improve ties.

North Korea has had gradual economic growth in recent years and doesn't appeal for foreign humanitarian assistance as much as it did in the past. Despite multiple rounds of UN sanctions, its leader, Kim Jong Un, has defiantly pushed his scientists to develop nuclear-tipped missiles capable of reaching the US heartland. It test-launched two intercontinental ballistic missile in the past month, and once Kim perfects such weapons, he may try to extract bigger concessions from Washington. An examination of how a country that frustrates and infuriates much of the world manages to get what it wants:

NUKES FOR AID

A relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons has been a major source of the country's ability to pull in aid and concessions. Since the North Korean nuclear crisis first started in 1993, its government has agreed to several now-dormant disarmament-for-aid deals. One accord was signed with the United States following bilateral talks in Geneva in 1994, while others were struck with several regional powers including Washington during on-and-off multilateral forums that lasted from 2003 to 2008.

Under those deals, North Korea halted atomic activities or disabled key elements of its weapons programs in return for security guarantees, heavy fuel shipments, promises of power-producing nuclear reactors and other aid. Despite it all, nothing has led to North Korea substantially dismantling its nuclear program. Washington accused North Korea of cheating and covertly continuing its atomic work, while the North often accused the United States and others of failing to provide aid on time.

SOUTH KOREAN SUNSHINE

Seoul, though the North's bitter enemy, has also helped its neighbor regularly.

During the Sunshine Era of inter-Korean detente from 1998 to 2008, liberals in Seoul espoused greater reconciliation.

This was welcome in North Korea, which had depended on outside handouts to feed many of its 24 million people and revive an economy devastated by a famine that killed hundreds of thousands in the mid-1990s.

South Korea shipped hundreds of thousands of tons of rice and fertilizer to North Korea annually and engaged in cooperation projects that became some of the few legitimate sources of foreign currency for the North. The value of the cash and goods provided to North Korea during that time was \$6.8 billion, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry.

Liberals credit their engagement with lowering border animosities and allowing two landmark inter-Korean summit talks and emotional reunions of families separated by war. Critics question whether South Korean aid and investment reached those who needed it most or instead helped finance the North's weapons programs. Seoul's large humanitarian assistance programs and cooperation projects were suspended after conservatives came to power in 2008.

CHINESE SUPPORT

China is widely seen as crucial to US-led efforts to strip North Korea of atomic bombs. China accounts for about 90 percent of North Korea's trade, and it sends about 500,000 tons of crude oil to North Korea, mostly for free, every year. China and Russia are also the two biggest hubs for tens of thousands of North Korean workers dispatched abroad - another key source of income for the North.

Critics say Beijing has never fully implemented U.N. sanctions on the North out of worries that a North Korean collapse could cause a wave of refugees to cross the border into China and American troops to move into the North. China is frustrated with North Korea, whose nuclear ambitions put Beijing in an awkward international position, but the Kim government still best serves China's national interests. Some believe even a brief suspension of Chinese oil would cause chaos in the North and force Kim to change. "If China stopped sending fuel shipments for just two to three weeks after the North's first ICMB launch on July 4, North Korea would not have dared conduct a second firing," said analyst Cheong Seong-Chang at South Korea's Sejong Institute. — AP



GAUHATI: In this Feb. 1, 2017 file photo, an Indian farmer works in his paddy field in Roja Mayong village. — AP

FARMER SUICIDES RISING IN INDIA AS CLIMATE WARMS, STUDY SHOWS

FARMERS HAVE LONG BEEN THE HEART AND SOUL OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: When Rani's husband died by drinking pesticide, he left the family in debt. But even if they could pay off the loans, Rani said their farming days are over. "There are no rains," said the 44-year-old woman from drought-stricken Tamil Nadu, one of hundreds of farmers protesting in the capital for more government support. "Even for drinking, we get water only once in 10 days."

A study suggests India will see more such tragedies as climate change brings hotter temperatures that damage crops and exacerbate drought. For every 1 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) of warming above 20 degrees C (68 degrees F) during the growing season in India, there are 67 more suicides on average, according to the findings published Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, or PNAS.

The message "is that farming is an inherently risky occupation, with annual incomes often held hostage to the weather, and it's getting riskier in the era of climate change," said Vikram Patel, an Indian psychiatrist and mental health expert with Harvard Medical School in Boston who was not involved in the study. Experts said the study's findings should raise alarms, especially with India's average temperatures expected to rise another 3 degrees C (5.4 degrees F) by 2050. That will bring more erratic weather events, more drought and stronger storms. "Anything that will affect occupational stability is going to affect farmers' mental health," Patel said.

Many factors

Farming has always been considered a high-risk profession, and a single damaged harvest can drive some to desperation. With agriculture supporting more than half of India's 1.3 billion people, farmers have long been seen as the heart and soul of the country. But they've also seen their economic clout diminish over the last three decades. Once accounting for a third of India's gross domestic product, they now contribute only 15 percent of India's \$2.26 billion economy.

There are many factors that can contribute to suicide, including poor crop yields, financial devastation or debt, access to easy methods of self-harm, or a lack of community support. In India, many farmers will drink toxic pesticides as a way out of backbreak-

ing debt, with the government in some cases guaranteeing monetary aid to their surviving families. That provides a perverse incentive for suicide, "rewarding people who end their lives by paying family compensation, but only if they die," Patel said.

"We may not be able to stop the world from warming, but that doesn't mean we can't do something to address suicide," including providing more financial stability and paying more attention to mental health, he said. The study released Monday should make those efforts even more urgent, experts said. "It provides evidence for a causal pathway - from unfavorable weather to poor crop yields to rural misery to increased suicide," said Dr. Howard Frumkin, a University of Washington environmental health professor who was not involved in the study. "With climate change bringing increasingly chaotic weather in many places, this causal pathway is likely to intensify."

India's farms are already hit regularly by strong storms, extreme drought, heat waves and other extreme weather events. Some still rely on rainfall rather than irrigation to water their crops. Scientists have shown that extreme weather events are already increasing as the planet warms. For the study, researcher Tamra Carleton looked at suicide data from India's National Crime Records Bureau between 1967 and 2013, along with data on agricultural crop yields and on temperature change.

"I estimate that warming temperature trends over the last three decades have already been responsible for over 59,000 suicides throughout India," writes Carleton, who studies agriculture and resource economics at the University of California, Berkeley. In other words, warmer temperatures were a factor accounting for a 6.8 percent increase in suicides, the study says.

She noted limitations in the study, including an inability to differentiate between urban and rural suicides because the crime records bureau only began classifying farmer suicides in 1995. Other experts also noted that the actual number of suicides may be higher than the crime database counted, but said these concerns were unlikely to undermine the study's core findings. India's farmers, often complaining about being ignored, hold frequent protests to demand better crop prices, more loan waivers and even water delivery systems

to guarantee irrigation during dry spells. Sometimes, they stage sit-ins or dump truckloads of vegetables onto highways to disrupt traffic.

Human skulls

For the past month, hundreds of farmers - some carrying human skulls they say are from farmers who committed suicide in the drought-stricken southern state of Tamil Nadu - have been staging what they say will be a 100-day protest in a central New Delhi square to "prevent the suicide of farmers who feed the nation."

The government recently introduced legislation to subsidize crop insurance aimed at reducing some of the financial risk faced by farmers who take out loans to buy seeds and agrochemicals. But experts note there is almost no discussion about mental health as it relates to India's farming community. Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh told lawmakers Thursday there were 11,458 farmer suicides in 2016 - the lowest number in two decades. It was also a year of mild temperatures and normal monsoon rains.

He acknowledged that the number of farmer suicides had gone up by about 9 percent in each of the previous two years, both of which were marred by drought. The crime bureau found that 58 percent of the 12,602 farmer suicides in 2015 were driven by bankruptcy, indebtedness and other farming-related issues. Most of the victims were marginal cultivators or small-farm holders with less than 2 hectares (5 acres) of land.

"Suicides occur due to extreme economic despair," said MS Swaminathan, a geneticist whose work on high-yield rice and wheat crops helped drive India's Green Revolution in the 1960s. His research in the late 1980s found that a 1 degree C (1.8 degree F) temperature rise reduced a crop's duration by about one week, causing losses in the overall weight of harvest.

His foundation works to find farming solutions not only to rising heat, but also to drought or salinity from coastal sea rise. Given these growing risks, he said, government policy has a large role to play. "Suitable crop insurance and a prompt compensation of losses due to climate-related factors will help to avoid a sense of hopelessness that leads to suicide," Swaminathan said. — AP



In this July 4, 2017, file photo distributed by the North Korean government shows what was said to be the launch of a Hwasong-14 intercontinental ballistic missile, ICMB, in North Korea's northwest. — AP

XI: CHINA WILL NEVER PERMIT LOSS OF 'ANY PIECE' OF LAND

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping issued a tough line on national sovereignty yesterday amid multiple territorial disputes with his country's neighbors, saying China will never permit the loss of "any piece" of its land to outsiders. Xi's declaration came during a nearly one-hour speech in Beijing marking the 90th anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army, which has formed a key pillar of support for the ruling Communist Party since 1927 and is the world's largest standing military, with 2.3 million members.

"The Chinese people treasure peace and we absolutely do not engage in invasion and expansion. However, we have the confidence to conquer all forms of invasion," Xi told government leaders and current and retired PLA members gathered at the hulking Great Hall of the People, the seat of the legislature that sits beside Tiananmen Square.

"We absolutely will not permit any person, any organization, any political party - at any time, in any form - to separate any piece of Chinese territory from China," Xi said to applause. "No one should expect us to swallow the bitter fruit of damage to our sovereignty, security and development interests." Xi made no reference to any specific conflicts or dis-

putes during his address, which focused largely on the PLA's growth from a scrappy guerrilla force fighting Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists and Japanese invaders into one of the world's most powerful, if largely untested, militaries.

However, China is currently engaged in a weeks-long border standoff with Indian forces near the countries' disputed border high in the Himalayas, with Chinese spokesmen demanding that Indian troops withdraw to avoid a clash potentially worse than the brief but bloody war the two fought in the region in 1962. China has also long been embroiled in a contest with Japan over East China Sea islands, as well as with five other governments over competing claims to territory in the strategically vital South China Sea. Beijing also threatens to use force to conquer Taiwan if peaceful enticements prove insufficient. China considers the self-governing democratic island Chinese territory.

In his speech, Xi also emphasized that the military's highest loyalty is to the ruling Communist Party, underscoring the PLA's key role as regime preserver through crises such as the bloody suppression of 1989 pro-democracy protests at Tiananmen Square. Top Chinese leaders have consistently rejected calls to make

the PLA loyal to the government and people instead. "The people's army will resolutely safeguard the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and our country's socialist system, res-

olutely safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests, and resolutely safeguard regional and world peace," Xi said. The speech followed a parade Sunday at a training



BEIJING: Chinese paramilitary policemen march outside the Great Hall of the People after attending a ceremony to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army. — AP

ground on the edge of the Gobi Desert during which Xi donned fatigues and declared that the military has the "confidence and capability" to ensure China's sovereignty, security and national interests. Xi, who commands the PLA as chairman of the Central Military Commission, has frequently spoken of his "China Dream" to restore China to a leadership position in international affairs with a modern, far-reaching military force to match. The parade at the Zhurihe base in Inner Mongolia featured troops and advanced weaponry, and was another forceful indication of Xi's iron grip over the PLA and every other political power base within the party ahead of a pivotal congress this autumn that will award him a second five-year term as leader.

That followed similarly high-profile military reviews in Beijing in 2015 and Hong Kong in June. Last week, Xi bestowed newly created "Aug. 1" honors on servicemen in a further elevation of the armed forces' stature. Xi and his predecessors engineered a radical upgrading of the PLA's capabilities through years of double-digit percentage increases in the defense budget, making China the world's second-largest military spender after the United States, although growth has slowed alongside a cooling of the overall economy. — AP

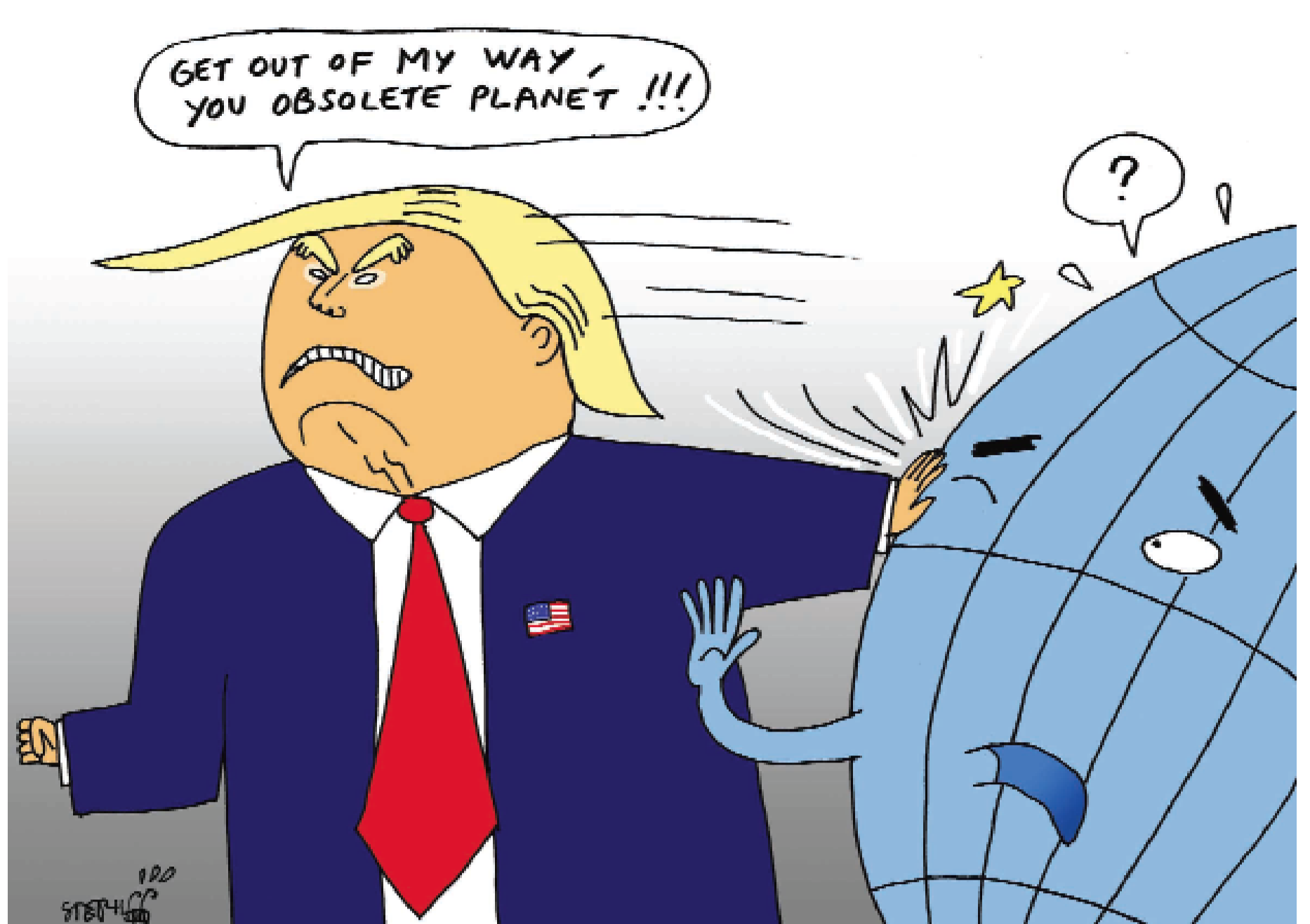
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Focus

AFTER FINISHING 2ND, HUGE 'THANK YOU' DUE TO LA

One of the beautiful things about the Olympics is that the runners-up get prizes, too. Which brings us to Los Angeles. The second choice in its own country to host the 2024 Summer Games took the second-place prize in the international race, too - essentially agreeing to cede 2024 to Paris and accept the consolation prize, which, in this case, is the Olympics four years after that. A city landing the Olympics used to spark parties in the street. On Monday, the news slowly leaked out of the International Olympic Committee headquarters and from city hall in LA, where it was met with about as much fanfare as a broken-down car being towed off the 405 at rush hour.

This has been a joyless, process-defying, mistake-riddled exercise that will be formalized six weeks from now in Peru, with the winners and losers already long decided. Hard to really pick on LA, though. Thanking them would be more appropriate. After the humiliations of Chicago for 2016 and New York for 2012, the US Olympic Committee's rejections of San Francisco and Washington for the current race and the clueless handwringing the USOC went through with its first choice, Boston, the fact that any major US city, let alone one with LA's cachet, was still willing to put itself out there, absorb the cost of the bidding process, and still say 'yes' to 2028 is, well, kind of remarkable.

The LA bidders did the USOC a favor after its board pointedly rejected them, instead choosing Boston, as if the board members, after a year's worth of vetting, were the only ones on earth who didn't know that Boston is known as the city that won't take 'Yes' for an answer. After Boston bailed, Los Angeles gladly stepped in and played all the games the way the IOC wanted them played: Most of its venues are built, it promises to keep costs down and adhere to IOC president Thomas Bach's vision of less-grandiose, less-expensive, less-bloated Games.

Now, it will take 11 years - instead of the usual seven - to see which promises are kept and which are broken. That's 11 years for the USOC leaders to send thank-you cards; one of their main missions has been to bring the Summer Olympics back to the United States for the first time since 1996, and they have done that, albeit four years later than planned. And that's 11 years for Bach to send as many flowers as possible to Los Angeles.

He had to have been embarrassed by the slow dropping out of candidate cities that left the 2024 race with only two bidders: Paris and Los Angeles. Bach decided to change the bidding process and award the next two games this year because, in his words, the status quo produced too many losers - even though, deep down, he may have known the biggest loser under the existing system would've been him.

The 2028 bidding could have come down to Toronto (safe if not scintillating), South Africa (if the problems in second-world Brazil didn't teach the IOC a lesson, whatever will?) and Russia, a country whose doping violations have made it a pariah to much of the Western sports world outside of IOC headquarters in Lausanne. Not wanting to see that contest take place on his watch, Bach changed the rules. The IOC will give a king's ransom - to the tune of at least \$1.8 billion - to Los Angeles in exchange for this compromise. Some will go toward funding youth sports in the city and some will be wrangled over with the USOC, which has given away a lot of cash and swallowed a lot of pride to improve international relations over the last eight years.

Whatever the IOC pays won't be enough. Los Angeles bailed out the Olympic movement in 1984, when Tehran was the only interested bidder and the previous three games had been devastated by terrorism (Munich), red ink (Montreal) and a boycott (Moscow). Peter Ueberroth's vision put the modern-day model in place, turning the Olympics into a mass-marketed, slickly sponsored event that is now worth tens of billions.

The Summer Olympics became a crown jewel of sports thanks to the 1984 Games, and hosting them put your city at the top of the list of world's greatest destinations. Not true anymore. Everything from cost overruns to terrible traffic, pollution, human-rights abuses and mosquito-borne illness in places as wide ranging as Atlanta, Athens, Beijing and Rio de Janeiro punctured the myth of the Great Olympic City. No major, democratic, Western metropolis wanted to host these games anymore. — AP

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SEED FUNDING SLOWS IN SILICON VALLEY

The bloom is off seed funding, the business of providing money to brand-new startups, as investors take a more measured approach to financing emerging US technology companies. Seed-stage financing has been sliding for the last two years, with the number of transactions down about 40 percent since the peak in mid-2015, data show. Dollar investments in fledgling companies have also declined, although less dramatically, dropping more than 24 percent over the same period. The slowdown comes despite an explosion of interest by wealthy individuals and foreign investors looking to park money in the next big thing. And it has potentially big implications for Silicon Valley.

Early-stage funding is the lifeblood of a technology ecosystem built on risk-taking. Denied critical resources in infancy, companies can't hope to scale quickly enough to unseat incumbent industries and grow into the next Uber Technologies Inc or Airbnb. "The reason why startups are disrupting companies in the 21st Century is not because they are smarter. It's because they have capital to do so," said Steve Blank, a serial entrepreneur, startup mentor and adjunct professor at Stanford University.

Early-stage investors, known in Silicon Valley vernacular as seed and angel investors, often act as farm teams do in sports. They provide the first significant money and mentoring to help entrepreneurs prove their technology and hit milestones needed to attract even bigger investments from venture capitalists later on. But the zeal that prevailed just two years ago has faded. Seed and angel investors completed about 900 deals in the second quarter, down from roughly 1,100 deals in the second quarter of 2016 and close to 1,500 deals during that time period in 2015, according to a report released last month by Seattle-based PitchBook Inc, which supplies venture capital data.

The dollar amount provided by seed and angel investors was \$1.65 billion in the second quarter. That's just shy of the \$1.75 billion for the same time period of 2016 and down significantly from 2015, which

saw \$2.19 billion invested into fledgling startups. Veteran seed investors and industry analysts offer a number of reasons for the decline. They cite concerns over inflated valuations as well as a tepid market for initial public offerings, which provide seed funders a way to recoup their investments. After some much-hyped IPOs such as GoPro Inc, LendingClub Corp and Fitbit Inc lost their sizzle, Wall Street has curbed its appetite for shares in unproven private companies with billion-dollar-plus valuations.

Others blame the rise of technology leviathans for the decline in seed funding deals. San Francisco seed fund Initialized Capital, for example, has slowed its investment pace to about 20 companies a year, down from 50 to 60 just a few years ago, even though its fund size more than tripled to \$125 million, according to managing partner Garry Tan. Among his concerns: dominant players such as Facebook Inc have amassed so much wealth they can quickly challenge a hot startup, diminishing its value. "Incumbents just get so much more power, so there are fewer super early-stage opportunities that are very valuable," Tan said. "I can imagine a 20 to 25 percent reduction in valuable investment opportunities."

Fewer, Larger Investments

Funding cycles in Silicon Valley ebb and flow. Several veterans say the decline in seed deals is bound to reverse at some point. Still, some early-stage investors say they're observing a rethinking of the traditional "spray and pray" approach to seed funding. Instead of putting small amounts of money into lots of startups in the hopes that a few will work out, seed investors are shifting to fewer, larger deals. The median seed deal is now \$1.6 million, according to Pitchbook, up from about \$500,000 five years ago. That's more in line with what big venture firms used to invest.

And while data show that about 70 percent of seed-funded companies never make it to the next level, there is no shortage of interest from investors. About 450 seed funds have emerged in the past few years, according to fund managers,

financed by investors as diverse as wealthy individuals, universities, sovereign wealth funds and Chinese family offices and corporations. The experience of early-stage venture firm Floodgate is typical. Investment partner Iris Choi said the firm's average investment size has about tripled in the last four years, from \$1 million on the high end to \$3 million. But along with big bucks come big expectations. Funders betting seven figures want to see a much more mature business than in years past.

The upshot is that some entrepreneurs are finding it harder to get a backer in the very early going, says Allan May, chairman and founder of angel investing group Life Science Angels, based in Sunnyvale, California. "The bar is now higher to get early-stage financing," May said. "You've got to be further along."

In return for writing bigger checks - and assuming bigger risks - seed investors are also demanding larger ownership stakes in new companies. — AF

DEAD VOTERS AND OTHER WAYS TO STEAL ELECTIONS

Elections in Kenya are a fraught business, with polls beset with claims of rigging and intimidation, some subtle, some not, and this year's vote on August 8 is no different. A decade after a disputed election led to the country's worst electoral violence with over 1,100 killed, fear of irregularities is growing. "In Kenya, people say the dead come back to vote, and then return to their graves," said George Morara, chairman of the Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR). The fraudulent inclusion of the deceased on the voters' register is just one way to cheat your way to victory in Kenya.

Chase, scare, buy

Recent months' violence which has displaced citizens in Laikipia and Baringo counties has worried observers who fear ostensible banditry and land struggles as masking efforts to push people from their place of registration. Advocacy group Human Rights Watch in early July documented incidents of intimidation in the Naivasha region, a hotspot of violence in 2007-08. Another strategy is to "rent" voters' identity cards during elections, essentially paying someone not to turn out. "When you have someone's ID, this is the guarantee he will not be able to vote,"

said Morara, adding that some in Kenya will sell their ID and therefore their vote for 1,000 shillings (\$1).

Gerrymandering

Kenya's electoral law allows voters to choose where they register, opening up the possibility of manipulating the polls by bussing in supporters to stack the odds in a particular constituency. "In some constituencies, we notice that the registration levels are higher than normal," said Kelly Lusuli of the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC). "We fear that some are paying others to come and register in a constituency in which they don't live so as to favor a candidate."

Dodgy technology

In 2013, Kenya introduced an electronic system that included biometric voter registration intended to ensure only those registered could vote. It also provided for the electronic transmission of results from polling stations across the country to the national tally center in the capital, reducing opportunities for tampering with result sheets en route. But technology is neither fool-proof nor tamper-resistant with hackers able to modify results or render the entire system unusable. — AFP

AUTOMAKERS SLOW TO FIX DANGEROUS AIR BAGS

A government effort to speed up recalls of more than 21 million of the most dangerous Takata air bag inflators is falling short, according to an analysis of completion rates by AP. Nearly 10 million inflators with the highest risk of rupturing remained in use as of March 31, the latest documents filed by 10 automakers with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration show. That makes it likely that automakers won't meet the government's Dec 31 deadline to finish the recalls, most of which began in mid-2015.

Defective Takata air bag inflators can hurl shrapnel at drivers and passengers involved in a crash. At least 18 deaths have been reported worldwide, including 12 in the US. Inflators with a greater risk of rupturing, deemed "Priority One" by NHTSA, are older, are of a type more prone to failing, or they've been in high humidity areas for many years. Just last week, Florida authorities were investigating whether an exploding inflator in an older Honda Accord killed a 34-year-old mother of three near Tampa.

Of NHTSA's 15 highest-priority recalls, 10 had completion rates below 50 percent on the latest quarterly reports from automakers. In one recall of Ford Ranger pickups, the completion percentage was only 1.1 percent. In six recalls, fewer than one-third of the inflators had been replaced. "The long and short of it is the recall is failing," said US Sen Bill Nelson, a frequent NHTSA critic. Florida has more than 3 million recalled inflators with only about one-third replaced, according to Nelson's office.

Overall, 46 million inflators have been recalled as of June 23. The government says automakers have replaced 16 million, about 40 percent. But more recalls are coming, which will put a further strain on car companies, dealers and owners to get the repairs done. NHTSA says it's "deeply concerned"

that some automakers have low completion rates. In a 2015 order, NHTSA threatened fines against automakers who don't comply with deadlines. Asked if fines are possible, an agency spokeswoman said it is monitoring compliance "and will take further action as appropriate."

Automakers say completion rates are improving and they're cooperating with the government. Some say they've had trouble getting parts, and most have had difficulty finding owners and persuading them to get cars repaired. Subaru, Mitsubishi and Nissan did not respond to requests for comment. Critics such as Nelson say NHTSA is rudderless under the Trump administration. Since President Donald Trump took office, the agency has been without an administrator and two top deputies. But the recalls were moving slowly before Trump took office, records show.

Ford's slow response in the Jan 2016 recall of driver-side inflators in Ford Ranger pickups means thousands of trucks with dangerous inflators are still being driven. A South Carolina man was killed by an inflator in Dec of 2015 when his Ranger crashed. Only 511 of the nearly 362,000 recalled Rangers from the 2004 through 2006 model years have been fixed, with another 3,500 owners unreachable or vehicles removed from use, according to Ford's latest report. Ford had two other recalls from 2015 with completion rates under 40 percent.

Spokeswoman Elizabeth Weigandt says Ford has been replacing Ranger inflators in high-risk areas with newer versions of the same inflators that are in the vehicles now, with the intent of swapping them for safer ones later, she says. Since the inflators deteriorate over time, newer ones are better. "We are working with our suppliers to expedite final remedy parts for these vehicles and expect those to

be available in early fourth quarter 2017," she says, declining further comment.

Quarterly reports filed by BMW, Fiat Chrysler, Daimler Vans, Nissan, Mazda and Mitsubishi all showed completion rates under 50 percent. Daimler hit only 8.4 percent and BMW reached 28.6 percent. Fiat Chrysler's lone recall came in at 48 percent, while one Toyota recall was above 50 percent and another just below. Subaru hit 57 percent. Due to a parts supplier problem, BMW got a five-month deadline extension.

Most of the reports are as of March 31, the latest available. Fiat Chrysler and Subaru figures are from the second quarter, while the latest available Nissan and Mitsubishi reports were from last year's third quarter. At that time, Mitsubishi was at 31 percent, while Nissan reached just 25.6 percent. Even Honda, which has replaced over 63 percent of the inflators in its two "Priority One" recalls, has 3.3 million inflators left to fix. In a letter to senators, NHTSA Acting Deputy Administrator Jack Danielson wrote that automakers have had enough time to get replacement parts.

Several vehicle owners say dealers are still turning them away for lack of parts. John Carroll of Bel Air, Maryland, near Baltimore, says he checks with his dealer often to see if an inflator has arrived for his 2010 Mercedes ML350 driver's air bag. "The answer is always the same. They don't have the parts yet," says Carroll. To get over 60 percent, Honda set up teams in major metro areas who visit owners' homes. In some cases, Honda will send technicians to fix cars in driveways. The company also has used letters, social media and telephone calls to reach owners, spokesman Chris Martin says. NHTSA has urged automakers to take steps similar to Honda, and it has hired a monitor to watch the automakers. — AP

IRAN GUARDS FIND NEW ROUTE TO ARM HOUTHIS

NEW ROUTE USES WATERS OFF KUWAIT

LONDON: Iran's Revolutionary Guards have started using a new route across the Gulf to funnel covert arms shipments to their Houthi allies in Yemen's civil war, sources familiar with the matter have told Reuters. In March, regional and Western sources told Reuters that Iran was shipping weapons and military advisers to the Houthis either directly to Yemen or via Somalia. This route however risked contact with international naval vessels on patrol in the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.

For the last six months the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) has begun using waters further up the Gulf between Kuwait and Iran as it looks for new ways to beat an embargo on arms shipments to fellow Shi'ites in the Houthi movement, Western and Iranian sources say. Using this new route, Iranian ships transfer equipment to smaller vessels at the top of the Gulf, where they face less scrutiny. The transshipments take place in Kuwaiti waters and in nearby international shipping lanes, the sources said.

"Parts of missiles, launchers and drugs are smuggled into Yemen via Kuwaiti waters," said a senior Iranian official. "The route sometimes is used for transferring cash as well." The official added that "what is especially smuggled recently, or to be precise in the past six months, are parts of missiles that cannot be produced in Yemen". Cash and drugs can be used to fund Houthi activities, the official said.

Yemen is more than two years into a civil war pitting the Houthis against the government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, which is backed by a Saudi-led coalition. More than 10,000 people have died in fighting and a cholera epidemic has infected more than 300,000 in a country on the brink of famine. In backing the Houthis against a coalition led by its Sunni enemy Saudi Arabia, Iran is stepping up support for a Shi'ite ally in a war whose outcome could sway the balance of power in the Middle East.

Military Equipment

Efforts to intercept military equipment by the coalition have had limited success, with no reported maritime seizures of weapons or ammunition during 2017 so far and only a few seizures on the main land route from the east of Yemen. Independent UN investigators, who monitor Yemen sanctions, told the Security Council in their latest confidential report, which Reuters has seen, that they continue to investigate potential arms trafficking routes.

They said the United Arab Emirates - which is part of the coalition - had reported 11 attacks since Sept 2016 against its ground forces by Houthis using drones, or UAVs, armed with explosives. "Although Houthi-aligned media announced that the Sanaa-based Ministry of Defence could manufacture the UAV, in reality they are assembled from components supplied by an outside

source and shipped into Yemen," the report said. The report added that the Houthis "will eventually deplete their limited stock of missiles." This would force the Houthis to end a campaign of missile attacks against Saudi territory unless they are resupplied from external sources. An earlier UN report in January said the Houthis needed to replenish stocks of anti-tank guided weapons. The arms smuggling operation may not turn the tide of the conflict, but it will allow the Houthis receive stable supplies of equipment that is otherwise hard to obtain.

Safe Route

"The volume of the activity, I don't call it a trade, is not very large. But it is a safe route," a second senior Iranian official said. "Smaller Iranian ports are being used for the activity as major ports might attract attention." Asked if the IRGC was involved, the second official said: "No activity goes ahead in the Gulf without the IRGC being involved. This activity involves a huge amount of money as well as transferring equipment to Iranian-backed groups in their fight against their enemies." A third senior Iranian official also confirmed the shipment activity and pointed to IRGC involvement.

The IRGC is Iran's most powerful internal and external security force, with a sophisticated intelligence and surveillance network together with elite units which are playing a key role in the war in Syria in support of the government. The IRGC declined to comment on the arms shipments and Iranian foreign ministry officials could not immediately be reached.

Houthi officials were also not immediately available for comment but in March a Houthi leader, who declined to be identified, said accusations that Iran was smuggling weapons into Yemen were an attempt to cover up Saudi Arabia's failure to prevail in the war there. Kuwaiti officials did not respond to questions. A US Navy spokesman said he had no information on the matter.

"(The territorial waters of) Iran, Kuwait and Iraq in the northern...Gulf butt up against each other," said Gerry Northwood, of maritime security firm MAST and a former British Royal Navy captain who has commanded warships in the region. "There is still plenty of room for smugglers to operate. In fact the whole Persian Gulf is a hive of small boat activity. And this is in an area where one man's illegitimate trade is another's legitimate trade."

Hundreds of ships sail through the Bab Al-Mandeb and Strait of Hormuz every day - waterways which pass along the coasts of Yemen and Iran. Many are small dhows, which are hard to track. Western shipping and security sources said that since March there had been an increase in suspicious activity involving Iranian-flagged ships in waters near Kuwait. — Reuters



AMMAN: Women activists protest in front of Jordan's parliament yesterday with banners calling on legislators to repeal a provision that allows a rapist to escape punishment if he marries his victim. — AP

JORDAN PARLIAMENT REPEALS 'MARRY THE RAPIST' CLAUSE

AMMAN: The lower house of Jordan's parliament yesterday scrapped a provision in the kingdom's penal code that allowed a rapist to escape punishment if he married his victim. Cheers and applause erupted from a packed spectators' gallery as legislators voted for repeal, following an emotional debate in which some of the lawmakers jumped up and yelled at each other. The vote was hailed as a major step forward for women in the conservative kingdom. "This is a victory for the women's movement and human rights movement in Jordan," said Salma Nims, the secretary general of the Jordanian National Commission for Women.

Despite the country's pro-Western political orientation and cosmopolitan urban elites, many areas of Jordan remain socially conservative, with entrenched notions of "family honor". This includes the belief that having a rape victim in the family is shameful, and that such "shame" can be expunged through marriage. In yesterday's debate, some lawmakers had argued that an amended version of Article 308 was needed to protect rape victims against social stigma by giving them the marriage option.

