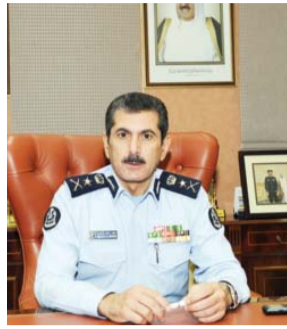


Building supervisors responsible for most fires



North Korea tests another ICBM, putting US cities in range



Charlie Gard, 'beautiful little Boy' at heart of dispute, dies



India thrash Sri Lanka by 304 runs in first test



IRAN VOWS NO HALT TO MISSILE TESTS AS WEST HARDENS TONE

TEHRAN, US TRADE BLAME OVER NEW NAVAL INCIDENT IN GULF



Min 35°
Max 51°
High Tide 04:44 & 16:40
Low Tide 10:59 & 11:05

OUSTED SHARIF NAMES BROTHER AS SUCCESSOR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif named his brother Shahbaz, the chief minister of Punjab province, as his successor and nominated ex-oil minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as an interim premier in a defiant speech yesterday. The announcement charts a way forward for Pakistan after the Supreme Court deposed Sharif Friday following an investigation into corruption allegations against him and his family.

The ruling brought to an unceremonious end his historic third term in power and briefly plunged the country into political uncertainty. "I support Shahbaz Sharif after me but he will take time to contest elections so for the time being I nominate Shahid Khaqan Abbasi," Sharif said in a televised speech to his party. The younger Sharif - who has so far been unscathed by the corruption allegations engulfing his brother's family - holds only a provincial seat, so must be elected to the national assembly before becoming the new prime minister.

Earlier yesterday, the Election Commission of Pakistan confirmed fresh elections would be held in Nawaz Sharif's former constituency, in the family's power base of Punjab province, in a process which could take up to 45 days. Considered more intelligent but less charismatic than his older brother, Shahbaz Sharif has controlled Punjab - Pakistan's

Continued on Page 11



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif addresses his party yesterday. (Inset) In this photograph taken on June 17, 2017, Shahbaz Sharif addresses the media after appearing before the anti-corruption commission at the Federal Judicial Academy. —AFP

TEHRAN: A defiant Iran vowed yesterday to press ahead with its missile program and condemned new US sanctions, as tensions rise after the West hardened its tone against the Islamic republic. Meanwhile, Tehran and Washington accused each other's naval forces of provocative maneuvers in the Gulf that culminated in a US helicopter firing warning flares at Iranian vessels, the latest close encounter between the countries in recent months. The US Navy said it had reacted to unresponsive vessels belonging to the Revolutionary Guards closing in on American ships at high speed, a charge denied by Iran, which described the American move as unprovoked.

"At 4 pm (1130 GMT) on Friday, the supercarrier USS Nimitz and its accompanying warship, while being monitored by the Guards' frigates, flew a helicopter near the Resalat oil and gas platform and approached the force's ships," the Guards said. "The Americans in a provocative and unprofessional move, sent a warning message to the frigates and fired flares." The Guards "ignored the unconventional move by the US ships and continued their mission, after which the supercarrier and its warship left the area," the statement added.

The US Navy said in a statement its ships were on a routine patrol when an American helicopter "observed several Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps naval vessels approaching US naval forces at a high rate of speed". It added: "US naval forces attempted to establish communications, with no response from the Iranian vessels. Shortly thereafter, at a safe distance, the US helicopter deployed flares, after which the Iranian vessels halted their approach."

Continued on Page 11

STALLED TRUMP AGENDA LEADS TO SHAKEUP

WASHINGTON: Six months into his presidency, Donald Trump is saddled with a stalled agenda, a West Wing that resembles a viper's nest, a pile of investigations and a Republican Party that's starting to break away. Trump on Friday indirectly acknowledged the troubled state of his unconventional White House when he abruptly replaced his chief of staff with hard-nosed retired Gen John Kelly, until now the Homeland Security secretary.

Kelly will take the desk of Reince Priebus, a Republican operative who was skeptical of Trump's electoral prospects last year and ultimately came to be viewed by the president as weak and ineffective. Kelly's ability to succeed will depend on factors outside his control, including whether Trump's squabbling staff is willing to put aside the rivalries that have sowed disorder and complicated efforts to enact policy. But the big question is can Kelly do what



John Kelly Reince Priebus

Priebus couldn't? And that's curbing the president's penchant for drama and unpredictability, and his tendency to focus more on settling scores than promoting a policy agenda. No other aide or adviser has been successful on that front. As a candidate, and now as president, Trump has cycled through campaign chiefs and

advisers but has remained easily distracted by his personal interests and only loosely tethered to any policy plans.

"Trump has spent a lot of his political capital on nothing but defending his own reputation," Alex Conant, a Republican strategist, said of Trump's first six months in office. "There is no sustained strategy. His attention seems to shift with whatever is leading cable news at that moment." Staff shake-ups are a tried-and-true way for struggling presidents to signal that they are ready to shift course.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton elevated budget director Leon Panetta to chief of staff with a mandate to bring more discipline to a loosely organized White House. President George W Bush made the same move with Josh Bolten in 2006 as the Bush presidency buckled under criticism of his handling of the Iraq war and the

Continued on Page 11



GROZNY, Russia: Young people take a photo in front of the Heart of Chechnya - Akhmad Kadyrov Mosque and large letters reading 'I love Grozny' on July 26, 2017. — AFP

GROZNY EMERGES FROM RUINS TO BECOME 'SHOWCASE FOR ISLAM'

GROZNY, Russia: As the plane from Moscow touches down in Grozny, the capital of the Russian republic of Chechnya, a young woman wraps a scarf around her hair. "Here it's better to be veiled," she told AFP. On Grozny's streets, many women follow her example and wear headscarves or a hijab that covers the chest, while others are in long dresses that hide their arms and legs. "We don't force women to wear a headscarf," the city's mayor Muslim Khuchiyev said. "But we remind them that this is the Chechen tradition and what our faith calls for."

Under authoritarian leader Ramzan Kadyrov, in power since 2007, the role of Islam has grown massively in the Russian North Caucasus republic. In Grozny, dozens of mosques have been built from the ruins of a city devastated after separatists waged two wars against the Russian army. Grozny hit the headlines in recent months after Russian opposition daily Novaya Gazeta published a report alleging that gay men were being persecuted by the Chechen authorities. Homosexuality in the conservative region is taboo.

Kadyrov, 40, has also expressed support for polygamy, which is against the law in Russia, saying that "for me, the most important thing is Islamic law". With alcohol sales restricted, school children studying the canons of Islam and women officially encouraged to wear headscarves for work and study, regional authorities are actively promoting Islam.

Malika, 29, goes to the mosque every day with her husband. "In the last two or three years, people have

become more and more religious," she said, adding that she makes her daughter take lessons in religious morality. "Of course the authorities encourage us. A religious woman is a good mother, a religious man is a peaceful person," said Malika as her phone rang to alert her to one of the five daily calls to prayer, which are also broadcast around the city over loudspeakers. "Grozny has emerged from ruins to become a modern Muslim city, a showcase for Islam," Khuchiyev said.

Taking pride of place in the center of Grozny is the Akhmad Kadyrov Mosque, named after Kadyrov's father. Chechnya's previous leader, Akhmad Kadyrov was assassinated in 2004. It was opened in 2008 on the site of the ruined former parliament building, destroyed by Russian bombs. Now "the largest mosque in Europe... is already not big enough," said Khuchiyev. Asked about financing for the mosque, the mayor simply said "the money came from Allah", echoing a phrase often used by Kadyrov himself to bat away questions about public spending.

Most of the city's grand reconstruction projects were enabled by lavish funding from Russia. Since taking power Kadyrov has sought to eliminate the Islamist insurgency known as the Caucasus Emirate that grew out of the pro-independence fighting units in the second Chechen war that erupted in the late 1990s. "We absolutely had to build new mosques so that people came back to the good Islam," Khuchiyev said.

Continued on Page 11



DUBAI: In this July 25, 2017 photo, a customer leaves the Pyongyang Okryu-Gwan North Korean Restaurant. — AP

GULF HOSTS THOUSANDS OF N KOREA WORKERS

DUBAI: As pressure over North Korea's nuclear weapons program grows, America's most valued Arab allies host thousands of its laborers, whose wages help Pyongyang evade sanctions and build the missiles now threatening the US and its Asian partners, officials and analysts say. From state-run restaurants to construction sites, North Korean workers in Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates face conditions akin to forced labor while being spied on by planted intelligence officers, eating little food and suffering physical abuse, authorities say.

North Korean laborers even have helped expand a UAE military base that hosts US forces fighting the Islamic State group, two officials familiar with Pyongyang's tactics told AP. Emirati offi-

cial, who are now relying on South Korean expertise to build the first nuclear power plant on the Arabian Peninsula, did not respond to requests for comment. "To put it fairly simply - an isolated country like North Korea is always seeking hard currency," said Giorgio Cafiero, the CEO of the Washington-based political risk consultancy Gulf State Analytics. "The Gulf is a place that the North Koreans see as a very reliable place to make the money."

Longstanding international concerns over North Korea's nuclear weapons program have intensified since it conducted two nuclear tests last year and launched its first intercontinental ballistic missile July 4. Facing US and international sanctions, North Korea has relied on its

Continued on Page 11

GOP FEARS FALLOUT AFTER 'EPIC FAIL' ON HEALTHCARE

NEW YORK: Weary Republicans in Washington may be ready to move on from healthcare, but conservatives across the United States are warning the GOP-led Congress not to abandon its pledge to repeal the Obama-era health law - or risk a political nightmare in next year's elections. The Senate's failure this past week to pass repeal legislation has outraged the Republican base and triggered a new wave of fear. The stunning collapse has exposed a party so paralyzed by ideological division that it could not deliver on its top campaign pledge.

After devoting months to the debate and seven years to promising to kill the Affordable Care Act, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, simply said: "It's time to move on." But that's simply not an option for a conservative base energized by its opposition to the health law. Local party leaders, activists and political operatives are predicting payback for Republicans lawmakers if they don't revive the fight.

"This is an epic fail for Republicans," said Tim Phillips, president of Americans For Prosperity, the political arm of the conservative Koch Brothers' network. "Their failure to keep their promise will hurt them. It will." To the American Conservative Union, the three Republican senators who blocked the stripped-down repeal bill that failed in the wee hours Friday are "sellouts". A Trump-sanctioned super political action committee did not rule out running ads against uncooperative Republicans, which it did recently against Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev.

There are limited options for directly punishing the renegade senators - John McCain of Arizona, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Susan Collins of Maine. None of the three is up for re-election next fall. McCain, whose dramatic "no" vote killed the bill, is serving his last term in office, has brain cancer and is hardly moved by electoral threats.

Continued on Page 11



Firemen put out the blaze in Ahmadi.

A firefighter battles the blaze in Ahmadi.

A fireman battles a blaze in a chalet in Nuwaseeb Friday afternoon.

KUWAIT: A fire ladder is used to put out a blaze which erupted in a paper factory in Ahmadi industrial area on Friday. — KFSD photos

Amir lauds efforts exerted during paper factory fire

Six firefighters injured, 2,500 square meters damaged

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and KUNA

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah lauded the Interior and Health Ministries, in addition to the Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) for their efforts that contributed in extinguishing a fire that erupted in a paper factory in Ahmadi industrial area and left six firemen injured on Friday. In a cable sent yesterday, His Highness the Amir voiced appreciation for the honest patriotic spirit that prevailed during the incident, wishing for a speedy recovery to those injured.



Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Mekrad, KFSD Director General

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Premier Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the concerned bodies and officials, including Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and Health Minister Jamal Al-Harbi.

Firefighters injured

Firefighters from five fire service stations have managed to extinguish the massive blaze which hit a paper factory and warehouse in Al-Ahmadi before spreading to nearby buildings, KFSD announced. It added that six firefighters were wounded while fighting the fire and a probe was launched to unveil the causes of the blaze. Earlier, KFSD's Acting Deputy-Director General Brigadier Mohammad Al-Mahmeed said that the fire has damaged 2,500 square meters of the 4,000 square meter-building. In a separate case, firemen also tackled a blaze which burned a chalet in Nuwaseeb Friday afternoon. No injuries were reported in the incident.

- Iron cuts sparked fires in Sabah Al-Salem University City, Kuwait Credit Bank and Sharq tower.
- Electrical short circuit caused garage fire in Sharq Industrial area.
- Investigations revealed that 409 arsons were committed in 2016.
- Some 655 out of 13,991 facilities inspected were referred to prosecution due to severe violations.

Iron cut

Mekrad attributed most of fire incidents in buildings under construction to the way the iron was cut inside the site, causing sparks to start fire when they land on woods. This same reason caused the fire incidents in Sabah Al-Salem University City, Kuwait Credit Bank under construction building and another tower site in Sharq, downtown, he said. Mekrad said workers should not cut the iron inside the project. But if they want to, he added, they should make sure the sparks would not reach the huge amount of woods used in the project.

The garages fire in the Sharq Industrial area was due to an electrical short circuit in one of the garages' air condition unit, Mekrad mentioned, adding that the area's poor organizational structure has delayed the arrival of firefighting squads on time thus allowed the fire to expand further and become difficult to deal with. "I have urged for removal of this poor area due to its sensitive location in the capital's center, posing a major risk on the safety of buildings and people," he said, stressing the importance of building an appropriate and special area for car garages.

Severe violations

Meanwhile, Mekrad affirmed that KFSD performs its tasks to the fullest, including search operations, which covered 13,991 facilities, current and under construction, and storages in 2016. Some 655 were referred to prosecution due to severe violations, prompting suspension of their files and transactions, he said, adding that around 21 facilities so far have been closed down in 2017, including storages, warehouses, companies, hotels, medical clinics, factories, and cellars.

Mekrad also praised a number of state sectors, including Kuwait Municipality, Environment Public Authority, Public Authority for Industry, Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources, Environment Police, and Removals Committee for their cooperation with KFSD in closing down some facilities that were not committed to precautionary requirements.

"Right now, we are working on removing severe and hazardous violations in Industrial Sulaibiya area that pose great danger on the safety of the society," he noted. He noted the great efforts exerted by the Directorate's media and press department in promoting awareness campaigns.

Non-commitment to safety standards and requirements is actually a problem, Mekrad said, noting that the Directorate has voiced strong messages that stressed the importance of having fire extinguishers inside houses. He also expressed his discontent with the current punishments in the Fire Law, adding that the Directorate is currently working to draft a new law that would increase financial and transactional punishments.



Fire engulfs a 1,000-square-meter site in Amghara.



Firemen battle a blaze in a garage in the Sharq Industrial area.

Supervisors responsible

Meanwhile, Kuwait's top fireman said that supervisors of sites under constructions are responsible for most of fire incidents erupted in those sites in Kuwait. But KFSD "does not cover on arson and is ready to take necessary measures against anyone trying to mess with security of the country, safety of people and properties," Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Mekrad, KFSD Director General, said. He underlined that KFSD "is acting in a transparent manner ... and is not ready to cover on any person."

Mekrad said in an interview that KFSD was taking "necessary measures" against anyone causing the fires "regardless of that person's identity. The fire directorate, he added, revealed the "real causes" of every fire in its report, which is "supported by evidence like photos and samples and testimonies of eyewitnesses." The reports, which he said were produced "without any pressure," were published in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior's Criminal Evidence Department. Mekrad said the number of deliberate fires in 2016 reached 409.



Firefighters battle fires with courage, risking their lives to save others.



A fireman faces a wall of smoke and flames while extinguishing a blaze in a garage in the Sharq Industrial area.

Local Spotlight

WHERE IS PALESTINE?



By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

In mid-2015, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East peace process Nicolai Mladenov issued a report through the Security Council calling on the Palestinian and Israeli sides to make every effort to build on existing agreements, taking into consideration UN Security Council resolutions, the roadmap and the Arab peace initiative to reach a mutual agreement. The report stated that the coming period will be crucial for the future of the peace process, with growing concerns about the absence of negotiations to reach a two-state solution.

The report pointed out that the current situation will inevitably lead to the continuous erosion of the living conditions of Palestinians and Israelis alike and will undermine security and stability for all. The report called on the government of Israel to take practical steps to reaffirm its commitment to the two-state solution, including the freezing of settlement activity.

Two years have passed and the situation is still burning, and even got worse recently. It seems there's no hope of a near-miraculous breakthrough. Because neither the Israeli government is prepared to cooperate nor the Palestinians are ready to accept anything less, because they have been suffering for many years over making any move in favor of their case, which today seems like an old issue in a global file filled with hundreds of hot issues in a semi-ruptured Arab world.