In the end, lawmakers voted in line with the recommendations of the government and a royal committee on legal reforms. Prime Minister Hani Mulki addressed the plenum before the vote, saying the government backs repeal. The decision must still be approved by parliament's appointed upper house, or Senate, and by King Abdullah II. After the expected final approval, Jordan would join Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt which have canceled their "marry the rapist" clauses over the years.

The international rights group Human Rights Watch said Lebanon's parliament is also considering repealing such a provision. The clause remains on the

books in several other countries in the Middle East and Latin America, as well as in the Philippines and Tajikistan, HRW said. In a statement issued before Tuesday's vote, the New York-based watchdog said that scrapping Article 308 "would be a positive step to strengthen the rule of law and end impunity for violence against women."

Dima Barakat, a leading activist, said that those forcing a girl to marry her rapist "are killing this girl a thousand times a day, at least". The attacker "took away her dignity, her honor and took away her life," Barakat said. Ahead of yesterday's vote, several dozen activists rallied outside the parliament in Amman, the Jordanian capital, calling for repeal. They held up banners reading "Article 308 is a disgrace to the Jordanian justice system" and "Article 308 does not protect honor, it protects the culprit."

Nims said before the vote that many of the lawmakers had been undecided. She said some saw the provision as a form of "protection" for women who can demand marriage rather than suffer further social stigma for having been raped. The need for such "protection" indicates a fundamental problem in how Jordanian law and society perceive women, said Eva Abu Halaweh, executive manager of Mizan for Law, a human rights group. "The law still looks at women as bodies, linked with 'honor,'" Abu Halaweh said.

Earlier this week, parliament took another step toward legal reform, closing a legal loophole that had given courts the discretion to impose sentences of as little as six months on those who killed female relatives in the name of "family honor". Under the new amendment, killing "in a fit of rage" can no longer be considered a mitigating circumstance in such cases. — AP

NEW HEALTH FEES TO GO INTO EFFECT...

Continued from Page 1

The first decision includes fees for health services for non-Kuwaiti visitors and those not registered in the health insurance system. The second decision decides fees for health services for expats who are included in the health insurance system. The decisions do not include any increase in health insurance charges - these will remain at KD 50 for an expat worker, KD 40 for his wife and KD 30 each for his children.

The decisions took into consideration and exempted some cases over humanitarian and social circumstances, within the rules.

Exemptions include the following categories: Children under 12 suffering from cancer; non-Kuwaiti wife of a Kuwaiti citizen; non-Kuwaiti mother of a Kuwaiti; children of a Kuwaiti woman married to a non-Kuwaiti; inmates of care homes; inmates of social care homes; GCC citizens; bedoons (stateless residents); members of official delegations; transit passengers; foreign prison inmates; scholarship students at the

education ministry; blind patients in private rooms of ministry hospitals; all employees of the health ministry, their spouses and children are exempt from x-ray and nuclear medicine fees. The decision stipulates that handicapped non-Kuwaitis shall be treated as Kuwaitis with regards to prosthetics.

Meanwhile, the committee studying various subsidies kept the prices of petrol as is, and reduced the prices of diesel and kerosene for August to 105 fils from 110 fils. Meanwhile, UAE and Oman raised prices of all types of petrol and diesel, while Qatar kept prices as is.

Separately, government sources told Al-Anbaa daily that Kuwaiti insurance companies are seeking official approval to raise third-party vehicle insurance from KD 20 to KD 100, an increase of 400 percent. The current fees have been the same for more than 55 years, since the issuance of law 24/1961 with regards to insurance companies and brokers. The sources said most insurance companies are reviewing insurance programs to get official approval.

AMIR URGES LAWMAKERS TO SAFEGUARD...

Continued from Page 1

Ghanem added that First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah spoke about regional issues and Kuwait's mediation among GCC countries, hoping that HH the Amir's efforts would result in tackling the inter-GCC rift.

The meeting dealt with other issues, namely the so-called Abdaly cell case, state security, public fund cases, measures by the interior ministry to bring to justice those charged, the corrupt and traitors, "with emphasis that judicial rules be the basis for determining the truth and the law be applied literally and justly".

Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah said the meeting was "very positive and fruitful". The session focused on regional situations, measures taken against the Abdaly cell and action against fugitives from justice in this case, Sheikh Mohammad, who doubles as Acting Minister of Information, told reporters. During the meeting, the government briefed deputies on all details it had regarding such matters, the minister said. Sheikh Mohammad thanked the deputies for their high spirits which helped in the success of the meeting, hoping that patriotic sentiments would prevail and that Kuwait's security and stability would be maintained. — KUNA

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SPANISH WINGER NAVAS RETURNS TO SEVILLA

MADRID: Spanish international winger Jesus Navas returned to Sevilla yesterday, the La Liga club announced on their website. Navas had been a free agent since being released by Manchester City at the end of last season. "Sevilla FC have reached an agreement with Jesus Navas, with the player signing a deal yesterday keeping him at the club for the next four seasons," Sevilla said in a statement. The 31-year-old moves back to Spain after four seasons with City, during which he won the 2013/14 Premier League title and two English League Cups. Navas, who played 395 times for Sevilla after his first-team debut in 2003, has 35 international caps but hasn't played for Spain since being left out of the 2014 World Cup squad. "Navas comes home with the firm intention of becoming Sevilla FC's all-time (record) appearance holder," the club added. Navas is only 19 short of the current record of 414 appearances held by club legend Juan Arza. —AFP



GREENLAND DENIES ERITREAN COACH FIRING WAS RACISM

STOCKHOLM: The Football Federation of Greenland (GBU) has denied firing its national coach of Eritrean origin because of racism, according to local media. GBU President John Thorsen told the daily Greenlandic newspaper Sermitsiaq late on Monday that Tekle Ghebrelul was fired because a majority of the board ruled that he did not conduct an "exemplary sporting performance," in line with the federation's guidelines. But Ghebrelul, who served as coach for four years, has slammed his dismissal as "unjustified" and having "racist motives". The GBU announced that Ghebrelul was fired last Thursday. Accused of assaulting a minor, Ghebrelul told Sermitsiaq on Friday that the allegations were "a pretext" to fire him in order to silence his criticism against the "hostility" he experienced in the North Atlantic autonomous Danish territory, which he moved to 14 years ago. —AFP

NEYMAR IN DUBAI, BUT WHERE NEXT IS A MYSTERY

PARIS: Brazil's Neymar triggered a guessing game on his return from China yesterday, posting a video on social media apparently from Dubai but leaving his final destination—Paris or Barcelona—a mystery. As speculation mounts of an imminent record-busting transfer from Barcelona to Paris Saint-Germain, Neymar's video appeared to be from the first class lounge at Dubai airport. The 25-year-old forward, who was in Shanghai on Monday fulfilling a sponsor's engagement, also posted a photo with the caption in Portuguese: "Lunch at half-way". In another video posted from an aeroplane, Neymar jokes around with an image messaging app that superimposed a Spanish flag and a small plane on his tee-shirt. Intrigue surrounds his final destination amid initial reports that he was headed from China to Doha, to meet PSG's Qatari owners and pass a medical before his reported 222-million-euro (\$260 million) move from Barca. —AFP



VIVA REAL MADRID SOCCER ACADEMY TRAINING CAMP KICKS OFF

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the kick-off of VIVA Real Madrid Soccer Academy's training camp at Valdebebas sport city in Madrid.

The training program features several workshops and activities educating the players on the best maneuvers, attacks, different scenarios and conditioned games. Moreover, it focuses on different technical areas, such as dribbling, short passing, turning and finishing. The program was also designed to develop

young players in other fields, such as tactical understanding, and mental, physical and social growth.

Commenting on this occasion, Abdulrazzaq Bader Al-Essa, Corporate Communications Director at VIVA said: "We are extremely

pleased with the enthusiasm the players have displayed since the beginning of the trip. The players could not wait until they show their talents to the coaches since they arrived to Madrid. We are very pleased to have been able to support these young athletes in bringing

them closer to their dreams." He added: "We scheduled different activities to the players to ensure the maximum of experience during this camp. Abdulaziz Diab from VIVA's PR team and Ali Al-Adwani from VIVA's Marketing team accompanied the players during the camp."

PEYPER GETS SUPER NOD DESPITE 'NEUTRAL' CALL

WELLINGTON: South Africa's Jaco Peyper was yesterday named as referee for the Super Rugby final as officials shrugged off calls for a neutral whistle-blower and a yellow-card controversy in the semis.

Governing body SANZAAR said Peyper's appointment was purely "merit-based" after putting him in charge of Saturday's final between South Africa's Golden Lions and New Zealand's Canterbury Crusaders in Johannesburg.

"The selection criteria for all match official appointments for the last two years follows a clear tournament policy... that such appointments be merit-based," SANZAAR CEO Andy Marinis said in a statement.

He added that New Zealand's Glen Jackson refereed last year's final between the Lions and the Hurricanes in Wellington, when the home team lifted the trophy. Some experts have questioned the wisdom of using referees from the same country as one of the teams involved, with Crusaders coach Scott

Robertson among those calling for the "best neutral ref".

"I'd love a neutral referee," he told New Zealand's Radio Sport. "Look it's not my decision, but in my opinion it's more around what's best for the game. 'Let's get the best neutral ref, I just think it's fair'."

Peyper was also at the centre of controversy last week when he sin-binned Hurricanes fly-half Beauden Barrett at a key stage of their semi-final against the Lions in Johannesburg. Replays suggested the punishment was harsh but the Lions took full advantage, scoring 17 points to seize the lead while Barrett was off the field in the second half.

"It was a pretty tough decision against Beauden," former Springboks coach Nick Mallett said on SuperSport TV at the time. On Saturday, Peyper will have fellow South African Marius van der Westhuizen and New Zealander Glen Jackson as his assistants, while South Africa's Marius Jonker is the television match official. — AFP



SINGAPORE: In this March 4, 2017 file photo South Africa's Christopher Anthony Cloete of the Southern Kings holds on to the ball during their Super Rugby match against Japan's Sunwolves, in Singapore. Europe's Pro12 has confirmed it will add the two South African teams dropped from Super Rugby to expand to a 14-team, two-continent competition from this season. Celtic Rugby, which runs the Pro12, says the Cheetahs and Southern Kings will join straight away for the 2017-18 season starting later this year. — AP

RUGBY

S AFRICAN TEAMS CONFIRMED IN EXPANDED PRO14 FOR IN 2017-18

LONDON: South African teams Cheetahs and Southern Kings will join an expanded Pro14 in time for the 2017-18 season, competition organisers confirmed yesterday. The move increases the number of teams in the league, which grew out of the Celtic League and was previously known as the Pro12, from 12 to 14.

The championship will be split into two seven-team conferences, each containing two Welsh teams, two Irish teams and one club from each of Scotland, Italy and South Africa. "The arrival of the Toyota Cheetahs and the Southern Kings marks a bold and exciting new chapter for the Guinness PRO14 as a global rugby championship," said Pro14 chief executive Martin Anayi. "South Africa is a rugby powerhouse of over 55 million people. These teams already operate to the high standards demanded by Super Rugby and they will add to the quality of our tournament."

"The appeal of professional club rugby has never been greater and we aim to be at the

forefront of the game's growth around the world." The Cheetahs, from Bloemfontein, and the Port Elizabeth-based Kings will play their home games in South Africa. They will only play on Saturdays and there will be five travel-free days before matches.

The Cheetahs and Kings will not be able to qualify for European competition. The pair lost their places in the southern-hemisphere Super Rugby, which is being cut from 18 teams to 15, at the end of the current season, which ends on Saturday with the final between South Africa's Lions and New Zealanders Crusaders.

"This development is as exciting as the launch of Super Rugby itself back in 1996," said South Africa Rugby CEO Jurie Roux in a statement on the Pro14 website. "It will not be without its challenges in aligning with a competition in a different part of the calendar and in very different playing conditions."

"But it is also a fantastic opportunity for South African rugby to widen our rugby hori-

zons." Conference A will feature the Ospreys, Cardiff Blues, Munster, Connacht, Glasgow, Zebre and Cheetahs. Reigning champions Scarlets will line up alongside Dragons, Leinster, Ulster, Edinburgh, Treviso and the Southern Kings in Conference B.

Each team will play every other team in their own group home and away, in addition to one-off matches against all the teams in the other group. Two additional rounds will guarantee the Welsh and Irish teams retain six derbies each, while the Scottish, Italian and South African teams will play each other three times.

Six teams will qualify for the end of season knock-out phase culminating in the Pro14 final. The top three non-South African teams in each conference and the team with the next best points tally across both conferences will qualify for the Champions Cup.

The first round of the season is due to be played on the weekend of September 1-3. The fixtures have not yet been announced. — AFP

TYCOON 'TWIGGY' VOWS TO SAVE WESTERN FORCE

SYDNEY: Australian mining billionaire Andrew 'Twiggy' Forrest promised Monday to dig into his own pockets to save Super Rugby club Western Force as arbitration to decide its fate got underway. The hearing follows the ARU announcing in April that either the Force or Melbourne Rebels would be cut from the unwieldy southern hemisphere competition from next year, along with two South African teams.

This was supposed to happen within "48 to 72 hours" of the announcement, but has become bogged down in legal wrangling. South African franchises Central Cheetahs and Southern Kings have already been ditched.

If the ARU win the arbitration hearing, which could run for a week or more, they are set to dump the Force, although News Corp. newspapers said Forrest could pursue further legal action.

But if it goes in favour of Western Australia's RugbyWA, the national body will have to try to cut the Rebels or negotiate a merger between two Australian franchises. Local reports said RugbyWA would argue that Western Force are guaranteed participation in Super Rugby until the end of 2020 as part of the current broadcasting deal.

But the ARU will counter that that guarantee is void after regional body SANZAAR moved to reduce Super Rugby from 18 to 15 teams. ARU chief Bill Pulver last week reiterated that

Australia does not have the financial capability or player depth to support five Super teams.

"I'm not going to speculate on the arbitration, I'm not even going to talk about the arbitration other than to say it starts on Monday," he said then. The Force are currently owned by the ARU under a financial bailout deal they signed last year, but they have launched an 'Own the Force' campaign to buy back their licence.

It has been selling shares to fans at Aus\$1,000 (US\$800) each to raise enough revenue to do this. Forrest, who has previously promised to "keep this team thriving", Monday announced he will now offer interest-free loans to purchase shares, with any money lent paid back to RugbyWA.

This effectively means the Force will receive double for each share sold, leaving enough to buy the licence and build for the future, said RugbyWA chairman Tony Howarth.

"Andrew's idea of promoting community participation by doubling the benefit for the cause will have a wonderful impact on both the professional game but more importantly provide funds for RugbyWA to support the growth of grassroots rugby," he said.

Forrest said instead of scrapping Western Force, the ARU should merge the Rebels with the ACT Brumbies and ensure Super Rugby is played nationwide, and not just in Australia's eastern states. — AFP



BUDAPEST: Hungary's Katinka Hosszu competes in the final of the women's 400m individual medley during the swimming competition at the 2017 FINA World Championships in Budapest. — AFP

THIEM SAYS CATCHING BIG FOUR STILL 'LONG WAYS' OFF

WASHINGTON: Dominic Thiem, the highest-ranked men's tennis player without a Grand Slam title, begins his push to the US Open this week knowing the gap to the game's big four remains large.

The 23-year-old Austrian, ranked a career-high seventh, and 20-year-old German Alexander Zverev, who reached a career-best eighth on Monday, are the top-ranked men's players at the ATP and WTA Citi Open. "We still have to win a lot of matches to deserve to be

called the next big things in tennis," Thiem said Monday. "It's nice to hear that but I think it's still a pretty long ways for both of us."

World number one Andy Murray, second-ranked Rafael Nadal, number three Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic, who will miss the rest of the year with an elbow injury, remain the gold standard in their 30s that Thiem and his fellow 20-somethings are chasing in the rankings and for Grand Slam crowns.

"They are really special. It's very unusual you

have four players like this in one generation," Thiem said. "I think it's getting a little better for the other players. They are starting to take a few tournaments. In the Grand Slams you would have to beat two or three (of them) in a run. That's why other players haven't won the big titles."

Thiem defeated Djokovic in the French Open quarter-finals to reach the last four at Roland Garros for the second consecutive year. He lost there to Rafael Nadal, as he had in the Madrid and Barcelona finals, but Thiem recog-

nizes the value of a strong run-up to a Slam with the US Open looming in just four weeks.

"It's important to find a strong game. It's the start of a very long journey," Thiem said. "I hope it works out well here in Washington. We have a lot of tough matches ahead. From round one basically there are only really tough matches."

This week is Thiem's biggest event as a top seed and one he expects will toughen him for upcoming US Open tune-ups at Montreal and Cincinnati. "Of course it's nice to be top seed

here but it doesn't affect anything because the guys behind me are really strong," he said.

Thiem does not marvel at how players like Federer and Nadal play top tennis deep into their 30s, having followed their fitness path. "It's everything on how you are taking care of your body," he said. "Players have improved that a lot in recent years. It's the diet. Everyone has a physio. They get treatment after every practice. It's small things but if you do them every day for 15 years it has an impact." —AFP

NISHIKORI TRIES TO END TITLE DROUGHT AT PAST WIN SITE

WASHINGTON: Japan's Kei Nishikori, trying to end an 18-month ATP title drought, hopes returning to the scene of his most recent outdoor crown will provide a pre-US Open spark. The 27-year-old Rio Olympic bronze medalist opens with a second-round match today at the ATP Citi Open in his first match on the Washington hardcourts since beating John Isner in the 2015 final for his 10th career ATP crown.

"I don't want to think about it too much, but I know this is a tournament I've won before. I do have good memories on center court," Nishikori said Monday. "I think there's an advantage for past champions. I'm happy to play in a place I've won before."

Ninth-ranked Nishikori was the 2014 US Open runner-up, becoming the first Asian man in a Grand Slam final, and reached the semi-finals last year at Flushing Meadows. But he hasn't won a title since taking his fourth consecutive Memphis Open crown in February 2016, dropping six finals since then—last year at Miami, Barcelona, Canada and the Swiss Indoors and this year at Brisbane and Buenos Aires.

"I'm always looking to win," he said. "I'm a little disappointed not to be winning some tournaments. If I keep playing well, I'll be winning some. The chance will come if I keep working hard." Nishikori took some time off in Japan after making a third-round Wimbledon exit. He had matched his deepest French

Open run with a quarter-final effort at Roland Garros, losing to British world number one Andy Murray. But he got back to work last week.

"It has been a very good week. Trained a lot," Nishikori said. "I'm excited to be in this tournament. The court is a little faster than two years ago. It's a little hot. I make fit my tennis in these conditions."

The wildcard second seed is among five of the world's top 11 players in the field, paced by seventh-ranked Austrian Dominic Thiem and rising German star Alexander Zverev, ranked a career-best eighth.

"The field is very strong. It's going to be tough rounds," Nishikori said. "I'll try to force my tennis each match. It's going to be a great tournament." Nishikori praised the play of Swiss star Roger Federer, who turns 36 next week after capturing his record 19th Grand Slam singles crown at Wimbledon.

"Roger is playing great again. With his age, it's something incredible," Nishikori said. "I want to play a long time but I don't know if my body can stand up."

Nishikori says he loves the challenge of playing at a time when older stars and rising talents have raised the level needed to stay competitive. "It's a good thing," he said. "Competition is tough. Not only are the top four playing good, young guys are coming up. It's good for tennis and good for me. I'm excited. I enjoy the challenge." —AFP



STANFORD: Maria Sharapova of Russia competes against Jennifer Brady of the United States during day 1 of the Bank of the West Classic at Stanford University Taube Family Tennis Stadium on Monday in Stanford, California. — AFP

TENNIS

SHARAPOVA BATTLES INTO SECOND ROUND AT STANFORD

LOS ANGELES: Five-time Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova made a battling return to US hardcourts on Monday with a 6-1, 4-6, 6-0 victory over American Jennifer Brady in Stanford, California. "I feel like I just want to hug everyone and say thank you," Sharapova told fans in a post-match interview. "It's my first match in the States in a really long time, and it's the closest thing to home for me." The former world number one from Russia hadn't played in the US since March of 2015, before serving a 15-month doping suspension for the use of meldonium. She returned to competition in April, but her comeback has been disrupted by a hip injury that forced her to withdraw from Wimbledon qualifying. Sharapova, whose ranking has fallen to 171 in the world, received a wild card into the premier level tournament in Stanford, where she was tested Monday by the 80th-ranked Brady.

Sharapova got off to a brisk start. Although she needed to save three break points in the sixth game to take a 5-1 lead in the opening set, she broke in the next game to seize the set before Brady won the second. "I had a bit of a letdown but that's the way it is," Sharapova said. "You finish a set and think you've got it, but she came out firing, capable of hitting winners and big serves."

Early in the third Sharapova fought off two break points to consolidate her lead, and wrapped up the match after two hours and two minutes. "I feel like I face a lot of things: not competing for a long time, an opponent who's able to play some great tennis ... I feel like I'm playing catch-up against everyone who's had a head start," Sharapova said. "All that matters is that I keep playing."

Sharapova, who has also accepted a wildcard into the WTA tournament in Cincinnati-

another key warmup for the US Open—booked a second-round meeting with seventh-seeded Ukrainian Lesia Tsurenko, a 6-3, 6-3 winner over Spain's Lara Arruabarrena.

Wimbledon champion Garbine Muguruza,

who stunned Venus Williams in the final at the All England Club, is the top seed. She will open with a second-round match against American Kayla Day, who defeated Japan's Misaki Doi 6-4, 6-2 on Monday. —AFP



LONDON: This file photo taken on June 25, 2002 shows French Jerome Golmard playing a forehand during the first round match against Czech Jan Vacek at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. Golmard died of the Charcot disease aged 43, the French Federation of Tennis announced yesterday. — AFP

ISNER SIDELINED BY SORE RIGHT KNEE

WASHINGTON: New US number one John Isner, who took back-to-back titles the past two weeks in Newport and Atlanta, withdrew from the ATP Citi Open on Monday with a right knee injury.

The 32-year-old standout, a three-time runner-up at the Washington hard-court event, won the 11th and 12th titles of his career over the past two weeks, downing Australian Matthew Ebden on Newport grass and compatriot Ryan Harrison in two Atlanta tie-breakers in the finals.

But the toll prompted Isner to withdraw from Washington, where he was seeded ninth and owned a first-round bye, as Masters Series events in Montreal and Cincinnati loom before the US Open starts August 28.

The twin triumphs were enough to boost Isner over Jack Sock in the rankings to top the American list, Isner moving to 18th this week with Sock staying at 19th. Isner's departure leaves only nine of the world's top 20 players at the US Open tuneup event in the US capital. —AFP



John Isner

CUBS ACQUIRE LHP WILSON, C AVILA IN TRADE WITH TIGERS

CHICAGO: The rolling Chicago Cubs got a big lift Monday when they acquired reliever Justin Wilson and catcher Alex Avila in a trade with the Detroit Tigers, bolstering their chance for another long playoff run. The addition of Wilson gives manager Joe Maddon another late-inning option in front of All-Star closer Wade Davis. The World Series champions had been searching for a veteran to back up catcher Wilson Contreras since they cut Miguel Montero a month ago, and Avila is having one of the best seasons of his career at the plate.

Tigers general manager Al Avila traded away his son, but his club received minor league infielders Jeimer Candelario and Isaac Paredes and a player to be named or cash. The 23-year-old Candelario was considered one of Chicago's top prospects, but he was blocked at the major league level by NL MVP Kris Bryant and first baseman

Anthony Rizzo. Just three weeks ago, the Cubs hit the All-Star break with a 43-45 record after an embarrassing 14-3 loss to Pittsburgh at Wrigley Field. They trailed Milwaukee by 5 1/2 games in the NL Central, and there was no sign of a turnaround on the horizon.

But Chicago got left-hander Jose Quintana in a blockbuster trade with the crosstown White Sox on July 13, and took off from there. The Cubs won two of three in Milwaukee over the weekend to improve to 13-3 since the break and open a 2 1/2-game lead over the Brewers in the division. St. Louis was 4 1/2 back, with Pittsburgh 5 1/2 behind Chicago.

"The second half, we've played really well," Cubs general manager Jed Hoyer said. "But we've got three teams we have to hold off to win our division, and that's our focus is. A team that was two games under .500 two weeks ago can't

be looking ahead. We've got to take care of business in our division. That's where all of our focus is now."

While Chicago has benefited from solid relief all season, the acquisition of Wilson will lessen the load on primary setup men Carl Edwards Jr., Koji Uehara, Hector Rondon and Pedro Strop. It also puts a third left-hander in the bullpen alongside Mike Montgomery and Brian Duensing. "I think it really takes a burden off of a bunch of different guys, which I think is really helpful for Joe," Hoyer said.

Wilson, who turns 30 on Aug. 18, is 3-4 with 13 saves and a 2.68 ERA in 42 appearances in 2017. He also is under contractual control through next year, an important consideration for the Cubs since Davis, Uehara and Duensing are eligible for free agency after this season. Avila returns to Chicago after he played for the White Sox last year.

The 30-year-old Avila is batting .274 with 11 homers and 32 RBIs in 77 games. Contreras is the middle of a breakout season and Victor Caratini hit a tiebreaking homer in the seventh inning of Sunday's 4-2 win at Milwaukee. But Caratini has just 26 major league at-bats, leaving the Cubs on the lookout for a veteran backstop to help keep Contreras fresh.

"Wilson plays like the Energizer Bunny," Hoyer said. "I think we all know that. Everyone has their limits, and I do think we have to be very careful not to wear him down, to make sure he's still fresh during the pennant race. We risked him playing too much without going out and making moves like this." Right-hander Dylan Floro was designated for assignment to create a spot on Chicago's 40-man roster. The Cubs will have to make two more moves to add Wilson and Avila to their active roster

before Tuesday night's series opener against Arizona.

The Tigers are fourth in the AL Central, making them sellers at the non-waiver deadline. They traded outfielder J.D. Martinez to Arizona for three prospects on July 18. To replace Wilson and Avila on the roster, Detroit recalled right-hander Joe Jimenez and catcher John Hicks from Triple-A Toledo before Monday night's game at the New York Yankees. Candelario, who made his major league debut last season, hit .152 with a homer and three RBIs in 11 games with the Cubs this year. The switch-hitting third baseman batted .266 with 12 homers and 52 RBIs in 81 games with Triple-A Iowa.

The 18-year-old Paredes, who signed with the Cubs as a non-drafted free agent in 2015, hit .264 with seven homers and 49 RBIs in 92 games with Class A South Bend.— AP



OAKLAND: Oakland Athletics' Chad Pinder, left, scores past San Francisco Giants catcher Nick Hundley during the eighth inning of a baseball game in Oakland, Calif., Monday. — AP

BASEBALL

GONZALEZ HURLS EIGHT NO-HIT INNINGS IN NATIONALS WIN

MIAMI: Gio Gonzalez lost his no-hit bid in the ninth inning when Dee Gordon led off with a clean single, and the Washington Nationals beat the Miami Marlins 1-0 Monday night. Gonzalez was pulled after Gordon hit a soft liner the opposite way to left-center field. He threw 106 pitches. Gonzalez (9-5), who grew up in nearby Hialeah, walked three, hit a batter and struck out five. He retired 14 in a row during one stretch. Sean Doolittle relieved and got NL home run leader Giancarlo Stanton to ground into a double play. After Christian Yelich beat out an infield single, Marcell Ozuna popped out, giving Doolittle his fourth save since being acquired from Oakland and seventh this season. Jose Urena (9-5) matched zeroes with Gonzalez until the sixth, when Bryce Harper's RBI single put the Nationals ahead. Urena allowed just three hits in eight innings.

YANKEES 7, TIGERS 3

Aaron Judge broke out of a slump with

his 34th home run, regaining sole possession of the major league lead, and Chase Headley sparked New York past Detroit. Luis Severino beat Michael Fulmer in a matchup of young All-Stars on the mound, though neither was at his best. Hours after acquiring Sonny Gray from Oakland at the trade deadline, Headley put the AL East leaders ahead to stay with a two-run double in a four-run fourth inning. Todd Frazier followed with a two-run single, and Judge hit a solo shot in the fifth. Headley finished with three hits as New York won for the ninth time in 11 games. Severino (8-4) needed a career-high 116 pitches to get through five innings. Aroldis Chapman entered with the bases loaded in the ninth and got two outs for his 13th save. Fulmer (10-9) gave up seven runs and seven hits over six-plus innings.

ORIOLES 2, ROYALS 1

Craig Gentry singled home the winning run with two outs in the ninth inning, and

Baltimore cooled off surging Kansas City. Manny Machado had two hits and scored a run for the Orioles, who have won three straight. Caleb Joseph got Baltimore going in the ninth with a one-out single off Joakim Soria (4-3). Ruben Tejada singled with two outs before Gentry hit a grounder up the middle that sent Joseph home from second base without a throw. It was the second loss in 12 games for the Royals, who managed only five hits off three Baltimore pitchers. Zach Britton (1-0) - the subject of many rumors before the non-waiver trade deadline ended on Monday afternoon - worked the ninth for the Orioles.

RED SOX 6, INDIANS 2

Doug Fister took a shutout into the eighth inning and rookie Rafael Devers went 4 for 4 with an RBI to lead Boston. Mookie Betts stopped his mini-slump by driving in three runs with two singles, and Eduardo Nunez added three hits and two RBIs for the Red Sox, who won for the third time in nine games. Bradley Zimmer hit a two-run homer for AL Central-leading Cleveland, which lost its second straight after a season-high nine-game winning streak. Fister (1-5), claimed off waivers from the Los Angeles Angels on June 23, was pulled after giving up Zimmer's homer with two outs in the eighth. He allowed two runs and five hits, walking two and striking out five. Brandon Workman got the final four outs. Mike Clevinger (5-4) gave up five runs on seven hits in three innings.

PHILLIES 7, BRAVES 6

Odubel Herrera and Maikel Franco hit homers, Nick Pivetta threw six sharp innings and the Philadelphia Phillies beat the Atlanta Braves 7-6 on Monday afternoon to complete a four-game sweep. Pivetta (4-6) gave up one run and three hits, striking out five. Kurt Suzuki and Freddie Freeman went deep for Atlanta. Braves starter Mike Foltynewicz (9-6)

allowed five runs and seven hits in four innings. The Phillies have won five in a row and are 10-6 since the All-Star break, but still own the worst record (39-64) in the majors.

MARINERS 6, RANGERS 4

Robinson Cano had a two-run single in the ninth and Seattle won at Texas hours after the Rangers traded pitcher Yu Darvish. The Mariners trailed 4-0 after two innings before getting even against Cole Hamels, the remaining ace for Texas now that Darvish is with the NL West-leading Los Angeles Dodgers. Cano lined a ball over the head of right fielder Shin-Soo Choo, getting two runs home before he was thrown out trying to stretch the hit into a double. The hit came right after pitching coach Doug Brocail was ejected for arguing a balk called against Alex Claudio (2-1) that put runners at second and third. David Phelps (1-1) struck out five in 1 2/3 innings before Edwin Diaz pitched a perfect ninth for his 20th save. Rougned Odor and Carlos Gomez homered for the Rangers, who had five hits in the first two innings against Felix Hernandez and then one the rest of the game. They struck out 13 times against four pitchers.

WHITE SOX 7, BLUE JAYS 6

Matt Davidson singled in Leury Garcia with two outs in the ninth inning for his second game-ending hit in two days, and Chicago rallied to beat Toronto after losing top prospect Yoan Moncada to a right knee injury. Adam Engel sparked the winning rally with a one-out single against Roberto Osuna (3-2). Garcia then was hit by a pitch, putting runners on first and second. After Tyler Saladino struck out swinging, Jose Abreu tied it at 6 with a single to right. Davidson followed with another base hit, and then was mobbed by his teammates as he ran around the infield. The White Sox trailed 6-1 before they scored four times in the eighth,

capped by consecutive homers for Davidson and Yolmer Sanchez. Davidson also hit a game-ending, two-run homer in Sunday's 3-1 victory over Cleveland.

ASTROS 14, RAYS 7

Jake Marisnick homered twice among his three hits and had a career-high five RBIs to help Houston coast past Tampa Bay. The Rays cut the lead to one after a two-run homer by Corey Dickerson in the third inning before an RBI single by Tyler White made it 4-2 with two outs in the bottom of the inning. Marisnick's first shot - a three-run homer which bounced off the wall above the seats in left field - came next to push the lead to 7-2. Two pitches later Derek Fisher, who finished a triple shy of the cycle, connected off Alex Cobb (9-7) on a home run to right field to make it 8-2. Houston starter Charlie Morton (9-4) allowed a season-low two hits with two runs in six innings for his fourth win in five starts. Dickerson added a solo shot in the eighth for his seventh career multihomer game.

ATHLETICS 8, GIANTS 5

Marcus Semien hit a grand slam off reliever George Kontos in the sixth inning, and Oakland held on for the win hours after trading ace Sonny Gray. Jed Lowrie had three hits and an RBI, Ryon Healy added a two-run single and Matt Joyce reached base four times and scored twice for Oakland. Bruce Maxwell drew a leadoff walk from Josh Osich (3-2) to begin the sixth. Pinch-hitter Rajai Davis followed with a one-out single before Osich walked Joyce to load the bases. Kontos replaced Osich to face Semien, who powered a 1-1 pitch over the wall in left-center for his second career grand slam. Paul Blackburn (2-1), making the start after Gray was dealt to the New York Yankees, allowed five runs over five innings. Blake Treinen retired three batters for his first save in the AL this season. Buster Posey and Brandon Belt had two hits apiece for the Giants.— AP

MLB Results/Standings

Oakland 8, San Francisco 5; Houston 14, Tampa Bay 7; Chicago White Sox 7, Toronto 6; Seattle 6, Texas 4; Boston 6, Cleveland 2; Washington 1, Miami 0; NY Yankees 7, Detroit 3; Baltimore 2, Kansas City 1; Philadelphia 7, Atlanta 6.

American League				National League				
Eastern Division				Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB				
NY Yankees	57	47	.548	-	Washington	63	41	.606
Boston	58	49	.542	0.5	Miami	49	55	.471
Tampa Bay	54	53	.505	4.5	NY Mets	48	55	.466
Baltimore	51	54	.486	6.5	Atlanta	48	56	.462
Toronto	49	57	.462	9	Philadelphia	39	64	.379
					Central Division			
					Chicago Cubs	56	48	.538
Cleveland	57	47	.548	-	Milwaukee	55	52	.514
Kansas City	55	49	.529	2	St. Louis	52	53	.495
Minnesota	50	53	.485	6.5	Pittsburgh	51	54	.486
Detroit	47	57	.452	10	Cincinnati	42	63	.400
Chicago White Sox	41	62	.398	15.5	Western Division			
					LA Dodgers	74	31	.705
Houston	69	36	.657	-	Arizona	60	45	.571
Seattle	54	53	.505	16	Colorado	60	46	.566
LA Angels	51	55	.481	18.5	San Diego	47	58	.448
Texas	50	55	.476	19	San Francisco	40	67	.374
Oakland	47	59	.443	22.5				

AUSTRIA BRACE FOR HISTORIC GAME

WAGENINGEN: Women's Euro newcomers Austria are bracing for their semi-final against Denmark fully aware that tomorrow's encounter will be a world apart from last month's 4-2 win in a friendly.