Therefore, Palestine today is neither victorious nor vanquished. The few Palestinians who still live there on hope and the Arab dream are not even able to find their daily bread, let alone peace. Amidst the intransigence of Israeli forces and the provocations and harassment that continue over observing religious rites, Israelis themselves are not being able to live in safety, stability and peace. So there are no winners or losers - everyone has been defeated.

Earlier this month, the Israeli authorities closed Al-Aqsa Mosque and surrounding areas for the first time in years after a shooting incident. On Friday, the Israeli occupation forces imposed restrictions on the entry of worshippers to the Al-Aqsa Mosque for Friday prayers, and opened only three doors for worshippers to enter under certain conditions related to age and gender.

The Israeli government blames the attacks on Israelis on "incitement" among Palestinians from Islamist movements. In contrast, the Palestinian Authority says the reason is the state of frustration caused by decades of Zionist occupation. I believe that no country or international power can now offer a magical solution that can be fully satisfactory to the two parties in light of a historical, religious and humanitarian conflict where each party sees that it is completely right and the other has to leave its homeland.

This cannot be achieved on the ground, especially with the strategy of the United States, which does not seem to see the Palestinian and Israeli conflict from a humanitarian or historical perspective, but as an old issue related to its strategic and international interests, and therefore it is not important to them how many Palestinians are dying or tortured. They see the Israelis as a force capable of protecting themselves with all the weapons they have obtained. It is a complex issue indeed and I do not think that the launch of new negotiations will bring any change now.

So what is the solution? I believe that the Europeans and the EU have the elements of any possible initiative that can be taken seriously, including commitment, clarity and transparency in the position on the Palestinian issue. For example, these countries through the Security Council can call for the implementation of resolution 2334 issued on Dec 23, 2016 and emphasize the need to commit Israel to remove all obstacles to worshippers to enter Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Old City of Jerusalem.

Al-Aqsa Mosque has great importance in the hearts of Muslims and its closure was a serious mistake that cannot be tolerated. Therefore, the Security Council must condemn Israeli practices in violation of international resolutions and law. This decision will not achieve the dreams of the Palestinians in their homeland, but it is an important message to Israel that Al-Aqsa Mosque is a red line and must not be breached.

SPEAKER BACK HOME AFTER ATTENDING AIPU MEETING

KUWAIT: Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem returned to Kuwait yesterday after concluding his participation at an extraordinary meeting for the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU). The AIPU meeting focused on the recent Israeli violations against Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. The meeting called for the United Nations and the global community to stand firm against Israel, saying it was important to protect Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem.

Ghanem had stated on Thursday that Kuwait would not surrender to "defeatist proposals" regarding the rights of Palestinians, and urged Islamic nations to come to the aid of Palestinians through diplomatic means.

Kuwait's chief lawmaker made the comments during the urgent AIPU talks on Israel's recent failed attempts to place metal detectors and surveillance cameras at the gates of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Israel removed the inspection measures after Palestinian worshippers in the hundreds declined to enter the holy site in protest of the move. Ghanem urged Arab lawmakers and politicians to bring up the topic at upcoming international meetings, calling Israel's actions a "bold and shocking assault" on one of Islam's holiest of sites.

Meanwhile, he expressed regret at what he deemed were attempts, amongst certain Arab and Muslim countries, to encourage a sense of resignation to the issue of Palestine. "Here I ask the languid and the detractors: Do we give up on all other forms of support for the Palestinian people, merely because we are unable to come to their aid with weapons?" he said.—KUNA

MUNICIPALITY RAIDS KHAITAN, JLEEB STORES

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Farwaniya municipality carried out a campaign on restaurants and stores in Khaitan and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh resulting in issuing 33 tickets for violations that varied between dealing with items without nutritional value, dealing with items in unhealthy circumstances, dealing with items unfit for human consumption, and not complying with hygiene rules. A total of 150 kilograms of spoiled food were also confiscated during the campaign.

Meanwhile, Farwaniya municipality also sent 152 food samples to Health Ministry laboratories to make sure they are fit for human consumption. Director of inspection and services' follow up Nasser Al-Rashidi said 2,235 signs and ads from streets were removed during a recent campaign. He added that 50 stores were inspected, 11 citations were issued, two violations were settled with the payment of KD 200 while nine were not settled.

In the meantime, Capital municipality carried out a campaign during which inspectors discovered 10 grocery stores operating in residential areas illegally, in addition to four motorbikes used to sell ice cream without a license.

Separately, Hawally municipality issued several citations during a recent crackdown, including five for employing workers without a health certificate, five for hiring workers without with health certificate, four for unauthorized use of area and four for displaying food items outside store limits.



MINISTRY SUCCESSFUL IN MEETING ENERGY DEMAND DESPITE EXTREME WEATHER

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Only two out of 48,000 transformers in Kuwait exploded due to overload this summer, which is a testimony of the successful maintenance operations conducted by the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) throughout the year, said engineer Iqbal Al-Tayyar, the Director of Technical Supervision Department, Head of the Rationalization at the Government and Private Sector. Meanwhile, Tayyar revealed that the ministry plans to support the United Arab Emirates with 200 megawatts per day for two months, which is considered another testimony for the ministry's success to cope with the increase in demand during the hot months of summer, especially when considering the 150 megawatts that the ministry also provides to Bahrain through the joint GCC grid.

Housing project

State Minister for Housing Affairs Yasser Abul said 14 citizens applied to the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), asking to forfeit land pieces allocated for them in exchange of allowing them to receive allocations in the south Khaitan project. However, their applications were not approved, the minister said. PAHW began receiving allocation applications for south Khaitan since June 11 and will continue receiving them until October 31, he said, adding that the project provides 1,448 plots, each of which has an area of 400 square meters.

School fees

Education Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for Private and Quality Education Dr Abdelmohsen Al-Huwailah said the department is forming a special committee to set the standards and rules for private schools' fees. Meanwhile, Dr Huwailah said the private education department must communicate with the supplies and stores department to make sure about receiving books before the start of schools.

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* This campaign is limited to participants in Kuwait only. Ministries and their departments, companies and NGOs cannot enter the festival.
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KUWAIT: A picture of Kuwait City's skyline taken from Al-Shaheed Park. —KUNA photos



Al-Shaheed Park at night.

KUWAIT KEEN ON RESTORING CULTURAL GLORY WITH CONSTRUCTION BOOM

Ambitious plan to restore 'Pearl of the Arabian Gulf' moniker

KUWAIT: Since its independence, Kuwait has been a regional culture and art hub, attractive for artists and art-lovers from across the region and beyond. The pioneering and illuminating role of its cultural institutions gave it a well-deserved advanced position on regional cultural map and the country was named 'the Pearl of the Arabian Gulf.'

But this role has been interrupted by the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait in 1990 and the ensuing major events. In the past few years, the government embarked on an ambitious plan to restore the country's cultural glory. It inaugurated a large number of cultural centers, museums, theaters, and cinemas to enrich culture life as well as to create new platforms to bring together Kuwaiti artists and art lovers.

Al-Shaheed Park

On April 12th, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah patronized and attended the opening of the second phase of Al-Shaheed Park which is located on the periphery of Kuwait city. Al-Shaheed Park narrates the story of Kuwait's land, history and culture. The

park consists of 200,000 square meters of greenery, featuring beautiful botanical gardens, two museums: Thekra and the Habitat, a visitor center, a lake, walkways, and jogging tracks, making it the largest urban park in Kuwait.

At Thekra, Al-Shaheed Park's memorial museum, visitors are provided with more knowledge on the history of Kuwait, its past battles and the Gulf War. "Thekra Museum is meant to shed lights on Kuwait's heritage and history, to give us strength and determination for dealing with the future and its challenges," the Museum official Engineer Bashayer Al-Awwad said.

She underlined the important role played by museums and different culture centers in fostering cultural activism and enhance patriotic values. She also stressed culture centers need to do more to woo children and youth through a series of special activities and programs.

The Habitat, Al-Shaheed Park's environmental museum, is dedicated to the Kuwait environment and bird migration. "The Habitat museum, the first of its kind in Kuwait, was inaugurated in March, 2017, to showcase the country's geographic and environment characteristics as well as plant

and animal resources through a wide array of sophisticated tools," the Habitat official Mohammad Al-Kharafi told KUNA.

Cultural Center

On October 31 last, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah inaugurated Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center (JACC) in Kuwait City. The Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Centre is a multidisciplinary public space owned by the Amiri Diwan striving to entertain, educate and inspire the people of Kuwait. It offers a range of events - in music, theatre, film, workshops and spoken word - for every generation and sector of society.

JACC provides a space for dialogue to share and showcase skills and knowledge, giving younger voices a forum in which to speak. The cultural center is a platform for educational and cultural exchange; moreover, it functions as an influential entertainment and culture powerhouse and productive space for the region.

Cultural district

Kuwaiti cultural circles are also waiting the near inaugu-

ration of the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre. Together with the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre, it is expected to form Kuwait's new national cultural district.

Each building will contain an array of permanent and temporary world-class exhibits and artworks. Walking through the cultural district beneath the canopy of the street will be a journey full of surprises, with stunning views deep into the heart of the museums where visitors will see framed vistas of priceless exhibits. The museums will celebrate Kuwaiti, Islamic and Arab culture and history. They will also embrace and showcase the rich diversity of the world's finest cultural achievements. It will consist of six main buildings: Natural History Museum; Science Museum; Museum of Islamic History, Space Museum, Fine Arts Centre; and a theatre. "Cultural centers are enriching cultural life, if they are professionally utilized for this goal," Secretary General of Kuwait Writers Association Talal Al-Rumaidhi said. He called for preparing plans to host a slew of cultural and artistic activities and exhibitions in the new centers to attract culture and art lovers from different segments of the society. —KUNA

CONDOLENCES

Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief,
management and staff

convey their deepest condolences to

**Mrs Rachelle De Leon
and her family**

on the sad demise
of her father

May God Almighty Rest His Soul in Peace



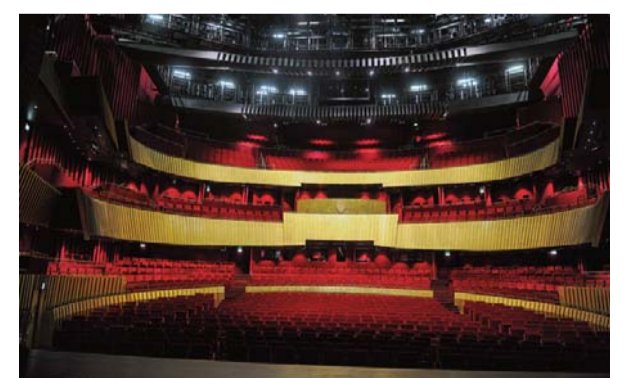
A replica of Al-Jalbout ship, located in the second phase of Al-Shaheed Park.



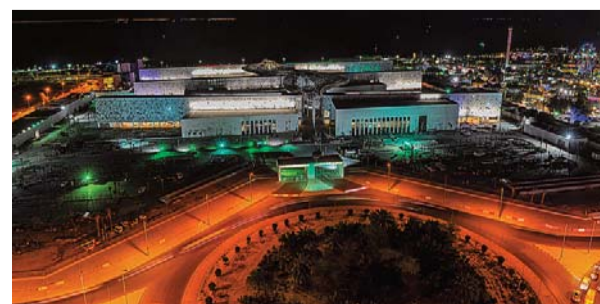
The Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center in Kuwait City.



A folklore performance at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center.



The National Theater is the biggest theater in Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Centre.



An aerial view of the Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center.



The Abdulhusain Abdulridha Theater.

Crime

Report

THREE TEENS KILLED IN ACCIDENT

KUWAIT: Three Kuwaiti citizens were killed on Fahaheel road when their vehicle collided with a concrete barrier on Shuaiba bridge and fell under it. A fourth man who was in the car was rushed to Adan Hospital and admitted inside the intensive care unit in a critical condition. Two of the deceased were 17 years of age, and one was 16. Police authorities are investigating.

Air pistol

A Syrian juvenile was killed when he was shot with an air pistol in the chest. The incident took place inside a toy shop in Fahaheel, and the shot was fired by a Lebanese juvenile who is being detained for questioning in the teenager's death. The boys were playing a game to hit targets when one of them mistakenly fired a gunshot at the other. Police were called and took over the case.

Mistreatment

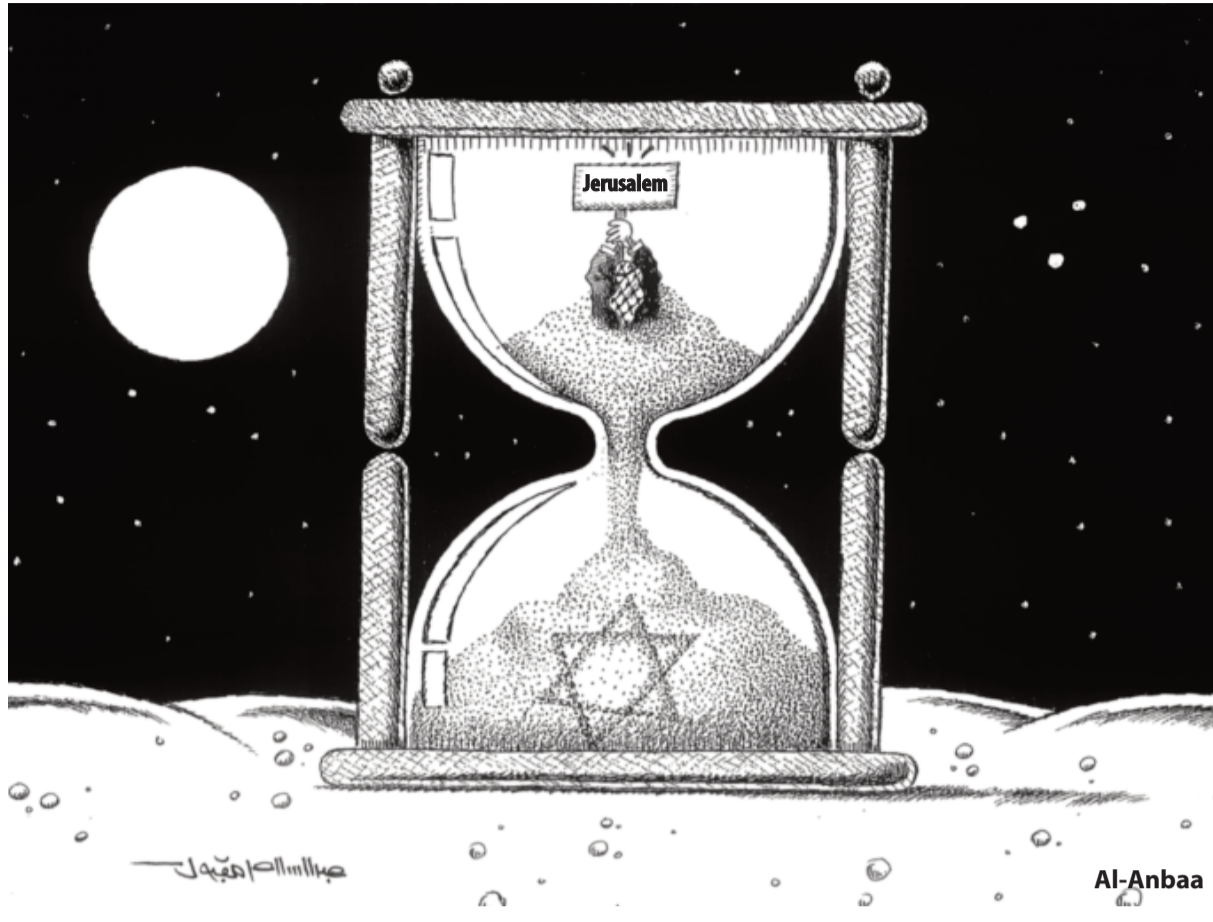
A bedoon child ended up in the psychiatric hospital after being ill-treated by her mother. The mistreatment caused the 11-year-old girl some mental and psychological problems. The mother was detained and charged with negligence. Juvenile's protection department officers received information about a child who was taken to hospital, and was behaving in a way that may cause herself harm. Detectives discovered that she suffered from mental illness due to mistreatment by her mother. Police were given orders to arrest the mother for questioning.

Theft

A citizen accused her ex-husband of theft in a complaint she lodged at Mubarak Al-Kabeer police station. According to her statements to police, the woman said that she had a dispute with her ex-husband, which escalated to the point where he divorced her. She said that when she went to her parents' house she found out that one of her phones and the spare key of her car were missing, and accused him of stealing the said items. Police are investigating. Separately, a Lebanese woman was beaten by her husband who ruptured her ear-drum. The woman went to hospital and brought a medical report.

Kidnapping

Detectives are investigating the kidnapping of a woman in her thirties who was jogging with her nine-year-old daughter in Jahra. The kidnapping took place in front of many onlookers who were unable to act. The victim's mother told police that her daughter was surprised with a car stopping them, then a man came out and forced the woman in, while the little girl escaped and sought passers-by help. —Translated from the Arabic press



Al-Anbaa

Al-Anbaa

EMPLOYEES' PRODUCTIVITY

By Saqer Al-Ghailani

There is no doubt that the attendance and absence of employees is important in all establishments. Some establishments have indicators to calculate the cost of employees' absence, their lack of attendance leads to delay in doing the job and receiving undeserved salaries, as the number of working hours is set in the working contract. Also, this matter causes trouble to some officials especially when they come in the morning to start work with an incomplete team while people wait in halls to process their transactions.

The idea of using biometric devices to register staff attendance came about when a group of employees did not comply with attendance and exit, as many of them either do not come to office, or used silicon prints for their fingerprints that others can use on the devices for them. In addition, there is a group of employees who would fingerprint in the morning, then go home to sleep, or spend the day in malls, before coming back to fingerprint again at time for checkout. But before the introduction of the biometric system for attendance, why wasn't a survey done to find out the true reason for lack of attendance of employees? Or is it that the system was implemented directly without sufficient research?

What if there are other reasons than laxity? Maybe the notion that there are too many employees carrying out the same job at the same department makes the employee frustrated and makes him feel that his presence or absence is the same. Maybe there is lack of a good working environment. I remember a colleague who did not report to work in a ministry for two years because there was no office for her. This and other matters must be corrected before direct implementation is made as a reaction to a specific matter.

There was talk about exempting employees who have been in service for 25 years from the fingerprint, and there is no realistic reason for that, because like the rest of employees, they have rights and duties. Exemption should be done for some jobs that require field work, which makes it difficult for the employee to come to office, or for the establishment to be based on setting goals and projects for each employee, so what is important is to fulfill the goals on time, and of course, our establishments are built on this system.

The fingerprint system will not guarantee the employee's productivity and will not solve the true problem which is overemployment, so concentration should be on employing manpower in a true manner so that the state can benefit from them. There should be a suitable working environment with evaluation systems that show the employees productivity, and not to continue with the policy of distributing wealth indirectly. If it was proven that an employee was negligent in attending, then simply enforce the law on him until he gets terminated and becomes an example for others. But to have a fingerprint system while the employee knows he is protected against termination, then nothing really has changed. —Translated by Kuwait Times

التقوس

Al-Qabas

THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

By Abdelmohsen Jamal

Regardless of how long the Arab-Israeli conflict remains, the ideological dimension that is in the presence of the holy religious places for Muslims and Christians will not allow the Zionists to practice the containment policy easily. The Zionists do not want to control the Palestinian territories alone, rather they want to control the entire Arab policy. It is clear that they are trying to create Arab differences on one hand, and separate Palestinians on the other.

The Israeli behavior in Jerusalem lately, and keeping Muslims from praying in Al-Aqsa mosque for two consecutive Fridays, is perhaps one of the Zionists' means of testing Arabs' solidarity and the extent of their governments' commitment to the religious dimension of the Palestinian cause, which is the fundamental dimension the Zionists fear.

The Palestinian reaction on one hand, and the Arab and Islamic one on the other is an unpleasant surprise for the Zionists because they counted on the weak religious aspect. But they discovered that it is still strong, and maybe it is this aspect that is keeping the Palestinian cause alive and keeps some from normalization with the Zionist enemy. The free Arab and Muslim people along with the free people of the world still look at the Palestinians as oppressed people who

are deprived of basic rights, so it is a must to stand with them especially if it is related to the Zionists' desecration of sacred religious places.

The place which the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) traveled to and from where he ascended to Heaven will not be subject to negotiation or any concession by Muslims and Christians. Rather, it will unite them and make their resistance more solid regardless of their sacrifice that may reach the martyrdom of young men and women in defense of the holy places. People's dignity will not go by terrorism or brutal force, and their pride will not be put down by violence and force.

Today, the Palestinians have realized their strength is in their commitment to their Islamic and Christian holy places and will be the strong deterrence to the attempts of some to put an end to the Palestinian cause. The Zionists want to turn Jerusalem into their artificial state's capital, and demolish Al-Aqsa mosque in order to build the temple in its place, and that is an illusion that will not happen with Arabs, Muslims and Christians clinging to their rights. The religious dimension is the major barrier to stop Zionists' plans and put an end to their dreams in expanding and continuing their oppression. —Translated by Kuwait Times

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It's not always 'you're fired' when Trump forces staff out

N KOREA LEADER SAYS 'ALL US' WITHIN RANGE AFTER MISSILE TEST



HAMBURG: A woman places a candle at a makeshift memorial of flowers and candles arranged like a peace sign. — AFP

HAMBURG ATTACKER WAS 'KNOWN ISLAMIST'

26-YEAR-OLD PALESTINIAN SUFFERED FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

HAMBURG: The suspect who killed a man with a knife in Hamburg supermarket was a known Islamist, German officials said yesterday, adding that his motives remained unclear as he also suffered from psychological problems. Identified as a 26-year-old man of Palestinian origin, he had arrived in Germany in 2015, but was due to be deported as his application for asylum was rejected.

The assault risks reopening a bitter debate over refugees two months before general elections, putting pressure on Chancellor Angela Merkel over her decision to open Germany's borders in 2015, letting more than a million asylum seekers in. "He was known as an Islamist but not a jihadist," said the German port city's interior minister Andy Grote, noting "there are indications of radicalization". But the minister stressed that while there could have been an Islamist motive for the attack, the suspect also suffered from "psychological instability".

"It remains unclear which was the overriding element," he said. Police piecing together the assault on Friday said the man had entered the supermarket and took a kitchen knife measuring around 20 cm from the shelves. "He ripped off the

packaging and then suddenly brutally attacked the 50-year-old man who later died," said deputy police chief Kathrin Hennings. He later wounded two other men in the supermarket before fleeing, slashing others along the way, before he was overpowered by courageous passers-by. Witnesses told AFP the man had brandished the bloodied knife, shouting "Allahu Akbar" ("God is Greatest") as he fled the scene, but that bystanders gave chase and flung chairs to stop him.

'Almost exemplary'

If confirmed as an Islamist attack, it would be the first in Germany since Tunisian Anis Amri drove a truck into crowds at a Berlin Christmas market on December 19, killing 12 and injuring 48. Germany has been on high alert over the threat of a jihadist assault since Amri's rampage in Berlin, for which the Islamic State group claimed responsibility.

Like the Hamburg suspect, Amri was due to have been deported after his asylum request was turned down, but the process was held up by a lack of identity documents. News website Spiegel Online named the supermarket attacker as Ahmad A, while officials said he had not filed an

appeal against Germany's decision to reject his asylum application. In fact, he had helped to obtain documents to facilitate his departure from Germany.

On the day of the attack, he had even gone to the authorities to ask if the identify papers had arrived. Police chief Ralf Meyer said the suspect was "almost exemplary" in this aspect. Heavily armed police who searched a Hamburg asylum seekers' shelter where the man lived did not find any weapons.

'Intelligent but achieved nothing'

At the asylum shelter in a leafy suburb, the suspect's neighbor, who gave his name only as Mohamed, described him as "very intelligent". "He was always helping other asylum seekers with their paperwork," the 31-year-old Syrian refugee told AFP. But in recent weeks, he "had a crisis, he bought Islamist clothes and read the Koran very loudly in his room".

"And three weeks after Ramadan, he had another crisis. He started to drink heavily and smoke joints... he was sad that his mother was ill and that his asylum request was rejected," recounted Mohamed. "I find this whole story very

sad. He is 26 years old and... he has not achieved anything. And now we don't know what he did this," he added. On the high street in northeast Hamburg where the assault struck, residents laid flowers and candles outside the supermarket, which was closed.

Asylum debate reopens

Ahead of elections in September, the latest assault is expected to rekindle the debate over the record refugee influx. "It makes me especially angry that the perpetrator appears to be a person who claimed protection in Germany and then turned his hate against us," said mayor Olaf Scholz. Beatrix von Storch of the populist party Alternative for Germany (AfD) had stronger words, writing on Twitter that "before Mrs Merkel tweets again that this is 'beyond comprehension': this has something to do with Islam. Comprehend that once and for all!" AfD's support has fallen back in polling since the height of the migrant crisis, but the party remains on course to clear the threshold of five percent of the vote to enter parliament for the first time. — AFP

TIME TO MOVE ON FROM HEALTH CARE: GOP LEADER

WASHINGTON: The resounding Senate crash of the seven-year Republican drive to scrap the Obama health care law has led to finger-pointing but also has left the party with wounded leaders and no evident way ahead on an issue that won't go away. In an astonishing cliff-hanger, the GOP-run Senate voted 51-49 on Friday to reject Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's last ditch attempt to sustain their drive to dismantle President Barack Obama's health care overhaul with a starkly trimmed-down bill.

The vote, which concluded shortly before 2 am EDT, was a blistering defeat for President Donald Trump and McConnell, R-Ky. "They should have approved health care last night," Trump said Friday during a speech in Brentwood, New York. "But you can't have everything," he added, seemingly shrugging off one of his biggest legislative setbacks. Trump reiterated his threat to "let Obamacare implode," an outcome he could hasten by steps such as halting federal payments to help insurers reduce out-of-pocket costs for lower-earning consumers.

Senate Democrats were joined in opposition by three Republicans - Maine's Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Arizona's John McCain. The 80-year-old McCain, just diagnosed with brain cancer, had returned to the Capitol three days earlier to provide a vote that temporarily kept the measure alive, only to deliver the coup de grace Friday.

"Republicans in the Senate will NEVER win if they don't go to a 51 vote majority NOW. They look like fools and are just wasting time," Trump tweeted yesterday. He said the "Republican Senate must get rid of 60 vote NOW! It is killing the R Party." But on the crucial vote, a simple majority of 51 votes, including a tie-breaker by Vice President Mike Pence, was all that was needed. "Hello, he only needed 51 in the health care bill and couldn't do it," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-NY, helpfully reminded reporters.

Earlier in the week, Republican defections sank GOP efforts to scrap the 2010 law. One would have erased Obama's statute and replaced it with a more constricted government health care role, and the other would have annulled the law and given Congress two years to replace it. The measure that

fell Friday was narrower and included a repeal of Obama's unpopular tax penalties on people who don't buy policies and on employers who don't offer coverage to workers. McConnell designed it as a legislative vehicle the Senate could approve and begin talks with the House on a compromise, final bill.

But the week's setbacks highlighted how, despite years of trying, GOP leaders haven't resolved internal battles between conservatives seeking to erase Obama's law and moderates leery of tossing millions of voters off of coverage. "It's time to move on," McConnell said after the defeat. Friday morning, House leaders turned to singer Gordon Lightfoot to point fingers. They opened a House GOP meeting by playing "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald," a ballad about the 1975 sinking of a freighter in Lake Superior. Lawmakers said leaders assured them it was meant as a reference to the Senate's flop.

The House approved its health care measure in May, after its own tribulations. In a statement, Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., pointedly said "the House delivered a bill." He added, "I encourage the Senate to continue working toward a real solution that keeps our promise." Conservative Rep Mo Brooks, R-Ala, running for a Senate seat, faulted McConnell for not crafting a plan that could pass. He said if McConnell abandons the health care drive, "he should resign from leadership."

One moderate Republican said Trump shared responsibility. "One of the failures was the president never laid out a plan or his core principles and never sold them to the American people," said Rep Charlie Dent, R-Pa. "Outsourced the whole issue to Congress." In statements Friday, McCain said the Senate bill didn't lower costs or improve care and called the chamber's inability to craft wide-ranging legislation "inexcusable." He said Democrats and Republicans should write a bill together and "stop the political gamesmanship."

Lawmakers spoke of two possible but difficult routes forward. In one, balking GOP senators could be won over by new proposals from leaders or cave under pressure from angry constituents demanding they fulfill the party's pledge to tear down Obama's law. But both of those dynamics have been in play all year without producing results. — AP



WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump, accompanied by Vice President Mike Pence, Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price, and others, speaks about healthcare, July 24, 2017, in the Blue Room of the White House. — AP

XI JINPING HOLDS TALKS WITH PREZ MAHMOUD ABBAS OF PALESTINE

BEIJING: President Xi Jinping held talks at the Great Hall of the People with President Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine, who was in China for a state visit. Xi Jinping pointed out that the friendship between China and Palestine has a long history. China is one of the first countries to support the just cause of the Palestinian people, and recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization and the State of Palestine. The Chinese and Palestinian people are truly good friends, good partners and good brothers with mutual understanding, mutual trust and mutual support. In recent years, both countries have conducted close high-level exchanges, further consolidated political mutual trust, and achieved steady development from cooperation in various fields.

Xi Jinping stressed that China is willing to make joint efforts with Palestine to continuously and firmly support each other on politics, enhance coordination and cooperation and maintain high-level exchanges, so as to constantly advance bilateral cooperation in various fields. China appreciates Palestine for its constant adherence to the one-China policy, and will continue supporting the Palestinian people in the just cause of restoring the legitimate national rights. China is ready to, together with Palestine, co-build the "Belt and Road", and support qualified and capable enterprises of China in developing investment and cooperation in Palestine, in a bid to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results.

China stands ready to cooperate with Palestine in industrial park construction, talent raining and solar power station project, so as to help Palestine improve its self-development capacity. Both sides should continuously enhance exchanges and cooperation in various fields including culture, education and scientific research, and at inter-party, local, non-governmental, and youth levels, so as to continue to enhance the friendship between the two peoples. Xi Jinping put forward four propositions on promoting the settlement of the Palestinian issue:

The propositions

First, firmly advance the political settlement on the basis of the two-state solution. China firmly supports the two-state solution and the establishment of an independent State of Palestine, enjoying full sovereignty on the basis of the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital, and will as always play a constructive role in resolving the Palestinian issue.

Second, uphold a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security

concept. China calls for earnest implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2334 and an immediate stop of all settlement activities in the occupied territories. China hopes that immediate measures will be taken to prevent violence against civilians. It is imperative to restart negotiations as soon as possible, speed up the political settlement of the Palestinian issue and achieve common and everlasting security fundamentally.

Third, further coordinate efforts of the international community and strengthen the concerted efforts for peace. The international community should further coordinate with one another to put forward measures for peace with common participation at an early date. China is willing to participate in and support all efforts making for the political settlement of the Palestinian issue, and will hold a seminar for the peace lovers in Palestine and Israel within this year to contribute ideas and solutions to the Palestinian issue.

Fourth, comprehensively implement measures and promote peace with development. While promoting political negotiation, it is also important to highly value the issue of development to advance Palestine-Israel cooperation. China regards both Palestine and Israel as important partners along the "Belt and Road", and stands ready to carry out mutually beneficial cooperation in line with the idea of promoting peace with development to continue supporting Palestine in speeding up its development. China proposes to launch China-Palestine-Israel trilateral dialogue mechanism, and coordinate and push forward major projects aiding Palestine.

Mahmoud Abbas expressed that the traditional friendship between Palestine and China is like real gold, the color of which will never fade. Sincerely thanking the great China for always supporting its national just cause, Palestine will continue adhering to the one-China policy and supporting China to achieve national unity. Palestine congratulates and admires China's enormous achievements from economic and social development, and is ready to cement exchanges with China at high level and in various fields, actively participate in the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" and expand bilateral cooperation in areas such as economy, science, technology, infrastructure, industrial parks and tourism. Speaking highly of and supporting China's constructive proposals to press for a political resolution of the Palestinian issue, Palestine hopes to see China play a bigger role in the Middle East peace process.



MOSUL: Iraqi girls attend a class at a school in west Mosul. — AFP

MOSUL'S SCHOOLGIRLS AIM TO CATCH UP ON LOST YEARS

'UNDER IS, WE HAD 27 PUPILS. NOW THEY NUMBER 650'

MOSUL: Despite having fallen three years behind their peers elsewhere in Iraq, it's been mostly smiles all around for the girls at Mosul's Trablus school since it reopened its damaged gates after the jihadists fled. With a blast from her whistle to signal the end of recess, a supervisor in a black robe and white headscarf called the teenage girls back to class, during a recent visit to the school.

The girls chatted all the way back to the classrooms, each packed with an average of 90 pupils. In late May, the school became the first to reopen in western Mosul, as Iraqi forces pressed a sector-by-sector campaign that would finally this month expel the Islamic State group from the whole of the country's second city.

Several other schools have followed suit. Under IS, "we had 27 pupils. Now they number 650," said Nihad Jassem, an administrative employee at the school in the Mosul al-Jadida district. Its shrapnel-scarred metal gates have been covered with sheets and blankets, shattered windows let in the raging summer heat, the walls are cracked, water and electricity were only restored on Wednesday, the teachers have not been paid, and the school has a severe shortage of books. "But we're happy!" insisted Jassem.