"It's going to be a completely different game, the friendly was weeks ago," right full back Katharina Schiechl told AFP at Austria's training ground in Wageningen. "Denmark have presented themselves very well so far at the Euros, they've played stronger and stronger every game." "Besides, they have high-class individual players like Pernille Harder," added Schiechl. She was on the pitch on July 6 when Austria beat the Danes owing to braces from Nicole Billa and Sarah Zadrazil. So was left full back Verena Aschauer, who said Denmark were a little more acceptable opponent than Germany, the eight-time champion eliminated by Denmark in the quarter-finals.

"I wouldn't prefer Germany, but in the semi-final it doesn't matter who you play against, everything is possible in one game," said the 23-year-old, who plays for Freiburg in the Bundesliga.

"But Denmark sounds a little better than Germany," Aschauer added she had no doubt Austria—which enjoys massive fan support at home—was ready for the challenge. "Our team is something very special in every sense of the word," she added.

"Of course team spirit is the most important thing, the key factor, but we are also very good individually. "What makes us special is that we stick together no matter what, and we always believe until the final whistle that we can make it."

"That's what we proved for example in the game with Spain, but also in the other games." Austria surprisingly won their group after beating Switzerland and Iceland and a 1-1 draw with France.

Aschauer and the lanky Schiechl, who is 24 and plays for Werder Bremen in the Bundesliga, agreed the quarter-final win against Spain on penalties after a goalless draw was the biggest of their careers so far.

"Incredible, amazing," said Schiechl. "It's a dream come true at the moment, and speaking of the semifinal we're going to put in everything we have left in us." "But Denmark is going to be a hard task." — AFP



BAVEL: Denmark's forward Pernille Harder (C) attends a training session of the UEFA Women's Euro 2017 football tournament in Bavel, southern Netherlands yesterday.—AFP

SOCCER

ARSENAL FRIENDS READY IN DUTCH-ENGLAND EURO SHOWDOWN

ZEIST: Friends or not, Dutch keeper Sari van Veenendaal will be all business when she faces her on-form Arsenal teammate and England striker Jodie Taylor in the Euro semi-final tomorrow. Taylor is the tournament's top scorer with five goals from just three games, after being rested for the final group game against Portugal. She scored a hat-trick against Scotland and was on the mark against Spain in the group and France in the quarter-final.

"She's on fire and it's great for me to see this because of course she's still my teammate," the 27-year-old Van Veenendaal told AFP at the Netherlands' training base in Zeist.

"Every little chance is a goal. She's a real striker, she's running, she's working hard, and she has the luck on her side. She's a great player." "We're good, we did a lot of extra training last season to prepare us both for the Euros so I guess she knows exactly what kind of goalkeeper I am and I know what kind of striker she is."

"But for now we have just one job and that's to win our next game," added Van Veenendaal, who joined Arsenal in 2015, a year before Taylor. Van Veenendaal conceded only once at the

women's Euro when she misjudged Belgian Tessa Wullaert's vicious lob into the top corner, and the Netherlands have a perfect record after winning all group games and their semi-final against Sweden.

But so do England, who breezed through the group stage with ten goals for and one against before edging France 1-0 owing to Taylor's clinical 60th-minute finish.

"I know what kind of striker she is, I've played more than a season with her," says Van Veenendaal. "I'm training every day with her so I knew she could play like this. It doesn't really surprise me, to be honest."

'NO DEJA-VU'

Taylor also scored when the two teams last met in a friendly last November, handing England a 1-0 win with a lob over Dutch keeper Loes Geurts after coming on as a substitute.

"Maybe it's good that she scored at that moment because now we are ready for her," said Van Veenendaal, who is not by far the only Super League player on the Dutch team.

"Many of our players from the national team

here are playing in England so they know us really well but of course we know exactly how they play," she added.

Danielle van de Donk and substitute Dominique Janssen play for Arsenal, defender Mandy van den Berg for Reading, and young striker Vivianne Miedema signed up with Arsenal from Bayern Munich before the Euro. "We are playing every week on the highest level in the English league so we know what kind of football they're going to play," said Van Veenendaal. "Of course it's very special, I know most of the players, but for now we're playing for our own countries and I'm from the Netherlands and I really want to beat them."

In their last encounter at the Euro, England beat the Netherlands 2-1 in the 2009 semi-finals after extra time with the decider scored by Jill Scott, who is in the Netherlands but will not play after two bookings. "Times change for them and also for us so it's not deja-vu," said Van Veenendaal. "We're just playing our tournament, we try to prepare every game and Thursday is our next game so that's the most important part for now." — AFP

REAL EXPECTED TO GIVE MLS STARS INTENSE MATCH

CHICAGO: Veteran goalkeeper Tim Howard says top North American club players should expect "cut-throat" competition from Spanish giants Real Madrid in today's Major League Soccer All-Star Game. The All-Star match at Soldier Field, home of the NFL's Chicago Bears, marks the end of a four-match, 11-day pre-season US tour for Real Madrid that included a 3-2 loss to rival Barcelona in a Clásico matchup at Miami. But Howard expects Real Madrid to bring their best as they prepare for the upcoming La Liga campaign.

"When you get to play for a team like Real Madrid, there's no days off," Howard said. "There are no easy games. They have a world-class coach that they are trying to impress. They have got to play well to earn a spot coming up for the La Liga season. World football is intense and it's cut-throat. There aren't any days when guys just take it easy. When you put your jersey on and cross the line—whether it's a tournament, a regular-season game, a pre-season game, an All-Star Game—these guys are going to be up for it." Colorado Rapids goalkeeper Howard will start in goal for Chicago Fire coach Veljko Paunovic in the mid-season exhibition.

In 2001, Howard represented the East in a conference versus conference All-Star Game and in the following year he was part of an MLS All-Star squad that took on US national team. He played

against the MLS All-Stars when he returned with English Premiership side Everton in 2009 in the current format that pits the All-Stars against top-flight European competition.

"I'm not sure which one's better," he said of the various permutations of the All-Star Game he has experienced. "But it will be certainly exciting to play Real Madrid—there's no question about that." The All-Stars feature plenty of heavyweights with marquee match experience, including World Cup winners Bastian Schweinsteiger, David Villa and Kaka. "It's an honor to play for the MLS All-Star team, especially here in Chicago," said the Fire's German import Schweinsteiger, who launched his MLS career this season and will captain the All-Stars by popular vote. "We will look to have a good game, to be competitive against Real Madrid and if we can win, we will go for the match," Schweinsteiger told the Chicago Tribune.

"We know that it is a very strong team and that we are playing together for the first time. It is not going to be easy at all, but we will try and have a good game and enjoy it a little." Orlando City's Brazilian star Kaka, who helped Real Madrid to the 2011-12 La Liga title, said facing his former team will be "a very emotional experience." "I do not know how the game will go, but we have a great team to play a very even game with Real Madrid," he said. —AFP



CLAIREFONTAINE-EN-YVELINES: This file photo taken on June 5, 2017 shows France's defender Christophe Jallet (C) attending a training session in Clairefontaine-en-Yvelines as part of the team's preparation for the upcoming WC 2018 qualifiers against Sweden on June 9. Jallet, former defender of PSG and OL, continues his career in Nice and hopes to participate in the Football world cup 2018. —AFP

AUSTRALIAN CLUBS TO PLAY PRE-SEASON GAMES IN USA

NEW YORK: NBA clubs will play pre-season games in the United States against three Australian teams in October, the NBA and Australia's National Basketball League announced Monday. The Brisbane Bullets, Melbourne United and Sydney Kings will mark the first NBL clubs to travel to North America to face NBA teams.

"This is another big leap forward for the NBL and Australian basketball," said Kings coach Andrew Gaze, a former NBA player and five-time Olympian. "As somebody who played in the NBA I know how much this opportunity means. The NBL has always been very attractive for NBA players and is a pathway to the NBA."

The Sydney Kings will visit the Utah Jazz, whose roster includes Aussies Joe Ingles and Dante Exum, on October 2. "This is massive for Australian basketball and an exciting opportunity for NBA and NBL players to compete together on the same floor," Jazz swingman Ingles said.

"As an Aussie who began my career in

the NBL and now entering my fourth season with Utah, I am very proud of the growth of the game in my home country." Melbourne United will visit the Oklahoma City Thunder on October 8 and the Brisbane Bullets will visit the Phoenix Suns on October 13.

"We are proud to help continue the advancement of the game through these competitions," Thunder general manager Sam Presti said. A record-matching eight Australian players were on NBA opening-night rosters last season, including former NBL players Ingles and Patty Mills, a guard for the San Antonio Spurs.

The NBL has eight teams, seven in Australia and one in New Zealand, and will celebrate its 40th season with the 2017-18 campaign that launches in October. "This is a huge moment for Australian basketball," said NBL executive chairman Larry Kestelman. "For the NBL to be able to play some of the biggest teams in the world shows how far our league has come." — AFP

News

In brief

Cristiano Ronaldo says his 'brilliance' annoys people

LISBON: Real Madrid forward Cristiano Ronaldo said yesterday his "brilliance" annoys people, a day after he was quizzed by a Spanish judge investigating whether he evaded paying millions of euros in taxes. "What bothers people is my brilliance, insects only attack lamps that shine!!!" the Portuguese wrote in an Instagram message that received over a million likes within an hour of being posted. Ronaldo spent over 90 minutes on Monday answering the questions of investigating judge Monica Gomez at a closed door hearing in Pozuelo de Alarcón, the wealthy suburb of Madrid where he lives. Prosecutors accuse the four-time world player of the year of having evaded 14.7 million euros (\$17.3 million) in tax. Ronaldo, 32, has denied any wrongdoing.

Balotelli and Favre staying at Nice

NICE: Nice centre-back Dante said yesterday he is delighted that star forward Mario Balotelli and coach Lucien Favre decided to stay at the Ligue 1 club. Nice face a trip to Amsterdam to take on Ajax in the Champions League qualifying second leg today in their first ever participation in Europe's premier competition. Although Balotelli will be missing after suffering a hamstring injury in the 1-1 first leg draw in southern France, in which he scored Nice's goal, Dante is relieved the temperamental Italian has remained on the Cote d'Azur. "Mario was free (to leave). The two parties made an effort, though. We're very happy with that," said Brazilian Dante. Favre had been courted by Borussia Dortmund in the close season but Nice, who finished third in the top flight last season, ruled out any exit for the Swiss coach in June, with the Bundesliga outfit appointing Peter Bosz instead. "I never thought the coach would leave before the end of his contract," said Dante.

City send youngsters on loan to Girona

LONDON: Manchester City sent three young stars on loan to La Liga newcomers Girona yesterday. Brazilian midfielder Douglas Luiz, Colombian winger Marlos Moreno and Spanish midfielder Aleix Garcia will all spend the forthcoming season with Girona as City strengthen their links with the club. City had already sent Pablo Maffeo on loan to Girona earlier this week for the right-back's third spell with the Spaniards. Luiz's move comes just weeks after the highly-rated 19-year-old was signed by City from Vasco da Gama for £10 million (\$13 million). "Girona will give Douglas the perfect opportunity to develop at the top level of the European game," City director of football Txiki Begiristain said. Moreno, 20, was signed by City last year but spent the 2016-17 campaign on loan at Deportivo La Coruna. Garcia and Maffeo, both 20, have been on the fringes of the City first team without earning regular opportunities.



COLOMBO: Sri Lankan cricket captain Dinesh Chandimal catches a ball during a practice session at the Sinhalese Sports Club (SSC) Ground in Colombo yesterday. The second Test cricket match between India and Sri Lanka starts in Colombo tomorrow. —AFP

PREVIEW

PNEUMONIA-HIT CHANDIMAL TO LEAD SRI LANKA RECOVERY BID

COLOMBO: Dinesh Chandimal is expected to return from pneumonia to lead injury-hit Sri Lanka as they bid to rebound from their record thrashing against India in the second Test in Colombo, starting tomorrow.

Chandimal, who was only appointed last month, sat out the first Test in Galle when Virat Kohli's India won by 304 runs—their biggest margin of victory in terms of runs on foreign soil. It piled yet more pressure on beleaguered Sri Lanka, whose humiliating one-day series defeat to minnows Zimbabwe prompted former captain Angelo Mathews to step down.

Sri Lanka are also battling injuries ahead of the second Test, where they are bidding to stay alive in the three-Test series. All-rounder Asela Gunaratne fractured a thumb during the first Test in Galle, and veteran bowler and stand-in captain Rangana Herath also injured a middle finger. Sri Lanka's cricket manager Asanka Gurusinha said Chandimal should be fit for Colombo after his bout of pneumonia. Left-arm spinner Herath, who was unable to bat in the second innings, is still not certain. "We will give him (Herath) till the last minute to make sure that he is fit. The day before the Test we will see whether he can drift the ball, it will come down to that," said Gurusinha.

Batsman Danushka Gunathilaka, who made his Test debut in Galle, is likely to give up his place to Chandimal, while Kusal Mendis is expected to return to his number three batting position.

'OUR PLAYERS ARE CAPABLE'

Sri Lankan chief selector Sanath Jayasuriya

backed his team to bounce back at the Sinhalese Sports Club Ground, recalling India's turnaround during the previous series in 2015. "India did come back the last time they were here, after losing in Galle. This is cricket, and if we apply ourselves and want (to come back) then we can," Jayasuriya told The Times Of India.

"This is something we proved last year when we beat Australia, then world's number one Test team, 3-0 when they were here. It wasn't a one-off win because we can't win three Tests in a row without playing well. "So, our players are capable. We need to give them lot of confidence," said the former star all-rounder. But Sri Lanka, now seventh in the world rankings, will have to show rapid improvements against India, who dominated the opening Test. Kohli said he was facing his own selection headache with opener Lokesh Rahul available for selection after recovering from viral fever.

Shikhar Dhawan, who scored 190 in the first innings, and Abhinav Mukund, whose 81 steered the team's second innings, have made the opening slot a dilemma for the selectors. But Rahul is expected to make the starting line-up in place of Mukund. The match will mark batsman Cheteshwar Pujara's 50th Test. He hit a patient 153 in the first innings of his 49th game to improve his average to 52.18.

"There have been ups and downs, but looking at the recent form, I will be looking forward to play in the 50th Test match and score some runs for the team," the 29-year-old Pujara said. —AFP

Sports

South African teams confirmed in expanded Pro14 for in 2017-18



Gonzalez hurls eight no-hit innings in Nationals win



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CARSON: Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti speaks at the podium as he announces a deal has been reached with the International Olympic Committee to host the 2028 Summer Olympics during a news conference with LA 2024 Bid Chairman Casey Wasserman (L) City Council President Herb Wesson and Janet Evans olympian and vice chair of LA2024 (R) looking on at StubHub Center on Monday, in Carson, California. —AFP

LA AGREES TO HOST 2028 GAMES, PARIS SET FOR 2024

LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles announced its intent to host the 2028 Olympics on Monday, paving the way for Paris to host in 2024 in a deal hailed as a win-win-win for both cities and the Olympic movement.

"I am proud to announce the Olympic Games are coming back to the United States of America," Los Angeles mayor Eric Garcetti said at ceremony at the StubHub Center stadium. "In 2028, we are bringing the Games back to LA, one of the great capitals of the Olympic movement. A city that has always been a Games changer and will be again in 2028."

Los Angeles had been in a race with Paris to follow Tokyo 2020 as the 2024 host with the winner to be named by the IOC on September 13 in Lima. But the possibility that Los Angeles would abandon a 2024 bid and instead accept the 2028 Games has been growing since the IOC decided in July that it would attempt to award both Games at its Lima meeting.

Paris had remained insistent on hosting in 2024, on the 100th anniversary of the city's 1924

Olympics. LA officials, who had put forward a \$5.3 billion bid for 2024, said an agreement had been reached with the IOC on financial considerations that would make waiting an extra four years feasible.

Bid chief Casey Wasserman said the IOC had waived various fees and payments that could ultimately save LA organizers millions. The IOC will also advance \$180 million to LA organizers to lessen the impact of the longer leadup time, money that normally wouldn't be disbursed until closer to the Games kickoff.

"The IOC contribution as stipulated by the HCC is \$1.8 billion and has the potential to exceed \$2 billion according to the evaluation of the LA bid committee when taking into account the estimated value of existing sponsor agreements to be renewed and potential new marketing deals," the bid committee said in a statement.

Garcetti added: "This deal was too good to pass up." The deal will bring the Games back to Los Angeles for a third time, after the city hosted

in 1932 and 1984. The agreement must still be approved by the Los Angeles City Council and the United States Olympic Committee—both of which backed the 2024 bid.

City Council president Herb Wesson, an enthusiastic supporter of the Games, said the council committee on the Games would thoroughly vet the new proposals before making its recommendation to the full council for a vote hopefully within two weeks.

Local backing is crucial to the success of any Games, but federal government support is also key since the national government will play a key role in security.

Wasserman singled out the support of US President Donald Trump as helping to bring the Games back to the United States. The USA last hosted the Summer Olympics in Atlanta in 1996 while the Winter Games were held in Salt Lake City in 2002.

Garcetti said that if all goes according to plan, LA is confident it will receive 100 percent support by IOC members in Lima for a bid that

relies largely on existing infrastructure and features iconic venues such as the Memorial Coliseum-slotted once again to host athletics.

IOC president Thomas Bach also said he was confident any remaining hurdles could be cleared. "We are very confident that we can reach a tripartite agreement under the leadership of the IOC with LA and Paris in August, creating a win-win-win situation for all three partners," he said. "This agreement will be put forward to the IOC Session in Lima in September for ratification."

'AT THE FINISH LINE'

The IOC's efforts to streamline the bidding process didn't help boost the number of candidates for 2024. Boston was first selected by the USOC as a prospective host but dropped out amid local opposition and money concerns. Hamburg, Budapest and Rome also pulled out of the race.

"In sports terms, there is no other metaphor it was a marathon," Garcetti said of the arduous

process. "Today, we are at the finish line." Paris, which will also be hosting the Games for a third time, endured the disappointment of failed bids in 1992, 2008 and 2012.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo said on Twitter: "Happy that my friend @MayorofLA has made an important new step on an agreement that will have three winners:

Paris, Los Angeles and the IOC #Paris2024." Garcetti downplayed any risk involved in taking on the Olympics so far in advance, saying political or economic setbacks in the interim, or even a natural disaster such as an earthquake, wouldn't prove fatal to the preparations.

"Los Angeles is resilient," Garcetti said. "I'm not worried about those things. We aren't going to see sports go away. We're not going to see stadiums disappear. "When you look at those risks, sure in some scenario if the entire Earth falls apart probably the Olympics aren't happening in Los Angeles. "But short of that," Garcetti said, "We're going to have a great Games here in LA." — AFP

IAAF NOT READY TO LIFT RUSSIA'S SUSPENSION

LONDON: The IAAF is not ready to lift Russia's suspension from track and field competitions as the country fails to fully accept the findings of an investigation into its state-sponsored doping scheme. A meeting of the international track and field federation's member associations in London tomorrow will be asked to maintain the ban on Russia that was imposed in 2015 after World Anti-Doping Agency investigator Richard McLaren exposed how failed drug tests were covered up.

Rune Andersen, the IAAF's Russia taskforce chairman, wants assurances that the McLaren report's findings "have been properly acknowledged and addressed, and there will be no repetition."

The Russian athletics federation "has not yet demonstrated to the satisfaction of the taskforce that it has established a strong anti-doping culture within its sport, or that it has created an open environment that encourages whistleblowing," Andersen said in his latest report to the IAAF Council on Monday.

Andersen acknowledged in the document that Russia is making progress in cleaning up its doping culture, including "satisfactory cooperation" with French criminal authorities in an investigation, but says action is still required in key areas. A "small number" of athletics disciplinary cases that were ongoing in 2015 remain unresolved, a "few" athletes flagged in WADA's doping investigation are yet to be interviewed, and Andersen is concerned that banned coaches are still working in the sport.

"There is a long way to go until they can conduct the testing which we consider to be meaningful," Andersen told reporters. "We are working with the Russians on the changing culture. There are some good movements now started from the athletes themselves wanting to change, but they haven't shown and demonstrated to us that this is in place."

IAAF President Sebastian Coe is leaving Andersen's taskforce to decide when Russia should be allowed back into the track and field fold. "Although there is progress, there is still more work to be done," Coe said. The only Russians competing at the world championships in London, which begin Friday, are those cleared to compete as neutrals after the IAAF assessed their history of drug testing. The 19 athletes given exemptions include three former world champions, but they won't be allowed to wear national colors and the Russian anthem won't be played if they win gold. —AP

BARCELONA HAS 'DOUBTS' ABOUT NEYMAR'S FUTURE

BARCELONA: Barcelona is worried, very worried, that Neymar might be headed to Paris-Saint Germain. The Brazil striker is expected to be at practice today, but no one seems to know if he'll accept a world record transfer or show up for

training. Just in case, Barcelona is making moves to protect 26 million euros (\$30.7 million) that would be paid to Neymar if he stays in Spain, according to a club official.

The official, who spoke on customary condition of

anonymity, said "given doubts concerning the future of the player and while the situation is resolved" the money is being held from Neymar. "What the club does with the money, it does not know yet, given the uncertainty of the future," the official told The Associated Press.

The 25-year-old Neymar would be due the money now as per his contract renewal last year. But the amount is tiny compared to the 222 million euros (\$262 million) that PSG would have to pay to trigger the release clause included in Neymar's contract.

Neymar is supposed to arrive in Barcelona yesterday after some publicity events in China both personal and for Barcelona. He is scheduled to return to training at Barcelona's training grounds just outside the city today. There are growing rumors that Neymar, who has had four seasons of winning trophies and scoring spectacular goals at Barcelona, will bolt for PSG.

Part of the gossip surrounding the possible transfer is that Neymar was to meet with doctors in Qatar for a medical exam of the player with PSG. Neymar's father, who acts as his agent and is also named Neymar, arrived in Barcelona on Monday. He was swarmed by journalists at the airport but revealed nothing about his son's intentions.

Neymar also remained mum about his future while playing for Barcelona during its preseason tour in the United States before heading off to Shanghai to boost his brand as a fashion icon. Last year, Neymar signed a contract extension with Barcelona through 2021, with his buyout clause increasing to the current 222 million euros and 250 million (\$288 million) by 2018. The bonus Barcelona is now trying to protect is from that deal.

If PSG does sign Neymar, the cost of the transfer would more than double the 105 million euros (then \$116 million) that Manchester United paid a year ago for France midfielder Paul Pogba.

PSG starts its season on Saturday, while Barcelona has until Aug 13. Two weeks ago, Barcelona president Josep Bartomeu told the AP that Neymar "is not on the market." He then told ESPN that if Neymar "wants to go... then they will have to pay the clause, right down to the last euro." —AP



Neymar

Kuwait Times 55th Anniversary BUSINESS

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FRANKFURT: The skyline of the banking district is reflected in a puddle after a heavy thunderstorm during the night in Frankfurt yesterday. —AP

US FACTORY ACTIVITY SLOWS AS ORDERS DROP

CONSTRUCTION SPENDING FALLS, CONSUMER SPENDING UP 0.1%

WASHINGTON: A measure of US factory activity fell from a near three-year high in July amid a drop in new orders and consumer spending barely rose in the prior month, setting the economy on a moderate growth path in the third quarter. Other data yesterday showed a sharp drop in construction spending in June as investment in public projects recorded its biggest decline since March 2002.

The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said its index of national factory activity fell to a reading of 56.3 last month from 57.8 in June, which was the highest level since August 2014.

A reading above 50 in the ISM index indicates an expansion in manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the US economy. Manufacturing is slowing as a boost from the energy sector ebbs after a burst in oil well drilling activity. It is also being hurt by declining automobile production as companies respond to falling sales that have left them with an inventory glut. Motor vehicle production has dropped for three straight quarters.

Last month, the ISM survey's production sub-index fell 1.8 points to a reading of 60.6. A gauge of new orders slipped to 60.4 from 63.5 in June. Though a measure of factory employment dropped two points to 55.2, labor market conditions in the sector are tightening. Manufacturers reported an increase in turnover, with employees leaving for other opportunities.

The US dollar touched a 15-month low against a basket of currencies after the data. Prices of US Treasuries reversed course to trade higher and US stocks rallied, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average hitting a record high.

Tepid demand

In a separate report yesterday, the Commerce Department said consumer spending, which accounts for more than two-thirds of US economic activity, edged up 0.1 percent in June after a 0.2 percent gain in May.

There was also little sign of inflation. The personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index, excluding food and energy, rose 0.1 percent in June after a similar gain in May. In the 12 months through June, the so-called core PCE price index increased 1.5 percent after advancing by the same margin in May. The core PCE is the Federal Reserve's preferred inflation measure. The US central bank has a 2 percent target.

The data was included in the second-quarter gross domestic product report published last week. That report showed consumer spending increasing at a 2.8 percent annualized rate, which accounted for the bulk of the economy's 2.6 percent growth pace during the quarter. But that estimate could be revised lower in the wake of a report from the Commerce Department yesterday showing construction spending tumbling 1.3 per-

cent to \$1.21 trillion, the lowest level since September 2016.

Construction spending was weighed down by a 5.4 percent plunge in public investment, which was the biggest decline since March 2002. The drop was across federal, state and local governments. Hopes that President Donald Trump's vow to boost infrastructure spending would kick off a construction boom have largely faded since the beginning of the year. The consumer spending report showed inflation-adjusted consumption was unchanged in June after a rise of 0.2 percent in May. June's flat reading points to moderate consumer spending growth in the third quarter.

Since accelerating at a 3.8 percent pace in the second quarter of 2016, consumer spending growth has remained below a 3.0 percent rate, restrained by sluggish wage gains.

In June, personal income was unchanged. That was the weakest reading since a 0.1 percent dip in November 2016 and followed a 0.3 percent increase in May.

Wages and salaries increased 0.4 percent in June. Personal dividend income declined 3.0 percent in June after surging 4.8 percent in May. Income at the disposal of households after accounting for inflation fell 0.1 percent, the largest decrease since last December. Savings slipped to \$546.4 billion in June from \$564.7 billion in May. —Reuters



WASHINGTON: A Boeing 787 being built for Norwegian Air Shuttle at Boeing Co's assembly facility, in Everett, Washington. The Institute for Supply Management, a trade group of purchasing managers, issued its index of manufacturing activity for July yesterday. —AP

BOE WORKERS ON STRIKE FOR FIRST TIME IN 50 YEARS

LONDON: Striking employees at the Bank of England wore comical masks depicting the face of Governor Mark Carney yesterday as they stood outside the institution demanding better pay.

The three-day strike - the central bank's first in over 50 years - came after workers failed to reach a deal that would allow them to keep their wages growing as much as inflation, which is now at 2.6 percent annually. Some 40 workers, including maintenance and security workers, carried signs reading "Bank of England staff want fair pay."

An official with the union, Unite, Peter Kavanagh, said the workers had "been left with no choice but to take industrial action because they are facing another year of having to endure a pay cut imposed upon them." Kavanagh said Carney should meet the protesters to explain "why hardworking men and women deserve to face years of pay cuts."

The central bank noted that the number of strikers is small and says it will "continue to operate as normal during this period." The bank issued a statement which said it had been in talks with the union, "and remains ready to continue those talks at any time." —AP



LONDON: Demonstrators hold placards depicting an image of Bank of England Governor Mark Carney, as they protest during a strike against pay, outside the Bank of England in the City of London yesterday. —AFP

STRONG UK FACTORY DATA SENDS STERLING TO 11-MONTH HIGH

LONDON: Britain's pound climbed to its highest levels against the dollar since mid-September yesterday, as data showing UK factory activity growth recovered from a seven-month low in July eased concerns about an economic slowdown. The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) survey for Britain's manufacturing sector climbed to 55.1, exceeding the 54.4 consensus in a Reuters poll of economists, helped by the biggest influx of new export orders since 2010.

The numbers should hearten policymakers at the Bank of England, which will make a policy decision and release its latest quarterly Inflation Report tomorrow, and should soothe investors' fears that economic growth is deteriorating rapidly after a sluggish start to the year.

A run of weak data has - along with deep uncertainty about the impact of Brexit on the economy - cooled speculation that the BoE is poised to start removing its crisis-level stimulus, which followed a

series of hawkish remarks by policymakers at the banks in recent months.

But the latest numbers were not in themselves enough to substantially change the outlook either for sterling or for the BoE, said BNP Paribas currency strategist Sam Lynton-Brown. "The data was slightly better than expected but it shouldn't mean much for sterling, particularly this week, when we have more important data flows - the Bank of England's quarterly Inflation Report and also the services PMI," he said, referring to equivalent data from the services sector due tomorrow.

"Aside from the fact that it was only a moderate upside surprise, the manufacturing sector is a small contributor in comparison with services to the growth outlook, and so is not that important for the Bank of England." While a push-back of rate hike expectations has helped drive the pound to nine-month lows against the euro, it has not been enough to outweigh pessimism around the US dollar.

Sterling climbed as high as \$1.3240 after the data's release and was still trading at around that level by 1420 GMT, as data showing US construction spending unexpectedly fell in June weighed on the dollar. Against the euro the pound gained 0.3 percent on the day to trade at 89.35 pence, but that was less than a cent away from last week's lows.

Investors added to bets against the pound in the week up to last Tuesday, data showed on Friday, having taken them to their lowest in sixteen months the previous week.

"Holders of sterling will be crossing their fingers for a surprise interest rate rise (on Thursday)," said Jake Trask, FX Research Director at OFX. "However, disappointing Q2 GDP figures and a recent unexpected drop in inflation make this highly unlikely, especially with Kristin Forbes - who previously voted for a rise in rates - having left the (monetary policy) committee." —Reuters

H2 2017 COULD SEE KD 3.5BN IN NEW CONTRACTS IN KUWAIT

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

KUWAIT: The pace of project implementation cooled somewhat in 2Q17 as bidding on major projects faced some delays. Contracts worth KD 0.6 billion were awarded in 2Q17, according to MEED Projects. This is half the 2016 quarterly average. Award activity in the quarter was dominated by the power and transport sectors. We expect implementation to improve in the remainder of the year as more delayed projects move ahead. The second half of 2017 could see KD 3.5 billion in new contracts.

Award activity in 2Q17 was dominated by the power and transport sectors. According to MEED, the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) awarded the largest contract in the GCC in June 2017, a project worth KD 176 million for the third phase of the Subiya combined-cycle gas turbine project. It was awarded to Algham International. Other major awards during the quarter included three road projects by the Ministry of Public Works (MPW). These were the Northern Regional Road (KD 92.8 million), the South Surra Road upgrade (KD85.2 million), and the road linking Mina Abdulla and Wafra (KD 84.9 million).

Some delays in the bidding process have affected the construction, transport, power, and oil sectors. Close to KD 2.4 billion worth of contracts that were expected to be awarded in 2Q17 were postponed. This included 14 contracts worth a total of KD 808 million in the construction sector, eight contracts for KD850 million in the transport sector, nine contracts valued at KD 456 million in the power sector, and four contracts for KD 230 million in the oil sector.

Transport

The transport sector dominated project awards in 2Q17 summing up to KD 280 million. Another KD 1.1 billion worth of awards are

expected in the rest of 2017. MPW is expected to open bidding on nine separate contracts this year related to the northern section of the Regional Road, roads at South Al-Mutlaa, the southern section of the Regional Road, and other road works. Seven road projects were supposed to be awarded by the end of 2Q17 but were delayed.

Four contracts related to the northern Regional Road are expected to be awarded this year at a value of KD 448 million. According to MEED Projects, Combined Group Contracting is expected to be the lowest bidder the central part of the southern Regional Road, submitting a bid of KD 197 million; the project is due to be awarded soon. Combined Group was also awarded the South Surra Road upgrade, which is expected to be completed in three years.

Power

The power sector saw KD 226 million in awards in 2Q17, with another KD 1.1 billion in the bidding process and expected to be awarded later in 2017. Five contracts were awarded in 2Q17 in the power sector, three of which by MEW, including the Subiya Gas Turbine, which alone made up 78 percent of the 2Q17 awards in the sector.

The sector awaits two large power projects which could be awarded before the end of the year. The much anticipated phase 2 of the Al-Zour North IWPP power plant had been expected in 2Q17, but now could happen later in the year. Still, according to MEED Projects, the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) has yet to decide on whether to proceed with this project or with the Khairan IWPP. The Al-Zour North plant contract is expected to be worth close to KD 530 million. Another significant public-private partnership (PPP) project in

the sector is the Kabd Municipal Solid Waste. Similar to Al-Zour, no date for the commercial bidding has been set; the project is expected to cost KD 267 million.

Construction

Only one contract was awarded in the construction sector in 2Q17, though KD 1.7 billion in contracts are in the bidding process. In 2Q17, Mabane awarded Phase 4B of The Avenues at KD 63.7 million to the Ahmadiyah Contracting & Trading Company. Meanwhile, the KD 363 million contract for the Jahra Ministries Complex was delayed but could happen later in the year; the project would be the largest award in the sector in 2017. According to MEED Projects, MPW may change the location of the project to South Al-Mutlaa, but there hasn't been any official confirmation of this yet. The Amiri Diwan tendered the new Palace of Justice building for bidding at an expected cost of KD 303 million; the project, is expected to be the world's tallest and largest judicial building. Mohammed Abdulmohsin Al-Kharafi & Sons is the lowest bidder at KD 288 million, and bids are under evaluation.

Oil

There was hardly any activity in the oil sector in 2Q17, but a total of KD 935 million worth of contracts is expected in 2H17. Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) awarded one contract in 2Q17 worth KD 7.3 million. KOC has opened bidding on eight separate contracts that are expected to be awarded in 2017. They include the feed pipeline for the new refinery in Al-Zour. Bids have been submitted and are currently under evaluation. According to MEED Projects, the lowest bidder is Saipem with KD 255 million (\$842 million).



GULF BANK HOSTS RED'S 7TH MONTHLY DRAW WINNERS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank was pleased to host red's seventh monthly draw winners in its head office, on July 31st 2017, where members of senior management and red business owners greeted and handed them the prizes. Winners' names were announced on Monday, 24 July 2017 in a draw that was held at the bank's head office, under the supervision of Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The red account draw resulted the announcement of three students who won prizes ranging from an iPhone 7 plus to an Apple Watch and they are:

- Munera Fahad Tayib - iPhone 7 Plus
- Muneerah Ahmad Ali Al-Basais - iPad Pro
- Sarah Khalaf Mesfer Al-Shelahi - Apple Watch

Gulf Bank's red is a dedicated account for high school, college and university students aged between 15 and 25, which does not require a minimum deposit. Eligible customers will get the chance to enter the draw automatically and on a monthly basis, upon transferring their student allowances.

Each month, an iPhone 7 plus, an iPad Pro, and an Apple Watch will be gifted to

three lucky winners until January 2018. The next draw dates are announced as follows:

- August 21, 2017
- September 28, 2017
- October 23, 2017
- November 20, 2017
- January 11, 2018

In addition to the Apple prizes, students will have the opportunity to win a Fiat 500C-Model 2017 at the annual car draw, upon transferring their allowance. Also, movie tickets at all Cinescape theatres will be available for only KD2 seven days a week. red customers can also shop from the USA or the UK with a dedicated company (edfa3ly), which provide a mail box for internet shopping services from their website: <https://kw.edfa3ly.co/GulfBank>.

red customers can now also transfer money from anyone, from any local bank into their Gulf Bank account through the all new e-pay service, which also allows customers to pay their mobile bills for Zain, Ooredoo, and Viva and buy iTunes and Google Play cards, instantly using the new 'e-Pay' service available on Gulf Bank's Online Banking and Mobile Banking App.

Chart 1: Awarded projects (KD billion)

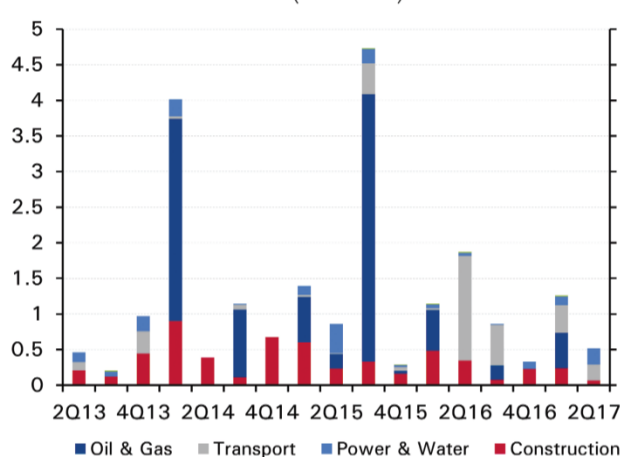
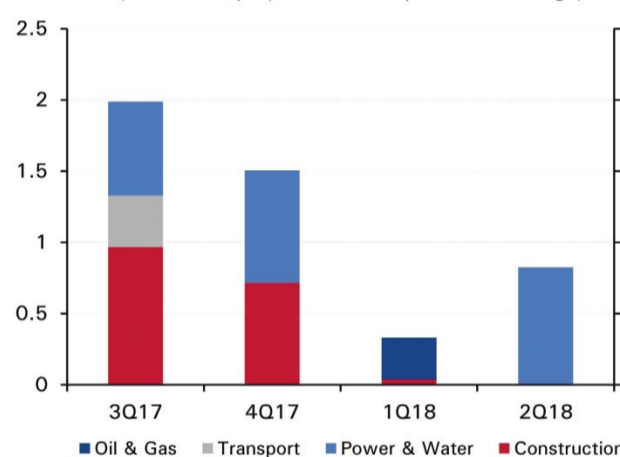


Chart 2: Projects awards outlook (KD billion, projects currently under bidding*)



Source: MEED Projects

Source: MEED Projects. *As of 7 July 2017.

KENYA JOBLESSNESS REMAINS DESPITE GROWTH

NAIROBI: At last count, unemployment in Kenya was running at around 11 percent of the workforce; for the young, those aged 15-24, it was twice that.

Kenya's years of strong economic growth—a key factor in President Uhuru Kenyatta's reelection campaign—has created jobs. But they are mostly low-paying, informal and coming at a rate economists say is too low to absorb the rapidly growing population. That has not gone unnoticed by the voters and has left Kenyatta, seeking a second and final five-year term in office on Aug 8, trying to make the most of recent improvements.

It is also why his Jubilee party is pledging to create year-long paid internships to all graduates in the future. Around 800,000 jobs were created last year, while the economy expanded by 5.8 percent, well outperforming the global and regional averages. But 90 percent of the new jobs are in the poorly-paid informal sector, according to Jibrán Qureishi, East Africa economist at Stanbic Bank.

"That is the challenge that policymakers need to address," he said. The number of new formal jobs is small. Terry Ryan, who has served on the central bank's monetary policy committee,

said just 15,000 of them were created in the economy annually.

By contrast, more than 560,000 students enrolled in university last year. "We are not creating formal sector jobs at anything like the rate of the supply of formal sector potential employees," Ryan told Reuters. That means no jobs for people like 25-year-old Cecilia Awuor, who earned a degree in business information technology last year.

She is working as a maid at \$50 a month. She is skeptical of politicians and doesn't plan to vote next week even though she is a registered voter. "I can't waste my time queueing to vote for a politician who just wants to enrich himself," Awuor said.

Most Kenyans share her concerns, according to a national survey released by global polling company Ipsos last month. Sixty-one percent of respondents said the country was going in the wrong direction; unemployment and inflation were some of their key worries.

Demand for work, meanwhile is rising. Kenya's 44 million-strong population is growing by 2.5 percent per year, and 9 million more jobseekers will join the market by 2025, the World Bank said in a report last year.

Politicians' promises

The government has built new roads and a railway and invested in energy generation to attract new manufacturers. The efforts have yielded modest results. Kenya's standing in the World Bank's annual Ease of Doing Business rankings climbed 45 places since Kenyatta took over, up to position 92 last year.

Investors like Sri Lanka's textiles firm Hela Intimates have responded. Hela opened an \$8 million factory last year, employing 4,000 workers who produce underwear for brands like Calvin Klein, Nautica and Tommy Hilfifer.

CEO Wasantha Perera said Hela were attracted by a large, easily trained work force, infrastructure and government incentives. "Setting up a factory, besides registration, was pretty straightforward," he told Reuters in his office, overlooking a brightly lit factory floor where thousands of workers sewed garments on production lines while music blared in the background. But there are not enough investors like Hela. The head of the state-run export processing zone, set up to entice foreign firms, said the 111 firms based there have expanded slowly, now employing 53,000 workers, up from 39,000 in 2012. —Reuters

FRANCE WARNS UNYIELDING ITALY OVER SHIPYARD ROW

ROME: France is ready to seek other buyers for its biggest shipyard should Italy turn down an offer to split ownership 50-50, the country's economy minister said yesterday ahead of a meeting in Rome.

"If the negotiations with Fincantieri don't go well," Bruno Le Maire said in reference to the Italian state-owned shipbuilder, "we will be forced to consider other options, but I hope that won't be necessary." "We are sister nations, we want to work hand in hand with Italy," Le Maire insisted in an interview with the Corriere della Sera daily ahead of talks with Italy's economy and economic development ministers.

But Italian Finance Minister Pier Carlo Padoan told AFP just hours before their meeting that Fincantieri "must have at least over 50 percent".

The French government sparked a row with Italy last week by temporarily nationalising the STX shipyard after backsliding on a deal with Fincantieri agreed by then French president Francois Hollande in April. The deal gave Fincantieri a controlling stake in the facility in return for which the Italian company gave job guarantees.

But on taking office in May centrist Emmanuel Macron said he wanted to renegotiate and France has since been pushing for a 50-50 split between Fincantieri and STX's French shareholders—a proposal rebuffed by Italy. The shipyard, located in the western port of Saint-Nazaire, has turned out some of the

world's biggest cruise liners and also builds warships.

'Defend our interests'

"None of our decisions are anti-Italian, they are driven by legitimate concerns over two points," Le Maire said. The first is job protection, the second is keeping shipbuilding skills in France rather than outsourcing to China. Padoan said the government and Fincantieri "have given all guarantees in terms of protecting jobs and technologies". On the eve of yesterday's meet, Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni said Rome would not be pushed around. "Let's see if any fresh proposals are forthcoming. Collaboration between friends, between European countries, is certainly important. We will defend Italian interests calmly but firmly," he said in a television interview.

Italy has made much of the fact that South Korea's STX Shipbuilding—the outgoing owners—held a 66 percent stake, but Paris has refused to let Rome hold a 51 percent stake. Italy's frustration "is understandable, but the economic situation was completely different. The shipyard was in serious difficulty, now it is profitable and has 11 years of orders lined up," Le Maire said. The French minister said Fincantieri may not have a majority stake, but it would effectively manage the company. But Padoan said that was not good enough, and Italy "should have at least more than 50 percent, considering that the Koreans had two-thirds". — AFP



Pier Carlo Padoan

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 Bhat	10.050
Turkish Lira	86.255

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

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



In this July 13, 2008 file photo, shows the Freddie Mac headquarters in McLean, Va. Mortgage giant Freddie Mac reported net income of \$1.7 billion for the second quarter yesterday up from the same period of 2016.—AP

FREDDIE MAC POSTS \$1.7BN NET INCOME IN SECOND QUARTER

WASHINGTON: Mortgage giant Freddie Mac reported net income of \$1.7 billion for the second quarter, up from the same period of 2016. The government-controlled company said yesterday its earnings were boosted by increased income from fees paid by lenders for guaranteeing mortgages in the April-through-June period.

Freddie, based in McLean, Virginia, will pay a dividend of \$2 billion to the US Treasury next month. Freddie will have paid a total \$110.2 billion in dividends, exceeding its government bailout of \$71 billion. The government rescued Freddie and larger sibling Fannie Mae at the height of the financial crisis in September 2008, after they suffered huge losses from risky mortgages in the housing market bust.

Together the companies received taxpayer aid totaling about \$187 billion. The housing market's gradual recovery, helped by record-low interest rates spurring home purchases, has made Freddie and Fannie profitable again. Still, the housing market's revival has been choppy, and it has lagged behind the rest of the economy. Despite the low borrowing rates that could lure prospective homebuyers, the market has remained hampered by tight mortgage credit, rising home prices and stagnating incomes.

With the economy on solid footing and unemployment at healthy levels, the

Federal Reserve had been in a campaign earlier this year to gradually raise interest rates from ultra-lows. But the Fed took a pause starting in May, keeping its key short-term rate unchanged - after having raised it in March for the second time in three months. Last week the Fed said that it's keeping its the rate steady at a time when inflation remains undesirably low despite the job market continuing to strengthen.

Freddie's second-quarter profit marked an increase from the \$993 million it earned in the same period of 2016. The company said its income from lenders for guaranteeing mortgages increased to \$158 million in the second quarter from \$124 million a year earlier.

Freddie and Fannie own or guarantee about half of all US mortgages, worth about \$5 trillion. Along with other federal agencies, they back roughly 90 percent of new home loans. The two companies don't directly make loans to borrowers. They buy mortgages from lenders, package them as bonds, guarantee them against default and sell them to investors. That helps make loans available.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has said that privatizing Fannie and Freddie, cutting them loose from government control, is a priority of the Trump administration. But Congress hasn't yet moved on legislation to overhaul the mortgage giants.—AP

GLOBAL REPORTS KD8.4M REVENUES IN H1 2017

COMPANY ANNOUNCES KD2.7 MILLION NET PROFIT

KUWAIT: Global Investment House ("Global" or the "Company"), a regional asset management and investment banking firm headquartered in Kuwait, with offices in major capital markets in the MENA region, yesterday announced its financial results for the first half ended 30 June 2017 reporting a net profit of KD2.7 million (\$8.8 million) compared to a net profit of KD0.9 million (\$3.0 million) in H1 2016, total revenues of KD8.4 million (\$27.7 million), and fee and commission income of KD5.8 million (\$19.1 million) representing 69 percent of total revenues. Asset Management business generated KD5.3 million (\$17.6 million) revenues during the first half.

At 30 June 2017, Asset under Management (AUM) stood at KD1.0 billion (\$3.3 billion). During the first half, the real estate asset management team closed two acquisitions and placement in the United Kingdom involving equity raising of GBP28 million. Several funds managed by the Company outperformed their respective benchmarks and peers.

During H1 2017, the Investment Banking team generated KD0.4 million (\$1.4 million) revenues from three mandates, ranging from advisory to M&A mandates. The team is currently working on several regional mandates and has an interesting pipeline of M&A and



Abdul Wahab Al-Halabi

advisory mandates. On the brokerage front, Global made focused efforts to grow the institutional brokerage business and take advantage of high double-digit increase in market turnover. During H1 2017, Brokerage fee revenues stood at KD0.5 million (\$1.7million).

The Company's co-investments in its own funds and other principal investments generated KD1.80 million (\$5.9 million) of realized gains, dividend income and fair valuation gains.

Following the annual general meeting and the extra-ordinary general meeting of the shareholders held on 22 June 2017, we have recently completed various legal and regulatory formalities associated with a KD22.9 million (\$75.6 million) capital reduction to be implemented by cancelling 229 million shares (around 29.14 percent of the number of shares owned by each shareholder excluding treasury



Hareb Al-Darmaki

shares) and paying 100 fils or par value per share in lieu of each cancelled share to shareholders registered on 2 August 2017. The cash distribution to shareholders through capital reduction has been facilitated by the company's healthy capital structure involving adequate capital, sufficient liquidity and no debt.

Hareb Al-Darmaki, Chairman of the Board of Directors, said: "The Company produced excellent financial results during the first half, reporting a many fold increase to the net profit. Continued profitability of Asset Management business resulted from effective implementation of our strategies and positive sentiment in the regional equity markets."

Abdul Wahab Al-Halabi, Director & Chief Executive Officer, commented: "We are delighted by these financial results, which reflect the Company's robust business model and trust of our clients and stakeholders in the Company."



Fishing boats head out to sea on the first day of the fishing season in Lianyungang, in China's eastern Jiangsu province yesterday. The fishing season opened after a three-month Summer Fishing Moratorium.—AFP

CHINA FACTORY ACTIVITY GATHERS STEAM IN JULY

BEIJING: China's manufacturing activity increased last month as both production and new order rates grew rapidly, independent figures showed yesterday, but analysts warned the economy still faces headwinds from policy tightening.

The Caixin Purchasing Manager's Index-an indicator of conditions at small manufacturers-came in at 51.1 in the month, up from 50.4 in June as it marked a four-month high in July.

A PMI figure above 50 represents growth while anything below points to contraction. Recent figures show steady expansion in the world's second largest economy, which registered an expectation-beating 6.9 percent growth in the first half of the year, but experts

warn of a slowdown as regulators look to adopt stricter financial controls aimed at reducing the country's excessive leverage.

"Operating conditions in the manufacturing sector improved further in July, suggesting the economy's growth momentum will be sustained," Caixin analyst Zhengsheng Zhong said in a joint statement with data compiler IHS Markit. "That said, it's unlikely that financial regulatory tightening will be relaxed."

Other analysts shed doubt on whether growth could be sustained. "Stronger foreign demand helped drive a pick-up in new orders," Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a note, adding that output and price indices also rose while employment edged down.

"We don't think this pick-up is sustainable, however, given the increasing headwinds from policy tightening and we still expect growth to slow during the second half of this year."

The Caixin data contrasts with the government's official purchasing managers' index (PMI) reading Monday, which suggested factory activity expansion slowed in July. The official PMI skews more towards big firms and state-owned companies, while the Caixin index includes more private small and medium size companies and is considered by some analysts as more representative of the health of China's economy. Evans-Pritchard added that even given the different focus of the two indexes, "it's not clear why the PMIs moved in opposite directions".—AFP

APPLE DOUBLES DOWN ON CHINA AS RIVALS PULL AHEAD

SHANGHAI/BEIJING: Apple Inc is binding itself more closely to China as its share of the world's biggest smartphone market slips and it becomes more reliant on selling services which require government approval. A flurry of recent action by Cupertino-based Apple underlines its push to get on the right side of China's notoriously tough tech regulators, as it looks to revive sales there.

This weekend it moved to block apps used to evade the country's internet censors, a decision that fits with Beijing's recent crackdown on unapproved online content. And Apple has announced it will establish its first China data centre in the politically important province of Guizhou, and has created the new position of a managing director for Greater China, reporting directly to CEO Tim Cook.

Apple's China revenues have stalled, falling for a fifth straight quarter in January-March, when sales grew in every other region. China recently slipped to Apple's third-largest market, as consumers have switched to newer domestic offerings. The buzz around new launches has also cooled since the iPhone 6 in 2014.

When it unveils quarterly earnings later on Tuesday, Apple is likely to report another dip in Chinasmartphone sales. Its once coveted iPhone has slipped into fifth position behind offerings from local rivals Huawei, Oppo, Vivo and Xiaomi, analysts said.

The iPhone's share of China's smartphone shipments fell to 9 percent in January-June, from a peak of 14 percent in 2015, according to consultancy Counterpoint. Having China's government on-side will certainly help. "Because others have eaten away at Apple's market share in China, it now has to pay more attention to regulation from government," said Beijing-based tech analyst Li Chengdong. "China is such a key market for Apple that it has to listen." Apple declined to comment for this article.

Apple, like other US tech brands including Facebook Inc and Alphabet Inc's Google, has looked to woo China's leaders to give it greater access, especially as it pushes services such as its App Store and Apple Pay. Services were Apple's rare bright spot in its struggling China business and logged double-digit revenue growth in Greater China in January-March. And maintaining momentum is crucial, as device sales may come under pressure again until Apple unveils its new iPhone, widely

expected later this year in a milestone launch that will be key to winning back Chinese buyers.

FRIENDLY SIGNAL

The services push, however, comes with risks. China is tightening regulation of what it sees as its cyberspace, including online media, live streaming and gaming, and brought in a new cyber security law on June 1, pushing firms to store user data inside China's borders. Apple has made swift moves to comply, despite concerns by overseas business groups who say the law's strict data rules and storage requirements are overly vague. The new data centre - part of a planned \$1 billion investment in Guizhou province - has a potential political upside too. Beijing wants to turn Guizhou into a tech hub, while President Xi Jinping himself has close ties to the region as a delegate for the province at the Communist Party congress.

"By setting up a data centre and pulling VPNs, (Apple) is sending a friendly signal to the Chinese government," said Liu Xingliang, head of the DCCI Internet Research Institute. Apple said at the weekend it would remove virtual private network (VPN) services from its ChinaApp Store - systems that allow users to bypass China's so-called "Great Firewall" aimed at restricting access to overseas sites. Beijing has targeted VPNs as it bids to tighten control over the domestic internet, a drive that is ramping up ahead of the Communist Party Congress later this year.

Some said the recent moves jarred with Apple's stance in the United States last year, when it opposed an FBI court order to break into an iPhone of a gunman who fatally shot 14 people in San Bernardino in December 2015, with Cook saying it would be "bad for America".

The U.S. firm's gamble here is clear: making moves to appease Chinese censors may prompt criticism outside China, but the firm will hope that local consumers are rather less fazed. "It's normal that Apple wants to get along well with the Chinese government," said Wang Siyue, 27, a marketing professional in Shanghai, who is a long-term iPhone user. "I will buy the next generation (iPhone) when it comes out. I'm just used to it," Wang said, adding she doesn't use VPN much, and Apple's move to take down the app wouldn't impact her decision to buy a new iPhone.—Reuters



MIAMI: Shoppers walk past a Marshalls store in Miami. Consumer spending slowed in June as income growth turned in the weakest performance in seven months, according to information released yesterday.—AP

EUROZONE ECONOMY PICKED UP SPEED IN SECOND QUARTER

FRANKFURT: Europe's economic expansion kept on rolling and even picked up a little speed in the second quarter. The economy in the 19 countries that use the euro currency expanded by 0.6 percent compared with the quarter before, an acceleration from the 0.5 percent rate of the first quarter.

The official figures released yesterday showed the economy was 2.1 percent larger than a year earlier. The eurozone is being boosted

by a growing global economy, buoyant consumer and business sentiment, and massive monetary stimulus from the European Central Bank. The auto industry has rebounded, with June registrations across the wider EU close to those of June 2007, before the global financial crisis. Indexes of manufacturing activity are showing strong growth.

And unemployment has kept on falling in the eurozone and is now at 9.1 percent, down from

12.1 percent at its peak in 2013. The eurozone is still working off the effects of a crisis over high government and bank debt that forced member governments to bail out member governments Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus and Spain's banks.

The ECB has been reluctant to announce when it will dial back the stimulus in the form of 60 billion euros (\$71 billion) in bond purchases slated to run at least

through year-end. That's because annual inflation at 1.3 percent remains below its goal of just under 2 percent. The bond purchases pump newly printed money into the economy in an effort to boost inflation to levels considered better for the economy. For the full 28-member European Union, second-quarter growth was the same as for the eurozone at 0.6 percent, and up 2.2 percent from the year-earlier quarter.—AP

EGYPT RESERVES REACHED \$36BN, HIGHEST IN 7 YEARS

CAIRO: Egypt's Central Bank says the country's foreign reserves reached 36.036 billion dollars in July, the highest level since December 2010. The bank announced the increase in a brief statement yesterday. The figure is four billion dollars higher compared to the previous month.

The rise comes after the government secured a \$12 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund. In order to qualify for that loan, the government imposed a set of tough economic measures, including subsidy cuts and the flotation of its local currency.

The economic measures were hailed by the IMF but have left many Egyptians struggling with both reduced buying power and spiraling inflation. The economy has yet to recover from a 2011 popular uprising or generate nearly enough jobs for Egypt's surging population of 92 million.—AP

DOW OPENS AT RECORD; APPLE EARNINGS EYED

NEW YORK: US stock indexes kicked off the month on a strong note, with the Dow coming within spitting distance of the 22,000 mark, powered by gains in Goldman Sachs and 3M.

The index had pierced through the 21,000 mark five months ago and had breached the 20,000 milestone in January. All eyes will be on the quarterly performance of Dow-component Apple, which reports results after the closing bell. The iPhone maker's shares were little changed.

Tech has been the best performing sector this year, despite the sector going through bouts of volatility of late on rising valuation concerns. The tech index was up 0.27 percent in early trading. Investors have been counting on earnings to support high valuations for equities. The S&P 500 is trading at about 18 times earnings estimates for the next 12 months, above its long-term average of 15 times.

S&P 500 earnings are expected on average to have grown 10.8 percent in the second quarter,

according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S. "It's been a very good earnings season so far which is helping to sustain US stocks at record highs and offset any disappointment with Donald Trump's inability to make progress on his growth policies," said Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at online forex broker Oanda.

The Dow hit a record closing high on Monday, helped by Boeing, while selling in technology companies kept the S&P 500 in check and pulled the Nasdaq lower.

At 9:40 am ET (1340 GMT), the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 61.02 points, or 0.28 percent, at 21,952.14 and the S&P 500 was up 4.19 points, or 0.16 percent, at 2,474.49. The Nasdaq Composite was up 15.46 points, or 0.24 percent, at 6,363.58.

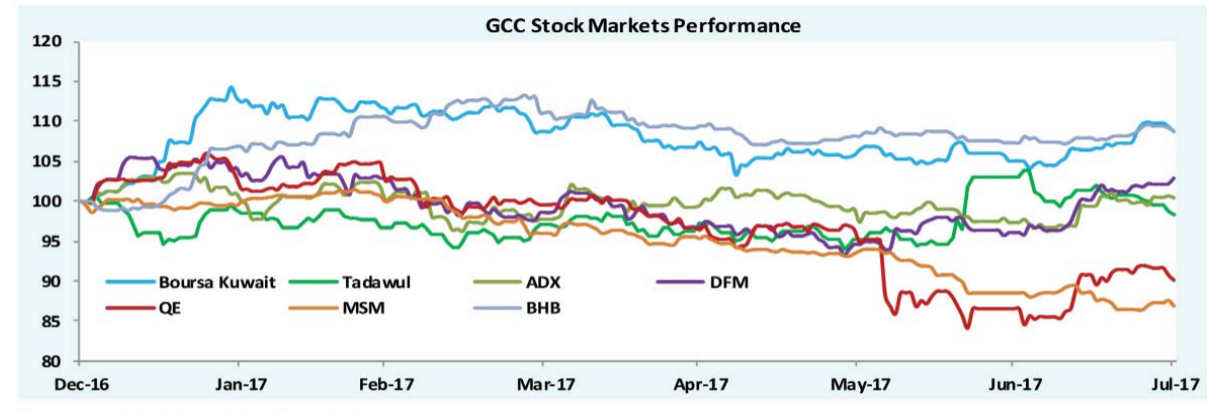
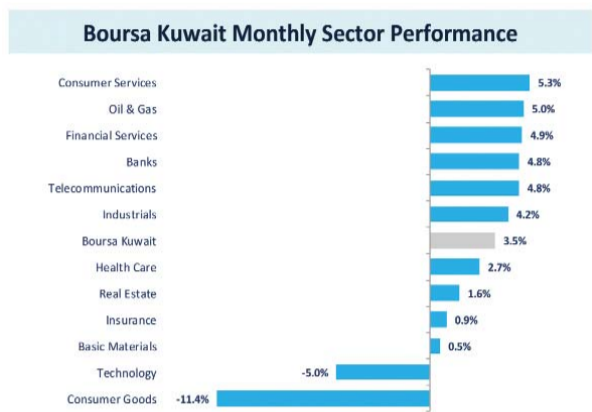
Ten of the 11 major S&P sectors were higher, with the financial index's 0.39 percent rise leading the advancers. Economic data showed US consumer spending barely rose in June as income failed to increase for the first time in sev-

en months. The core PCE numbers - the Federal Reserve's preferred metric to gauge inflation - for June edged up 0.1 percent following a similar increase in May. In the 12 months through June, the so-called core PCE price index increased 1.5 percent after advancing by the same margin in May, remaining below the Fed's 2 percent target rate.

● Pfizer edged down 0.72 percent after the drugmaker's quarterly revenue missed expectations. Under Armour fell 8.70 percent after the sportswear maker cut its full-year sales forecast. Sprint jumped 8.26 percent after swinging to a quarterly profit for the first time in three years. Lumber Liquidators soared 28.31 percent after the hardwood flooring retailer reported its first quarterly profit since a 2015 scandal related to allegations of carcinogens in its products dented sales. World stocks, on their longest streak of monthly gains in more than a decade, rose on Tuesday amid further signs that the global economy is in fine fettle, while the beaten-down dollar edged up slightly from 14-month lows. — Reuters



NEW YORK: In this Oct 25, 2016 file photo, a miniature reproduction of Arturo Di Modica's "Charging Bull" sculpture sits on display at a street vendor's table outside the New York Stock Exchange, in lower Manhattan. — AP



GCC TRADING ACTIVITY PERKS UP IN JULY

KAMCO GCC Markets Monthly Report

KUWAIT: Trading activity in the region improved in July 2017 after receding by 14 percent m-o-m in June-17 due to the lower activity from traders during Ramadan, and lower number of working days due to holidays. Overall value traded in the GCC was higher by 8.5 percent m-o-m and reached \$ 21.7 billion. However the MSCI GCC index which gained 4.9 percent in Jun-17 dropped the following month, albeit marginally, driven by the TASI which went down by 4.5 percent m-o-m in July-17. All other major GCC stock markets barring MSM closed the month in the green with DFM leading the way with a 7.1 percent m-o-m return, followed by Qatar (+4.2 percent) and Kuwait (Kuwait Weighted Index: +3.5 percent).

Q2-17 earnings season across the GCC is underway, and the TASI index was also affected in July-17 by corporate results, as some large caps saw declines in profitability y-o-y. SABIC saw its Q2-17 net profit drop by 25 percent, due to higher cost of sales and lower sales volumes. Saudi Arabia also saw their GDP growth reduced by the IMF for 2017 and 2018, which in our view would have affected sentiment towards future corporate profitability as well. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia's SAR 17 billion sukuk was oversubscribed by three times, which underpins the strength of the economy and its capital markets. In Kuwait, H1-17 results of the banking sector showed that profitability of banks have grown by over 8 percent y-o-y.

Oil prices pulled back 8 percent-10 percent during the month of July to hover around \$ 50/bbl after visiting intra month lows of mid-forties. Sovereign credit ratings action, oil markets and monetary policy action from Central banks would also have a signaling impact on corporate profitability and in turn stock prices in the following quarters. Moreover, a recovery from the TASI and QE 20 indices in H2-17 would be crucial in driving GCC markets and market activity higher in terms of volumes going forward.

Kuwait

Stocks reversed trends from June-17 in Kuwait and went up during July-17 as reflected in the increases recorded by all the three benchmark indices. Large-caps did better than small-caps as the Weighted Index and Kuwait 15 Index outperformed the Price Index. The Kuwait Price Index improved by 1.3 percent, but traded below the critical 7,000 mark to reach 6,851.62 points by month end. The Weighted Index after breaching the 400 mark in Jun-17, went up by 3.5 percent and traded above the mark to close at 413.29 points, while the Kuwait 15 Index performed marginally better and increased by 3.6 percent to reach 943.17 points. Nevertheless, despite remaining in a trading range, Kuwait continues to record the best YTD-17 performance in the GCC with a return of 19 percent for the Price index, 8.7 percent for the Weighted Index and 6.6 percent for the Kuwait 15 Index.

Trading activity on the exchange jumped with monthly volumes up by 148.1 percent post Ramadan and holidays to reach 1.82 billion shares as compared to 0.73 billion shares traded during June-17. The monthly value traded also almost doubled to reach KD 300 million as compared to KD 150 million during the previous month.

Number of trades also more than doubled to reach 67,408 trades in Jul-17 as against 32,532 trades in Jun-17. The monthly volume chart was topped by Alimtiqz Investment Group, with 219 million shares traded during the month followed by Abyaar Real Estate Development and AUB at 124 million and 88 million traded shares, respectively. On the monthly value chart, Kuwait Finance House (+10.8 percent) topped the list with KD 41.1 million worth of shares traded during the month followed by KD 36.8 million for Alimtiqz Investment (6.3 percent) and KD 28.5

million worth of shares for NBK (-3.3 percent). In terms of sector performance, the Consumer Services index recorded the highest monthly return of 5.3 percent on the back of 36 percent surge in shares of IFA Hotels & Resorts, the best performing stock during the month. The Oil & Gas and the Banking indices recorded positive returns during the month. The Oil & Gas index rose by 5 percent m-o-m was buoyed by NAFESCO, which went up by 15 percent for the month. The gain of 4.8 per-

cent for the Banking index primarily reflected 10.8 percent returns for KFH and was further solidified by the 3.3 percent m-o-m returns from NBK.

Moreover, quarterly earnings for banks shows positive y-o-y growth for the six banks that reported Q1-17 earnings. KFH reported a y-o-y net profit increase of 15.2 percent in H1-17, while NBK saw its profits move up by 9.3 percent y-o-y as compared to H1-16. The monthly gainers chart also included National Industries Group with a gain of 23.9 percent as the. On the decliners side, the Consumer

which pulled down the overall index. Amongst the gainers was the Media index predominantly which went up by more than 125 percent m-o-m in July-17, as Saudi Research and Marketing Group saw its share price end the month up by more 1.5 times. Food & Staples Retailing and Retail also moved by 4.0 percent each m-o-m from the month of Jun-17.

In earnings releases, index bellwether SABIC reported a net profit of SAR 3.71 billion in Q2-

lower levels included the Industrials index, which went down by 1.6 percent m-o-m, as larger stocks in the index Gulf Pharma (-1.3 percent) and RAK Ceramic (-1.2 percent) receded for the month of July-17. The Consumer Staples and Insurance indices also saw lower levels as they receded by 1.0 percent and 0.5 percent respectively.

In prominent H1-17 earnings releases, group net profit for First Abu Dhabi Bank improved 4 percent y-o-y to AED 5.49 billion in H1-17. Key drivers for the performance were revenues at AED 9.85 billion, and the realization of substantial cost synergies post-merger; Impairment charges were 8 percent lower y-o-y on the back of higher recoveries and an adequately provisioned portfolio. ADCB reported a net profit of AED 2.114 billion in H1-17 representing a decrease of 2 percent y-o-y from H1-17. Though the Bank's underlying performance and volumes remained healthy, net profits were impacted by adverse market conditions, which resulted in higher impairment charges and a lower non-interest income in Q2-17. Interest income for the bank of AED 4.849 billion in H1-17 was 15 percent higher y-o-y, driven by strong volumes as this was achieved in the absence of higher interest in suspense reversals.

Dubai Financial Market

DFM was the best performing index in the GCC for the month of July-17, even as the index was a relative underperformer YTD. The index went up by 7.1 percent m-o-m and closed at 3633.18 points, which buoyed the index into the green on a YTD basis. Sectoral trends were mostly positive barring the

Qatar Exchange

The QE 20 index reversed trends from the past four months and was the second best performing market in the GCC for the month of July-17 after the Ramadan and holiday break. All indices were able to close in the green for the month. The index went up by 4.2 percent m-o-m, but still closed lower than the 10,000-point mark at 9406.06 points. The Qatar All Share index, which maps the broader index, also witnessed a move up as it went up by 3.8 percent m-o-m for the month of July-17. Banks & Financial Services companies led the way as the heavyweight index went up by 5.6 percent m-o-m, QNB jumped by 8.7 percent m-o-m. Masraf Al-Rayan and Qatar Islamic Bank followed with gains of 5.8 percent and 4.3 percent for the month. Telecoms was the other major index, which gained and went up by 4.9 percent as both Vodafone Qatar and Ooredoo gained by 8.4 percent and 4.2 percent respectively. Real Estate index followed with gains of 3.1 percent m-o-m for the month of July-17 as Ezzan Holding and Barwa were able to push up the index, as the property stocks went up by 3.7 percent each.

Bahrain Bourse

The Bahrain All Share Index, which remains one of the best performing markets, despite declining trends from the previous three months gained ground in July-17, albeit marginally. The index closed 1.4 percent higher on a m-o-m basis during the current month. The index closed at 1327.81 points at the end of the month. Sectoral performance was mixed, as there were indices, which gained and receded. Market breadth for the index favored gainers, as 9 stocks gained ground, while 5 stocks witnessed declines in their share prices. Commercial Banks were up 1.9 percent m-o-m as compared to June-17, as Ahli United Bank increased by 2.9 percent m-o-m. Industrials was the best performing index as the sector gained by 10.4 percent m-o-m as compared to the previous month. The Investment sector also gained, albeit marginally by 0.3 percent for the month of July-17. The Services sector was weakest performing index dropping by 4.4 percent m-o-m, followed by the Hotels & Tourism index and the Insurance index as their m-o-m returns came in 0.8 percent and 0.6 percent respectively. In earnings releases, NBB recorded a H1-17 net profit of BHD 31.74 million, compared to BHD 31.72 million H1-16. The Net Interest Income (NIM) for H1-17 was BHD 34.95 million, compared to BHD 31.82 million for H1-16, representing an increase of 9.8 percent. The increase in NIM was as a result of growth in earning assets and better asset liability management leading to an improvement in net interest margin.