After three years under IS rule, "we want to develop, we want to be civilized again. These girls have a fresh chance," she said. "Their future was about to be destroyed forever." At the next recess, the girls, aged between 13 and 15, go back to chatting and giggling in the corridors or outside in rare spaces in the shade. They all sport headscarves, at times with a brooch or bow attached, some wearing makeup and a small number in the niqab full-face veil. "We cater to everyone here," Jassem said. "We have a mission. I want them (the girls) to succeed," said Iman Yussef, a teacher of 26 years standing, 10 of them at Trablus school.

'Wound that hasn't healed'

Under IS rule, teachers were forced to show up or face arrest by its religious police. "Many just ran away but those with nowhere to go had to come," she said. Biology, history, geography and sciences were scrapped from the curriculum, leaving only studies on Islam, and the Arabic and English languages.

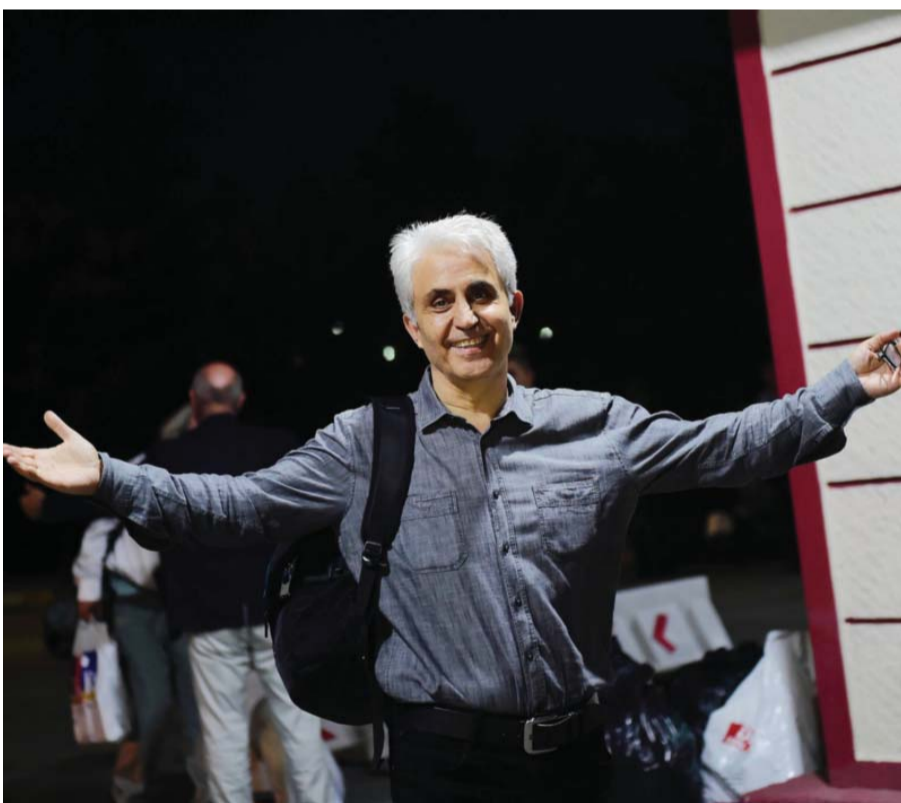
"We don't talk about those times any more. It's like a wound that hasn't healed, so we don't touch it," said Shada Shamma, who teaches Arabic at the school. "In any case, we are not totally rid of IS. Some of the girls may have family members in IS." Behind the stream of smiles

around the school, fear and sorrow sometimes come to the surface.

"We're all happy but our happiness is not complete because we've all lost someone. A friend of mine was killed together with her family a few days ago in the Old City," the last sector of Mosul recaptured earlier this month, said 15-year-old Seema Faris. A schoolmate, Nur Kheiri, chipped in: "The other day someone apparently wanted to carry out a suicide attack on a school but was stopped in time. The government should send in soldiers to protect us."

On the academic front, the priority for pupils aiming to become professionals one day is to catch up with their peers, as the Iraqi government has said it does not recognize schooling under IS, which seized control of Mosul in 2014. In the race to catch up, schools in western Mosul, which was retaken months after the eastern sector, are operating in the summer-time, with holidays cancelled this year.

"We only have 40 days left before the exams and we've only covered half of the book," complained Shams Maher. "It's very crowded and the heat is unbearable, but we don't care. What we want is books," said her friend Kheiri, with a cheeky smile on her face. "My favorite subject is chemistry because that's the only book available." — AFP



ISTANBUL: Turkish cartoonist Musa Kart of the Cumhuriyet newspaper gestures after being freed from Silivri prison on July 28, 2017 following a Turkish court order to free the seven defendants in the trial of the Cumhuriyet newspaper staff. — AFP

TURKEY NEWSPAPER STAFF WALKS FREE AFTER 9 MONTHS IN PRISON

ISTANBUL: Seven staff from the Turkish opposition newspaper Cumhuriyet walked free yesterday after nine months in jail, expressing hope that four colleagues still behind bars would be released soon. An Istanbul court had Friday ordered that the seven be released under judicial control, meaning they remain charged and will have to report to the authorities.

The staff from the newspaper, one of the few voices in the media in Turkey to oppose Erdogan, had been on trial for aiding terror groups, in accusations denounced as absurd by supporters. But the trial, which started earlier this week, is a test for press freedom under the rule of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the most prominent journalists from the newspaper remain in jail. The seven freed, including respected cartoonist Musa Kart, left Silivri jail on the outskirts of Istanbul to cheers and embraces from supporters in the early hours of yesterday. "We were taken away from the people we love, our relatives, our work," said Kart after his release.

'No hatred'

But he added: "Believe me, during this period in jail we have felt no hatred, no rancor, we could not live with such thoughts." The others released include books supplement editor Turhan Gunay as well as the paper's legal executives. They had been held for 271 days.

The four remaining in custody are the commentator Kadri Gursel, investigative journalist Ahmet Sik, the paper's editor-in-

chief Murat Sabuncu and chief executive Akin Atalay. Kart said: "I thought I was going to be very happy to find out that I was going to be released but I can't say that today. Unfortunately, four of our friends are still behind bars."

"The image of journalists in jail is not flattering for our country and I hope our four friends will come out as soon as possible." The Cartoonists Rights Network International (CRNI), which has pushed for Kart's release, said the news was "better than could have been expected" but added there was "little comfort" for the families of those returning to jail.

"Deficient justice," headlined Cumhuriyet, above the pictures of the four staff still in prison. "Our friends and their lawyers proved that the accusations are baseless and illegal... The world saw it, the court did not," it added. The staff are charged with supporting in their coverage three entities that Turkey considers terror groups—the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the ultra-left Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C), and the movement of Fethullah Gulen, the US-based preacher who Ankara accuses of ordering last year's coup attempt.

The next hearing is set for September 11. If convicted, they face varying terms of up to 43 years in jail. Prosecutors meanwhile said they would file new accusations against Sik over an incendiary defense statement he made on Wednesday where he slammed Turkey's ruling party over its past cooperation with the Gulen movement. — AFP

SQUEEZED IN RAQA, JIHADISTS RAMP UP COUNTER-ATTACKS

RAQA: As Islamic State group fighters steadily lose chunks of their Syrian bastion Raqa to a US-backed force, the jihadists are ramping up the ferocity of their counter-attacks. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) first broke into Raqa in early June and have advanced in a pincer-like motion towards the heart of the city. The alliance's Arab and Kurdish fighters now hold half of Raqa, but as they tighten the noose around IS, the jihadist group appears to be lashing out.

"The closer we get to the city centre, the harder IS defends itself, because it's completely besieged," said Davram Dersem, an SDF field commander. To defend Raqa, IS has deployed a barrage of car bombs, suicide bombers, weaponized drones, snipers, and mines scattered across the city. "They're cornered like a wounded animal. Raqa is their main stronghold—they're not going to abandon it easily," Dersem added.

The Kurdish commander spoke to AFP in the western Raqa neighborhood of Al-Daraiya. Mortar shells crashed into surrounding neighborhoods, which were also hit by the occasional air strike. After IS captured Raqa in 2014, the group transformed the city into a symbol of its most macabre practices, including public beheadings. Raqa was also thought to have been used as a hub for planning attacks overseas. Now, much of it has been destroyed by the fierce fighting and US-led air strikes. Roofs have collapsed and streets are littered with rubble, metal, and glass.

'Life-or-death battle'

In the adjacent district of Massaken Al-Dubbat, 24-year-old SDF fighter Talal Sharif pointed at a devastated row of two-storey homes ahead. "All of this destruction, it's because of their car bombs. There have been at least four in each of these streets," Sharif told AFP. "Little by little, they're being suffocated in Raqa. This is why they're resisting."

Sharif spoke confidently, but his face was marked by exhaustion after weeks of street-by-street battles. When his unit recently stormed an IS-held neighbourhood, they stumbled on four enemy fighters sleeping inside a home. "During the raid, one of the jihadists blew himself up, another two were killed, and one was taken prisoner," Sharif recalled.

But if they don't have access to belts of explosives or car bombs, IS fighters resort to something much simpler—grenades. "In close combat, they just toss grenades. For them, it's a life-or-death battle," Devrem said. Up to 50,000 civilians remain trapped in Raqa in increasingly dire circumstances, with little access to food, water, or life-saving medication, according to the United Nations.

The intensifying fight for Raqa has also forced tens of thousands of its residents to flee, dodging IS sniper fire, mines, and even US-led coalition air strikes. On Friday, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said at least 21 civilians—including eight children from a single family—had been killed in "intensifying air strikes by the coalition" over the previous 24 hours.

The Britain-based monitor says more than 300 civilians including dozens of children have died since the SDF first broke into Raqa. Another 467 IS jihadists and 219 SDF have also been killed in the fighting. SDF advisor Nasser Hajj Mansour said the battle for Raqa is far from over. "It could still be long. In the coming days, the battles will become more ferocious," Mansour said. "IS jihadists will either try to hide amongst the civilians or fight until the end." — AFP



RAQA: Smoke billows out from Raqa following a coalition air strike. — AFP

ABBAS GETS CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH AFTER CHECKUP

RAMALLAH, West Bank: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, 82, underwent a checkup at a West Bank hospital yesterday and his doctors said the results were good. Abbas underwent routine checks, including blood tests and X-rays at the private Al Istishari Hospital near the West Bank town of Ramallah, and left after 90 minutes, said the hospital director, Dr Fathi Abu Mughli. "The results are good," Abu Mughli told The Associated Press, but did not elaborate.

Abbas was flanked by aides and smiling when he left the hospital. Abbas has suffered heart problems in the past, but his doctors have said he is fine. A year ago, Abbas underwent an emergency heart procedure after suffering exhaustion and chest pains. He went through a number of tests, including a cardiac catheterization, a procedure that can detect and treat heart problems, but was given a clean bill of health.

Last month, Abbas dispelled rumors he had suffered a stroke. Any health scare for Abbas heightens concerns over the uncertain leadership situation in the Palestinian territories - which are divided between two rival governments and where there is no succession plan for the aging leader. Abbas, who has no plans to step down, has ignored calls to appoint a successor, setting the stage for a bitter power struggle if he is incapacitated.

Abbas was elected president in 2005 for what was supposed to be a four-year term. But in 2007 the rival Hamas militant group forcefully seized control of the Gaza Strip after their victory in parliamentary elections a year earlier. Abbas remained in power, left in charge of autonomous enclaves in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Abbas, who is a heavy smoker and overweight, was treated years ago with prostate cancer and has had a stent inserted to treat artery blockage. — AP

TRUMP APPEARS TO ADVOCATE FOR ROUGH POLICE TREATMENT

BRENTWOOD: Talking tough on illegal immigration and violent crime, President Donald Trump appeared Friday to advocate rougher treatment of people in police custody, speaking dismissively of the police practice of shielding the heads of handcuffed suspects as they are being placed in patrol cars.

"Don't be too nice," Trump told law enforcement officers in Suffolk County, New York, during a visit to highlight his administration's efforts to crack down on the street gang known as MS-13. The violent international group has terrorized communities on Long Island and in other parts of the country. The president urged Congress to find money to pay for 10,000 Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers "so that we can eliminate MS-13." Trump said his administration is removing these gang members from the United States but said, "We'd like to get them out a lot faster and when you see ... these thugs being thrown into the back of the paddy wagon, you just

see them thrown in, rough, I said, 'Please don't be too nice.'" Trump then spoke dismissively of the practice by which arresting officers shield the heads of handcuffed suspects as they are placed in police cars.

"I said, 'You could take the hand away, OK,'" he said, drawing applause from many in the audience, which included federal and law enforcement personnel from the New York-New Jersey area. The Suffolk County Police Department said in a statement after Trump's speech that it has strict rules and procedures about how prisoners should be handled. "Violations of those rules and procedures are treated extremely seriously. As a department, we do not and will not tolerate roughing up of prisoners."

Immigrant communities

The former chief of the Suffolk County Police Department, James Burke, was sentenced to nearly four years in prison last November for beating a

handcuffed man in an interrogation room. Trump talks regularly about cracking down on MS-13, or Mara Salvatrucha. The gang is believed to have originated in immigrant communities in Los Angeles in the 1980s and then entrenched itself in Central America when its leaders were deported. It is known for violent tactics that include torturing victims and hacking them with machetes. Authorities estimate the group has tens of thousands of members across Central America and in many US states.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions has instructed the Justice Department's law enforcement agencies and federal prosecutors to prioritize the prosecution of MS-13 members, as directed by an executive order Trump signed in February. Since the beginning of 2017, the Department of Homeland Security's investigative unit has arrested 3,311 gang members nationwide during targeted operations, said Tom Homan, acting director of US Immigration and

Customs Enforcement. The agency could not provide similar numbers for 2016.

Trump's visit to his home state of New York came as Sessions was in El Salvador to increase international cooperation against the gang. But the president did not mention Sessions in his remarks - his latest slight against the man he's been publicly fuming at for recusing himself from all matters related to Russian election meddling. Trump's comments about the treatment of people in police custody resurrected memories of Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old Baltimore man who was shackled but alive when he was put into a Baltimore police van in April 2015. Gray left the vehicle with severe neck injuries, and his subsequent death spawned rioting. Six officers were charged initially, but prosecutors in July 2016 dropped all remaining charges after acquittals and a hung jury. Gray's family agreed in September 2015 to a \$6.4 million settlement with Baltimore.—AP

IT IS NOT ALWAYS 'YOU'RE FIRED' WHEN TRUMP FORCES STAFF OUT

OFTEN MAKES OTHER PEOPLE DO THE DIRTY WORK

WASHINGTON: Real estate developer Donald Trump shot to national fame as a reality television star on "The Apprentice" with the snappy tagline: "You're fired!" Now president, Trump often makes other people in the White House do the dirty work - or shames those he wants out into quitting themselves. Ways in which Trump has pulled the plug on aides:

REINCE PRIEBUS

Trump announced on Friday he was replacing his chief of staff after months of speculation about Priebus's fate and a series of belittling and

tor was in California for a previously scheduled appearance and learned of his dismissal from TV.

COREY LEWANDOWSKI

After months of infighting and negative headlines during the campaign, Trump finally decided in June 2016 to oust his campaign manager. Lewandowski had guided the campaign with the motto, "Let Trump be Trump." Trump had stuck with Lewandowski even after he was accused of roughing up a female reporter. He agreed to pull the plug only after an intervention from his adult

Bannon the chore of telling Christie he was out.

PAUL MANAFORT

Trump chose to fire his campaign chairman amid a steady stream of negative headlines about Manafort's foreign consulting work. He technically resigned from the position last August after Trump made clear his time was done. Trump's middle son, Eric Trump, said in an interview at the time that his father was concerned that questions about Manafort's past were taking attention away from the billionaire's presidential bid.

MICHAEL FLYNN

Trump's campaign adviser-turned-national security adviser resigned in February, following reports that he had misled Pence and other officials about his contacts with Russia. In his resignation letter, Flynn said he gave the vice president and others "incomplete information" about his calls with Russia's ambassador to the US. But Flynn's resignation wasn't voluntary. Trump later said that he'd fired Flynn, and blamed leaks from intelligence agencies and biased reporting from the "fake media" for forcing his hand.

SAM NUNBERG

The man behind many of Trump's earliest and most popular campaign ideas was pushed out of Trump's campaign in the summer of 2015 following a report that he'd posted racially charged material on his Facebook page. This time, Trump delivered the news to Nunberg directly over the phone. The campaign also released a statement that falsely minimized Nunberg's role in the campaign, describing him as a "short-term consultant" and "low-level" staffer.