Muscat Securities Market

Oman was the only other index in the GCC which saw declines during the month of July-17, and remained the weakest performer in the GCC YTD. The benchmark MSM index was down 1.8 percent m-o-m, closed at 5024.24 points, and lost over 13 percent since the start of the year. All sectoral indices closed in the red for the month. The Industrials index was the main laggard as it declined by 4.6 percent m-o-m, driven by a 9 percent drop in Raysut Cement. Oman Cable Industry (-1.3 percent) and Oman Cement Co (-0.5 percent) also witnessed lower levels as compared to the previous month. The Services index followed with a decline of 3.8 percent driven by a 7.6 percent drop in Phoenix Power, followed by a 4.4 percent drop in Ooredoo. The Financials index also saw lower levels and declined by 1.9 percent driven by Ominvest that receded by 3.5 percent m-o-m. National Bank of Oman followed and went down by 2.8 percent as compared to the previous month followed by HSBC Oman which declined by 2.4 percent as compared to June-17.

Monthly Indicators	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17
Price Index	5,419.7	5,398.4	5,401.1	5,554.5	5,748.1	6,832.2	6,783.1	7,029.4	6,843.0	6,785.4	6,762.8	6,851.6
Monthly % Change	(0.6%)	(0.4%)	0.0%	2.8%	3.5%	18.9%	(0.7%)	3.6%	(2.7%)	(0.8%)	(0.3%)	1.3%
Weighted Index	347.3	351.9	354.0	367.1	380.1	427.4	424.0	413.3	408.3	404.5	399.3	413.29
Monthly % Change	(1.0%)	1.3%	0.6%	3.7%	3.5%	12.4%	(0.8%)	(2.5%)	(1.2%)	(0.9%)	(1.3%)	3.5%
Kuwait 15 Index	801.8	814.1	826.5	855.2	885.0	985.4	964.1	933.8	919.4	915.8	910.1	943.2
Monthly % Change	(1.1%)	1.5%	1.5%	3.5%	3.5%	11.3%	(2.2%)	(3.1%)	(1.5%)	(0.4%)	(0.6%)	3.6%
Market Cap (KWD Mn)	24,010	24,326	24,475	25,371	26,257	29,442	29,102	28,354	28,008	27,656	27,257	28,187
P/E (X) - TTM	15.30	15.63	15.72	16.30	16.80	18.80	18.70	18.16	16.01	15.90	15.60	16.20
P/BV (X) - TTM	1.05	1.06	1.07	1.11	1.13	1.27	1.26	1.23	1.24	1.23	1.22	1.26
Dividend Yield (%)	4.37%	4.30%	4.27%	4.12%	3.98%	3.67%	3.67%	3.42%	3.76%	4.02%	4.09%	4.70%
Volume (Mn Shares)	1,430	902	1,679	2,908	3,594	13,858	8,857	7,105	5,907	2,734	735	1,822
Value (KD Mn)	152	87	258	328	321	1,185	866	653	517	301	151	301
Trades ('000)	40.1	27.2	45.2	70.6	75.6	229.8	171.8	147.7	115.9	75.6	32.6	67.5

Source: Kuwait Stock Exchange, KAMCO Research

Goods index witnessed the steepest decline during the month recorded at 11.4 percent as the largest stock in the index - Kuwait Food dropped by 14 percent m-o-m. Shares of First Takaful Insurance topped the monthly decliners list recording a fall of 19.3 percent followed by United Projects Group and Automated Systems Co. with monthly declines of 18.0 percent and 17.4 percent, respectively. The monthly market breadth was strongly skewed towards gainers that included 88 companies while decliners included 59 companies. Prices of 14 companies remained unchanged.

Saudi Arabia (Tadawul)

The relatively weak earnings season led the TASI to decline for the month of July-17, after witnessing a strong Jun-17 where the index went up by over 8 percent m-o-m. The index, which was the only major market to see lower levels, declining by 4.5 percent m-o-m in July-17, but still traded above the support level of 7,000 points and closed at 7094.2 points. Index performance was mixed and was mostly skewed towards losers. Food & Beverages was the key laggard as it plunged by 11.9 percent m-o-m. Real Estate Mgmt. & Development and Energy indices followed with declines of 7.7 percent m-o-m and 6.9 percent m-o-m. Telecoms (-5.7 percent), Utilities (-5.6 percent) and Banks (-4.7 percent) were also key indices

Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange

The ADX followed broad key GCC market (ex-TASI) cues and gained by 3.2 percent during the month of July-17. The index closed at 4566.15 points and moved into the green on a YTD basis. Sectoral performance included both gainers and losers. Telecom was the best performing index as it gained by 8.4 percent, as Etisalat (+ 8.3 percent) was able to buoy the index higher. Investment & Financial Services companies also jumped by 6.3 percent m-o-m for the month of July-17, while Banks moved up marginally by 13 percent m-o-m. Real Estate followed & Services followed with gains of 3.0 percent and 1.5 percent respectively from the previous month. Indices which saw

Industrial and the Services indices, as each index receded by 1.6 percent m-o-m for the month of July-17. The Financials pack consisting of Banks, Financial and Investment Services and Insurance were all up for the month. Financials and Investment Services index was the best performing index as it jumped by 12.8 percent m-o-m for the month of July-17, led by 23 percent jump in the share price of Shuaa Capital and a 13.5 percent increase in Dubai Investment's stock price. Banks went up by 5 percent for the month as all banks closed in the green m-o-m. Insurance companies also closed up by 5.7 percent for the month of July-17. Telecoms were the second best performing index in July-17, gaining by 10.1 percent m-o-m, as both DU and Hits Telecom witnessed double-digit returns for the month.

In earnings related announcements Emirates NBD saw its net profit go up by 5 percent to AED 3.9 billion in H1-17. Net interest income improved 2 percent y-o-y during the first half of 2017 due to loan growth and helped by a recent improvement in margins. Key driver for the improvement since the beginning of the year as loans reset at higher rates and funding costs improved as liquidity conditions eased. Dubai Islamic Bank saw its net profit rise by 7 percent YoY to AED 2.143 billion in H1-17.

THE ALL-NEW INFINITI Q60 COUPE

'POWERFUL ELEGANCE' DESIGNED FOR SOME PEOPLE



KUWAIT: Building on a legacy that started back in 2002 with the G35 Coupe, the all new INFINITI Q60 arrives in 2017 to epitomize the ethos set by an inspiring leader in the automotive industry. "INFINITI is not about doing what everyone else is doing. It is not about copying traditional, conservative notions of luxury. We will not try to be all things to all people, but everything to some people", famously reflected Carlos Ghosn, former Chairman and CEO of Renault-Nissan Alliance, the strategic partnership which INFINITI forms a part of.

The Q60 is a driver centric, passenger minded Coupe with powerful elegance and striking performance. The driver enjoys a totally in-control experience in the high-back, high-bolster seats that are newly-designed to lower the load on the spine and support the shoulders. The exterior's flowing sculptural lines and strong, muscular proportions communicate dynamism, representing a daring visual expression of the car's performance.

The INFINITI Q60 Red Sport 400 ensures that its speed and power are well felt with its 3.0-liter V6 twin-turbo engine. Generating a staggering 400hp, the all-new Q60 engine is designed to offer enhanced performance while maintaining high levels of efficiency. The steering wheel is sleeker and more

performance based than ever, ensuring flawless drivability that triggers the senses. The driver gets to choose from seven personalized modes to customize steering performance according to their preferred driving style.

The Q60 delivers a confidence-inspiring and personalized experience behind the wheel, which epitomizes INFINITI's dedication to developing new and innovative driving technologies.

The Q60 is fully customizable through the Drive Mode Selector (DMS) - accessed through the 8-inch upper touchscreen. The system allows the drive mode to be selected from the following available options: 'Standard', 'Snow', 'Eco', 'Sport', 'Sport+' (new for certain models), and 'Personal'.

Employing a signature INFINITI design cues to communicate unifying features such as the double-arch grille and the crescent-cut C-pillars - which arc forward and emphasize the car's dynamic quality - the Q60 is instantly recognizable.

The deeper grille is inset from the body, communicating a stronger connection to the engine. LED headlights, employing 'light guide technology' to spread light evenly on the road ahead, are designed to emulate the shape of the human eye, providing an alluring 'face' to the car. The car's aggressive stance gives a greater impression of stability



and in-control driving potential, while its lower centre of gravity has a positive overall effect on driving dynamics.

The Q60 features newly-designed 19-inch aluminium alloy wheels as standard. The 'Red Sport 400' models - more performance-oriented versions of the car - have wider wheels and tires at the rear, contributing to a more aggressive stance while also improving handling and grip with a higher capacity for lateral G-forces. The wheel gaps - the spaces between tires and wheel arches

- are tighter than ever, further lowering the visual volume of the car and giving it a low, powerful stance.

"Our 'Powerful Elegance' form language makes INFINITI vehicles instantly recognizable, but rather than applying constraints and limitations upon the artistry and creativity of design, it is constantly evolving to retain its fresh and contemporary edge - above all, Q60 brings this philosophy to life," explained Alfonso Albaisa, former INFINITI Executive Design Director.

Studio on Wheels

The incredible Studio on Wheels INFINITI audio system features three woofers that create an immersive experience with deep frequencies brought to life. Working with acoustic glass and noise cancelling technology, the system replicates the richness of live performances. The Q60 is equipped with INFINITI's InTouch advanced infotainment setup, allowing occupants to personalize the interior environment of the Q60 according to their preferences, and can store profiles for multiple drivers. InTouch is able to memorize more than 200 settings that the individual can program themselves.

The Q60 enables owners to access a Vehicle Health Report, providing a monthly overview of the car's status regarding ABS, airbags, brakes, engine, oil pressure, and tire pressure. InTouch then alerts the driver if any action or servicing is required.

With safety a central concern, the Q60 is equipped with six airbags and includes safety technologies that actively protect people in and around the car. The comprehensive safety features offer the ultimate peace-of-mind, as hazard monitoring and avoidance systems significantly reduce risk of incidents. The Q60 comes in 10 exterior colors including 'Dynamic Sunstone Red' and 'Solar Mica' that are completely new to the INFINITI range.



The 737 MAX family offers customers exceptional performance, flexibility and efficiency.

BOEING DELIVERS FIRST 737 MAX 8 TO FLYDUBAI

SEATTLE: Boeing and flydubai celebrated the delivery of the airline's first 737 MAX 8, making the Middle East carrier the first in the region to operate Boeing's newest single-aisle airplane.

Today's delivery is the first of 76 737 MAX airplanes the airline will be adding to their all-Boeing fleet of Next-Generation 737s. "We are delighted to receive our first Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft from our order made at the Dubai Airshow in 2013," said Ghaith Al-Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer, flydubai. "This marked the largest single-aisle Boeing aircraft order placed in the Middle East. With this new chapter, we are looking forward to continuing our work with Boeing as we benefit from increased efficiency and are able to offer an enhanced customer experience."

flydubai currently operates a fleet of 58 Next-Generation 737-800s and has built a network of more than 95 destinations in 44 countries, from Russia in the north, Czech Republic in the west, Thailand in the east and Tanzania in the south. "flydubai's growth in just nine years has been remarkable and Boeing is honored to have been part of this journey," said Boeing Commercial Airplanes President and CEO Kevin McAllister. "This delivery marks another significant milestone

in our partnership. We are confident that the market-leading efficiency and reliability of the 737 MAX will play a key role in flydubai's continued success and complement its current Boeing fleet."

The 737 MAX family has been designed to offer customers exceptional performance, flexibility and efficiency, with lower per-seat costs and an extended range that will open up new destinations in the single-aisle market. "As the first MAX customer in the region, we look forward to the further fuel and operating efficiencies that this aircraft will bring to our young modern fleet," said Ken Gile, Chief Operating Officer, flydubai. "Our flight crew share our excitement in operating one of the most highly anticipated commercial aircraft to enter service on our network."

The 737 MAX incorporates the latest technology. CFM International LEAP-1B engines, Advanced Technology winglets, Boeing Sky Interior, large flight deck displays, and other improvements to deliver the highest efficiency, reliability and passenger comfort in the single-aisle market.

The 737 MAX is the fastest-selling airplane in Boeing history, accumulating more than 3,800 orders to date from 88 customers worldwide.



The delivery of the first of 76 737 MAX airplanes will be adding to flydubai's all-Boeing fleet.

KIPCO REALIGNS OPERATIONS OF ITS BAHRAIN-BASED UGB

'STRATEGIC CREATION OF TWO DISTINCT LINES OF BUSINESS': AL-AYYAR

KUWAIT: KIPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - has announced the realignment of the operational structure of its Bahrain-based subsidiary, United Gulf Bank (UGB). The realignment of the investment bank's operations is proposed to result in the establishment of two distinct entities: UGB Holding (which will fully own the existing UGB), and UGB as a wholesale conventional bank governed by the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB).

UGB Holding is proposed to be listed on the Bahrain Bourse, while UGB is proposed to be delisted. UGB Holding will ultimately fully own UGB and other core investments currently held under the bank, while in the final structure UGB will retain the regulated banking activities and will thus continue to hold its stake in the Kuwait-based KAMCO Investment Company as a subsidiary.

This realignment has been approved in principle by the CBB and is subject to the approval of shareholders and other regulatory authorities. Commenting on this matter, Faisal Al-Ayyar, KIPCO's Vice Chairman (Executive), said: "KIPCO's strategy to constantly seek ways to streamline our operations has kept us lean and efficient across the Group. The creation of a holding company listed on the Bahrain Bourse will allow UGB to focus its operations on investment banking as a core line of business. In turn, the holding company will hold the other investments, such as UGB's stakes in Burgan Bank, United Real Estate, TAKAUD Savings and



Faisal Al-Ayyar

Pensions and other investments. The strategic creation of these two distinct lines of business will serve to enhance performance and increase efficiency down the line."

The KIPCO Group is one of the biggest holding companies in the Middle East and North Africa, with consolidated assets of \$33 billion as at 30 June 2017. The Group has significant ownership interests in over 60 companies operating across 24 countries. The group's main business sectors are financial services, media, real estate and manufactur-

ing. Through its core companies, subsidiaries and affiliates, KIPCO also has interests in the education and medical sectors.



EXCLUSIVE OFFERS TO CUSTOMERS AT BANTA FURNITURE: KFH

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) is offering a wide array of financing promotions in collaboration with Banta Furniture within the framework of a marketing campaign themed "offers at the price of cash for 3 years settlement period".

This campaign stems from the bank's keenness to grant clients special advantages and boost the market. The campaign lasts until mid-October on all Banta products; furniture, kitchen, accessories etc. Banta offers a wide range of services such as design service, layout service, project needs, and free delivery, not to mention several innovative services.

KFH is keen to offer services that satisfy customers' financial needs in compliance with the principles of the Islamic sharia.

The campaign enjoys several advantages

such as the price of cash for 3 years settlement period. It offers the possibility to finance customers up to KD15,000 with 6 months the maturity of first installment, while payment period up to 5 years. KFH is keen on continuing its support to local market and create new partnership with dealerships and companies to reinforce strategic relationships with all sectors in the local market. The consumer financing includes furniture, electronics, gadgets, kitchens, constructions materials, boats and vehicles in addition to the education and medical financing. This serves in enabling customers to achieve their needs and meet their ambitions.

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.

CYBERMAK INFORMATION SYSTEMS WINS 3 AWARDS

AWARD AT BMC PARTNER CONFERENCE IN RECOGNITION OF CYBERMAK'S SUCCESSES OVER THE YEARS

KUWAIT: CyberMAK Information Systems won three awards at the annual BMC Partner Conference which was held in June at the Spanish capital, Madrid. The awards by BMC were in recognition of CyberMAK's successes over the past several years and its ability to support its customer's Digital Transformation experience through CyberMAK's successful implementation of BMC solutions in the domains of Data Center Automation, Information Security, Compliance, Workload Automation, Proactive Infrastructure, Service Application Performance Management, IT Service Management, Mobility Capacity Optimization, all of which has contributed effectively to help several organizations reduce costs (Capex & Opex), enhance service stability, achieve more with fewer resources and improve the quality and health of an organization's business. The awards were as follows:

- * First award: CyberMAK is the only



First Platinum Partner in the Middle East for BMC

- Second award: BMC's Best Performing Partner - EMEA-EM for 2017
- Third award: BMC's Best Partner-EMEA-EM in the Middle East, Europe and Africa in BMC's True Sight Technologies,

which includes Infrastructure Management, Monitoring Solutions, Efficiency and Performance of Software Applications, and Capacity Resource Planning. CyberMAK's Chief Executive Officer Colin Miranda said, "winning such awards reflects CyberMAK's proven technical and professional capabilities, which has been instrumental in creating business differentiation for our customers and making them more agile to face the changing nature of market demands through automation, by applying BMC solutions in over 120 successful implementations, spanning 14 countries."

CyberMAK's latest expansion of its operations has resulted in the establishing of its branch in Riyadh in order to bring 20 years of CyberMAK's experience in BMC technology, to customers in the Saudi market. The company also targets enhancing the experience of BMC customers in Saudi Arabia by providing local technical

expertise that will deliver unparalleled quality that has made CyberMAK an extremely successful systems integrator in the Middle East.

CyberMAK Information Systems is a leading Kuwaiti company in the field of digital transformation and information technology in the Middle East and Africa with 20 years of experience. In partnership with its client-base, CyberMAK has driven several success stories in various industries like banking, telecom, retail, government institutions, oil and gas, achieving tangible and measurable success for its customers.

CyberMAK is also extremely skilled in the domains of Cyber-Security and IT Analytics and offers the renowned SIEM Solution/Behavioral Analytics Tool called Splunk. In addition, CyberMAK is leaders in Command & Control, GIS and Process, Power and Marine Engineering with its Intergraph solution.

DEMAND FOR WI-FI NOW SKY-HIGH FOR MIDEAST PASSENGERS: SURVEY

60% OF ALL PASSENGERS BELIEVE INFLIGHT WI-FI IS A NECESSITY NOT A LUXURY

DUBAI: Inflight broadband is changing the airline industry and revolutionizing passengers' expectations of the onboard experience. That is the conclusion from the third annual global Inflight Connectivity Survey, published recently by Inmarsat (LSE: ISAT.L), the world's leading provider of global mobile satellite communications, in association with market research company GfK.

Overwhelmingly, passengers now expect the same levels of connectivity and access to online services whilst they are at 30,000 feet as they receive on the ground. As such, 60 percent of all passengers say that inflight Wi-Fi is now a necessity rather than a luxury. Over half (56 percent) of passengers in the Middle East who have experienced high-quality inflight Wi-Fi rate it higher on their list of priorities than inflight entertainment when choosing an airline.

With airlines in every market racing to install or upgrade their Wi-Fi offering, passengers will have a choice to opt for an airline that offers high-quality broadband, and will soon turn their back on airlines not offering this. Over a third of Middle Eastern respondents (36 per-

cent) said they would stop using their preferred airline within the next year if it did not offer connectivity enabling them to stream or browse online without interruption.

The ability to connect to personal devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets now sits within the top three considerations when choosing an airline, behind ticket price and airline brand for 46 percent of Middle Eastern passengers who have experienced high-quality inflight Wi-Fi.

What's more, the ability to remain online and work during a flight is greatly improving passenger experience, according to more than half (56 percent) of all business travellers who have previously used inflight Wi-Fi.

The survey reflects the responses of 9,000 airline passengers from 18 countries across Europe, the Middle East, Asia Pacific, and North and Latin America, and is the largest global passenger survey of its kind.

Ben Griffin, Vice President, Middle East, Africa and South Asia at Inmarsat Aviation, said: "High-quality inflight Wi-Fi is changing the way people think about flying and how they spend their time in the air. Whether using the time to

work, to connect with friends and family, or to pass time shopping or viewing entertainment, the availability of inflight broadband has become a major factor when choosing an airline."

He continued: "The annual Inflight Connectivity Survey has become a barometer for passenger sentiment. This year's survey reveals that 60 percent of passengers believe that inflight Wi-Fi is a necessity and no longer a luxury. This will only increase as more people experience inflight connectivity. It is clear the opportunity that connectivity presents to airlines cannot be underestimated."

Middle East Survey Highlights

- 81 percent of Middle Eastern passengers would pay for inflight connectivity even on short-haul leisure flights, rising to 85 percent for long-haul business flights
- 59 percent of Middle Eastern passengers agree that inflight Wi-Fi takes the anxiety out of flying because they can stay in contact with people on the ground
- 36 percent of passengers in the Middle East said they would stop using their preferred airline within the next year if they only offered poor quality Wi-Fi
- Business flyers in the Middle East use Wi-Fi for both work and non-work reasons: 29 percent browse the web, 37 percent use social networks, 43 percent email

and 20 percent use business tools

Leisure flyers love the freedom to use a variety of devices as they wish. The Middle East has the highest volume of multi-device usage in all regions surveyed, with 66 percent of inflight connectivity users connecting more than one device.

51 percent of Middle Eastern passengers would take advantage of the ability to purchase items from the plane and collect them on arrival at the airport.

27 percent of respondents in the region would choose to have inflight purchases delivered to their home.

Inmarsat is transforming the global aviation industry by bringing complete connectivity to every aircraft and flight path in the world. It is the first and only provider with a complete next-generation High-Throughput Satellite (HTS) network spanning the world. Inmarsat is also the only aviation broadband provider capable of connecting the complete aircraft from cabin to cockpit. Inmarsat's world-leading passenger solutions are complemented by its industry-standard certified safety and operations services. Passengers can browse the internet, stream videos, check social media and more during flights, with an on-board connectivity experience on par with broadband services available on the ground.

INFLIGHT CONNECTIVITY: BRINGING FREEDOM TO THE SKIES

BRING IT ON inmarsat aviation

Passengers are demanding more

60% agree that inflight Wi-Fi is not a luxury, it's a necessity, with the top priority being to stay connected to the ground (71% amongst inflight connectivity users)

So long, seatback screens

61% of passengers who have experienced good inflight Wi-Fi consider it more important than onboard entertainment when choosing an airline

Wi-Fi is a "life-saver" for families

71% of inflight connectivity users travelling with children connected more than one device

Flights no longer mean wasted time, especially for business travellers

61% agree that "Wi-Fi would take the anxiety out of flying because I could stay in contact with people on the ground", rising to 67% for those with children at home



LONDON: An actor poses besides a Rolls Royce Waterspeed Phantom Drophead Coupe at the Bluebird Cafe in London.

ROLLS-ROYCE POWERS INTO PROFIT; SHARES SOAR

LONDON: Rolls-Royce powered back into profit during the first half, propelled by strong deliveries for its Trent aircraft engines, lifting its share price almost ten percent yesterday.

Net profit stood at £1.58 billion (\$2.1 billion, 1.77 billion euros) in the six months to June 30 compared with a loss after tax of £1.77 billion in the first half of 2016, Rolls said in an earnings statement, with the group boosted also by a recovery for sterling against the dollar. "Civil aerospace large engine deliveries increased 27 percent," Warren East said in the release, adding that the group's savings from a restructuring program were ahead of plan.

"Our strengthened management team is making good progress in simplifying the organization and driving the pace of necessary change to develop a more resilient and sustainable business," he added.

Rolls said revenues grew 17 percent to £7.6 billion in the reporting period, helped by strong sales for its Trent XWB engines that power the Airbus A350 extra wide-bodied passenger plane.

The British group's share price surged 9.6 percent to 973.50 pence to sit atop London's benchmark FTSE 100 index,

which was up half-a-percent overall at 7,409 points. "With cost-cutting continuing, and production of the flagship Trent engines ramping up, there are plenty of reasons for investors to be positive," said George Salmon, equity analyst at stockbroker Hargreaves Lansdown.

East is shedding 3,600 jobs as part of his restructuring program implemented since starting as chief executive two years ago. Rolls-Royce last year slumped into a record £4-billion annual net loss, ravaged by a Brexit-fuelled collapse in the pound and a corruption fine. In 2016, Rolls took a vast £4.4-billion hit from the drop in the value of the pound in the wake of Britain's shock EU exit referendum, alongside a £671-million penalty to settle bribery allegations. "Since the end of 2016, the value of sterling relative to the US dollar strengthened by around five percent to the end of the first half, compared to the prior period in which sterling depreciated by around 10 percent," Rolls noted in yesterday's statement.

Last year's sterling slump ramped up the cost of imported materials for Rolls, forcing the company into its deep loss. —AFP

FUELED BY NETAPP PROGRAM EXPANDS, DRIVES CLOUD GROWTH

ABU DHABI: NetApp recently announced the expansion of its Fueled by NetApp program, designed to help drive growth for service providers who are helping their customers on the path to digital transformation. With this announcement, service providers gain access to new consulting and incubator programs, as well as new efficiency guarantees and increased training.

The Fueled by NetApp global service provider program will continue to deliver go-to-market solutions with scale-out, guaranteed performance, automated management, data assurance, and global efficiencies. In addition to this, NetApp will now offer:

- Extended complementary product management consultancy services for the full NetApp product and solution portfolio with experienced service provider industry experts
 - NetApp Cloud Incubator Program, which provides easy access to storage resources for cloud and hosting startups, allowing a focus on solution engineering and delivery rather than the heavy costs associated with infrastructure build-outs
 - Training partnerships with live, instructor-led technology guidance and industry-leading product marketing and management certification support specific to NetApp
 - Increase in investment for co-marketing and solution development to drive more significant service provider go-to-market activities
 - Efficiency guarantees on the SolidFire storage platform to offer a more predictable cost model
- "Enterprise technology is rapidly shifting to consumption-based and hybrid cloud models, creating a unique growth opportunity for the

service provider industry," said Fadi Kanafani, Regional Director Middle East & Africa at NetApp. "Our Fueled by NetApp program addresses this digital transformation with a tailored approach with clear go-to-market consultancy forservice providers designed to drive business growth while reducing risk."

Achieving results

Carrenza, a global cloud service company, turned to NetApp and implemented the market-leading NetApp SolidFire all-flash block storage system to increase the agility and responsiveness of its cloud infrastructure.

"Our customers depend on us to deliver a high-performance infrastructure that never goes down," said Matthew McGrory, managing director of Carrenza. "The Fueled by NetApp consulting team provided us valuable market insights and intelligence that helped us figure out our flash storage strategy in a way that we have not experienced from any other storage company."



Fadi Kanafani

Internet Solutions, a wholly owned subsidiary of Dimension Data and part of NTT, is a pan-African telecom and cloud service provider providing end-to-end telco and cloud services to its customers. "We evaluated a number of leading storage vendors, and NetApp SolidFire came out on top in terms of performance, risk, licensing, cost, and modular scalability," said Kevin Pillay, director of technology, Internet Solutions. "The Fueled by NetApp team provided training and go-to-market consulting and offered best practice cost modeling around pricing and productization of the SolidFire system in a way that we were not expecting. It really helped Internet Solutions to shape our flash storage strategy."

INDONESIA TO LIFT BAN ON TELEGRAM MESSAGE SERVICE OVER SECURITY

JAKARTA: Indonesia and encrypted messaging service Telegram have agreed to establish better procedures to stamp out distribution of terrorist propaganda on the platform, the app's founder and the communications minister said yesterday. Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, has seen a resurgence in home-grown radicalism, and worries about the growing influence of extremist group Islamic State.

Telegram is a messaging platform believed to be popular with Islamic State sympathizers, who use chatrooms with hundreds of members, besides holding private conversations.

Indonesia authorities blocked access to some Telegram channels last month, saying it had several forums that were "full of radical and terrorist propaganda".

"We have discussed ways to block publicly available propaganda of terrorism on Telegram, which is something we have committed to do globally, and particularly in Indonesia," app founder Pavel Durov told a joint news conference with the minister.

Durov said the two had agreed to set up better lines of communication, because Telegram was not aware of email requests from the ministry to take down some channels. It could take about 24 to 36 hours for the app to shut down public channels with terrorism content, but a

direct communication line to Indonesian authorities would allow it to "shut them down more efficiently within several hours", he said. Durov has formed a team of Indonesian speakers, he added.

Once a standard operating procedure has been agreed, the government would free up operations of Telegram in Indonesia, said Communications Minister Rudiantara.

"Once all the technicalities are done, we can remove the blockage," added the minister, who uses one name, like many Indonesians. Indonesia had blocked 11 of Telegram's Domain Name Systems (DNS) for its web-based service on July 14 and these would be reopened this week, the ministry said in a statement. —Reuters

FATHER, SON PREPARE FOR ECLIPSE AFTER MISSED 1979 VIEWING

MADRAS, Oregon: The last time a total solar eclipse blacked out the sun in Oregon nearly 40 years ago. Gene Brick was working in a timber mill that refused to shut down for the spectacle. The World War II veteran and amateur astronomer was devastated when his friends raved about experiencing a pitch-dark sky in the middle of the day. "Everyone who was outside got to see it, and they enjoyed telling me all about it - and I was hurt by that," said Brick, now 92. "But work is work, you know." Brick will get another chance to witness history this month, when a total solar eclipse begins its path across the US in Oregon.

The one he missed in 1979 covered the Pacific Northwest and parts of Canada. This total eclipse will be visible from coast to coast across the nation - something that hasn't happened in 99 years. Brick plans to watch the event with his son using two telescopes: a fancy new one and one the two crafted together 53 years ago in their basement. The men will peer at the sun through both during the eclipse's totality, when the moon's shadow completely covers the sun for just over two minutes. They also will use special filters to photograph the eclipse through the newer machine.

For Brick, who survived a kamikaze attack on the USS Drexler during the Battle of Okinawa, the opportunity is

the experience of a lifetime. "I always loved to look at the moon," he said, after peering through the telescope the pair crafted in 1964. "I still do." The Bricks will have a prime location for their father-son moment. The town of Madras, in central Oregon, is in the high desert, where summertime skies are often clear and cloudless. Up to 100,000 people are expected to flock to the town and surrounding Jefferson County for the Aug 21 event, creating worries about overcrowding and traffic.

Brick's son, Bartt Brick, is on the Madras City Council and will be on call during the eclipse. But taking the time to watch the event with his father is important to him. The elder Brick got the last four credits he needed for his high school diploma by signing up for the US Navy and never attended college - but even in his 90s, he's studying particle physics.

A new dictionary

The pair decided to build the telescope when the younger Brick was 14, after finding a piece of glass in his late grandfather's garage that was hand-ground into a concave lens for a telescope. Gene Brick worked long, hard days cutting logs at the mill then stayed up into the night working on the project

with his teenage son. "We'd bought ourselves a book on telescopes and a new dictionary, and after about - what - four or five months, we had a telescope," Bartt Brick recalled on a recent summer day. "I'd sleep about half the night," his father added with a chuckle. The two dragged the telescope outside on the night they finished, aimed it toward the heavens by propping it on a stepladder, and peered into the night sky until they spied the Ring Nebula, a dying star in a constellation about 2,000 light years from Earth.

"We were so excited, we ran in and told Mom. But at 2 o'clock in the morning, she wasn't as thrilled as we were," the younger Brick said. Over the years, the telescope got a lot of use from the family and from a string of neighborhood children who lined up most evenings to peer at the moon. But when the 1979 total solar eclipse came along, the elder Brick was working, the younger Brick no longer lived at home, and the telescope went unused. When Bartt Brick moved back to Madras three years ago, the stars aligned for another crack at a shared celestial show.

On Aug 21, three generations of Bricks will assemble. They'll have a sleek black, new telescope equipped with a remote control and a USB cord for snapping photos through a computer. But they'll also have on hand the unassuming,



MADRAS, Oregon: This frame grab from a video shows Gene Brick, 92, left, and his son, Bartt Brick, peering through a telescope that they made together in 1964. — AP

unmounted metal cylinder they worked on so long ago. "Dad's had a message for me ever since I was 2 years old, and it was, 'Be curious,'" Bartt Brick said. "And boy, did I learn how to be curious with this." — AP

SANOFI AND ROCHE COLLABORATE TO MANAGE PATIENT'S WITH DIABETES

KUWAIT: To enable health care providers and patients to effectively manage diabetes, Sanofi, in partnership with Roche Diabetes Care, are introducing 'My Star' Starter Kits in Kuwait and the region. The aim is to channel knowledge, health beliefs, as well as influence adherence to medication and lifestyle measures that can aid diabetic patients cope well in the long run.

The 'Starter Kit' offers easy-to-use resources, information and tools that can improve a patient's understanding of their condition. The objective is to support patients through their journey with diabetes by providing them with useful information on day to day concerns, facilitate regular monitoring of blood sugar levels, and improve awareness on the benefits of effective diabetes management. The kit consists of various components including a diabetes general education booklet, a sugar log book and a blood glucose machine to measure their blood sugar levels.

"At Sanofi, we believe in constantly furthering our commitment to improve patient lives and contributing to the growth of healthy societies. With the launch of 'My Star Starter Kits', our aim is to empower health-care professionals and their patients to use innovative approaches that are scientifically proven, and can help in effective control of diabetes in Kuwait and the region," said Jean-Paul Scheuer, Country Chair and General Manager for Sanofi Gulf.

The starter kits will be distributed to physicians treating

patients across Kuwait, UAE, Oman and Bahrain. In turn, the treating physician will share the starter kits with suitable patients, introduce them to the items included in their kits, and explain how these can be used to improve their well-being and diabetes control. In Kuwait, the 'Starter Kits' will be available for patients in private as well as government hospitals. The initiative is being rolled out in three phases across GCC countries this year, reaching over 150,000 patients.

"At Roche Diabetes Care, we strive to help people with diabetes worry less about their daily diabetes management routines and experience true relief. For people with diabetes, simplifying the management of their condition can be an essential part of championing their own health and wellness. We are happy to be a part of an integrated effort through the launch of the 'My Star Starter Kits'. We hope that many members of the community will benefit from the initiative and allow them to learn more about diabetes, while helping them live healthier by staying in range," said Fadi Gedeon, General Manager of Roche Diabetes Care Middle East.

The increased prevalence of diabetes in Middle Eastern countries is a major health concern. Lifestyle interventions and adherence to medications are central to disease prevention and management. The efforts are being driven in alignment with the GCC strategy to reduce the incidence and effectively manage non-communicable diseases like diabetes in the region.



YANGON: Photo shows elderly resident of the "Twilight Villa" nursing home receiving free dental work at the center on the edge of Yangon.



YANGON: Photo shows elderly residents of the "Twilight Villa" nursing home being watched by nurses in one of the centre's rooms on the edge of Yangon.

'TWILIGHT VILLA': HOME OF MYANMAR'S ABANDONED ELDERLY

YANGON: Paralyzed on one side by a stroke and barely able to speak, Tin Hlaing was left to die at the side of a road by her own children. The 75-year-old only survived because a stranger took pity on her as she laid on the street and brought her to the "Twilight Villa" nursing home on the edge of Yangon. Her story has become increasingly familiar as impoverished Myanmar struggles to cope with a rapidly aging population that is piling pressure on its already anemic health system. Twilight Villa's vice chairwoman Khin Ma Ma said many of the residents, like Tin Hlaing, arrive bewildered and sick after being abandoned by their families. "She was in a terrible state-disorientated, dehydrated and above all very angry," Khin Ma Ma told AFP. "It was impossible to communicate with her." Set up in 2010, the retirement home already cares for 120 people over the age of 70 and has more than 100 people on its waiting list. The wards are crowded with beds, all just a few centimeters apart, filled with elderly people who sit quietly staring into space or lie huddled under blankets.