SEAN SPICER

The White House press secretary announced his resignation earlier this month after six months on the job. He quit after Trump tapped New York financier Anthony Scaramucci to serve as White House communications director. Spicer, who had long been seeking the more strategic, behind-the-scenes role, quit with little warning, telling The Associated Press that he felt it would be best to give Scaramucci a chance to start the job with a "clean slate." Spicer was not fired and said in an interview with Fox News that the president wanted him to stay on. But he had been subjected to a string of public slights by his boss, including being excluded from a Trump meeting with the pope during a trip to the Vatican and a series of public statements in which Trump said that Spicer had been beaten up by the press.—AP

CHRIS CHRISTIE

New Jersey's governor spent months leading the president-elect's transition team, pulling together policy papers and coming up with lists of potential Cabinet members. But Trump decided he no longer required Christie's services in the days after his election victory and replaced his longtime personal friend with Mike Pence, the vice president-elect. This time, according to The New York Times, Trump gave chief strategist Steve



WASHINGTON: In this July 21, 2017, file photo, former White House press secretary Sean Spicer walks down the steps of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building towards the White House.—AP

emasculating comments from Trump and other White House aides. Priebus told CNN that he'd resigned on Thursday after it became clear to him the president "wanted to go a different direction." The former Republican Party chairman added: "He intuitively determined that it was time to do something differently. And I think he's right."

JAMES COMEY

When the president decided to fire the FBI director in May, he deployed one of his most trusted and longest-serving aides to carry out the task: bodyguard-turned-security director-turned-director of Oval Office operations Keith Schiller. Schiller was sent to the Justice Department to deliver a letter notifying Comey of his firing. But the direc-

children and his son-in-law, Jared Kushner. Lewandowski was unceremoniously escorted out of Trump Tower in Manhattan by security after being notified of his dismissal, but continued to speak with Trump regularly.



WASHINGTON: US Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) heads for the Senate Floor for a vote at the US Capitol.—AFP

REPUBLICAN WOMEN KEEP TRUMP IN CHECK

WASHINGTON: The stunning collapse of President Donald Trump's health reforms was due in large part to the defiance of two Republican women who resisted relentless White House pressure to toe the party line. While Senator John McCain's revolt grabbed the headlines, the votes of the lesser-known Susan Collins and Lisa Murkowski proved decisive in sinking Trump's goal of repealing Obamacare.

During his presidential run against Hillary Clinton, Trump faced flak over his behavior and comments towards women. And after Friday's health debacle, critics again questioned Trump's attempts to intimidate Collins and Murkowski, either via his top lieutenants or the bully pulpit of Twitter. While several male Republican colleagues who voiced concerns about the direction of the repeal effort ultimately caved to Trump's demands, it was Collins and Murkowski who stood firm. A wavering McCain's dramatic last-minute kibosh of the latest effort to repeal Obamacare would not have been possible without the persistence of the female senators from Maine and Alaska.

Scare tactics

Each has faced aggressive arm-twisting and callouts by Trump, scare tactics from his cabinet, even threats of violence from a Republican congressman, Blake Farenthold, who said he would challenge "some female senators" to a duel if they were men rather than women, because they were blocking health care reform. The mounting pressure against Collins and Murkowski served as a reminder of some of Trump's controversies from his presidential campaign.

He smeared a female reporter who moderated his first debate, attacked Clinton as an "enabler" for her husband's marital infidelities, used crude banter at campaign events, and of course there was the "Access Hollywood" tape, where he was heard using graphic language to boast of assaulting women. Now in power, he can't shake the fact that women have blocked his singular legislative initiative.

Among the Senate's 52 Republicans, five are women. Collins and Murkowski have been the most consistent opponents to the

Obamacare repeal plans. They both also voted against his nominee for education secretary, arguing she was not qualified for the post. When Trump made nasty and denigrating remarks about a female MSNBC news host in June, Murkowski, age 60, and Collins, 64, led the condemnation. "Stop it!" Murkowski blasted to him on Twitter. Collins's reprimand was similar. On health care, the pair argued that the various plans offered threatened to adversely impact millions of American families on Medicaid. They also cast votes against earlier Senate plans that would have left tens of millions more Americans uninsured.

'Standing strong'

Collins's opposition goes back to 2015, when she was the only current Republican senator who voted against a similar partial repeal bill. She and Murkowski were the only Republicans to oppose a motion to proceed to the health care bill debate that collapsed this week, prompting an angry tweet from Trump.

Murkowski "really let the Republicans, and our country, down yesterday. Too bad!" he said in an ominous tweet. The intimidation ratcheted up dramatically when Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke called Murkowski, reportedly to warn her that the administration was prepared to withdraw its support for expanded oil drilling in Alaska and some of her other priorities. He threatened the wrong lawmaker.

Murkowski chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and she immediately delayed several administration nominations up for the panel's consideration. She is no political pushover either. During Murkowski's 2010 re-election bid, she lost her Republican primary to a Tea Party-backed challenger. Undeterred, she mounted a write-in campaign and retained her seat. Murkowski's and Collins's passionate positions against their own party earned respect from across the aisle. "Thanks for standing strong throughout," tweeted Democratic Senator Michael Bennet. Another Senate Democrat, Mazie Hirono, told CNN that she recently spoke with Murkowski, who offered advice about dealing with bullies: "fight back."—AFP

MADURO PRESSES ON WITH VOTE DESPITE PROTESTS, CRITICISM

CARACAS: Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro was pushing forward yesterday with a controversial weekend vote, despite growing domestic political opposition, international condemnation and deadly street protests. On Friday, his forces faced small groups of protesters defying a ban he had imposed on demonstrations against the election he has called Sunday to choose a new body to rewrite the constitution.

Blockades went up across a few roads in Caracas and in a border town with Colombia, San Cristobal as well as in Maracaibo and Guayana, but the scale was far less than the mass protests seen earlier this week before the ban took effect. "It's normal that there's fear, but people are still coming out into the streets despite it all," a lawmaker in the opposition-controlled National Assembly, Freddy Guevara, said at one of the Caracas protests.

Maduro on Thursday warned that anyone taking part in protests against his "Constituent Assembly" risked up to 10 years in prison. The threat appeared to dampen public anti-government demonstrations of the sort that, in the past four months, have led to 113 deaths-eight of them during a two-day general strike that ended Thursday. The most recent reported fatality occurred Friday when an 18-year-old protester was killed in San Cristobal. Human rights organizers said another activist, a 23-year-old violinist famous for playing at anti-government protests, had been arrested in Caracas. An opposition mayor, Alfredo Ramos, was also arrested for not lifting barricades under a court order. Meanwhile, international censure of Maduro remained fierce. US Vice President Mike Pence spoke by telephone to a detained prominent Venezuelan opposition leader, Leopoldo Lopez, who early this month was moved from prison to house arrest.

Maduro playing his 'card'

In implicit support for the opposition, Pence praised Lopez's "courage." He also called for the "unconditional release of all political prisoners in Venezuela, free and fair elections, restoration of the National Assembly, and respect for human rights in Venezuela," a statement from his office said. The United States this week imposed sanc-



CARACAS: An anti-government activist is arrested during clashes.—AFP

tions on 13 current and former Venezuelan officials, including police and army chiefs, over Maduro's plan. Colombia's President, Juan Manuel Santos, said his country would not recognize the results of Sunday's election in Venezuela, calling the basis of the Constituent Assembly "spurious." Yet Maduro has remained determined to see through his plan, with backing from a loyal military. "We have a card to play: a card that will win this game. And that card is the National Constituent Assembly," he said.

He urged the opposition to stop its "insurrection" and hold talks instead. The leftist president has repeatedly accused the US of fomenting the unrest against him. The new assembly would comprise 545 citizens chosen from across the country, and from societal sectors over which Maduro's government holds influence.

The opposition, which brands the election of

the body a ploy by an unpopular "dictator" to cling to power, has called for a boycott of the vote. Some 70 percent of Venezuelans oppose plans for the constituent assembly, and 80 percent reject Maduro's leadership, according to the polling firm Datanalisis.

'Tense' situation

An electoral expert, Eugenio Martinez, noted that most of Venezuela's 20 million voters would be able to vote twice, raising questions about the validity of final turnout and balloting figures, especially with no foreign election observers present. Fears of open civil conflict have prompted thousands of Venezuelans to join an exodus into Colombia. The neighboring country said it would give 150,000 Venezuelans who had overstayed permission to remain another three months before they had to leave.—AFP

KIDNAPPED OIL WORKERS IN BOKO HARAM VIDEO

LAGOS: Boko Haram Islamists have published a video showing three kidnapped members of an oil exploration team, after an ambush in northeast Nigeria earlier this week that killed at least 50. In the four-minute video, the trio identify themselves as being from the University of Maiduguri and call on the government to meet the jihadists' demands in exchange for their safe return.

The men were part of a Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) team on a mission to find commercial quantities of oil in the Lake Chad basin when they came under attack on Tuesday. "I want to call on the acting president professor Yemi Osinbajo to come to our rescue to meet the demand," one of the men says in the video, which he said was shot on Friday. He attributed the attack to the Islamic State-supported Boko Haram faction headed by Abu Mus'ab Al-Barnawi, which has promised to hit military and government targets.

"They have promised us that if their demands are met they will release us immediately to go back to the work we were caught doing," the man added. There was no indication of where the

video was shot but the convoy came under attack near Magumeri, some 50 kilometres (31 miles) by road northwest of Maiduguri.

Most of the victims were soldiers and civilian militia members providing security. Five members of staff from the university-two lecturers, two technologists and a driver-were also killed, vice-chancellor Ibrahim Njodi said on Friday. University of Maiduguri spokesman Danjuma Gambo confirmed the identities of the three kidnapped men in the video. "They are our staff but one more is yet to be accounted for," he told AFP.

No fear

Experts said the attack-Boko Haram's bloodiest this year-underscored the persistent threat posed by the jihadists, despite government claims the group is a spent force. "It's a confirmation of the boldness and reassurance that Boko Haram has managed to gain over the last six weeks," Yan St-Pierre, from the Modern Security Consulting Group in Berlin, told AFP. "They have been attacking more and more military outposts and more military convoys. For them to go after NNPC personnel just shows they don't fear any military reprisal.—AFP

TAIWAN BRACES FOR ITS FIRST TYPHOON OF 2017

TAIPEI: Taiwan came to a standstill yesterday with power knocked out for part of the island as it braced for its first typhoon of the year. Typhoon Nesat - which strengthened into a moderate storm Friday - already brought massive waves of over 15 meters to the east coast, where it is due to make landfall

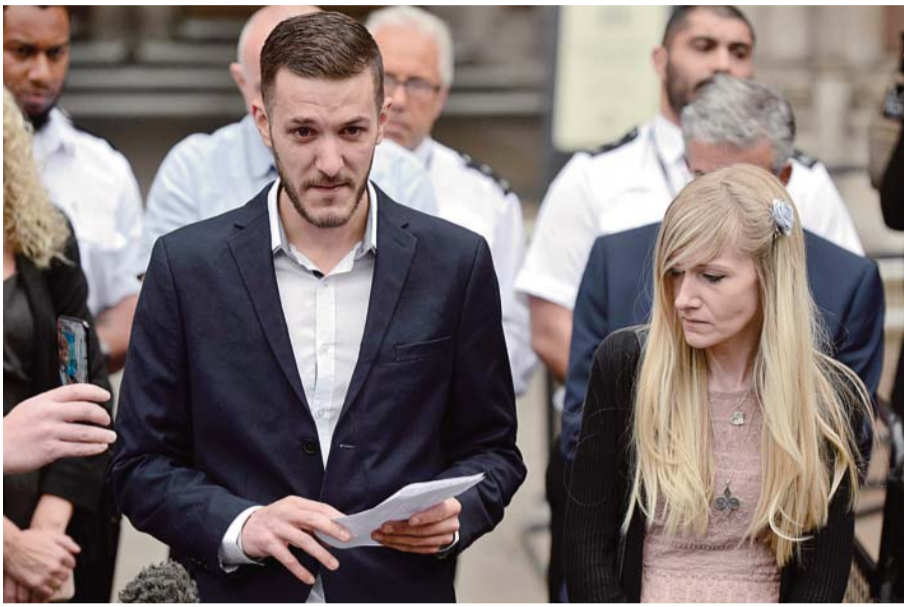
early today. Schools and offices were closed across the island, while most train services are suspended. As many as 35,364 households had electricity outages.

As of 1015 GMT, Nesat was 70 kilometers southeast of Yilan on Taiwan's east coast, packing gust of up to 180

kilometers an hour. Taiwan's weather bureau warned of torrential rain in the eastern and southern counties, with the tropical storm expected to dump as much as 900 millimeters of water in some areas. The southernmost county of Pingtung was flooded in many areas, leaving dozens of residents stranded.

More than 36,000 soldiers are on standby to help with disaster relief. Air travel was also disrupted, with 108 flights cancelled at the island's main Taoyuan International Airport. Although Nesat is Taiwan's first typhoon this year, the island was pounded by heavy rains last month. At

least one person died in June floods in the north of the country, after 600 millimeters of rain fell in under 11 hours in some areas. Taiwan's government has stepped up preventive measures against tropical storms since typhoon Morakot left more than 400 people dead in its wake in 2009. —AFP



LONDON: This file photo taken on July 24, 2017 shows Chris Gard (L) the father of terminally-ill 11-month-old Charlie Gard reads out a statement while Charlie's mother Connie Yates (R) looks on at the Royal Courts of Justice. —AFP

TERMINALLY-ILL BRITISH BABY CHARLIE GARD DIES

LONDON: Charlie Gard, the terminally-ill British baby whose plight drew sympathy from Pope Francis and US President Donald Trump and sparked a debate about medical ethics, died on Friday, his mother said. His parents, Connie Yates and Chris Gard, had fought a lengthy legal battle to allow him to be taken to the United States for treatment for a rare genetic condition. But despite the international attention brought by his case, he died exactly one week short of his first birthday.

"Our beautiful little boy has gone. We are so proud of you, Charlie," his mother Yates said in a statement. A court had ordered that the 11-month-old should be moved from hospital to a hospice, where his life support was withdrawn. Supporters around the world donated £1.35 million (\$1.75 million, 1.5 million euros) via an online fundraising site to support his parents and their efforts to keep their son alive, while 350,000 signed a petition demanding that he be allowed to receive experimental treatment in the US.

Following news of the boy's death, Pope Francis, who supported the campaign, tweeted: "I entrust little Charlie to the Father and pray for his parents and all those who loved him." British Prime Minister Theresa May said she was "deeply saddened" by the death while US Vice President Mike Pence wrote he was: "Saddened to hear of the passing of Charlie Gard."

Mitochondrial disease

Gard was born on August 4 last year with a rare form of mitochondrial disease that causes progressive muscle weakness, including in key organs such as the heart. He was admitted to hospital at eight weeks old and his condition progressively deteriorated. Gard's parents fought a five-month legal battle for him to be taken to the United States for experimental treatment.

They lost a series of appeals in British courts and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. Their campaign led to offers of help from the United States and the Vatican, leading the hospital to ask the courts for a final assessment of any new

evidence. On July 2, Pope Francis called for the couple to be allowed to "care for their child until the end", saying he had followed the case with "affection and sadness".

The following day, US President Donald Trump said in a tweet: "If we can help little Charlie Gard, as per our friends in the UK and the pope, we would be delighted to do so." But the boy's parents gave up their battle last week, saying "time has run out", after they were shown scans indicating that his condition had deteriorated too far. "We are so sorry that we could not save you," they said in an emotional statement at the High Court in London.

'Agony'

Judge Nicholas Francis summed up the emotion involved in the case. "It is impossible for any of us to comprehend or even begin to imagine the agony to which Charlie's parents have been subjected in recent weeks and months as they have had to come to terms with the decision that they have now made," he said in a judgment.

The parents then asked for Gard to be taken to their home for his final days but were overruled by the hospital which said the ventilator keeping him alive was too bulky to fit through their front door. They finally agreed for him to be placed in a hospice. Photographs of the baby dominated the front-pages of Britain's Saturday newspapers, which paid tribute to a "beautiful little boy".

The Daily Mail ran with the headline "Rest in Peace Charlie", with the centre-right publication saying the 11-month-old baby had "captured hearts around the world". It said the case has "raised so many questions about our age". The case triggered debate about whether parents or the state should have a final say on a child's wellbeing and whether a child's fate should be settled in a courtroom. It provoked strong reactions, with an army of supporters shouting "shame on GOSH" following this week's court hearing. The hospital issued a statement Friday, saying: "Everyone at Great Ormond Street Hospital sends their heartfelt condolences to Charlie's parents and loved ones at this very sad time." —AFP

PACQUIAO VISITS TROOPS IN PHILIPPINE WARZONE

MANILA: Boxing hero Manny Pacquiao lifted the spirits of Philippine troops in a visit yesterday to a southern city where soldiers have been battling pro-Islamic State militants for over two months. The boxer-turned-senator, dressed in a military camouflage uniform, joked that he would join the fight in the city of Marawi where militants have been on a rampage, holding hostages and burning buildings while flying the black IS flag.