On one, a frail old lady whispered into the ear of a smiling plastic doll, her only companion since she moved to the facility from the shed she used to occupy in her family's back yard. Khin Ma Ma remembers another woman who was thrown out of a car next to a rubbish dump, where she was found covered in cuts and bite marks from rats. She made it to the nursing home but survived for only a few months. "Sometimes we find only a small note in their pockets with their name and age. That's all. When we ask them questions, they can't even respond," she said. "Old people should not be treated like that in a civilized society and those who abandon them should be prosecuted."

'Here to die'

Decades of misrule by a brutal junta, stringent sanctions and ethnic conflict have

reduced Myanmar to one of the poorest countries in the world. Now it is facing a demographic crisis that is already squeezing the life out of Asia's former tiger economies.

The UN estimates some nine percent of the population is currently over 65 but that will surge to a quarter by 2050, outstripping the number of under-15s. "Economic realities oblige many people to continue heavy manual labor into old age to survive," said Janet Jackson, the UNFPA's Myanmar representative. "This underlines the need for adequate social services and policies that serve the aged." Already in tatters after 50 years of underinvestment by the former junta, Myanmar's health system is struggling to cope. Since taking office last year, the new civilian government has set up only one new care facility, exclusively for the over 90s, which receives just 10,000 kyat a month in funding-around \$7.

Traditionally most seniors are cared for by their families, but the pressures of poverty, double-digit inflation and rapid urbanization mean more and more people are abandoning their relatives. "We have nowhere to go. We have come here to wait to die," said Hla Hla Shwe, who has lived in another facility in Yangon run by monks for the past three years. "Here we feel less alone and people feed us, thanks to the donations," the 85-year-old added.

'Good old days' - But to the east of Myanmar's commercial capital, one group of actresses is finding solace together in their twilight years. Set up by former screen queen Nwet Nwet San on a donated piece of land, "Mother's Villa" has become a refuge for more than 20 aging film stars. "The later years can maybe be very difficult, even for former actresses," the 77-year-old founder told AFP. "I saw some people die in terrible conditions, so I decided to set up this place." — AFP

PHILIPPINES HAS FASTEST GROWING HIV INFECTIONS IN ASIA: UN

MANILA: The Philippines has the fastest growing number of HIV infections in Asia, a report by the United Nations and the government showed yesterday. The Southeast Asian nation saw a 140 percent increase in new cases from 2010 to 2016, even though the annual number of new infections in Asia-Pacific declined by 13 percent over the same period, according to the report. "The Philippines has a small window of opportunity to act now and stop a major HIV epidemic from taking hold," Eamonn Murphy, director of UNAIDS Regional Support Team said in a statement. He called on the government to focus anti-HIV efforts on

those at most risk. Genesis Samonte of the Philippine health department's epidemiology bureau said eight out of 10 reported HIV cases were among men having sex with men (MSM). "Risky behaviors are starting very young," she said, adding that the MSM group on average started having sex at 16, and anal sex at 17 before they have started using condoms or taken HIV tests, increasing the risk of infection.

The report also showed that only 35 percent of MSM had comprehensive knowledge of HIV transmission and prevention. Samonte said there were indications that a rise in the use of the Internet and cellphones was allowing more

young people to have multiple partners, further fuelling the risk of contracting HIV. Cases will continue to increase and burden the Philippine health system if the nation does not invest in prevention and treatment, according to Samonte. Health Secretary Paulyn Ubial said that "HIV is one of the top health priorities for the government," that the budget for the disease had been sharply increased and her department aimed to start reversing the trend in five years. The government was directing its services towards MSM and transgender women, and opening clinics in cities where the bulk of the new HIV cases were detected, Ubial added. — AFP

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THE PROMENADE ICE DOES IT FOR THE KIDS

The Promenade Ice, located within Kuwait's neighborhood mall, has celebrated a series of successful fun days in partnership with the Kuwait Center for Autism as part of its efforts in supporting the local community. More than 24 children with autism took to the popular ice rink with the professional team over the

course of two days to test their skills before being treated to lunch by Which Wich Kuwait.

"It is important for us at The Promenade Mall and as members of a growing community to give back. This latest event is part of our continued CSR initiatives and we look forward to many more successful occurrences

in the near future," Othman Al-Othman, Late Abdullah Al-Othman Portfolio's Malls Manager.

In addition to hosting different CSR initiatives, Kuwait's only in-door ice rink within a mall, The Promenade Ice, provides private lessons, specialized courses and public ice skating sessions on its expertly

designed ice rink. Whether a seasoned professional or a child's first time in skates, the qualified coaches can assist and guide you on the ice throughout the week, offering a fun place to bring all the family, or even celebrate a special occasion with a number of packages available.



JAPANESE EMBASSY JOINS CULTURAL CORNER AT DAI SUMMER CAMP

With Dar Athar Islamiya's idea of Dai Summer Camp for children to enjoy their summer vacation, the Embassy of Japan joined the fun as part of the camp. It was a great chance for children to learn about a new country and culture. Many children participated in this cultural corner, as they showed their excitement while trying the Japanese festival clothing (Happi). Later, Cultural attache' Shinji

Bantani taught the children about Japan and its culture through a presentation. They also got the chance to learn and speak a few words in Japanese such as hello, goodbye, please and thank you. Then, the children had fun drawing the Japanese flag on board and on their faces with face paint. They enjoyed learning about a new country, and returned home with a poster about Japan, and many happy memories.



GUIDANCE FOR COMBATING ADOLESCENT STRESS AT IISM



India International School Mangaf organized a special program privileging the girls of the IX, X & XI grades to understand and handle the morphological and psychological changes during their teenage with confidence. Dr Jyothirani, the gynecologist from Lifestyle Clinic through her congenial explanations guided the girls- approximately 120 participants- about the safety measures to be adopted in this transition process. The program started with the welcome speech of the principal and continued for a couple of hours at the school indoor auditorium. The senior vice principal and vice principals of various sections also attended the program. The event came to a close with an effective interactive doubt clarification session which was of great utility for the girls. All the participants found it very useful as they got many tips to manage their adolescence and teenage turbulence easily. The school director, Malayil Moosa Koya honoured the doctor with a memento. The two hours of enlightenment will be borne by all the teenage girls of IISM forever.



YMCA KUWAIT ELECTS NEW OFFICE BEARERS

YMCA Kuwait conducted its annual general body meeting at NCIM Hall, Salmiya. President AT Varghese presided over the function. General Secretary Parimanam Manoj offered welcome address to the audience and presented annual report. The audited Finance report of the year 2016-17 was presented by Treasurer Ajesh Thomas. There after Biji Samuel (Auditor) presented the auditor's report. Mathew Eapen (Vice President) expressed vote of thanks for all those who participated in the Annual General Body meeting. The General body Meeting unanimously elected the following office bearers and executive committee members for the year 2017-18.



VP Mathew Eapen



Secretary Parimanam Manoj



00:45 Animal Cops Philadelphia
01:40 Guardians Of Rescue
02:35 Tanked
03:25 Wildest Islands
04:15 Life At Vet University
05:02 Untamed China With Nigel Marven



00:00 The Jail Atlanta: 60 Days In
01:00 Babies Behind Bars
02:00 When Life Means Life
03:00 Evil Up Close
04:00 The Jail Atlanta: 60 Days In
05:00 Babies Behind Bars
06:00 It Takes A Killer
06:30 It Takes A Killer
08:00 The First 48
09:00 Homicide Hunter
10:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
11:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
12:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
13:00 The First 48



00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
01:20 Driving Me Crazy
02:10 World's Funniest
03:00 Destroyed In Seconds
03:50 Alaska Gold Diggers
04:40 How It's Made
05:30 Dirty Jobs
06:30 Mythbusters
07:00 Doki
07:25 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
07:50 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 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 World's Toughest Expeditions With James Cracknell
17:50 Kings Of The Wild
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
19:05 Destroyed In Seconds
19:30 How It's Made
20:20 Mythbusters
21:10 World's Toughest Expeditions With James Cracknell
22:00 Kings Of The Wild
22:50 Destroyed In Seconds
23:15 Destroyed In Seconds
23:40 Alaska Gold Diggers



00:30 The 1980s: The Deadliest Decade
01:20 Is O.J. Innocent? The Missing Evidence
02:10 Grave Secrets
03:00 Evil Lives Here
03:48 Obsession: Dark Desires
07:00 Murder Comes To Town
07:50 Murder Comes To Town
08:40 Murder Comes To Town
09:30 Murder Comes To Town
10:20 The Locator
10:45 The Locator
11:10 Hate In America
12:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
12:50 Obsession: Dark Desires
13:40 Obsession: Dark Desires
15:20 The Locator
15:45 The Locator
16:10 Evil Online
17:00 Swamp Murders
17:50 Swamp Murders
18:40 Swamp Murders
20:20 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
21:10 Evil Online
22:00 Evil Online
22:50 Murder Comes To Town
23:40 Grave Secrets

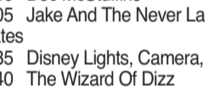


00:00 Hank Zipzer
00:25 Alex & Co.
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Hank Zipzer
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:10 Alex & Co.
04:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:25 Binny And The Ghost
05:45 The Hive
05:50 The 7D
06:00 Jessie
06:25 Jessie
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
06:55 Lolorock
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 Lolorock
11:30 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
11:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:00 Welcome To The Ponks
12:15 Hank Zipzer
12:40 Dog With A Blog
13:05 Star Darlings
13:10 Good Luck Charlie
13:25 Austin & Ally
14:00 Jessie
14:25 Lolorock
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
16:40 Girl Meets World
17:05 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
19:20 Liv And Maddie
19:45 Mako Mermaids
20:10 Jessie
20:35 Crackle
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 Lolorock
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
00:50 Zou
01:05 Loopdidoo
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
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, Lexi!
09:40 The Wizard Of Dizz
10:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
11:00 PJ Masks
11:25 Goldie & Bear
11:50 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
12:15 Sofia The First
12:40 The Lion Guard
13:10 Doc McStuffins
13:35 PJ Masks
14:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
14:30 The Lion Guard
14:55 Unbungleable
15:00 Goldie & Bear
15:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
16:00 Disney Lights, Camera, Lexi!
16:05 The Lion Guard: Return Of The Roar
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
20:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
21:00 Goldie & Bear
21:25 Doc McStuffins
21:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
22:00 Sofia The First
22:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
22:55 PJ Masks
23:20 Henry Hugglemonster
23:35 The Hive
23:45 Loopdidoo



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Man Fire Food
01:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Barefoot Contessa
06:30 Barefoot Contessa
07:00 The Kitchen
08:00 The Pioneer Woman
08:30 The Pioneer Woman
09:00 Siba's Table
09:30 Siba's Table
10:00 The Pioneer Woman
10:30 The Pioneer Woman
11:00 The Kitchen
12:00 The Pioneer Woman
12:30 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 Siba's Table
13:30 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 Chopped
21:00 The Great Food Truck Race
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped



00:20 Wheeler Dealers
01:05 Kings Of The Wild
01:50 The Wheel: Survival Games
02:35 Legend Of Croc Gold
03:20 Fast N' Loud
04:05 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 Kings Of The Wild
10:55 The Wheel: Survival Games
11:40 Legend Of Croc Gold
12:25 How Do They Do It?
12:47 Storage Hunters
13:10 Gold Rush
13:55 Impossible Engineering
14:40 Gold Divers
15:25 Fast N' Loud
16:10 Wheeler Dealers
17:00 How Do They Do It?
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 Blowing Up History
21:50 Strip The City
22:40 Made By Destruction
23:05 Made By Destruction
23:30 Fast N' Loud



00:00 Milo Murphy's Law
06:25 Disney11
06:50 Mech-X4
07:15 Right Now Kapow

07:40 Gravity Falls
08:05 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 Kickin' It
11:10 Future-Worm!
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
19:55 K.C. Undercover
20:10 American Pickers
20:25 Mech-X4
20:40 Disney11
21:00 Walk The Prank
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Bunk'd
22:10 Lab Rats
22:35 Phineas And Ferb
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am



00:50 WAGs Miami
01:50 El News
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 WAGs Miami
09:55 WAGs Miami
10:45 Celebrity Style Story
12:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
15:00 El News: Daily Pop
15:55 WAGs Miami
16:45 WAGs Miami
18:30 Celebrity Style Story
19:00 El News
20:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
21:00 Famosly Single
23:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
23:55 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Man Fire Food
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11:00 The Kitchen
12:00 The Pioneer Woman
12:30 The Pioneer Woman
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13:30 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 Chopped
21:00 The Great Food Truck Race
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped



00:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Royal Recipes
03:25 Together
03:55 Together
04:25 Doc Martin
05:15 Seven Days With...
06:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
07:05 Royal Recipes
08:00 Together
08:30 Together
09:00 Doc Martin
09:00 Doc Martin
10:00 Seven Days With...
10:55 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
11:50 Royal Recipes
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Emmerdale
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
15:10 Royal Recipes
16:00 This Is England '90
16:55 Lewis
17:50 Seven Days With...
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Emmerdale
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Royal Recipes
21:00 This Is England '90
21:55 Lewis
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Emmerdale
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Ancient Discoveries
01:00 Engineering An Empire
02:50 Ancient Aliens
03:40 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
04:30 Serial Killer Earth
05:20 Ancient Discoveries
06:10 The Universe
07:00 Engineering An Empire
08:25 Wild Botswana: Lion Brotherhood
17:30 Tiger Man
18:25 Wild Colombia
19:20 The Invaders

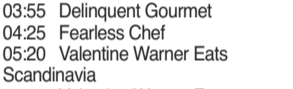
11:00 The Universe
12:00 Good Luck Charlie
13:00 Engineering An Empire
15:00 Ancient Aliens
16:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
17:00 The Universe
18:00 Ancient Discoveries
19:00 Engineering An Empire
21:00 Ancient Aliens
22:00 How 2 Win
23:00 Serial Killer Earth



00:20 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle
01:10 Alone: Lost And Found
02:00 Swamp People
02:50 Storage Wars Miami
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Pawn Stars
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Mountain Men
06:00 Leapu 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 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstyn...
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 Leapu And Pitbull
16:00 Storage Wars
16:25 Storage Wars
16:50 Pawn Stars
17:15 Pawn Stars
17:40 Hoard Hunters
18:30 Swamp People
19:20 Mountain Men
20:10 American Pickers
21:00 Counting Cars
21:25 Counting Cars
21:50 Forged In Fire
22:40 Forged In Fire
23:30 American Pickers



00:15 Wineroads
00:45 Fish Of The Day
01:10 What's For Sale?
01:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
02:35 Maximum Foodie
03:00 Maximum Foodie
03:30 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
03:55 Delinquent Gourmet
04:25 Fearless Chef
05:20 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
05:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
06:15 What's For Sale?
06:40 What's For Sale?
07:10 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
08:05 Maximum Foodie
08:30 Maximum Foodie
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09:55 Fearless Chef
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11:15 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
11:45 What's For Sale?
12:10 What's For Sale?
12:40 Island Hunter
13:35 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
14:30 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
09:25 Delinquent Gourmet
09:55 Fearless Chef
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12:10 What's For Sale?
12:40 Island Hunter
13:35 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
14:30 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt



00:00 Max & Ruby
00:23 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
00:34 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
00:44 The Day Henry Met
00:49 The Day Henry Met
00:55 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:17 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:40 Zack & Quack
02:01 Team Umizoomi
02:23 Olive The Ostrich
02:28 Olive The Ostrich
02:34 Paw Patrol
02:57 Little Charmers
03:09 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
03:20 Dora The Explorer
03:43 Max & Ruby
04:05 Nella The Princess Knight
04:27 Shimmer And Shine
04:49 Dora And Friends
05:12 Zack & Quack
05:23 The Day Henry Met
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
07:21 Bubble Guppies
07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
08:07 Paw Patrol
08:30 Shimmer And Shine
08:53 Nella The Princess Knight
09:15 The Day Henry Met
09:22 Paw Patrol
09:45 Rusty Rivets
09:57 Bubble Guppies
10:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
10:40 Zack & Quack
10:52 Team Umizoomi
11:15 Shimmer And Shine
11:38 Shimmer And Shine
12:01 Max & Ruby
12:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:47 The Day Henry Met
12:52 The Day Henry Met
12:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:41 Zack & Quack
14:03 Team Umizoomi
14:25 Olive The Ostrich
14:30 Olive The Ostrich
14:35 Paw Patrol
14:58 Little Charmers
15:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
15:22 Dora The Explorer
15:44 Max & Ruby
16:07 Nella The Princess Knight
16:31 Shimmer And Shine
16:54 Dora And Friends
17:17 Zack & Quack
17:29 The Day Henry Met
17:34 The Day Henry Met
17:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
18:00 Rusty Rivets
18:13 Paw Patrol
18:37 Dora The Explorer
19:00 Zack & Quack
19:21 Bubble Guppies
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21:45 Rusty Rivets
21:57 Bubble Guppies
22:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
22:40 Zack & Quack
22:52 Team Umizoomi
23:15 Shimmer And Shine



00:10 Continent 7: Antarctica
01:00 Wicked Tuna
02:00 Air Crash Investigation
03:00 Explorer
04:00 Continent 7: Antarctica
05:00 Showdown Of The Unbeatable
06:00 Science Of Stupid
06:30 Science Of Stupid
07:00 Dog Whisperer
08:00 Dog Whisperer
09:00 Remote Survival
10:00 Surgery Ship
11:00 Invasion Earth
12:00 The Truth Behind
13:00 Terror In The Skies
14:00 Dog Whisperer
15:00 Dog Whisperer
16:00 Surgery Ship
17:00 Invasion Earth
18:00 The Truth Behind
19:00 Nazi Megastructures
20:00 Surgery Ship
20:50 Invasion Earth
21:40 The Truth Behind
22:30 Nazi Megastructures
23:20 Dog Whisperer



00:20 The Jungle King Compilation
01:10 Monster Fish
02:00 Predator Battleground
02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 Monster Fish
04:40 Deadly Game
05:35 Predator Battleground
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Monster Fish
08:20 Deadly Game
09:15 Insect Wars
10:10 Wild 24
11:05 Ultimate Animal Countdown
12:00 Shark Nicole
12:55 Snake Underworld
13:50 Hooked
14:45 The Invaders
15:40 Natural Born Monsters
16:35 Wild Botswana: Lion Brotherhood
17:30 Tiger Man
18:25 Wild Colombia
19:20 The Invaders

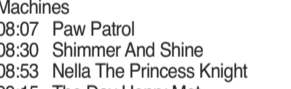
20:10 Natural Born Monsters
21:00 Wild Botswana: Lion Brotherhood
21:50 Tiger Man
22:40 Wild Colombia



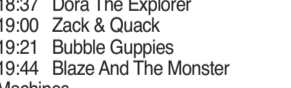
00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 The Loud House
07:24 Rabbids Invasion
07:48 Get Blake
08:12 Harvey Beaks
08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 Paw Patrol
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
16:36 The Loud House
17:00 Regal Academy
17:24 Winx Club
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 Henry Danger
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:00 The Loud House
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
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22:36 Harvey Beaks
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



00:00 Max & Ruby
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04:49 Dora And Friends
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05:27 The Day Henry Met
05:32 The Day Henry Met
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21:45 Rusty Rivets
21:57 Bubble Guppies
22:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
22:40 Zack & Quack
22:52 Team Umizoomi
23:15 Shimmer And Shine



01:25 Road Wars
02:55 Grosse Pointe Blank
04:45 Attila
06:15 Knight And Day
08:15 The Tower
10:20 Sherlock Holmes
12:30 Forbidden Empire
14:25 Knight And Day
16:25 Tekken: Kazuya's Revenge
18:00 X-Men: First Class
20:15 Mission To Mars
22:10 Mercenaries
23:45 Green Street 3: Never Back Down



01:00 Sneakers
03:25 Fun Size
04:55 Love The Coopers
06:45 Babe: Pig In The City
08:25 Fun Size
09:55 Love The Coopers
11:45 Babe: Pig In The City
13:30 Cheech & Chong's The Corsican Brothers
15:10 Hope Springs
16:50 Murder Of A Cat
18:40 Cops And Robbersons
20:20 5 To 7
22:00 Your Friends & Neighbors
23:45 How To Make Love Like An Englishman



05:15 Two And A Half Men
05:40 Great News
06:05 Great News
06:30 Mom
06:55 Community
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
09:50 George Lopez
10:15 Two And A Half Men
10:40 Mom
11:05 Community
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:20 Seinfeld
12:45 Seinfeld
13:10 The Middle
13:35 The Middle
14:00 George Lopez
14:25 Two And A Half Men
14:50 Mom
15:15 Great News
15:40 Great News
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 Seinfeld
17:30 Seinfeld
18:00 The Middle
18:30 The Middle
19:00 The Last Man On Earth
19:30 The Last Man On Earth
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Seinfeld
21:30 Seinfeld
22:00 Baskets
22:30 Baskets
23:00 Better Things
23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:40 Training Day
01:30 Marvel's Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.
02:20 Blindspot
03:10 The Flash
04:10 Once Upon A Time
05:00 Good Morning America
07:00 The View
07:45 The Chew
08:30 Training Day
09:20 The Flash
10:10 Once Upon A Time
11:00 Blindspot
11:45 Royal Pains
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 Famous In Love
22:00 The Americans
23:00 Blindspot
23:50 Grimm



FAMILY
00:40 I'll Be Home For Christmas
02:10 D3: The Mighty Ducks
03:55 Atlantis: The Lost Empire
05:35 I'll Be Home For Christmas
07:05 Beverly Hills Chihuahua
08:40 D3: The Mighty Ducks
10:25 Atlantis: The Lost Empire
12:05 Atlantis: Mio's Return
13:30 Alone For Christmas
15:00 The Hunchback Of Notre Dame II
16:10 Frankenweenie
17:40 A Simple Wish
19:15 Hannah Montana Movie
21:00 The Hunchback Of Notre Dame II
22:10 Alone For Christmas



ACTION
01:25 Road Wars
02:55 Grosse Pointe Blank
04:45 Attila
06:15 Knight And Day
08:15 The Tower
10:20 Sherlock Holmes
12:30 Forbidden Empire
14:25 Knight And Day
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20:15 Mission To Mars
22:10 Mercenaries
23:45 Green Street 3: Never Back Down



COMEDY
01:10 Sneakers
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15:10 Hope Springs
16:50 Murder Of A Cat
18:40 Cops And Robbersons
20:20 5 To 7
22:00 Your Friends & Neighbors
23:45 How To Make Love Like An Englishman



FESTIVAL
01:00 Hungry Hearts
02:55 The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou
04:55 No God No Master
08:35 Fort McCoy
09:20 Steve Jobs: The Man In The Machine
10:30 The Yellow Handkerchief
12:10 The Better Angels
13:50 No God No Master
15:30 The Yellow Handkerchief
17:15 New York Stories
19:15 12 Angry Men
20:55 Whiplash
22:45 A Clockwork Orange

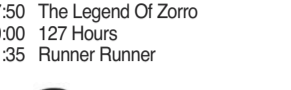


KIDS
01:30 Cher Ami
03:05 Marco Macaco
04:25 Bark Ranger
06:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
07:25 Operation Arctic
09:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
10:25 Funny Little Cars
11:25 Cher Ami
13:00 Marco Macaco
14:20 The Wheelers
15:35 Mamma Moo And Crow
16:55 Blue Elephant 2
18:35 Memory Loss
20:00 The Wheelers
21:15 Operation Arctic
22:45 Funny Little Cars
23:45 Blue Elephant 2



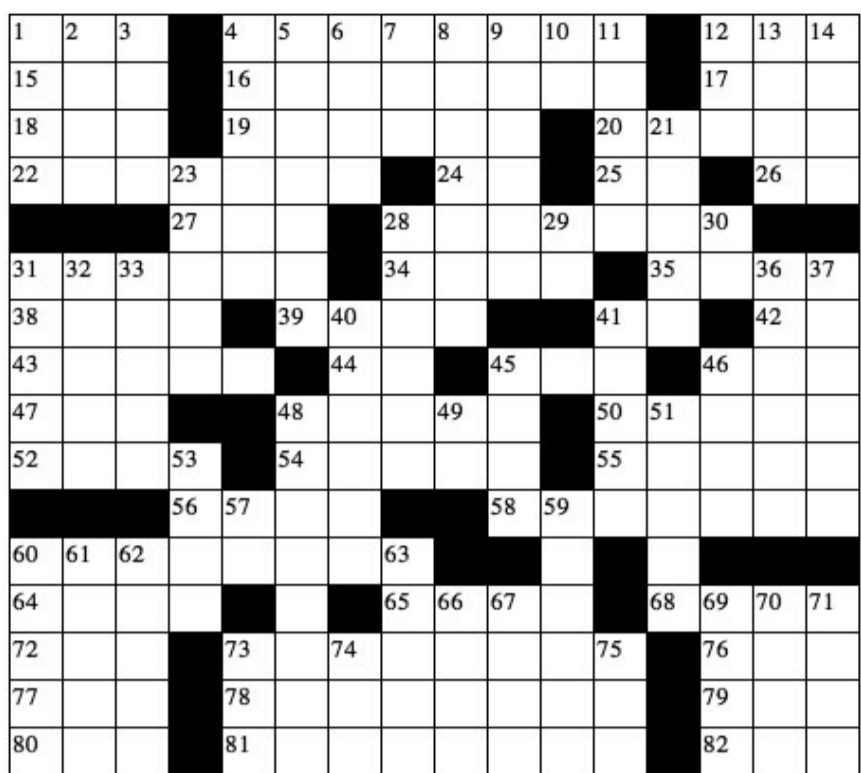
00:00 Suspect Zero
01:40 Barely Lethal
03:20 Little Man Tate
05:05 Kicking And Screaming
06:45 Rocky

08:45 Barely Lethal
10:30 People Like Us
12:25 San Andreas
14:20 The Bad News Bears
16:15 Nacho Libre
17:50 The Legend Of Zorro
20:00 127 Hours
21:35 Runner Runner



00:30 How Do They Do It?
00:55 Food Factory
01:20 Secrets Of The Underground
02:10 Sci

CROSSWORD 1675



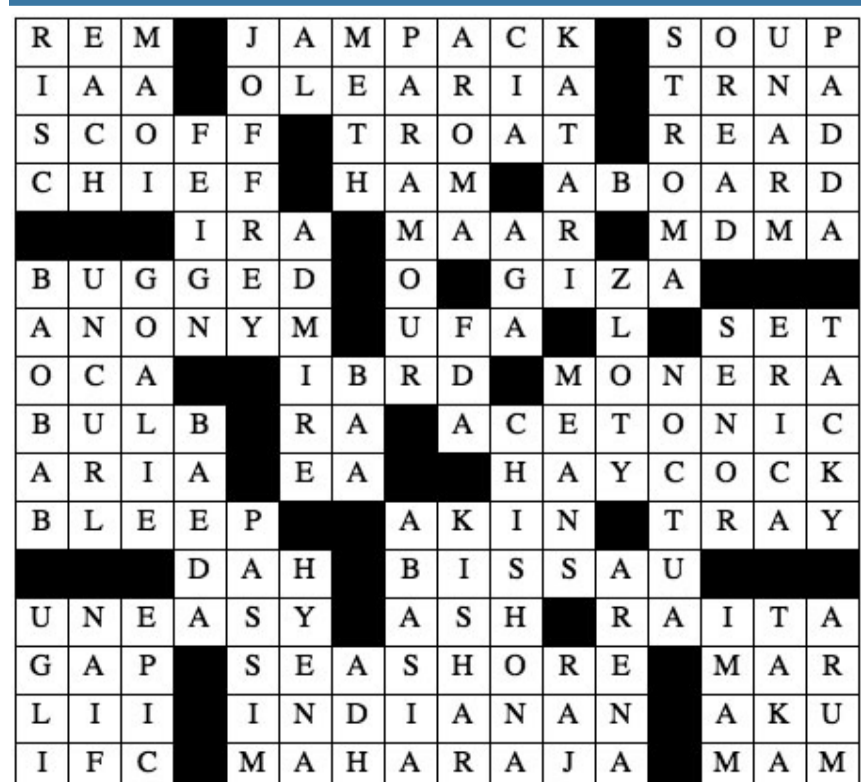
ACROSS

1. A religious belief of African origin involving witchcraft and sorcery.
4. A Japanese (paper or silk) wall hanging.
12. Counting the number of white and red blood cells and the number of platelets in 1 cubic millimeter of blood.
15. Something that remunerates.
16. Germanic barbarian leader who ended the western Roman Empire in 476 and became the first barbarian ruler of Italy (434-493).
17. Of or relating to a member of the Buddhist people inhabiting the Mekong river in Laos and Thailand.
18. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
19. Remove or make invisible.
20. (trademark) An alloy of iron and nickel having a low coefficient of thermal expansion.
22. German hero.
24. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
25. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
26. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
27. Gone by.
31. (trade mark) A soft form of cereal for infants.
34. The emotion of hate.
35. Harsh or corrosive in tone.
38. Expel, as of gases and odors.
39. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
42. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
43. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
44. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
47. A dark-skinned member of a race of people living in Australia when Europeans arrived.
50. English monk and scholar (672-735).
52. An independent agency of the United States government responsible for aviation and spaceflight.
54. Tropical American tree grown in southern United States having a whitish pink-tinged fruit.
55. A person who acts as host at formal occasions (makes an introductory speech and introduces other speakers).
56. An informal term for a father.
58. A tan discoloration of a woman's face that is associated with pregnancy or with the use of oral contraceptives.
60. Relating to or associated with a coma.
64. Toward the mouth or oral region.
65. East Indian cereal grass whose seed yield a somewhat bitter flour, a staple in the Orient.
68. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
72. A recurring sleep state during which dreaming occurs.
76. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
77. Light informal conversation for social occasions.
78. Something or someone that causes trouble.
79. A nucleic acid that transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm.
80. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
81. Confidently declared to be so.
82. A light touch or stroke.

DOWN

1. Large elliptical brightly colored deep-sea fish of Atlantic and Pacific and Mediterranean.
2. A very young child (birth to 1 year) who has not yet begun to walk or talk.
3. The eighth month of the civil year.
4. A member of an aboriginal people living in the hills in southeastern India.
5. A benign epithelial tumor of glandular origin.
6. A commercial center and river port in western Germany on the Rhine River.
7. (Old Testament) Adam's wife in Judeo-Christian mythology.
8. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
9. Nocturnal wildcat of Central and South America having a dark-spotted buff-brown coat.
10. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
11. A projecting bay window corbeled or cantilevered out from a wall.
12. Being five more than one hundred fifty.
13. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
14. (Greek mythology) Daughter of Zeus and Demeter.
21. Sole genus of the family Naiadaceae.
23. A republic on the island of Malta in the Mediterranean.
28. A member of the Indian people of northern California and southern Oregon.
29. The 17th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
30. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
32. Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
33. Wild ox.
36. In the same place (used when citing a reference).
37. Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
40. A large commercial and industrial city in northeastern Texas.
41. A confusion of voices and other sounds.
45. The biblical name for ancient Syria.
46. Either of two large muscles of the chest.
48. (Greek mythology) The god of the underworld in ancient mythology.
49. Before noon.
51. Affect with wonder.
53. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
57. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
59. Give expression to.
61. (Greek mythology) One of the mountain nymphs.
62. Arboreal snake of central and southern Africa whose bite is often fatal.
63. Remove from memory or existence.
66. The sixth month of the civil year.
67. Informal abbreviation of 'gentleman'.
69. Any of a group of Indic languages spoken in Kashmir and eastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan.
70. (Irish) Mother of the Tuatha De Danann.
71. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
74. An alliance made up of states that had been Soviet Socialist Republics in the Soviet Union prior to its dissolution in Dec 1991.
75. (Brit) A tough youth of 1950's and 1960's wearing Edwardian style clothes.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Work seems intense today but you possess a powerful, persistent drive and are a hard, steady worker. Some people find you deep, with a sense of mystery. You are willing to do work today that others would not go near, quietly putting an end to some difficult problems. Later today you might be helping others to learn technical techniques so that you will eventually not be so overburdened. You are able to direct others in your business and this may lead to a leadership position. You busy yourself this afternoon in some project that you had been putting off for some time. You will be creating a new form or format for presentation to some very important people. Some people may wonder how the business could ever get along without you.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are friendly and encouraging today. You somehow manage to find a creative environment or the creative in any environment, so as to provide the most beneficial area in which to work or play. Others want to join you in this project. You have a built-in sense of what the public wants and can always come up with just the right image. You find it easy to work with the emotions and feelings of others and with great imagination. You are great with kids and big on animals, sports and the outdoors. You are an instant umbrella of warmth, friendship and self-expression. Clear decisions affecting others could be made easily at this time. These are the attitudes and circumstances in which you find yourself teaching others.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

There are lots of energy and action this day. Your dreams and imaginings keep bumping into the real and the actual. You quickly pick up on what is expected of you, and you are accountable. You are learning to plan ahead as you see your goals begin to develop. You do the best you can in every situation that you experience. It takes judgment to make the choices that best benefit a situation. Consider this: your powers of perception are particularly sharp at this time, and you would do well now to work out the details of any plans that you have previously made. This evening, you may feel focused and even a bit radiant. You are either entertaining company or being entertained yourself tonight. The snacks are low calorie and nutritional-good for you!



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may realize that you may have been stagnating lately. There are opportunities today to rise above the mundane. Saying or writing with style comes naturally as you seek to write a program or progress report. It may seem that you are always writing technical material, and just now there is a desire for variety with some of your work. You may find yourself at a used book store reading all types of subjects. You may even find yourself involved with two books at once. Increasing your vocabulary expertise can be a fun ongoing activity, and you could find a friend to join you. Your ability to discriminate real breakthroughs and to spot new trends makes you able to work in areas at the very fringe of technology these days-more technology to write.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Before work begins this morning, conversations with co-workers could be in the religious realm or at least, spiritual. You have little interest in spirituality that is rampant these days. You could probably bring imagination and religious understanding to physical and scientific studies. Opportunity for further thought regarding the spirit tends to crop up during the day-you are open to new ways of thinking. Continued success on the career level may point to your abandoning some of your dreams. This afternoon, family matters tend to take precedence and you may have to help a young person to understand the word-concentration. You may even think of some fun exercise or game to play with the kids that will help with concentration.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You enjoy working hard and being organized and you exercise skill and discipline in anything that affects your career and reputation. You have the perfect combination to be in a management position at this time. If you think you are ready, this time may be best for pushing through any changes you may want to make in your career. You have good insight into all social activities that are around you and if you are not careful, you may find yourself involved in many club or social group responsibilities. You like to facilitate, compromise and otherwise show your talents-like a coat of many colors. New and creative projects help you to change that feeling of being in a rut. Chatting with neighbors or siblings this evening will help you to relax.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

An emphasis on discipline with regard to work and health is a keynote of the cycle now dawning in your life. Procedures, scheduling, details: you may become weak in some areas unless you take steps to correct any deficiencies. Deficiencies may only be when you fail to meet a deadline. You can do this... You will be pleased with your progress. Otherwise, you will have to run faster just to avoid falling behind. A desire for variety marks this phase and this especially applies to romantic experience and artistic taste. The latter tend to focus on literature and poetry. Communication with distant family members is possible this afternoon. A sociable, congenial, slightly frivolous orientation sets in this evening. A social involvement can be enjoyable.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a good time for promoting yourself and for letting others know what you have to offer. Right now, the key to career moves involves attending to nagging details-whatever you have neglected before. This is a time during which you may be able to move ahead with your ambition and your general life's purpose. You would make an excellent teacher of philosophy or religion-you cannot help but communicate these subjects to others and enchant all who come to know you. Your understanding of the unity behind appearances, along with the ability to put these thoughts into words, is a rare and valuable gift. You would make a good director, photographer, choreographer, etc. You like working with mental images.