"You are the real heroes, not Manny Pacquiao. I am just a boxer but you give your lives for our country," he told soldiers in a camp in Marawi City. "Hopefully, I can come back here and greet you again when the fighting is done and if it isn't finished when I come back, then I will be the one who will go over there," said Pacquiao, referring to a battleground outside the camp where gunshots and explosions could be heard.

The fighting in the Mindanao region has claimed 630 lives, including 471 militants, 45 civilians and 114 government troops, the military has said. Pacquiao, who was made a lieutenant colonel in the military reserves in recognition of his boxing achievements, remains a hugely popular figure in the Philippines. He rose from poverty to become a millionaire world boxing champion in an unprecedented eight weight divisions, using his celebrity status as a springboard to get elected to the powerful Philippine senate. But Pacquiao's star has dimmed in recent years, with the 38-year-old fighter losing his world welterweight title to Australian Jeff Horn in a major upset last month. —AFP



MINDANAO: This handout from the Western Mindanao Command (WESMINCOM) taken and released yesterday shows Filipino boxer Manny Pacquiao (C) talking to members of the media during a visit to a military camp in Marawi on the southern island of Mindanao. —AFP

N KOREA LEADER SAYS 'ALL OF US' WITHIN RANGE AFTER MISSILE TEST

BEIJING AND MOSCOW BARE 'UNIQUE RESPONSIBILITY': TILLERSON

SEOUL: Kim Jong-Un boasted of North Korea's ability to strike any target in the US after a second ICBM test that weapons experts said yesterday could even bring New York into range—in a potent challenge to President Donald Trump. China condemned the test but US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Beijing and Moscow bore "unique responsibility" for the growing threat posed by the reclusive North.

Under Kim's leadership North Korea has accelerated its drive towards a credible nuclear strike capability, in defiance of international condemnation and multiple sets of UN sanctions. Kim said the test "is meant to send a grave warning to the US" and demonstrated the North's ability to launch "at any place and time," the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

The "leader said proudly the test also confirmed all the US mainland is within our striking range," it said. Trump denounced the launch as "reckless and dangerous" and rejected Pyongyang's claims that such tests helped ensure its security. "The United States will take all necessary steps to ensure the security of the American homeland and protect our allies in the region."

Weapons experts said the altitude and flight time of Friday's missile suggested it was significantly more powerful than the July 4 test, with a theoretical range of around 10,000 kilometres meaning it might be able to reach east coast US cities like New York, depending on the payload size. "North Korea seems to have made a logical step forward, as it tries to perfect the technologies to build and field an operationally-viable ICBM that can threaten the mainland United States," said Michael Elleman, missile defense specialist at the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

'Growing threat'

Kim Dong-Yub, a defence analyst at the Institute for Far Eastern Studies at Kyungnam University, said the North may have succeeded in miniaturising warheads down to 750 kilograms. "If the missile carries a 750 kg payload, its range could be



PYONGYANG: A man looks at a display showing images of missile launches and military exercises in a public square. —AFP

10,000 kilometres. Taking into account the Earth's rotation, it means it could reach not only the western cities but New York and Washington as well," he told AFP. Tillerson said Pyongyang's main ally Beijing, together with Moscow, bore responsibility for the growing threat from Pyongyang. "As the principal economic enablers of North Korea's nuclear weapon and ballistic missile development program, China and Russia bear unique and special responsibility for this growing threat to regional and global stability," he said. Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said he held telephone talks with Tillerson and agreed on the need to put "the heaviest possible pressure" on North Korea.

"We confirmed that we will closely cooperate in adopting a fresh UNSC (UN Security Council) resolution, including severe measures, and working on China and Russia," Kishida told reporters. In a standard response to the test, Beijing urged restraint by all sides, after the US and South Korea conducted a live-fire exercise using surface-to-surface missiles.

The heads of the US and South Korea militaries also discussed "military response options" after North Korea's launch, the Pentagon said. South Korea said the test had prompted it to speed up deployment of a US missile defense system, despite consistent protests from China that the program would destabilize the region.

"The THAAD (missile defense) system deployment cannot solve South Korea's security concerns, nor can it solve the problems facing the Korean peninsula," China's ministry of foreign affairs said in a statement yesterday. North Korea's unrelenting pursuit of its missile and nuclear programs poses a thorny policy challenge for Trump, who is at loggerheads with Beijing over how to handle Kim's regime. Trump has repeatedly urged China to rein in its recalcitrant neighbor, but Beijing insists dialogue is the only practical way forward.

'Time for Trump to focus'

Joel Wit, a senior fellow at the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University and an expert on the North's nuclear weapons program,

said Friday's launch confirmed time was running out for Washington to find a way out of a pressing security crisis. "Another North Korean test of what appears to be a missile that can reach the United States further emphasizes the need for the Trump administration to focus like a laser on this increasingly dangerous situation," Wit said on the institute's 38 North website.

The North's July 4 test triggered global alarm, with experts saying the missile had a theoretical range to reach Alaska. There remain doubts whether the North can miniaturize a nuclear weapon to fit a missile nose cone, or if it has mastered the technology needed for the projectile to survive re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere. But since Kim came to power there has been a series of technical advances, including three nuclear tests and a string of missile launches. In all, six sets of UN sanctions have been imposed on North Korea since it first tested an atomic device in 2006, but two resolutions adopted last year significantly toughened the sanctions regime. —AFP

EU TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST POLAND OVER COURT REFORM

BRUSSELS: The European Union said yesterday it has launched legal action against Poland's right-wing government over a new law it fears will undermine the independence of the country's common courts. The action taken by the European Commission, the EU executive, could lead to Poland being hauled before the 28-nation bloc's highest court, the European Court of Justice, and eventually given a fine. The commission is now coming down hard on Warsaw to prevent what it says is not just an increasing threat to Poland's democratic standards but those across the 28-nation bloc.

"The European Commission launched an infringement procedure against Poland by sending a letter of formal notice, following the publication in the Polish Official Journal of the Law on the Ordinary Courts Organisation on Friday 28 July," the European Commission said in a statement. It said Poland's governing Law and Justice Party (PiS) had one month to respond to Commission concerns, including that "the independence of Polish courts will be undermined" by increased powers for the justice minister.

Other concerns, it said, include "discrimination on the basis of gender due to the introduction of a different retirement age" for female and male judges. The legal action had been expected after Polish President Andrzej Duda signed into law a measure earlier in the week that allows the justice minister to unilaterally replace the chief justices of the common courts.

However, Duda surprised many in the government when he vetoed a bill that would have reinforced political control over the Supreme Court and another allowing parliament to choose members of a body designed to protect the independence of the courts. The ruling Law and Justice party nonetheless vowed to push ahead with all the reforms despite the vetoes.

European Commission First Vice President Frans Timmermans on Wednesday warned of even more severe action if Supreme Court justices are sacked. "If such a measure is taken the commission is ready to immediately trigger the Article 7 procedure," Timmermans said Wednesday. Article 7 is a never-before-used EU process designed to uphold the rule of law, a so-called "nuclear option" that can freeze a country's right to vote in meetings of EU ministers.

The legal reforms have triggered mass street protests in Poland and raised fears for the rule of law in one of the EU's leading eastern former communist states. Brussels and Warsaw have been at loggerheads over the legal changes ever since the right-wing PiS took power in 2015 and announced reforms to Poland's constitutional court. —AFP



SYDNEY: Police man guards a check point in the Sydney inner suburb of Surry Hills. —AFP

4 ARRESTED IN SYDNEY COUNTER-TERROR RAIDS

SYDNEY: Four people were arrested in a series of raids across Sydney yesterday which the prime minister said were carried out to foil plans for terrorist attacks in Australia. Armed police stormed homes in at least four neighborhoods, including in the inner city. "The New South Wales Joint Counter Terrorism Team has conducted multiple searches across Sydney today, resulting in the arrest of four men," police said in a statement. "These searches and the broader investigation remain ongoing, and further information will be made available at the appropriate time." The Seven Network reported 40 riot squad officers moved on one inner city home before an explosives team found a suspicious device, although police would not confirm this.

TV footage showed a man with a bandage on his head and draped in a blanket being led away by authorities. National broadcaster ABC quoted a woman as saying her son and husband were arrested in the raids, but denied they had links to terrorism. "I love Australia," she said as she was led away to a car. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull

urged people to "remain alert". "These operations are designed to disrupt and prevent plans to undertake terrorist attacks in Australia," he said of the raids. "I have been kept closely briefed on the progress of the operations by the heads of our relevant security agencies. "However, as the operations are ongoing, it is inappropriate to provide further detail at this stage." Australian officials have grown increasingly concerned about the threat of extremist attacks and have prevented 12 on home soil since September 2014, with more than 60 people charged.

But five have taken place, mostly with guns, including a fatal shootout in Melbourne in June claimed by the Islamic State group. In that incident, a man of Somali background was killed in a gun battle with police when he opened fire following an hour-long standoff after taking a woman hostage. It is alleged 29-year-old Yacqub Khayre, linked to a 2009 terror plot targeting an Australian army barracks, had first murdered a Chinese-born Australian man. —AFP

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Washington Watch

TRUMP'S ANTICS: CHAOS BY DESIGN

By Dr James J Zogby

We are only a little more than six months into the Trump presidency and I'm already becoming emotionally exhausted by the antics of the president and his underlings. What I'm beginning to suspect is that this may be the reaction Trump is seeking to elicit from his opponents. He is using chaos and outrage to wear us down. Like millions of other Americans, I wake up each morning and turn on TV and check Twitter to see what new and outlandish things have been said by the occupant of the White House: Who has he demeaned? What new whoppers has he told? What bizarre charges has he levied at his favorite targets?

Analysts and commentators have posited several theories in an effort to make sense of the president's behavior. I think, to a degree, all of them may be valid. One theory suggests that the president makes particularly outrageous comments when he is under attack or failing. Understanding media, he knows that if he can create a "feeding frenzy" with a crazy tweet, he can steer attention away from his inability to pass legislation or damaging aspects of the continuing probe into Russian collusion.

Others see in the language Trump uses in his tweets and speeches an effort to play to the worst instincts of his supporters while cultivating his own brand of authoritarian leadership. In his messaging, he promotes the notion that he and he alone speaks for true American values and, therefore, those who question or oppose him are not patriotic. He uses his tweets to target his (and, therefore, America's) enemies - the media, judges, the intelligence agencies, those law enforcement officials who are investigating him, minorities of all stripes, etc. Because, as he has claimed, "no one knows the system better than me, [and therefore] I alone can fix it" - it is particularly disturbing that those who are susceptible to his messaging are being led to see our nation's most fundamental institutions as a threat to their leader and his ability to restore some vague promise of "greatness".

Unhinged Narcissist

Then there are those who simply see in Trump's tweets an unhinged narcissist who out of his own sense of inferiority needs to prove himself to be better, stronger, smarter, and more virile than everyone else. This need drives the president to make outrageous and clearly dishonest claims about the size of his crowds (or his hands), his legislative successes, or his ability to accomplish things that no other president has been able to accomplish. This same pathology leads the president to demean opponents or those whom he feels are standing in his way. Finally, there is what I mentioned in the beginning - the chaos and the exhaustion. Whether by design or unintended consequence, Trump's tweets are taking a toll on the psyche of many Americans who are simply finding the daily outrages and the circus-like antics in the White House to be too much to bear.

Like other charismatic authoritarians before him, Trump thrives on chaos. From the beginning, his staff had competing power centers. This was by design. As he watched his underlings squabble and/or cannibalize each other in a craven struggle for influence and access to the "great man", he kept ultimate power and decision-making in his hands. In this game, he played the media as a useful tool. One day, it's Bannon and his allies on top, the next day it's his son-in-law and his allies. When he sees one or the other getting too much credit or attention, Trump knocks them down a peg. The result is that he remains in control.

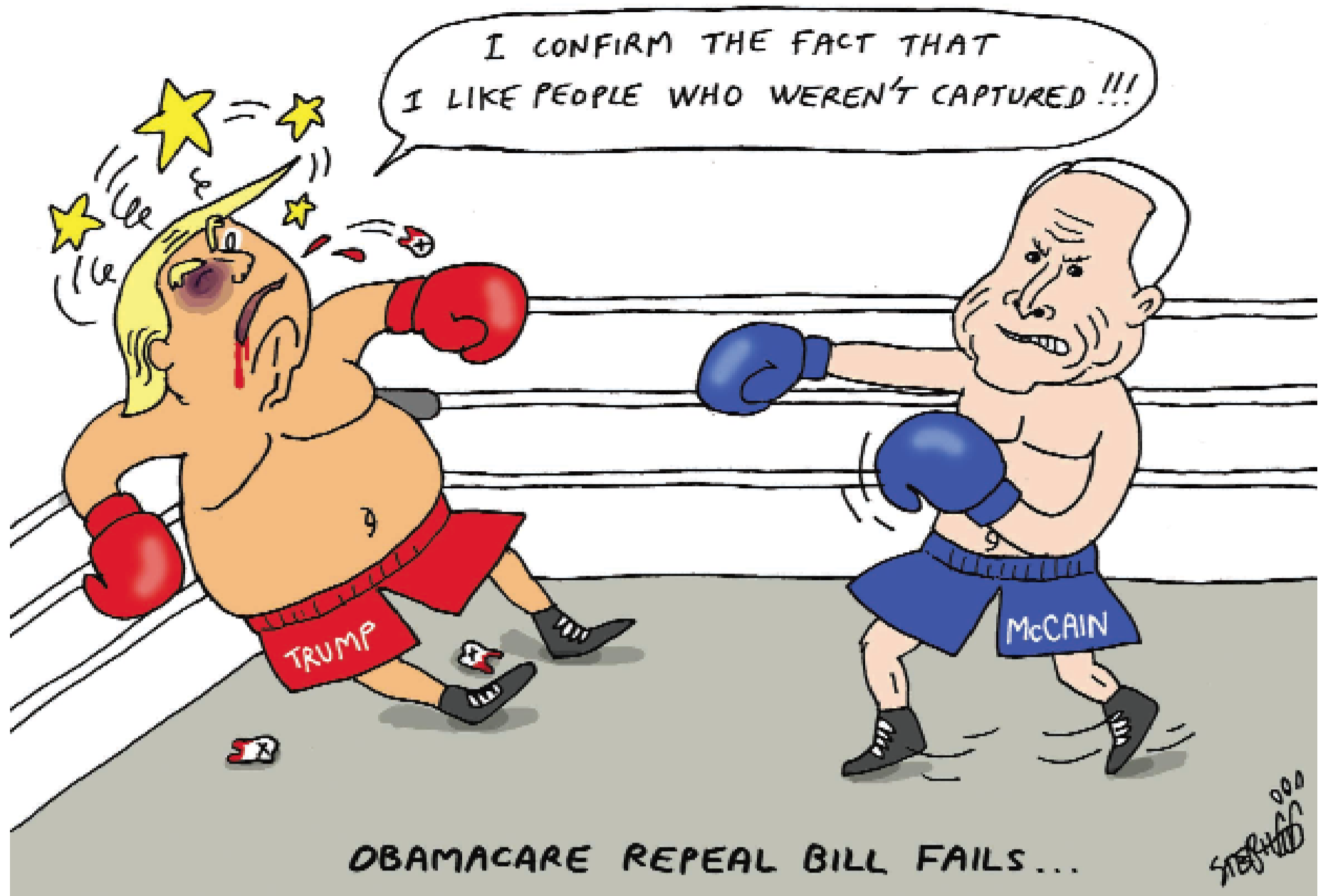
During last week, we were gifted with a full dose of all of these behaviors. His speeches to the Boy Scouts of America and an audience in Youngstown, Ohio were classic Trump. He bragged, made promises he couldn't keep, repeatedly attacked the "fake news" media, and encouraged boos for former President Obama. He used his tweets to repeatedly humiliate his attorney general. Trump is furious with the AG because he recused himself from the Russian investigation and, as a result, can't do the president's bidding. It is speculated that Trump wants this AG out of the way so he can appoint a more "loyal" person who will fire Special Prosecutor Mueller and thereby stop the investigation into the Russian connection and Trump family finances.

Distractions

As an additional distraction, Trump created an unnecessary firestorm with tweets banning transgender Americans from military service. While he claimed that he made this decision in consultation with "my generals", that was refuted by the Pentagon which said it would not implement this tweet. Net result, no immediate change in policy, but "red meat" for his base, and enough of a distraction that Russia was out of the news for a day.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute

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AQSA CRISIS HARDENS LEADERS' POSITIONS

The latest crisis over one of the most combustible spots in the Middle East has been defused for now, but has pushed the leaders of Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians into tougher positions that could trigger new confrontations. The standoff over a Jerusalem shrine holy to Muslims and Jews also signaled that the festering Israeli-Palestinian conflict is shifting further from what was once seen as a territorial dispute toward a religious one.