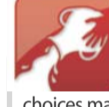
Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You might like to ignore responsibilities and do some socializing, but realities demand you tend to business and forget your friends for the moment. This is one of the best times to make progress, push forward and rise to prominence. It will be hard for you to do wrong-all the cycles are working in your favor. Your career seems to get the support you need and this is one area of life that runs smoothly. You seem to understand what the public wants and mass marketing could be a natural for you. This is also a time when you may marry or take on a new role in the community or with other people. Your mind is ever on communication, how you present yourself, especially when negotiating. Enjoy cooking a new recipe tonight.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Independence on the part of people or events somehow challenges your authority today. Also, the forces of change assert themselves now and again, managing to overrule and overturn whatever you have managed to secure. Observing others, you will find that some people just naturally deal well with upheavals and adjustments-yet others may find much difficulty. You have great discipline and may find it enjoyable to teach young people how to solve difficulties they may uncover. You can demonstrate a good sensitivity and understanding about the needs of others. You know just the right words that will communicate positive messages. This could involve political issues. If not community politics, possibly club politics.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Opportunities may go against your own sense of responsibility. Career choices may require that you temporarily neglect the home. This is a tough call, and some compromise is perhaps the best way to a workable solution. This is a perfect time to be assertive and to move forward in your career decisions. You are driven when it comes to fulfilling your ambitions and carving out a career. There is no lack of energy or drive here, and nothing can stand in your way. Everything is poured into making the right moves-the correct decisions. You are outgoing, enthusiastic and always diplomatic-everybody's favorite. Politics or some other public career seems inevitable. Some experienced politician may tutor you in this process if that is what you want.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You enjoy working with whatever is psychological-the hidden, vulnerable, sensitive areas of the mind and self. You can handle material that is sensitive or taboo without batting an eye. This interest in all that is psychological makes you an excellent teacher. You also have a natural grasp for writing and after you worked with research, reports and projects, you may decide to go in a different direction. The different direction is what today is about. Where could you apply your talents and be the happiest-you drive in the area of psychology, meditation, renewals of direction or perhaps, concentration on a focus to improve, may mean an advice column. If you are not with a mate, this may be a time you will meet someone very special.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Movie Actresses 2

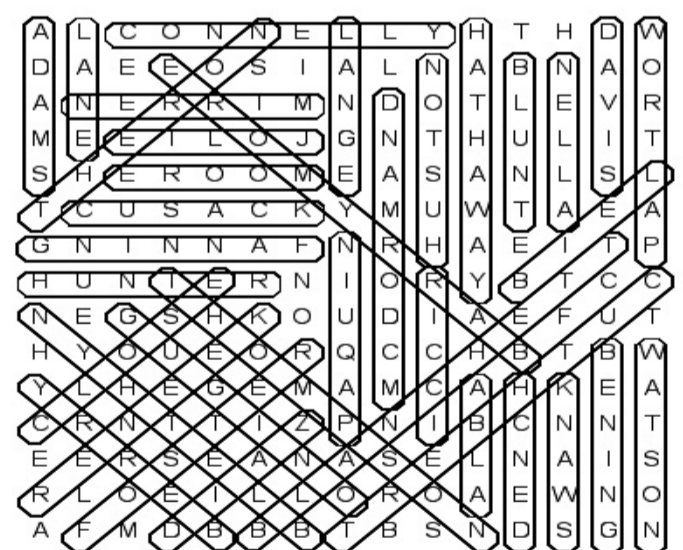
Find and circle all of the Movie Actresses that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a movie for which Louise Fletcher won an Oscar.



- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| BATES, Kathy | JOHANSSON, Scarlett | SPACEK, Sissy |
| BINOCHÉ, Juliette | KIDMAN, Nicole | STEENBURGEN, Mary |
| BRESLIN, Abigail | KNIGHTLEY, Keira | STEWART, Kristen |
| BULLOCK, Sandra | LINNEY, Laura | STREEP, Meryl |
| BURSTYN, Ellen | LOHAN, Lindsay | SWINTON, Tilda |
| CLARKSON, Patricia | MACLAINE, Shirley | THURMAN, Uma |
| CRUZ, Penelope | MCADAMS, Rachel | TOMEI, Marisa |
| DELPY, Julie | MOORE, Julianne | WALTERS, Julie |
| DESCHANEL, Zoë | PFEIFFER, Michelle | WATTS, Naomi |
| DUNST, Kirsten | PORTMAN, Natalie | WEAVER, Sigourney |
| FARMIGA, Vera | REID, Tara | WEISZ, Rachel |
| FLETCHER, Louise | ROBERTS, Julia | WINSLET, Kate |
| HAVEK, Salma | Ryder, Winona | WITHERSPOON, Reese |
| HEIGL, Katherine | SARANDON, Susan | ZELLWEGER, Renee |
| HUDSON, Kate | SMITH, Maggie | |

Yesterday's Solution

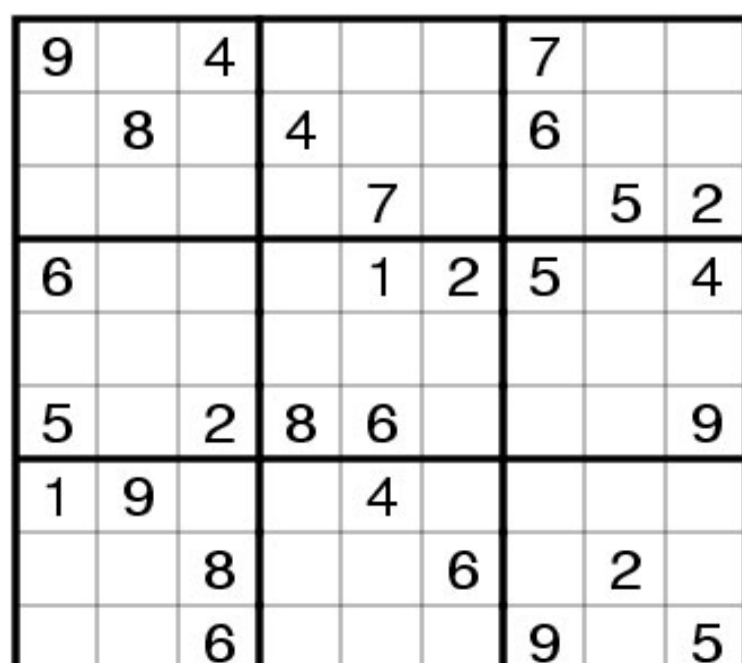
Movie Actresses 1



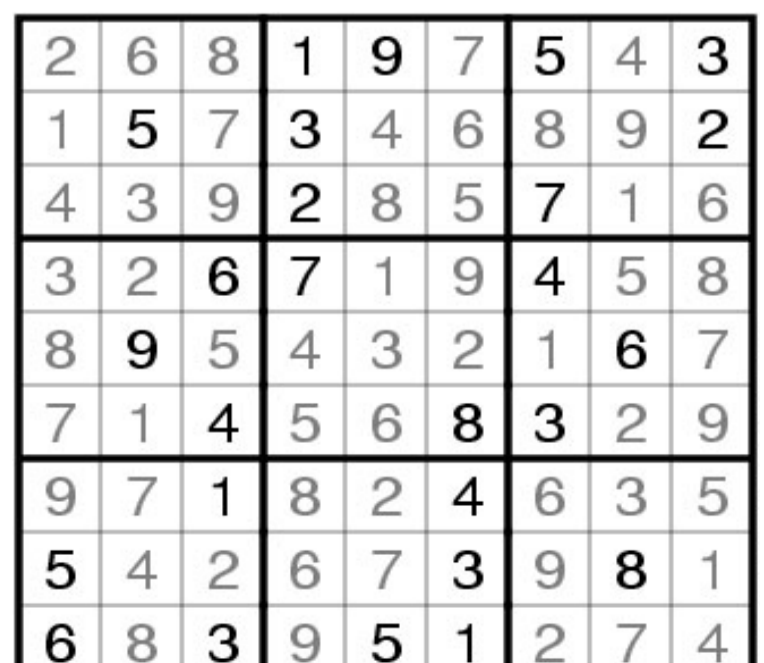
- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| ADAMS, Amy | CUTHBERT, Elisha | LANE, Diane |
| ALBA, Jessica | DAVIS, Hope | LANGE, Jessica |
| ALLEN, Joan | DENCH, Judi | MCDORMAND, Frances |
| BARRYMORE, Drew | DIAZ, Cameron | MIRREN, Helen |
| BENING, Annette | FANNING, 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 | THERON, Charlize |
| CLOSE, Glenn | JOLIE, Angelina | THOMPSON, Emma |
| CONNELLY, Jennifer | KEENER, Catherine | WATSON, Emily |
| CUSACK, Joan | | |

The hidden movie title is: THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times
 Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (27/07/2017 TO 02/08/2017)

Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time
SHARQIA-1 CARS 3 CARS 3 BANK AL HATH BANK AL HATH ATOMIC BLONDE ATOMIC BLONDE	1:00 PM 3:15 PM 5:30 PM 8:00 PM 10:30 PM 12:45 AM	TISBAH ALA KHAIR FRI ATOMIC BLONDE CARS 3 ATOMIC BLONDE ATOMIC BLONDE ATOMIC BLONDE	1:35 PM 3:30 PM 5:45 PM 8:00 PM 10:15 PM 12:30 AM	DUNKIRK DUNKIRK DUNKIRK BABY DRIVER BABY DRIVER	3:30 PM 5:45 PM 8:00 PM 10:15 PM 12:30 AM
SHARQIA-2 DUNKIRK DUNKIRK BABY DRIVER DUNKIRK BABY DRIVER DUNKIRK	12:45 PM 3:00 PM 5:15 PM 7:30 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM	FANAR-2 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES DESPICABLE ME 3 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES BABY DRIVER	11:30 AM 2:15 PM 5:00 PM 7:45 PM 10:00 PM 12:45 AM	AVENUES-1 DUNKIRK BANK AL HATH BANK AL HATH BANK AL HATH BANK AL HATH BANK AL HATH	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:15 PM 6:45 PM 9:15 PM 11:45 PM
SHARQIA-3 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES DESPICABLE ME 3 DESPICABLE ME 3 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	11:30 AM 2:15 PM 4:15 PM 6:15 PM 9:00 PM 11:45 PM	FANAR-3 MUBARAKAN -Hindi DESPICABLE ME 3 DESPICABLE ME 3 MUBARAKAN -Hindi BABY DRIVER BOYKA: UNDISPUTED BOYKA: UNDISPUTED	12:30 PM 1:40 PM 3:35 PM 5:30 PM 8:30 PM 10:45 PM 12:40 AM	AVENUES-2 DUNKIRK -2D-4DX DESPICABLE ME 3 -3D-4DX WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES ATOMIC BLONDE -2D-4DX DUNKIRK -2D-4DX ATOMIC BLONDE -2D-4DX	12:15 PM 2:30 PM 4:30 PM 7:15 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM
MUHALAB-1 SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING TISBAH ALA KHAIR GOUTHAM NANDA - Telugu SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING ATOMIC BLONDE ATOMIC BLONDE ATOMIC BLONDE	11:35 AM 2:20 PM 4:15 PM 4:45 PM 7:30 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM	FANAR-5 BANK AL HATH DESPICABLE ME 3 BABY DRIVER BANK AL HATH BANK AL HATH BANK AL HATH	11:30 AM 2:00 PM 4:15 PM 6:30 PM 9:00 PM 11:30 PM	AVCARS 3 CARS 3 CARS 3 CARS 3 MUBARAKAN -Hindi MUBARAKAN -Hindi	11:40 AM 1:55 PM 4:10 PM 6:25 PM 8:40 PM 11:40 PM
MUHALAB-2 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES DESPICABLE ME 3 CARS 3 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	11:45 AM 2:30 PM 4:30 PM 6:45 PM 9:30 PM 12:15 AM	MARINA-1 TISBAH ALA KHAIR WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING TISBAH ALA KHAIR ATOMIC BLONDE ATOMIC BLONDE	1:30 PM 12:45 PM 3:30 PM 6:15 PM 8:15 PM 10:30 PM 12:45 AM	360°-1 DUNKIRK DUNKIRK DUNKIRK DUNKIRK DUNKIRK DUNKIRK	12:00 PM 2:15 PM 4:30 PM 6:45 PM 9:15 PM 11:30 PM
MUHALAB-3 DUNKIRK DESPICABLE ME 3 DUNKIRK DUNKIRK DUNKIRK BABY DRIVER BABY DRIVER	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 3:45 PM 6:00 PM 8:15 PM 10:30 PM 12:45 AM	MARINA-2 CARS 3 DESPICABLE ME 3 CARS 3 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	12:00 PM 2:15 PM 4:15 PM 6:30 PM 9:15 PM 12:05 AM	360°-2 DESPICABLE ME 3 DESPICABLE ME 3 DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM 1:35 PM 3:35 PM
FANAR-1 CARS 3	1:00 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3 DUNKIRK	1:35 PM 1:15 PM	BAIRAQ-1 DUNKIRK CARS 3 CARS 3	12:30 PM 2:45 PM 5:00 PM

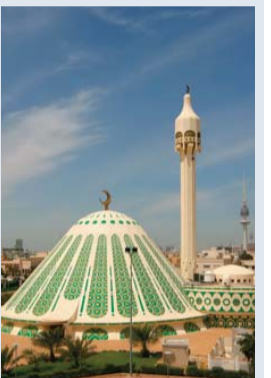
CHANGE OF NAME

I, Kommina Sankar S/o Kommina Sivaiah, holder of Indian Passport No. L0036357 & Civil ID No. 278062403186 has changed my name to Kommina Ravi Kumar, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5333) 31-7-2017

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is

1889988

EMERGENCY 112



PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr: 03:40
Shorook: 05:08
Duhr: 11:54
Asr: 15:30
Maghrib: 18:40
Isha: 20:04



Flight Schedule

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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 2/8/2017				Departure Flights on Wednesday 2/8/2017			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	KAC	513	Tehran	12:45
KAC	786	Jeddah	00:30	IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
JZR	267	Beirut	00:35	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
KAC	102	London	00:55	THY	767	Istanbul	13:45
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	FEG	932	Alexandria	13:55
WAN	806	Sarajevo	01:10	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	IRB	6512	ABD	14:50
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
KKK	6506	Istanbul	01:55	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
JZR	241	Amman	01:55	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:05	JZR	776	Jeddah	15:30
PGT	830	Istanbul	02:10	KAC	563	Amman	15:40
QTR	1086	Doha	02:10	SVR	501	Jeddah	15:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	684	Madinah	16:00
AEE	942	ATH	02:25	KAC	619	Doha	16:00
THY	1404	AYT	02:30	OMA	775	Riyadh	16:05
KAC	418	Manila	02:50	KAC	646	Muscat	16:10
THY	752	Istanbul	03:05	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:30
RJA	644	Amman	03:10	SAW	706	Damascus	16:50
KAC	382	Delhi	03:15	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:50
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	SVR	505	Madinah	16:55
FDB	069	Dubai	03:15	RJA	641	Amman	16:55
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	03:25	JZR	786	Riyadh	17:00
KAC	544	Cairo	03:50	FDB	052	Dubai	17:05
KAC	796	Madinah	03:55	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
QTR	1090	Doha	04:05	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
RBG	559	Alexandria	04:10	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
UAE	873	Dubai	04:15	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	KAC	357	Kochi	17:40
KAC	358	Kochi	04:50	NIA	362	Alexandria	17:50
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00	KAC	381	Delhi	17:50
KAC	784	Jeddah	05:00	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	SVR	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	JZR	188	Dubai	18:30
KAC	362	Colombo	05:50	KAC	785	Jeddah	18:45
BAW	157	London	06:05	JZR	266	Beirut	19:00
JZR	553	Alexandria	06:20	QTR	1081	Doha	19:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:35	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	1802	Cairo	06:35	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	678	Riyadh	06:55	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:55	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
KAC	156	Istanbul	07:05	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:35
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	353	Bangalore	20:55
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	JZR	240	Amman	21:00
JZR	1541	Cairo	08:30	DLH	634	Doha	21:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KAC	1543	Cairo	21:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
IRC	6511	ABD	09:10	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	JZR	1442	Doha	21:15
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:40
IRM	1188	Mashhad	09:55	JZR	538	Cairo	21:40
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	203	Lahore	21:45
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:00
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:05	KAC	155	Istanbul	22:15
JZR	561	Sohag	11:10	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
KAC	614	Bahrain	11:15	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:25
KAC	742	Dammam	11:45	THY	1413	Bahrain	22:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
JZR	239	Amman	12:25	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
KAC	774	Riyadh	12:45	KAC	783	Jeddah	23:10
THY	766	Istanbul	12:50	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
FEG	953	Asyut	12:55	RBG	552	Alexandria	23:40
				JZR	184	Dubai	23:50



GOSSIP

Charli XCX: Female pop stars are more vocal

Charli XCX believes female pop stars are taking charge of their careers after years of being controlled by record labels and men in suits. Charli XCX thinks women are "more vocal" about their opinions and more "in control" of their careers than ever before. The 'Boys' hitmaker has learned from her time in the music industry that it's important to have your own voice and not let record labels or men in suits have the last say on choices made about your image or music. Charli, 24, has praised her fellow female pop stars for standing up for themselves and taking charge of their careers. She said: "I think a lot of females in the industry are so vocal about their opinions on feminism and their experience in the music industry and I think a lot of female artists and artists in general are so much more in control of their own career now. "Audiences are more intelligent, fans are cleverer, they understand the marketing and putting together of the pop star and they want somebody who is real and genuine and fun.

Not somebody who is built up, so I think artists have to take control and really run their own game to be successful.' The 'Boom Clap' singer is known for wearing racy outfits and doing risqué dance routines on stage, but she says that is all her doing and if a man ever told her how to dress she wouldn't be happy with that. Speaking on BBC Radio 1's Breakfast Show yesterday she said: "Throughout my career I've been very vocal on my opinion about being a woman in the music industry. "I get asked questions about feminism all the time ... I'm not somebody who is worried about wearing revealing outfits or performing provocatively on stage - as long as that's my choice I'm completely happy to do it. "The second it is an instruction from a man or a record label then it's not cool, but otherwise it's good."

Q Awards 2017 features first-ever longlist

The voting system for the 2017 Q Awards in association with Absolute Radio features the first-ever longlist to help select the nominees. The general public can now vote from the seven categories compiled by the staff at Q magazine of acts they've supported throughout the year. Music fans have until Monday August 31 with the awards nominees shortlist announced on September 7. This year sees Ed Sheeran, 26, left out of the Best Album category for his chart-smashing album 'Divide', however, he's listed for Best Act in the World Today, Best Track for 'Shape of You', Best Solo Artist and Best Live Act. Former Oasis frontman Liam Gallagher, 44, will go head-to-head with the biggest bands in the business for Best Track for 'Wall of Glass' and he's also up for Best Live Act and Best Solo Act. Speaking about the awards, Q editor Ted Kessler said: "From returning rock'n'roll icons to grime's mainstream breakthrough and Ed Sheeran's continued conquering of the pop landscape, it has been a brilliant year for music. This year's Q Awards are a reflection of that and it's shaping up to be one of the events of the year. The newly-created longlists mean that voters will play a crucial role in helping to shape our shortlists, and live performances on the night from Sleaford Mods, one of the UK's most exciting live bands, and Manic Street Preachers, who have a long and illustrious history with Q, will cap off what promises to be another outstanding Q Awards." The ceremony will take place on October 18 at Camden's Roundhouse and will see Absolute Radio's Christian O'Connell host the evening for the fourth consecutive year. Speaking about his return, O'Connell said: "It's an honor to host the Q awards again this year and it's great to see Liam Gallagher back and going head to head with the biggest bands in the industry. This could be the liveliest awards in years."



LIAM GALLAGHER: OASIS COULDN'T WORK WITH TWO LIAMS OR NOELS

Liam Gallagher says Oasis wouldn't have worked with "two Noels or two Liams". The 'Some Might Say' group's frontman says despite being his older sibling Noel Gallagher's bitter rival, the constant clashing is what made the Britpop group - which came to an abrupt end in August 2009 following a backstage fight between the pair before a Paris festival performance - so legendary. The 44-year-old rocker admits that he left the 50-year-old guitarist to do most of the "graft", including writing most of the songs, while he would live the rock 'n' roll lifestyle and "undo the graft", however he says that is what was key to their success. Asked whether just performing Oasis songs was sufficient for him, Liam told the latest issue of GQ magazine: "Always. Honestly. I knew the score. That was Noel's thing. My thing was the whole cliché: the sex, the drugs, the rock'n'roll. "I lived it, mate. I was it. And that's why Oasis worked. We couldn't have both been boring and neither could we have both been headcases like me. "And I know how much it annoyed him. He did the graft while I went out and undid the graft. But Oasis wouldn't have worked with two Liams or two Noels. "The Rolling Stones wouldn't have worked if they were nuns, would they?" The 'Wall of Glass' singer - who is gearing up to release his debut solo album 'As You Were' later this year - then confirmed Noel's recent comments that he might lead the rock star life but Liam is the "rock star". He added: "Listen, I'm sorry he got dealt the card he did to write the songs, but who's the one with eight houses now? As he says himself, he might have the rock-star life, but who is the real rock star here?" It comes after Noel said: "I live a rock star life... But I'm not sure that I'm a rock star. "Liam's a rock star. Do you know what I mean?"



Jonas Blue finds it hard to hold down relationships

Jonas Blue says his hectic life as a DJ has made it hard to hold down a relationship. The 'Mama' hitmaker would love to find the girl of his dreams but finds it difficult to keep up in contact with girls because he's a workaholic and is either on the road or making music in the studio. Speaking to the London Evening Standard newspaper, he said: "I am single and the lifestyle definitely takes its toll on that side of your life. It's definitely hard to have relationships. "When your life moves so quickly, people generally want replies on messenger apps and sometimes I don't get back to people for two or three weeks. "It's mainly just down to how busy my life is, but I'm doing my best. I would love to find someone." The 27-year-old hunk - whose real name is Guy Robin - is always chasing new artists to collaborate with from Katy Perry to the One Direction lads. And while his love life might be non-existent, his collaborations keep coming as he's said to be getting together with Shawn Mendes for a track on his debut album. The producer recently released a compilation LP 'Electronic Nature - The Mix 2017', but he is hard at work on his first ever record and is waiting for the 'Treat You Better' to have a free slot to head into the studio with him. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz, Jonas said: "I'm in talks with Shawn Mendes, we spoke the other night and we're trying to make something happen but it's always schedule dependent. "We just need to find the right date. I want to get in the studio with Shawn, doing it remotely doesn't really work with an artist like Shawn. "I need to know where he's coming from and he needs to know where I'm coming from, we need to be in the same room together sharing the experience."



Jay-Z hails Martin a 'modern day Shakespeare'

Jay-Z has hailed Coldplay's Chris Martin a "modern day Shakespeare". The 31-year-old hip-hop star is close pals with the 'Everglow' hitmaker and his ex-wife Gwyneth Paltrow but he says that doesn't make him biased when it comes to the 40-year-old singer being one of the best frontmen and songwriters around. Speaking to the Metro newspaper, Jay said: "I have been in the industry long enough to know when I'm in the presence of a genius and Chris Martin is just that", he opened up. "In years to come, Britain will look back at him as a modern day Shakespeare. He is an incredible recording artist, an incredible songwriter, but where he really comes alive is performing live. If you get the chance to see Coldplay live, do it - you ain't gonna regret it." The pair previously teamed up on the song 'Beach Chair' from Jay's 2006 album 'Kingdom Come' and Jay's wife Beyoncé featured Coldplay's track 'Hymn For The Weekend' from their latest album 'A Head Full of Dreams'. Both Jay and Chris have been added to the line-up for BBC Radio 1's Live Lounge Month as part of the UK station's 50th birthday. The '99 Problems' rapper - who recently made his comeback with studio album '4.44', his first in four years - will perform covers live on air on September 22, with the biggest names in music including Miley Cyrus and Harry Styles also set to join host Clara Amfo throughout the month. Clara said: "This year's Live Lounge Month has me more excited for our listeners than ever. From L.A. back to our studios in the UK, there is 50 great years of Radio 1 to celebrate with all of the artists and I can't wait for it to kick off!"



R Kelly axes four tour dates

R Kelly has cancelled four of his upcoming tour dates. The 50-year-old singer has axed a quartet of shows, two in Louisiana, one in Los Angeles and one in Dallas, which were among 10 forthcoming concerts scheduled for his 'After Party Tour'. Sources told gossip website TMZ the 'I Believe I Can Fly' hitmaker's dates were shut down due to poor ticket sales. However, insiders close to the star have insisted his LA show was only dropped because of a scheduling issue. This comes after R. Kelly - real name Robert Kelly - is said to have performed at Veterans United Home Loans Amphitheater in Virginia Beach on Friday to a barely half-full venue. He tweeted afterwards: "VIRGINIA BEACH showed love last night. Grateful 4 all my fans supportin' & lovin' on ya boy for 30yrs. BALTIMORE...time 2 turn up! See U soon. (sic)" In an accompanying video, he said: "I just want to thank all of the fans in Virginia Beach for supporting Kel last night. "I had a great time. We came out, walked down memory lane. I really appreciate you guys for coming out and showing Kel some love. I needed that. "I love you all. Onto the next one." The singer also thanked fans for their support throughout his career. He wrote: "VIRGINIA BEACH, VA you were amazing! Thx for partying with ya boy not only last night, but for the last 30 years of my career! Love y'all! (sic)"

Perry giving away tour tickets to charitable fans

Katy Perry is giving away concert tickets to fans who help donate supplies to their local Boys & Girls Club of America. The 32-year-old singer has teamed up with the national organization - which helps provide after-school programs to young people across America - through social-action platform Global Citizen, to encourage people to donate both time and supplies to their local club. Fans of the 'Chained To The Rhythm' hitmaker that sign up to the scheme on Global Citizen's website and then donate supplies to their local Boys & Girls Club will be entered into a prize draw to win a pair of general admission tickets to Katy's 'WITNESS: The Tour'. If fans are able to go the extra mile and actually volunteer at their local club, they will be entered into another prize draw, where they have the chance to win a pair of VIP tickets to the tour and a meet-and-greet with Katy. In a statement announcing the partnership, the 'Bon Appetite' singer said: "I'm a firm believer that actions speak louder than tweets. I think we're all looking for a way to make real change beyond just donating our loose change." And in a post on the organization's website, fans are encouraged to help young people "reach their full potential." The post reads: "In partnership with Katy on her new 'Witness' album and tour, we #WitnessTheFuture where all young people, especially those who need us most, can reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. "You could win tickets to Katy's 2017-2018 tour in a city near you by getting involved with Boys & Girls Clubs and showing your support! (sic)" Meanwhile, Katy recently said she is striving to remain "authentic", even if the process is "painful". She said: "I'm evolving and learning at the same time ... I try to stay my most authentic self. That can be hard. Authenticity is not always pretty. Sometimes it is messy, sometimes it is strange, sometimes it's painful."



GOSSIP

Joe Russo: 'Avengers: Infinity War' plot got complicated

Joe Russo says the "hardest part of the job" of making 'Avengers: Infinity War' was combining all the different Marvel Cinematic Universe narratives. The next two Avengers movies have been announced as the end of Phase 4 in the MCU and the filmmaker - who is helming the two films with his brother Anthony Russo - said everything has been leading up to 'Infinity War', but it's a complicated journey. Speaking to Comicbook.com, Joe said: "Everything is setting up 'Infinity War'. Every narrative that you have seen in any of the Marvel movies leading up to this point comes to bear in some way because all of the characters and all of the franchises are coming together, bring-

ing their themes and their tone and the things that motivate the characters are driving them through this story. It has been the hardest part of the job for us, is melding all of that together. But thankfully we got Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely working with us. "They are incredible collaborators. They wrote 'Captain America: Winter Soldier' for us and 'Civil War'. Now they're writing both 'Avengers' movies. I feel like we've got a great Vulcan mind meld between the two of them, and me and my brother." 'Avengers: Infinity War' will see the hero squad - Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr), Captain America (Chris Evans), Thor (Chris Hemsworth), The Hulk (Mark Ruffalo), Scarlet

Witch (Elizabeth Olsen), Vision (Paul Bettany), Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) and Hawkeye (Jeremy Renner) - join forces with the Guardians of the Galaxy. The two teams will have to work together to fight Thanos, with some help from newcomers Spider-Man (Tom Holland), Black Panther (Chadwick Boseman) and the screen debut of Captain Marvel (Brie Larson). Russo also revealed at San Diego Comic-Con that 'Infinity War' is currently the longest 'Avengers' movie so far.



Holland responds to Dunst's Spider-Man criticism

Tom Holland says Kirsten Dunst is entitled to criticize 'Spider-Man: Homecoming' but he doesn't care if she sees the blockbuster. Back in June, the 35-year-old actress - who played Mary Jane Watson in Sami Raimi's trilogy between 2002 and 2007 - was dismissive of Marvel Studios and Sony Pictures reboot of the character, which saw the webslinging superhero join the Marvel Cinematic Universe for the first time in 'Captain America: Civil War'. New Spider-Man Holland has now responded to her comments claiming he "doesn't care" if she sees the film or not as things have now moved on. Speaking to Movie 'n' Co UK, the actor said: "You know, she's entitled to her own opinion and I'm not one to judge at all. I definitely am not doing this movie for the money. I mean, it's a job that I think anyone would do regardless of what you were getting paid, you know? All I know is I had the greatest time on this movie and I absolutely loved it and, you know, if she doesn't want to go and see it, I don't really care. I don't dislike her in any way for what she said and she's entitled to her opinion, so it's all cool." The comments came after Dunst claimed her and Tobey Maguire's films were the "best ones" and that Spider-Man is only still going on the big screen for financial reasons. She told Marie Claire magazine: "We made the best ones, so who cares? I'm like, 'You make it all you want! They're just milking that cow for money. It's so obvious. You know what I mean? I don't care. Everyone likes our Spider-Man. Come on, am I right or what? Listen, I'd rather be in the first ones than the new ones.'" Holland played the Marvel comic book legend in 'Spider-Man: Homecoming' following Andrew Garfield's two movie stint from 2012. Following the success of 'Spider-Man: Homecoming', both Marvel and Sony have announced a sequel is slated for a 2019 release. Holland will be reprising his wall-crawling role in the upcoming 'Avengers: Infinity War'.



JOHN CENA JOINS BUMBLEBEE

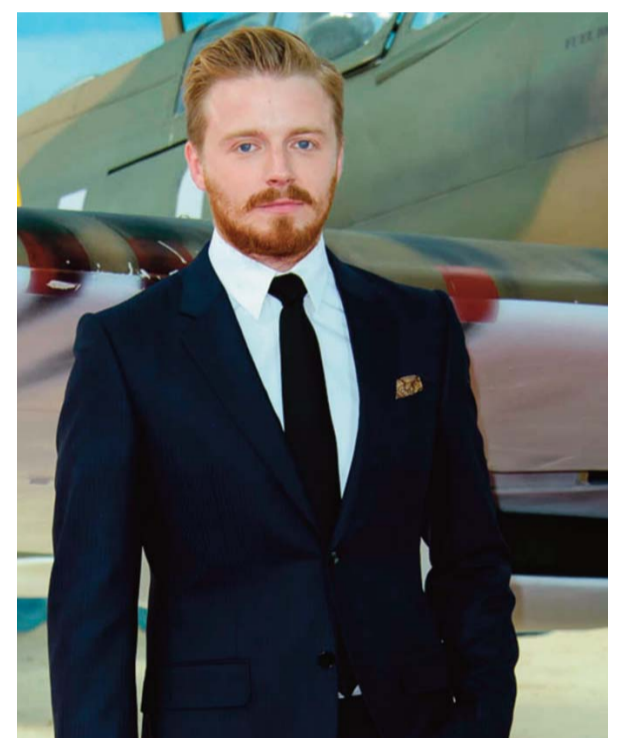
John Cena has joined the cast of 'Bumblebee'. The professional wrestler has landed a lead role in the 'Transformers' spin-off movie, which will focus on the yellow and black bot of the same name, and he will star alongside Hailee Steinfeld. According to The Hollywood Reporter, the forthcoming film has a new release date of December 21, 2018, which will see it go up against Warner Bros' 'Aquaman'. Jason Drucker, Abby Quinn, Rachel Crow, Jorge Lendeborg, Ricardo Hoyos and Gracie Dzienny are also set to star in the motion picture, which kicked off production on Monday. Lorenzo di Bonaventura and Michael Bay - who directed the last five 'Transformers' films - will produce the movie, along with executive producers Steven Spielberg, Brian Goldner Mark Vahradian and Chris Brigham. The motion

picture will be written by Christina Hodson and directed by 'Kubo and the Two Strings' filmmaker Travis Knight, which will be his live-action debut. The film will be set in 1987 and sees Steinfeld play Charlie, a young woman preparing to turn 18 who finds Bumblebee battered and broken, but she soon discovers what it is capable of. Di Bonaventura confirmed last week that the 20-year-old actress would play a major role in the motion picture. He said: "We are starting to shoot a week from today. We had decided to do this well before 'The Last Knight' had come out. "Our feeling was that we wanted to give the audience a different experience. Bumblebee's designed to be a more intimate movie. "What we're trying to do is deliver, a love story may be too strong of a term, but it is a coming of age for Bumblebee and our lead character, Hailee Steinfeld."

Jack Lowden says filming Dunkirk was immense

Jack Lowden said it was "immense" filming 'Dunkirk'. The 27-year-old actor plays Spitfire pilot Collins in Christopher Nolan's latest World War Two epic and admitted the filmmaker didn't want to use much CGI, and one day there were more than 1,000 extras on the Dunkirk beach. Speaking to The I Paper, he said: "That was immense. He doesn't like to use a lot of CGI, so you would be confronted with this spectacle every day. I think we had 1,200 extras on the beach one day; it was an incredible sight. And the flying scenes were pretty cool. We were up in the air, over the Channel, flying Spitfires, so that was great." Nolan - who helmed the hit 'Dark Knight' Batman trilogy - researched 'Dunkirk' by watching real life footage and reading records from the British-led rescue mission in 1940 in which 330,000 Allied troops were rescued from the clutches of the Nazis. Speaking at the world premiere of the movie London's Odeon on Leicester Square, the 46-year-old filmmaker said: "I was looking at a lot of firsthand accounts of people who were there. I want people to see it

in the big screen and feel like what it was like on the beach or be in small boat. I wanted to make the film feel real. I watched archive footage of what it was like. It was about realism for me and staging it in front of a camera rather than green screen." The idea of realism and authenticity was something important for Nolan who even made Harry Styles change the way he tied his shoelaces as soldiers would have done it a specific way. Styles said: "When I heard about Chris doing it I was kind of already excited to watch it to be honest and I just wanted to be involved ... On my first day he told me my laces were tied wrong." Lowden stars alongside many well-known including Sir Kenneth Branagh and Sir Mark Rylance, others are Nolan regulars such as Cillian Murphy and Tom Hardy, as well as newcomers Fionn Whitehead and One Direction star Styles.



IT could have been Swinton for Pennywise

Tilda Swinton was wanted to play Pennywise the Clown in the 'IT' remake. The 56-year-old actress is said to have been wanted for the re-imagining of the hit Stephen King novel by producer Barbara Muschietti and her husband Andres, however, due to conflicting schedules Swinton wasn't able to take on the role of the monstrous child killer. Speaking to Joblo, Barbara said: "Tilda Swinton wasn't available. No, no, I swear to God. She was not. We had a slot to shoot the movie and she wasn't available so she didn't even audition. "But of course, we all thought about it." The new big screen version of Stephen King's chilling novel about a child killer on the loose in an American town - which was turned into a 1990 TV miniseries starring Tim Curry as the terrifying Pennywise - is set to hit cinemas this September. The role of Pennywise ultimately went to 'Allegiant' star Bill Skarsgard, 26, who was revealed to be so scary that he had to stay away from the child co-stars during the shoot. Andres said: "Bill came in and blew our socks off. Because he was doing his very own interpretation of Pennywise, very erudite ... very, very familiar with the novel and with Pennywise in the novel, which for us was a huge help. Because we went in the casting process with the book in mind. We read the novel when we were teens, we saw the miniseries much later in the game, so Tim Curry's performance is extraordinary but that is not necessarily what we link to Pennywise immediately. For us, the Pennywise is the Pennywise in the book which is quite different. I think Bill went for that and he did an amazing, amazing performance and we gave him several tests. Again, because he's a shape shifter, we wanted to make sure that he could play in different grades, right? And he did. He's amazing. "And what's even more amazing



is that he kept the character very unpredictable, and that's what scares us the most, when you don't know what way he's going to go." 'IT' follows a group of young children who are faced with their biggest fears when they square off against Pennywise in Derry, Maine, after multiple children go missing. The brave kids mature into adulthood and are forced to revisit their horrors as one by one they encounter Pennywise again. Muschietti has already revealed that a plan for a sequel is in the works.

Director Jaume Collet-Serra pulls out of Suicide Squad 2

Jaume Collet-Serra has pulled out of directing 'Suicide Squad 2'. The 'Shallows' filmmaker was the frontrunner to helm the DC Extended Universe sequel but now Collet-Serra has signed up to direct 'Jungle Cruise' for Disney starring Dwayne Johnson, Deadline reports. Warner Bros Studios have been on the hunt for a director after David Ayer - who helmed the first movie - pulled out to focus on 'Gotham City Sirens'. Mel Gibson was previously linked with the vacant director's chair, but was adamant it was all just speculation. He said: "I don't know. I just met some guys about story points. It's not a done deal or anything, but it's just fun to shoot the pool, you know, when it comes to stories. I love doing it. And if we can elevate any type of concept, it's good. We'll see." Other filmmakers in the running to helm the sequel included Jonathan Levine, Daniel Espinosa and Ruben Fleischer, who has since taken over directing 'Venom' for Sony Pictures. Joel Kinnaman admitted he "definitely" wants to return to the franchise as special forces operative Rick Flag, and confirmed work is currently underway on a script, with shooting expected to commence "sometime" in 2018. Speaking back in June, he said: "As far as I know they're writing the script and I think the plan is to shoot it sometime in 2018, but that could change. I think I'll definitely come back for it." Though he hasn't seen a plot for the film yet, Kinnaman, 37, knows what he'd like to see his character get up to in the sequel with the team of supervillains, which includes Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie), Deadshot (Will Smith) and Captain Boomerang (Jai Courtney).



Ryan Reynolds praises 'epic' Cable in Deadpool 2

Ryan Reynolds has insisted Cable will be "epic" in 'Deadpool 2'. The 40-year-old actor will reprise his role as Wade Wilson and his titular alter ego in the upcoming sequel to the popular Marvel movie, and has promised fans they won't be disappointed by the introduction of the movie's antagonist, who is played by Josh Brolin. Speaking to Fandango, Ryan said: "I think it's going to be very interesting. I've spent this last week on the business end of many Josh Brolin punches. Both verbal and physical and literal and it's going to be pretty fantastic. He's going to be epic. He's going to be an epic Cable." Ryan's high praise comes just after the movie's director

David Leitch said he "couldn't be happier" with the casting of Josh, 49, whilst speaking at San Diego Comic-Con last month. He said: "When he graciously agreed to do the role, Ryan and I were through the roof; we love him. He's such a great actor, he brings a humanity to Cable, but he also has the depth of acting chops to hang with the comedy when needed. He's bringing that character to life in the short 12 days we've been shooting and I couldn't be happier." Meanwhile, T.J. Miller - who plays Deadpool's best friend Weasel - teased that the second installment won't follow the "same [story] in a different location" and will instead involve "different stakes". He said: "It's not going to be like 'Hangover 2', it's not going to be the same movie in a different location, for instance. It's got different stakes, different things happen, some pretty tragic, dark things happens in the first part of the film, in the beginning, and the rest of the film is kind of dealing with that, so that's interesting. But Weasel remains just absolutely the most selfish individual on the face of the planet." And the star even believes 'Deadpool 2' could be "funnier" than the first installment, as he laughed so hard when reading the script that he "dropped an iPad in a public restaurant". T.J. said: "This installment is going to be more Weasel-icious than ever before. I was crying so hard laughing that I dropped an iPad in a public restaurant when I was reading the script."



FEATURES

Wonder to lead concert to protect global aid



File photo shows musician Stevie Wonder performs during a free pop-up concert in Philadelphia.

Stevie Wonder and Green Day will headline a concert in New York to mobilize support for efforts to eradicate global poverty as President Donald Trump proposes sweeping foreign aid cuts. "Happy" pop star Pharrell Williams, chart-topping electronic duo The Chainsmokers and alternative rockers The Killers will also play the Global Citizen Festival in Central Park on September 23, organizers announced yesterday. Wonder said the festival came at a "crucial time," adding in a statement: "When we commit ourselves to life issues, we are showing love of the Most High."

The festival has drawn A-list stars annually since 2012 as the largely young audience presses world leaders for commitments to development as they gather in New York for the UN General Assembly. The 2017 edition comes in a sharply different political climate even as needs mount amid crises ranging from intractable wars in Syria and Yemen to hunger on the Horn of Africa. Global Citizen CEO Hugh Evans said the timing was critical after Trump's shock win and Britain's vote to exit the European Union but also amid a rejection of right-wing populism in elections in France and The Netherlands.

"Now is a hugely important point for there to be a line drawn in the sand that says foreign aid matters, investing in education matters, investing in food and hunger matters," Evans told AFP. The festival, which has expanded over the past year to India and Germany, is free of charge with fans earning tickets by taking actions such as writing letters to their governments. Hoping to expand its reach, the festival for the first time will be preceded by a Global Citizen Week of discussions, films, art and music around New York.

Evans said the festival wanted to reach out to people, including political centrists, who believed in the possibility of making change in the world. "In the same way that extreme poverty has been halved in the past 30 years while I've been alive, actually in the next 30 years we can end it all together," he said.

Progress 'impossible' with Trump cuts

The United Nations has set the Millennium Development Goals whose targets include eradicating malnutrition, ensuring universal access to drinking water and providing equal

educational opportunities to girls by 2030. But Evans said it would be "virtually impossible" to achieve the goals if the United States implements Trump's plans. He wants to slash foreign aid by one-third while ramping up military spending as part of his "America First" platform. US lawmakers, including some from Trump's Republican Party, support assistance in areas such as HIV/AIDS. But Evans said there was still a risk of major reductions in US aid, even if not by the same margins proposed by Trump.

The United States is the world's largest economy and donor in absolute terms, although many European nations give more in public funds on a per capita basis. Alongside pressing for sustained US aid, the latest festival will seek support for the Global Partnership for Education, which promotes schooling in poor countries-an area where progress has lagged behind some health areas. Other acts to play the Global Citizen Festival include folk rockers The Lumineers, soul singer Andra Day, rising Canadian pop songwriter Alessia Cara and rapper Big Sean. — AFP



File photo shows Billie Joe Armstrong of the band Green Day performs on ABC's "Good Morning America" 2017 Summer Concert Series in New York.



File photo shows The Chainsmokers' Alex Pall, left, and Drew Taggart perform in Austin, Texas. — AP photos

ROWLING SORRY AFTER ACCUSING TRUMP OF IGNORING DISABLED BOY

"Harry Potter" author JK Rowling, an outspoken critic of US President Donald Trump, apologized yesterday for suggesting he ignored a child in a wheelchair at a White House event. The British writer-like Trump a prolific user of Twitter-used the social network to admit she had been mis-

taken and apologize "unreservedly" to the boy and his family. "Re: my tweets about the small boy in a wheelchair whose proffered hand the president appeared to ignore in press footage, sources have informed me that was not a full or accurate representation of their interaction," she wrote.

"I very clearly projected my own sensitivities around the issue of disabled people being overlooked or ignored onto the images I saw and if that caused any distress to that boy or his family, I apologize unreservedly." On July 24, Trump and Vice President Mike Pence hosted several families who the White House said had been "heavily burdened" by Obamacare, including the little boy and his mother. Rowling had deplored "how stunning, and how horrible" it was that Trump seemed to ignore him. She has since deleted those tweets, although they were published by the Daily Mail website. A video posted on the White House website clearly shows the president bending down to talk to the child. — AFP



File photo of British author JK Rowling as she poses for the photographers during photo call to unveil her new book, entitled: 'The Casual Vacancy', at the Southbank Centre in London. — AP

Home decorators embrace big, bold wall art

Not long ago, the only homes in which you'd see big, bold art hanging on the walls tended to be those of serious collectors. For everyone else, filling up a blank space meant going with something attractively innocuous that didn't jangle with the sofa color. But something exciting is happening; we're losing our trepidation over hanging larger wall art with more impact. "Personal platforms like Instagram and Pinterest, and online forums like Core77 and Dezeen have made it really easy for people to find and share pictures of things they love," says Alyson Liss-Pobiner of the New York firm Dineen Architecture + Design.

"I really love using Instagram to share our own work, and images that we find beautiful, interesting and inspiring," she says. "As a result, images of designer projects have become much more accessible and reach much larger audiences." Caleb Anderson, principal at Drake Anderson Interiors in New York, says a room doesn't look finished without art. "Artwork establishes mood, defines personality and impacts emotion," he says. It can connect furnishings and architecture, and draw people into a space. "Oversize pieces work particularly well

above a sofa or bed," he says. "Large art makes an impactful statement in an entry or at the end of a long corridor, making the otherwise void hall an interesting destination of its own."

Large-format work can create focus points throughout a home, making an impression "without creating a lot of visual noise," Liss-Pobiner says. When you're positioning large art, she says, don't be afraid to try something different. "In our room at Kips Bay Decorator's Showhouse this year, we centered the bed on one wall with a large sofa on the opposite wall," she says. They then placed a large blue concave mirror from Bernd Goeckler Antiques above the sofa, but slightly to one side. "The convention is to center the wall art above the furniture, but by 'freeing up' that wall with an asymmetrical composition, we were able to keep the eye moving around the room," she says. Large-scale art with typography can be affordable and add a dose of humor, say Mat Sanders and Brandon Quattrone of Consort Design, a bicoastal design firm.

"If you're looking to take the room in a more sophisticated direction, we also love large, painterly abstract pieces," the duo said in an email. Their online shop includes the figurative

expressionist work of Kristen Giorgi of Atlanta's NG Collective Studio, and Los Angeles artist Matt Maust's kinetic mixed-media work.

Anderson has some source suggestions, too, including the Loretta Howard Gallery in Manhattan. "They represent artists from some of my favorite movements and often in dramatic scale. I'm drawn to abstract expressionism, op art, minimalism and color field movements," he says. He also recommends New York gallery Danese/Corey for its large-scale paintings by artists of note, like Larry Poons and Connie Fox, and suggests 3-D compositions by artists such as Jeff Zimmerman, Matthew Solomon and Olafur Eliasson as alternatives to conventional paintings on canvas.

For budget-friendly pieces, Anderson recommends Saatchi Art, Twyla, ArtStar and @60". Liss-Pobiner cited a wide variety of galleries and websites for researching, buying and framing art. "We've had good luck finding interesting work on Etsy as well," she says. — AP

New boss starts restyling British Vogue

Edward Enninful took over as editor of British Vogue yesterday, launching a new Snapchat edition as he seeks to reinvigorate the fashion bible that one ex-staffer warned was losing its relevance. The 45-year-old former model and stylist is the 101-year-old magazine's first male, first black and first gay editor, and is known for his political activism, provocative shoots and A-list friends. He has lost no time in bringing in a new team, including his close friend, model Naomi Campbell, award-winning filmmaker and artist Steve McQueen and Grace Coddington from US Vogue and is also launching a new Snapchat edition.

"British Vogue is a great magazine with a legacy of creativity and innovation," he said. "I look forward to continuing to produce an exciting beautiful magazine for its readers." On his first official day in the job, the magazine made its debut on Snapchat's Discover platform, promising editions on the application three times a week as it seeks to reach out to new audiences. Many more changes are expected from the new boss, who cuts a sharply different figure from his predecessor, Alexandra Shulman, who edited Vogue for 25 years. While she is a down-to-earth figure who largely avoided the spotlight, Enninful regularly posts updates on social media of his celebrity lifestyle. His dog Ru, a Boston terrier named after drag artist RuPaul, has more than 11,000 followers on Instagram. Jonathan Newhouse, head of Vogue publisher Conde Nast International, described Enninful as "an influential figure in the communities of fashion, Hollywood and music which shape the cultural zeitgeist".

'Irrelevant for most people'

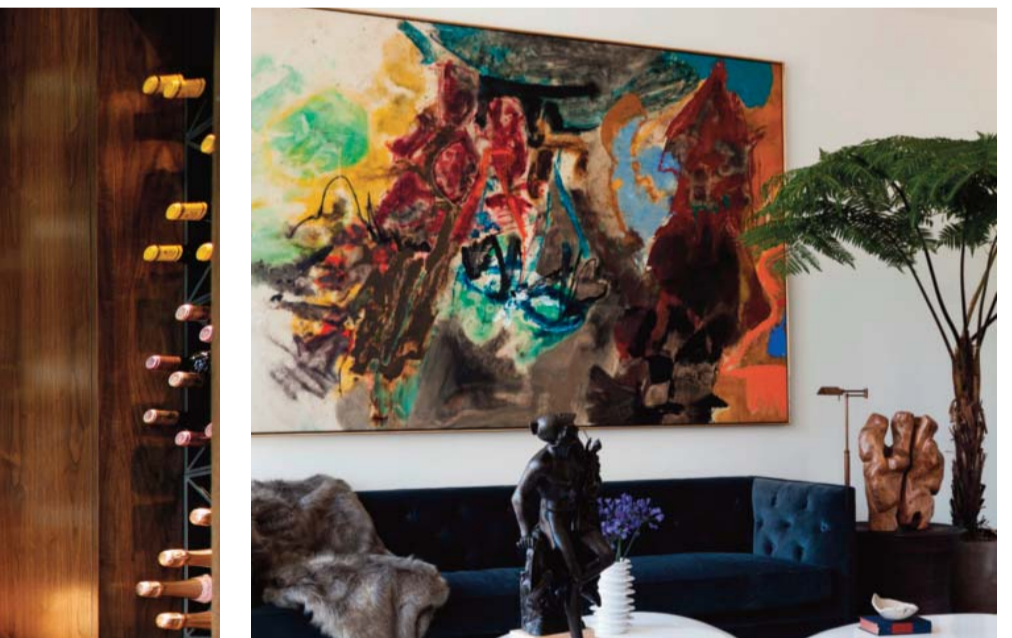
Several senior staff members have left Vogue since Enninful's appointment was announced in April. One newspaper dubbed it a "Posh Girl exodus" that looks set to change the largely white, middle-class and female face of the magazine. But one of

those who was fired, fashion director Lucinda Chambers, has acknowledged the need for change-admitting she had not read the magazine for years. Saying the clothes featured in fashion shoots were "irrelevant for most people-so ridiculously expensive," she also warned it had lost its authority.

"In fashion we are always trying to make people buy something they don't need," she said in a candid interview with industry publication Vestoj.com. "We don't need any more bags, shirts or shoes. So we cajole, bully or encourage people into continue buying."

'Revitalize the brand'

Born in Ghana and brought up in west London with five siblings, Enninful was scouted as a model at the age of 16, and began his career as a stylist. He became the youngest fashion director in the industry when he joined i-D, a British youth culture magazine, at the age of 18. He later worked at Vogue US and as contributing editor at Vogue Italia, before moving to "W" magazine as creative and fashion director in New York in 2011. Enninful has long pushed for greater diversity in fashion, creating a ground-breaking "All Black" issue for Vogue Italia in 2008. He has styled next year's Pirelli calendar featuring exclusively black stars including actress Lupita Nyong'o and rapper-turned-businessman Diddy. Enninful also helped orchestrate a short film in protest against US President Donald Trump's travel ban, entitled "I am an immigrant" and starring 81 fashion figures. Enninful was awarded an OBE for services to fashion last year-after which Campbell and Kate Moss threw him a huge party. "In his attitude towards celebrity and social media, Enninful is something of a bridge between the traditional fashion establishment and the next generation," the Business of Fashion website wrote in an editorial earlier this year. —AFP



This undated photo shows a New York living room designed by Drake/Anderson, where large scale art plays a starring role in the decor scheme.



This photo provided by New York based Dineen Architecture + Design, shows a room designed by Dineen at the Kips Bay Decorator's Showhouse in New York. — AP photos



Photo shows Drew Redman attempting an unassisted crossing of a deeper-than-it-looks creek with Ryan Johnson supervising. — AP photos



Photo shows Ryan Johnson leading Drew Redman on the single-track trail that makes the Maah Daah Hey Trail, in western North Dakota, a popular destination for mountain bikers.



Photo shows Drew Redman and Ryan Johnson riding on the riverbed of the Little Missouri River in western North Dakota.

Legendary biking on North Dakota's Maah Daah Hey trail

'The greater is the attraction of its lonely freedom'

By Carey J Williams

For mountain bikers, North Dakota's Maah Daah Hey Trail is such a treasure that people come from all over to experience it. I drove with friends more than 1,000 miles (1,600 km) to ride 100-plus miles (160 km) of the single-track trail, which is no wider than a bike. And we weren't the only non-Dakotans traveling long distances to do it. We met folks from Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Denver, Montana and Wyoming. The MDH is located where the Great Plains meet the Badlands. To use North Dakota's state slogan, it's legendary. It connects the northern and southern units of Theodore Roosevelt National Park in the western part of the state.

With elevation changes of over 10,000 feet (3,000 meters), only the fiercest of athletes complete the trail in one day, usually for the annual MDH 100 race (this year, Aug 5). We opted for a multi-day, self-supported trip. That's the essence of bikepacking - or backpacking by bike.

Within the first hour of leaving the northern trailhead, we knew we'd be tested by the rugged landscape. The unrelenting climbs, sheer cliffs along the exposed layers of the Badlands, switchback descents and grassy plateaus with panoramic views were going to be our repeating scenery for three days. After a two-hour opening night ride due to a late

patch kit, chain lube and pump) should be distributed equally around the bike because riding single-track trails demands your attention and balance. When the narrow track zigzags, the bike needs to follow as riders become one with the trail. The ideal bike would be a hardtail (with or without suspension) mountain bike with 27.5 or 29-inch wheels and bags for the frame, fork, handlebar and seat post.

But we're proof you don't need top-of-the-line gear to complete the trail. Two of our three riders used panniers, meaning saddlebags on racks over rear tires, though they did face more mechanical issues on 15-year-old bikes than the gearhead of the group. Plus the width of the bikes with panniers tended to disrupt the tall western wheatgrass and dense brush along the trail, leading to stops for tick checks and broken bike parts. Resting points were key to a successful trip, especially between the hottest times of day, 2 pm to 4 pm. The cooler, north-facing slopes and pockets of wooded draws were natural pit stops - usually in a grove of leafy cottonwood trees.

Sag wagons

The drier, south-facing buttes lent themselves to purple coneflowers, prairie roses, bright yellow blooming prickly pear cactus and the easily-recognizable yucca plant with its tall stalks. The wildflowers provided a contrast to the browns and



Photo shows Drew Redman pumping water for Ryan Johnson's various containers.

at least 18 miles (29 km) apart, had hand-pumped drinking water. There are also water-cache sites that can be stocked before the trip by driving on dirt roads. The campsites can be accessed on those roads, making it possible for exhausted riders to catch a ride back to town or for sag wagons - support vehicles - to greet pampered riders at the end of the day with a cold beverage.

Finding the campsites was a breeze with wooden fence posts placed on the trail within sight of each one. Roosevelt first came to the area to hunt buffalo but later returned to work as a rancher while working through grief for his late mother and wife, who died the same day in 1884. "The farther one gets into the wilderness," he said, "the greater is the attraction of its lonely freedom." —AP



Photo shows Drew Redman taking a break along the Maah Daah Hey Trail.

start, it took us three full days of 10 to 12 hours on the bikes to complete the trail. A fourth day would have made it a more relaxing experience with various side trips to the China Wall, Ice Caves and Roosevelt's Elkhorn Ranch.

Bikepackers carry the same gear as backpackers with the addition of tools and spare bicycle parts. Ideally, the gear (including a multi-tool, chain breaker, spare tubes, tire levers,

greens dominating the landscape. One note of caution for this season: The area is experiencing a drought. A wildfire recently closed part of the MDH trail along with two campgrounds, but at the end of July, all sections were open.

We each carried a total of 4 to 6 liters of water in daypacks, frame cages and luggage bags. Each campsite (CCC, Bennett, Magpie, Elkhorn, Wannagan, Buffalo Gap, Sully Creek), located



If You Go...

GETTING THERE: The town of Medora is the jumping-off point for the Maah Daah Hey trail and Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The CCC campground, the northernmost part of the MDH, is located about 70 miles (113 km) north of town along Highway 85.

OFF THE BIKE: The Medora Musical, a Western-style musical show, runs all summer at the Burning Hills Amphitheatre. The Bully Pulpit golf course, just outside Medora, was named one of America's top 100 public courses by Golf Digest in 2013.

TIPS: Visitors with bikes - even walking or carrying them - are not permitted on Theodore Roosevelt Park's non-motorized trails. There are alternative routes around the park's north and south sections.

Photo shows clay sticking to a bike tire after a rain-storm on the Maah Daah Hey Trail near Medora, North Dakota as Ryan Johnson is returning to his riding group to give a trail-conditions update.

Age of luxury: London's V&A to feature show on ocean liners

London's decorative arts and design museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, will host a major exhibition on ocean liners that includes relics from the Titanic. The exhibition that opens in February will explore the nostalgia for the golden age of ocean travel and its portrayal in pop culture. Most notable among its 250 showcased pieces is a diamond-and-pearl Cartier tiara saved from the ship Lusitania in 1915, as well as a panel fragment from the Titanic's first-class lounge.

Architecture, engineering and fashion all figure prominently in the show. The exhibition, now in the US, goes beyond the ships to look into the lives of famous passengers such as Marlene Dietrich and Elizabeth Taylor. It also examines the work of artists, designers and architects inspired by the ocean liner look. — AP

Nightmare at the museum: Art auction triggers ethics dispute

A Massachusetts museum's decision to part with 40 artworks, including two by illustrator Norman Rockwell, has touched off a debate over whether it's ever ethical to sell pieces of the collection to pay the bills. The Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield has come under intense national and local pressure after announcing it's auctioning the art. Critics say it's violating a cardinal rule of museums: Don't sell stuff to pay the bills. "One of the most fundamental and long-standing principles of the museum field is that a collection is held in the public trust and must not be treated as a disposable financial asset," the American Alliance of Museums and the Association of Art Museum Directors said in a joint statement. The sale would be an "irredeemable loss," they added.

Leslie Ferrin, who runs an area company that represents artists, started a Facebook page for members of the local art community opposed to the sale called "Save the art at the Berkshire Museum of Natural History and Art." Members of the group say they hope to convince the museum to change its mind. "Selling gifts is against every moral and ethical standard" of running a museum, she said. At auction, the pieces are likely going to be sold to private collectors, and the public will lose access, Ferrin said. The sale is necessary to ensure the museum's very existence, executive director Van Shields said.

The money raised will help establish a \$40 million endowment and pay for \$20 million in renovations as the museum refocuses its mission to become a more interdisciplinary and interactive institution more dedicated to history and science. "We are facing an existential threat. We needed to adapt, migrate or go extinct," he said. The art being auctioned includes works by Albert Bierstadt, Alexander Calder and Charles Wilson Peale, but it's the Rockwell oil paintings that have stirred the deepest emotions. "Blacksmith's Boy - Heel and Toe" and "Shuffleton's Barbershop" were gifts to the museum from Rockwell himself, who called the region home for the last 25 years of his life.

Changed dramatically

Laurie Norton Moffatt, director of the nearby Norman Rockwell Museum, has come out in opposition to the sale. "For the museum's leadership, the potential price that these irreplaceable artistic treasures could fetch seems to have obscured their very rich role in the life of the Berkshires," she wrote in an opinion piece in The Berkshire Eagle newspaper. Shields respects the opinions of those opposed to the sale, and said he and the museum's trustees "knew we were going to be pilloried," but added that the auction is a done deal.

When the Berkshire Museum opened in 1903, it was the cultural beacon of the region. It was founded by Zenas Crane, a member of the family that owned Crane & Company, a paper manufacturer that to this day supplies paper used to make US currency. Now it's overshadowed by the region's world-renowned museums, including the Clark Art Institute, the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art and the Norman Rockwell Museum. "The cultural landscape has changed dramatically and the Berkshire Museum has not adapted to that change," Shields said.

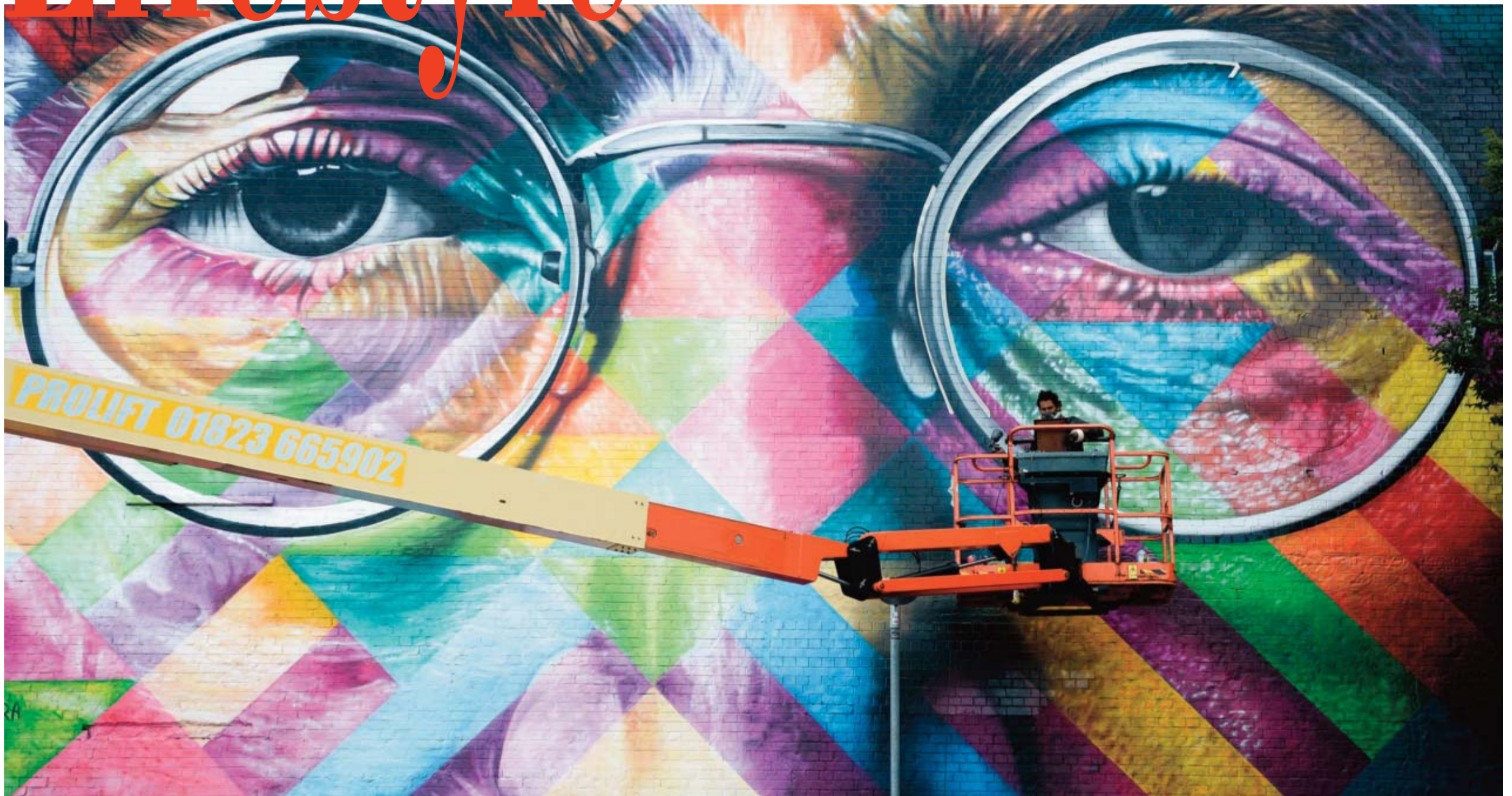
Selling the works was not a decision made lightly. It was a two-year process that involved multiple focus groups, multiple retreats by the board of trustees (which includes a member of the Crane family) and input from hundreds of members of the community, Shields said. By switching its focus to science and history - and yes, some art will remain - the Berkshire Museum can fill a currently empty cultural niche in the region. Those opposed to the sale are in the minority. "We've received overwhelming support for this," he said. — AP

Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2017

Stevie Wonder to lead concert to protect global aid

30



A graffiti artist works on a huge mural of former Beatle John Lennon as part of Upfest, a street art and graffiti festival in Bristol, England Monday. — AP

No visa, no veil? Saudi Arabia may ease rules for tourists



This file photo shows two veiled Saudi women enjoy the Red Sea at night, in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia.



This file photo shows a girl plays with her kite as visitors walk on the Red Sea beach, in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia.



This file photo shows a boy flies a kite on the Red Sea beach near the landmark Jiddah fountain, in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia. — AP photos

Saudi Arabia plans to build a "semi-autonomous" visa-free travel destination along its northwestern Red Sea coast where restrictions on women's dress, gender segregation and other conservative norms could be waived. The Red Sea project will include diving attractions and a nature reserve, with some areas resembling the luxury hotels, islands and lagoons of the Maldives. The Saudi Commission for Tourism did not immediately respond to an Associated Press request for more details on the rules that will govern tourists at the Red Sea resort.

The country's Public Investment Fund (PIF) said Monday it will provide the seed capital to develop the resort area, explaining that the new "semi-autonomous area will be

governed by laws on par with international standards." The fund said the project will attract leading names in hotel to "bring about the next-generation of tourism in a way that will open" Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coastline to tourists from around the world. The sovereign wealth fund developing the project is headed by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the young prince who in June was named heir to the throne by his father King Salman. The prince is overseeing a dramatic overhaul of the economy to lessen its dependence on oil exports for revenue.

Tourism is a key part of the prince's Vision 2030 plan. The plan aims to diversify and modernize Saudi society and the economy, and includes plans for keeping some of the

Saudi money spent abroad each year in the country. It also calls for raising tourism revenues outside of the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, which Saudi Arabia oversees. The Red Sea project aims to specifically generate 15 billion Saudi riyals (\$4 billion) annually to Saudi Arabia's economy and create 35,000 jobs. Already, the ultraconservative country has opened its doors to more entertainment in order to generate more local spending and appease the country's burgeoning youth population. The PIF is the main investor in a Six Flags theme park that is expected to be built in a new entertainment city that will be the first of its kind in the kingdom.

The fund said the Red Sea project will be built along 125

miles (200 kilometers) of coastline and is tailored toward global luxury travelers and those seeking wellness travel, a genre of tourism associated with personal well-being and health. Among the attractions will be protected coral reefs, dormant volcanoes, a nature reserve inhabited by rare wildlife like Arabian leopards and falcons, and trips to Saudi Arabia's ancient ruins of Mada'in Saleh, classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Also on offer will be parachuting, trekking and rock climbing. — AP



Image made available by the Apsara Authority of the Cambodian Government, archaeologists examine a 1.9-meter (6-foot, 3-inch) tall, 58-centimeter (23-inch) wide statue at Angkor Wat in Siem Reap, Cambodia.



The sun rises behind Angkor Wat on the northern outskirts of Siem Reap province, northwest of Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Archaeologists at Angkor Wat find large buried statue

Archaeologists at Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple complex studying the site of a hospital from eight to nine centuries ago say they have found a large statue in their excavations. The government agency that oversees the complex, the Apsara Authority, said on its website that the 1.9-meter (6-foot, 3-inch) tall, 58-centimeter (23-inch) wide statue was discovered Sunday by its team, working with experts from Singapore's Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. It is one of the largest statues from the era to be unearthed in recent years.

The agency said the statue, believed to be from the 12th or 13 century, is thought to have been a symbolic guardian of the

entrance of the hospital. It was found buried 40 centimeters (16 inches) under the ground, and will be put on public exhibition in the museum in the northwestern province of Siem Reap, where Angkor is located. In late 2011, archaeologists at the temple complex unearthed the two largest Buddhist statues found there in eight decades.

Angkor was the capital of the Khmer Empire, which flourished from approximately the 9th to 15th centuries. Large numbers of architectural and religious artifacts have been looted from there and sold overseas, while others were buried for safekeeping during a civil war in the 1970s. — AP



Tourists take photos of the sunrise at the Angkor Wat on the northern outskirts of Siem Reap, Cambodia.— AP photos