What Started It?

On July 14, three Arab assailants opened fire from the walled compound at Israeli police guards, killing two. The shooting left Israeli police scrambling for ways to screen worshippers for weapons as they enter the Muslim-run site through eight gates. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu approved a police recommendation to install metal detectors - reportedly over objections from Israel's military and a domestic security agency. The new measures stoked Muslim fears that Israel is trying to expand control over the site under the guise of security - a charge Israel denies. Palestinians in Jerusalem, led by senior Muslim clerics, began staging mass street prayers in protest, four Palestinians were killed in street clashes with Israeli troops and a Palestinian killed three members of an Israeli family in a West Bank settlement. Tensions ebbed after Israel removed the metal detectors and other devices earlier this week.

Sidelined Palestinian President

Mahmoud Abbas, who runs autonomous enclaves in the West Bank, was in China and his return home a week into the crisis reinforced perceptions among many Palestinians that he is out of touch. Trying to assert a leadership role, Abbas announced a suspension of security coordination with Israel until the situation at the shrine is restored to what it was before July 14.

For years, Abbas' forces worked with Israel to foil attacks by militants in the West Bank, often acting against a shared foe, the Islamic militant Hamas. Such mutually beneficial cooperation, though unpopular

among Palestinians, survived many crises and failed efforts to negotiate the terms of Palestinian statehood in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, lands Israel captured in 1967. Abbas threatened in the past to end security coordination, but never followed through. If he now restores such ties, he risks further harm to his domestic standing. If he doesn't, Israel's right-wing government could retaliate and threaten the survival of his Palestinian Authority.

The crisis highlighted Abbas' fading influence in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem. He also risks being cut off completely from Gaza, the territory he lost to Hamas in 2007. In recent weeks, Hamas and a former Abbas-aide-turned rival, Mohammed Dahlan, forged a Gaza power-sharing deal that would open the blockaded territory to Egypt and further weaken ties with the West Bank. Abbas, 82, was briefly hospitalized Saturday for what his office said was a routine checkup, but it also served as a reminder of his advanced age and lack of a successor.

Israeli Prime Minister Under Fire

Netanyahu was lambasted by all sides in Israel. The center-left accused him of making hasty decisions at a volatile site - the third holiest in Islam and the most sacred on in Judaism - that has triggered major rounds of Israeli-Palestinian violence, including one involving Netanyahu in the mid-1990s. Netanyahu's ultra-nationalist rivals, key to the survival of his coalition, said he capitulated to Arab pressure and effectively encouraged Palestinians to push for more concessions.

Netanyahu responded with a flurry of tough statements. He ordered the resumption of plans to build a new West Bank settlement and reportedly gave the green light to draft legislation to bring several West Bank settlements under Jerusalem's jurisdiction. He vowed to "kick Al Jazeera out of Israel," accusing the Qatar-based satellite station of inciting violence over the shrine crisis. And he called for the death penalty - not imposed by Israel for more than half a century - for last week's killer of the Israeli family. Even if it's mostly rhetoric,

Netanyahu's statements suggest that fending off his ultra-nationalist challengers is more important to him than calming the atmosphere. As both Netanyahu and Abbas harden positions, chances of the Trump administration - itself embroiled in turmoil - being able to revive peace talks seem close to zero.

Jordan's Angry Monarch

King Abdullah II publicly vented his anger about what he called Netanyahu's "provocative" behavior. Such harsh words from an Arab leader known for his measured tone were prompted by twin crises between the two countries and signaled delicate ties had taken a hit. Abdullah, Muslim custodian of the Jerusalem shrine, was involved in trying to defuse tensions there when he faced another complication: On Sunday, a guard at the Israeli Embassy in Jordan shot dead two Jordanians after one attacked him with a screw driver.

After a phone call between the king and Netanyahu, the guard returned to Israel and Israel removed the metal detectors. The sequence of events suggested a horse trade with problematic optics for Abdullah that might have been forgotten quickly -

had Netanyahu not given a hero's welcome to the guard and inflamed long-running resentment against Israel in Jordan. Jordan has since charged the guard with murder, demanded he be tried in Israel and issued a veiled threat - through an unidentified official quoted by Jordanian media - that Israel's ambassador would not be allowed to return to Jordan until the guard is held accountable.

Israel and Jordan share strategic security interests, but any open cooperation at this time might not be tolerated by the Jordanian public. Abdullah already faces other threats to Jordan's stability, including rising unemployment and spillover from regional conflicts.

From Land Dispute to Holy War?

Recent events made it clear that the conflict in the Holy Land is no longer just a territorial dispute that can be resolved through creative partition ideas. Such efforts ran aground a decade ago, and the absence of a solution has given a bigger role to the religious component. The showdown over shrine was increasingly being framed as a zero sum game between religions. — AFP



A Palestinian man walks past Israeli border police as they stand guard while Muslim worshippers pray outside Jerusalem's Old City on Friday. — AP

DOES SHARIF'S OUSTER MEAN CHAOS FOR PAK?

The ousting of Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has left a power vacuum at the top of the nuclear-armed country, yet experts say that in the long run it is unlikely to be destabilizing. Sharif's disqualification Friday by the Supreme Court over corruption allegations denies him the chance of becoming the country's first prime minister to complete a full five-year term. Yet despite the country's history of military rule, power will likely remain within the hands of a civilian government - and probably that of Sharif's eponymous Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Party, analysts say.

"In a country as volatile as Pakistan, there's good reason to be concerned whenever a prime minister is dismissed," said Michael Kugelman of the DC-based Wilson Centre. "But my sense is that everything will eventually fall into place - a successor will be chosen and the current government will serve out its term." Sharif named his brother Shahbaz, the chief minister of Punjab province, as his successor and nominated ex-oil minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as an interim premier in a defiant speech yesterday.

Pakistan has been roiled by military coups and instability for much of its 70-year history. But recently there has been a surge of optimism in the militancy-plagued developing country, which has seen a dramatic improvement in security and positive economic

growth in recent years. While the 2013 election that brought Sharif to power for a third time was also a powerful symbol of stability, representing Pakistan's first democratic transition from one elected government to another.

Supreme Court judged most harshly

Sharif was disqualified from the prime minister's office but remains the head of the PML-N party which holds a majority in parliament, meaning the next prime minister will likely emerge from its ranks. Political analyst Hasan Askari said that Pakistan's parliamentary system of government remains unshaken despite the Supreme Court's ousting of a democratically-elected premier. "Sharif will bring forward some person from the party. Obviously his personality will not carry as much weight (as Sharif)... But at the moment we can say, the first impact of the judgement has not proved to be destabilizing," he said. With Pakistan just a year away from gen-

eral elections, the question is whether the country's opposition parties can capitalize on Sharif's removal. Opposition leader Imran Khan has breathlessly pounded his party's anti-graft slogans and called for Sharif's removal as his slow downfall has played out on Pakistan's TV news channels over the last year. But his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, which governs one of Pakistan's four provinces, has so far failed to turn itself into a national party. "(It is PTI) that initiated the case against the prime minister (Sharif), therefore they are going to be the major beneficiary in terms of reputation and credibility," said Askari.

But, he cautioned, the party would benefit most from early elections, while popular opinion is still on its side - a remote prospect, with the PML-N-dominated National Assembly more likely to push for elections to be held as scheduled in June 2018. "This is a party (PML-N) that has the luxury of not facing a formidable opponent with national clout," said Kugelman. "This decision is not a game-changer for PTI," agreed senior political analyst Rasul Bakhsh Rais. "The only change is that Mr Nawaz Sharif is no longer a prime minister." The immediate reaction to Sharif's ouster from Pakistanis was muted, analysts agreed, with passionate statements made on both sides but only sporadic demonstrations in the streets, suggesting citizens believe the PML-N is still in control. While Sharif now has to face down allegations that his family has illegally amassed huge wealth, some observers say that it is the Supreme Court who will ultimately be judged the most harshly. "When history is written this is going to go down as one of a series of decisions that the Pakistani judiciary has given against popularly elected governments," said constitutional lawyer Yasser Hamdani. — AFP



GOP FEARS FALLOUT AFTER 'EPIC FAIL'...

Continued from Page 1

Still, broad disillusionment among conservative voters could have an impact beyond just a few senators. Primary election challenges or a low turnout could mean trouble for all Republicans. Democrats need to flip 24 seats to take control of the House of Representatives, a shift that would dramatically reshape the last two years of Trump's first term.

"If you look at competitive districts, swing districts, or districts where Republicans could face primary challenges, this is something that will be a potent electoral issue," Republican pollster Chris Wilson said of his party's healthcare failure. "I don't think this is something voters are going to forget." One such challenger has emerged. Conservative activist Shak Hill, a former Air Force pilot, plans to run against second-term GOP Rep Barbara Comstock in a competitive northern Virginia district.

Hill told AP that Comstock, who voted against a GOP House healthcare repeal bill in May, "has failed the moral test of her time in Congress". The leaders of other groups, such as Women Vote Trump, have begun to court primary challengers to punish those members of

Congress deemed insufficiently committed to President Donald Trump's agenda. "I expect that we will get involved in primaries," said the group's co-founder, Amy Kremer. "You cannot continue to elect the same people over and over again and expect different results."

On Capitol Hill, some Republicans insist their healthcare overhaul could be saved in the short term. Yet party leaders - backed by outside groups - are signaling that they would probably move on to taxes. Republicans hoped the issue would bring some party unity, even as realists in Washington view the tax overhaul - something that hasn't happened in more than 30 years - as one of the most complex legislative projects possible.

The Trump administration has become engulfed in internal drama over personnel and personalities. Trump on Friday ousted his chief of staff, Reince Priebus, and replacing him with Home Security Secretary John Kelly. The president did not appear to share conservatives' outrage about the Senate's vote, but repeated his promises to remake the health system. "You can't have everything," Trump said, adding: "We'll get it done. We're going to get it." — AP

STALLED TRUMP AGENDA LEADS TO SHAKEUP

Continued from Page 1

federal government's response to Hurricane Katrina. Rarely, however, do presidents face as much turmoil as quickly as Trump has. His Friday afternoon tweet announcing Kelly's hiring capped a tumultuous week:

- His new communications director, Anthony Scaramucci, spewed vulgarities in public at Priebus.
- Trump drew blunt criticism from GOP lawmakers over his attacks on Attorney General Jeff Sessions for withdrawing from the federal investigation into Russian campaign interference.
- Senate Republicans' efforts to pass legislation that would have overhauled the nation's health care law collapsed.

Some Trump allies tried to pin the blame for the health debacle on Priebus. The former Republican National Committee chairman had sold himself to Trump as a well-connected Washington operator who could help round up votes on Capitol Hill. He encouraged Trump to press forward with a health care overhaul early in his presidency.

But as Republicans sorted through the rubble of their healthcare failure, it was Trump, not his chief of staff, who was the target of criticism. "One of the failures was the president never laid out a plan or his core principles and never sold them to the American people," said Rep Charlie Dent. He said Trump "outsourced the whole issue to Congress."

Indeed, Trump's relatively rare public appeals for the passage of health legislation suggested he was more interested in a political win than in the details of policy. A for-

mer Democrat who does not adhere to all GOP orthodoxy, Trump frequently shifted his own stance as to whether the Republicans should repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act at once or simply repeal the law for now.

By week's end, it was clear that some Republicans simply weren't afraid of breaking with a weakened president. GOP Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, and John McCain of Arizona, who was back in Washington after a brain cancer diagnosis, doomed a last-ditch bill in Friday's early morning hours.

Murkowski, who was targeted by Trump on Twitter for her opposition, showed little sign of being cowed by the president. "We're here to govern, we're here to legislate, to represent people that sent us here. And so every day shouldn't be about campaigning. Every day shouldn't be about winning elections. How about doing a little governing around here?" she asked. To this point, Trump has failed to shepherd a single substantial piece of legislation into law. His only major accomplishments have been by executive power - rolling back regulations and undoing a few of his predecessor's achievements, like the Paris climate treaty - along with his successful nomination of Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch.

Kelly, who spent his career in the military before being nominated by Trump to run the sprawling Department of Homeland Security, has limited political and legislative experience. But at least for now, he has the trust of the president. "He has been a true star of my administration," Trump declared. — AP

OUSTED SHARIF NAMES BROTHER AS SUCCESSOR

Continued from Page 1

most populous and prosperous province - for much of the last decade, presiding over a series of big ticket infrastructure projects.

Abbasi is set to be rubber-stamped as placeholder in a parliamentary vote, with Sharif's ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) commanding a majority in the 342-seat house. There was no immediate confirmation of when the vote would take place. An electrical engineer and the businessman who launched Pakistan's most successful private airline, Air Blue, Abbasi is considered a highly-intelligent Sharif loyalist who has been elected to the national assembly six times since 1988.

The opposition could also field a candidate for the premiership, though the nominee has little chance of getting sufficient votes. Nawaz Sharif became the 15th prime minister in Pakistan's 70-year history - roughly half of which was under military rule - to be ousted before completing a full term. In his televised speech to PML-N parliamentary members yesterday, he angrily denounced the ruling and warned the country was "descending into chaos": "I have no regrets... I will continue to fight for my vision of Pakistan," he said.

The Supreme Court said in its judgement Friday that it was disqualifying Sharif for failing to disclose his monthly salary of 10,000 dirhams (\$2,700) from a company owned by his son in the United Arab Emirates. Sharif did not withdraw the salary, court documents show, but the five-member bench ruled his failure to

disclose its existence meant he was not "honest" - a requirement for Pakistani politicians under the country's constitution.

The decision sent his political opponents into the streets handing out sweets and beating drums in celebration. Opposition leader Imran Khan, who has spearheaded the push against Sharif, hailed the verdict as ushering in a new dawn for Pakistan. But Pakistanis were divided on whether it set the country's democratic progress back, with supporters and commentators and lamenting the ousting of a democratically elected premier on a "technicality" in what some termed a "judicial coup".

Sharif's link to the UAE company was exposed as part of an investigation into corruption allegations against his family that erupted as a result of the Panama Papers leak last year. The publication of 11.5 million secret documents from Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca documenting the offshore dealings of many of the world's rich and powerful implicated three of Sharif's four children - daughter Maryam and sons Hasan and Hussein.

Claims about the lavish lifestyles and luxury London property portfolio of the Sharif dynasty played out for months in endless loops in the country's raucous news media. Bribery and other forms of graft are endemic in Pakistan. The PML-N has consistently and noisily denied the accusations, insisting that the dynasty's wealth was acquired legally through Sharif family businesses in Pakistan and the Gulf. — AFP

GULF HOSTS THOUSANDS OF N KOREA WORKERS

Continued from Page 1

overseas laborers to get cash. China and Russia are its biggest markets, but the Gulf hosts thousands. Go Myong-Hyun, a research fellow at the Asian Institute for Policy Studies, said some Middle East countries like North Korea workers because "they don't run away".

Across the Gulf, some 6,000 North Koreans work, two officials familiar with Pyongyang's tactics told the AP, including 2,500 in Kuwait, as many as 1,500 in the UAE and 2,000 in Qatar. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss confidential intelligence reports. Most North Koreans working in the Gulf earn around \$1,000 a month, but the North Korean government keeps about half and another \$300 goes toward construction company managers, the officials said. That leaves workers with just \$200.

In the UAE, eight North Korean workers typically live together in a 21-sq-m space and eat little food, the two officials said. North Korea also operates three Korean restaurants in the UAE - two in Dubai and one in Abu Dhabi - out of an estimated 130 it runs around the world, the officials said. The two officials said another 1,000 North Korean workers will arrive in the UAE in the coming months. Typically, those in construction work as subcontractors, with those commissioning the projects sometimes unaware they have North Koreans working on site, the officials said.

They suggest that may have been the case when North Korean workers took part in a recent expansion of the

UAE's Al-Dhafra Air Base, a major Emirati military installation outside Abu Dhabi and home to some of the 5,000 American troops stationed in the country. Maj Josh T Jacques, a spokesman for the US military's Central Command, which oversees the Middle East, said its policies do "not allow for the admittance or contracting of North Korean nationals and other countries of interest at any US military installation". "We are not aware of any North Korean laborers at Al-Dhafra Air Base and we would certainly be concerned if there were," he told the AP.

America and others have been pushing its Gulf partners to limit their exposure to North Korea. A bill passed Tuesday by the House of Representatives includes limits on the use of overseas North Korean labor. In Oman, the sultanate expelled 300 North Koreans working in the country in December, according to South Korea. Some 80 are believed to remain. In Qatar, the UN said one construction company dismissed 90 North Korean workers in 2015 over abuse and labor law violations that included an incident that killed one laborer.

North Korea's sole embassy for the region is in Kuwait City, where authorities in 2016 stopped direct flights by the country's state-run Air Koryo and ceased issuing new worker visas. Embassy officials there and authorities in Kuwait did not respond to requests for comment. Oman's Embassy in Washington simply said "it's the first time we hear of" North Korean workers being expelled from the sultanate, without answering any questions. — AP

GROZNY EMERGES FROM RUINS TO BECOME...

Continued from Page 1

Khuchiyev means that Chechens should embrace religion without being drawn into the Caucasus Emirate or the Islamic State group, to which the Emirate has now sworn allegiance. A large number of Chechens have joined IS fighters in Syria and Iraq, according to Russian authorities.

In recent years, Kadyrov has expanded his message to address the wider Islamic world. After the violence erupted this month at a sensitive holy site in Jerusalem, he seemed to declare support for Palestinians on his highly popular Instagram account. "Almighty Allah has always at the necessary moment put a sword in the hands of a warrior for Islam who is capable of liberating Al-Aqsa," the post read. Al-Aqsa mosque is part of a compound in Jerusalem's Old City known as Haram Al-Sharif, or Temple Mount to Jews.

Moscow-based political analyst Nikolai Petrov said

Kadyrov's desire for "a special role in the Muslim world" has been visible ever since Charlie Hebdo. Hundreds of thousands of Chechens joined a government-directed protest against the French satirical magazine for publishing cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Jan 2015, just days after staff at Charlie Hebdo were murdered in an attack. Kadyrov's "latest statements on Israel and Palestine, on Chechens in Syria, and even the scandal over gays in Chechnya - all this only strengthens his position," said Petrov. "The greater the shock tactics, the stronger his status as leader."

Grozny is aiming to be a place of influence for Muslims internationally, Khuchiyev said: "People come from very far away to pray and study here". However, the emphasis on Islam has alienated some residents, such as Yelena, who has lived in the city since she was born. Yelena, a Russian Orthodox member, said she feels "like a second-class citizen". "Grozny is a Muslim city, for Muslims," she said. — AFP

IRAN VOWS NO HALT TO MISSILE TESTS AS WEST...

Continued from Page 1

Three days earlier, a US Navy patrol ship fired warning shots at a Guards boat in the Gulf as it closed in on the American vessel, according to US officials. The Guards denied approaching the US ship in Tuesday's incident and said it was the American vessel that had been at fault. There have been a string of close encounters between US ships and Iranian vessels in the Gulf in recent months.

On the political battlefield, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi told state broadcaster IRIB that Tehran condemned new US sanctions against its missile program, which President Donald Trump is set to sign into law, and vowed to press on. "We will continue with full power our missile program," he said. "We consider the action by the US as hostile, reprehensible and unacceptable, and it's ultimately an effort to weaken the nuclear deal."

Ghasemi was referring to a 2015 agreement between Iran and US-led world powers that lifted some sanctions on Tehran in return for curbs on the country's nuclear program. "The military and missile fields... are our domestic policies and others have no right to intervene or comment on them," the spokesman said. The sanctions bill, which also targets Russia and North Korea, was passed by the US Senate on Thursday, two days after being approved by the House of Representatives.

Separately on Friday, Washington imposed new sanctions targeting Iran's missile program, one day after Tehran tested a satellite-launch rocket. Iranian state television broadcast footage of the takeoff from the Imam Khomeini space center in Semnan province in the east of the country. The launch vehicle was capable of propelling a satellite weighing 250 kg into orbit at an altitude of 500 km, it said.

Western governments suspect Iran of trying to devel-

op the technology for longer-range missiles with conventional or nuclear payloads, a charge denied by Tehran, which insists its space program has purely peaceful aims. In a joint statement, Britain, France, Germany and the US condemned Tehran's "destabilizing" action, saying the test was in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that endorsed the nuclear deal. "We call on Iran not to conduct any further ballistic missile launches and related activities," they said.

Resolution 2231 called on Iran not to test ballistic missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and an arms embargo has remained in place. The United States has had no diplomatic ties with the Iran since 1980, and Trump has halted the direct contacts initiated by his predecessor Barack Obama. Tensions have mounted between Washington and Tehran since Trump took office six months ago vowing to be the best friend of Israel.

At UN headquarters in New York on Friday, US envoy Nikki Haley expressed mistrust of Iran. "Iran's wide-spread support for terrorists tells us we can't trust them. Iran's breaking its obligation on missile testing tells us we can't trust them. Yesterday's launch proves that yet again," she said. Despite his electoral promise to tear apart what he once called "the worst deal ever", Trump has so far respected the nuclear agreement.

The joint US-European statement said that Iran's latest test features technology related to "ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons". Iran insists it has "proven its compliance with the nuclear deal" as repeatedly confirmed by the International Atomic Energy Agency. "Iran does not recognize any limits to its scientific and technological progress and will not wait for the approval or permission of any country regarding the activities of its scientists and experts," the foreign ministry spokesman said. — Agencies

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GOLOVKIN SAYS HE WILL RISK ALL CROWNS AGAINST CANELO

LOS ANGELES: Unbeaten Gennady Golovkin of Kazakhstan will risk all his world middleweight titles when he faces Saul "Canelo" Alvarez in September, but the Mexican won't be trying to win them all. Statements from both fighters' camps on Friday indicated Alvarez would risk his liner and Ring magazine titles and seek Golovkin's World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation titles. Golovkin will also risk his World Boxing Council crown, but it would become vacant should he lose in the September 16 showdown at Las Vegas, Nevada. Golovkin, 37-0 with 33 knockouts, has the major belts in the division. But Alvarez, 49-1-1 with 34 knockouts, had owned the WBC title before vacating it last year. It was then awarded to Golovkin and reportedly that irked Alvarez, who vowed not to fight for it if he met Golovkin in the ring. — AFP



BRONCOS LOSE LINEBACKER SHANE FOR 6 TO 8 WEEKS

ENGLEWOOD: Just two days into the Denver Broncos' training camp, rookie head coach Vance Joseph has lost two key players to wrist injuries. Linebacker Shane Ray will undergo surgery Saturday to repair a torn ligament in his left wrist a day after running back Devontae Booker underwent surgery to repair a hairline fracture in his left wrist that was misdiagnosed for a month as a sprain. Ray, a first-round pick in 2015, will miss six to eight weeks. The Broncos are hoping to have him back by their third regular-season game, at Buffalo on Sept. 24. Booker, who is expected to miss six weeks, learned he needed surgery after reporting for his camp physical Wednesday. Just like Booker had, Ray figured his injury wasn't a big deal at first. He hurt his wrist Thursday but played through it. On Friday he wore a brace but he fell on it during one of the final drills of practice and was sent for X-rays. "It's really weird because it's the same area as Booker," Joseph said. "Booker had the bone that was fractured. (Ray) has the ligament torn that's attached to the same bone that Booker fractured. ... I'm disappointed again for the player more than us. He's worked so hard also, and he's making strides to have a great year." — AP

JAPAN'S HIBINO DENIES HOSTS ALL-CHINA FINAL

BEIJING: Japan's Nao Hibino demolished wildcard Wang Yafan in the last four of the Jiangxi Open yesterday to deny the hosts an all-Chinese final. The 22-year-old Hibino, who has one WTA title already to her name, faces the number two seed and remaining home hope Peng Shuai in the decider on the hard courts of Nanchang, southeast China today. World-ranked 92 Hibino had far too much class for Wang, who is 147 in the world, and sent her packing 6-0, 6-2 in a one-sided semi-final lasting hardly an hour. But Hibino will face a far sterner test in the final in the shape of Peng, who is ranked 32 and the highest seed left in the tournament with fellow Chinese Zhang Shuai already out. Peng was similarly emphatic in romping past compatriot Han Xinyun 6-0, 6-3 in 82 minutes to set up the showdown with Hibino. — AFP



MOTOR RACING

VETTEL ON POLE IN FERRARI FRONT ROW LOCKOUT

BUDAPEST: Championship leader Sebastian Vettel grabbed pole position for today's Hungarian Grand Prix as Ferrari locked out the front row of the grid in a tense, dramatic and record-breaking qualifying session yesterday. The 30-year-old four-time champion clocked a best lap of one minute 16.276 seconds to secure his third pole at the Hungaroring circuit and the 48th of his career.

His success gives him a perfect opportunity to make the most of the prime starting position and increase his one point lead over Lewis Hamilton in the standings. "Yes, yes, grazie tutti (thanks everyone)," screamed German Vettel on his slowdown lap. "The car has been incredible today and I love this track. Front row for us is incredible. We're working hard. It is just great. Obviously, the last race wasn't great for us, but we are here now and I am happy where we are as a team." His Ferrari team-mate Kimi Raikkonen was second fastest and will start alongside Vettel at the front of the grid ahead of the two Mercedes led by Valtteri Bottas, who was third, and three-time champion Briton Hamilton. Hamilton said he was not surprised by Ferrari's overnight leap in performance.

"They were always going to be quick here and I was reasonably satisfied with our performance. I thought we did quite well, except in Q3, for me," he said. "But you can't overtake here and it will be a train unless we can do something on the strategy."

Dutchman Max Verstappen was fifth for Red Bull ahead of his Australian team-mate Daniel Ricciardo, with German Nico Hulkenberg seventh for Renault and two-time champion Spaniard Fernando Alonso eighth for McLaren-Honda on his 36th birthday.

TOUGH RETURN

On a hot day at the Hungaroring, with an air tempera-



BUDAPEST: Ferrari's German driver Sebastian Vettel (L) and Ferrari's Finnish driver Kimi Raikkonen take part in the qualifying at the Hungaroring racing circuit in Budapest yesterday prior to the Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix. — AFP

ture of 28 degrees and a track temperature of 57, the session began with a fiercely-competitive opening section in which Briton Paul di Resta, Williams' reserve driver, made his first appearance at a Grand Prix since 2013 as replacement for the unwell Brazilian Felipe Massa.

It was a tough return for the Scot and, despite a valiant effort, he was eliminated in 19th place along with Dane Kevin Magnussen of Haas, his Williams team-mate Lance Stroll and the two Saubers of German Pascal Wlehrlein and Swede Marcus Ericsson.

Vettel topped the times, but the chasing pack, led by Verstappen, were closer at that stage than in the final practice, with Raikkonen third ahead of Hamilton. Vettel, Hamilton and Bottas were the first out for Q2, the Englishman reporting "there's a bit of vibration on these tyres" as he rejoined the fray in pursuit of a place in the top 10 shootout.

The German maintained his narrow advantage after the first flying runs ahead of Verstappen and Hamilton, who then responded with a new track record lap of 1:16.693 to go top as Vettel, Verstappen and Raikkonen stayed in the pits. In a final flurry of Q2 action, Spaniard Carlos Sainz squeezed through in 10th for Toro Rosso, pushing Briton Jolyon Palmer of Renault out of the final session. On the opening Q3 laps, Hamilton went off at Turn Four and chose to abort the lap, pulling into the pits. Bottas clocked 1:16.631 and then Vettel raised the record bar again to 1:16.276. Surprisingly, given his earlier grumbles about the tyres and his 'off' in Q2, Hamilton was soon out for his final run. "Big vibration on these tyres," he said, again, as he launched his first flying lap.

But it was in vain as Vettel took pole from Raikkonen, who produced a scorching final lap to snatch second from his Finnish compatriot Bottas. — AFP



BUDAPEST: US Madeline Musselman (L) holds the trophy for best player of the championship as she celebrates with teammate after winning the women's final water polo match between USA and Spain during the FINA2017 world championships, on Friday, at the Hajos Alfred swimming pool in Budapest. — AFP

WATER POLO

US WOMEN TOP SPAIN TO WIN WORLD WATER POLO TITLE AGAIN

BUDAPEST: They've done it again. The US women claimed a record-extending fifth world championship in water polo with a 13-6 victory over Spain on Friday. Kiley Neushul scored four goals to help the two-time Olympic champions win back-to-back titles at the worlds. "It probably seemed easier than it was. That Spanish team is tough. Miki (Oca Gaia) does an incredible job with them and we knew that they would fight," US coach Adam Krikorian said of his counterpart.

"We win it with our preparation. We win it with our training, the connection and passion that we have for each other. You don't win gold medals in championships during those 32 minutes," said Krikorian, who was pushed into the pool by his jubilant players as the celebrations got underway.

Captain Margaret Steffens spoke of the "American pride of always trying to be our best" as she paid tribute to the spirit of her teammates. "For us the spirit is trying to be the best team we can be and connect, because that's what makes it fun. The more fun we can have, the more heart you can see in our play, the will, the fight. We love making history, we love being first," Steffens said. The pre-tournament favorites had beaten Russia 14-9 in the semifinal. The Russians finished with the bronze medal. Spain fought to stay even at 3-3 before quick-fire goals from Neushul and Madeline

Musselman gave the US breathing room at halftime.

Steffens added a couple of goals in what turned out to be a comfortable win on the back of strong defense. US goalkeeper Gabrielle Stone saved seven of 12 shots. Amanda Longan yielded Spain's other goal. Musselman had a hat trick, giving her 16 goals for the tournament. Anna Espar Llaquet reached a hat trick for Spain with the game's final score. The US had been the first women's water polo nation to win four worlds, after victories in 2003, 2007, 2009 and 2015. But this group is hard to satisfy and some are looking ahead already. "I'm very excited for the future of this team, whether the girls stay or leave and new ones come in and more people come back," Musselman said. "It's a good start off to a new quad, and a new lead up to the Olympics, which is really exciting."

Both sides were backed by enthusiastic supporters on Budapest's Margaret Island in the middle of the Danube. Most of the crowd seemed to be from Hungary, whose men's team plays in the final against Croatia. Zach Beck and Rebecca Beck from Seattle were traveling through Europe but extended their stay to cheer on the American women. "We've been to the swimming, we've been to the diving," Zach Beck said. "But, I got to say, women's water polo was the best." — AP

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

JON JONES, DANIEL CORMIER REMATCH HEADLINES OUTSTANDING UFC 214 CARD

ANAHEIM: Jon Jones insists Daniel Cormier isn't his rival, not even when their rematch at UFC 214 is the most anticipated mixed martial arts fight of the year.

Jones says he doesn't even dislike Cormier, the man who has spent most of the past 2 1/2 years holding the light heavyweight title belt that Jones considers rightfully his. Everything about Jones' behavior suggests he might have stronger feelings than he acknowledges. When they finally hit the Honda Center cage on Saturday night, he'll have a chance to show how he really feels.

"A guy like Daniel, he has my full, undivided attention," Jones said this week. "He says that he's in my head, and that's exactly where I want him to be, because he is in my head. I think about him all the time. That's what makes me do the things I do." Jones and Cormier are headlining the UFC's best show of the summer, and likely the entire year, in Orange County.

UFC 214 features three title fights and numerous rising stars. Before Jones and Cormier, welterweight champion Tyron Woodley takes on Brazilian jiu-jitsu master Demian Maia in a compelling clash of styles, and pound-for-pound women's superstar Cris "Cyborg" Justino faces Invicta champion Tonya Evinger for the vacant featherweight title.

But the remarkable main event could be the culmination of Cormier's career or a monumental return for Jones, whose career and life have been severely fractured since their first bout. "It's pretty cool that it ends here," Jones said recently, speaking of both his disputes with Cormier and his own winding path back to the top. "There will be no grudge match. There will be no trilogy. Like I say all the time, Daniel Cormier is not my rival. I have no issue with him."

Jones' biggest issues have always been with himself. Jones reached the pinnacle of his sport when he soundly defeated Cormier in January 2015 to defend his UFC 205-pound title. Practically nothing has gone right in the ensuing 2 1/2 years for Jones, whose capacity for self-sabotage and lousy decision-making surpassed even his incredible MMA talent.

The UFC stripped Jones of its title twice - after a hit-and-run accident in which he broke a pregnant woman's arm, and again after he was revealed to have failed a doping

test four days before fighting Cormier at UFC 200 last July.

Jones' yearlong suspension has ended, and the UFC put him right back in a title shot with Cormier, who dutifully defended the belt during the mercurial ex-champion's absence. Cormier, an ex-Olympian and family man who also works as a television commentator, sees every flaw in Jones' makeup.

"He's a guy who can't stop hurting himself and people around him," Cormier said. "He's a talented athlete, but mixed martial arts aren't just about the best athlete. He's weak mentally. He's got problems, and I don't know if he solved them yet."

Jones plays it cool when talking about Cormier, yet their promotional staredowns have usually devolved into trash-talking and physical drama. They got into an infamous brawl in a Las Vegas casino lobby in 2014 during the early stages of their promotion of the

first bout. They exchanged harsh words again this week in a faceoff, but Jones has vowed to be classy after he wins their rematch. "He's a good dude," Jones said. "I want the best for him, I really do. I wish he was just man enough to realize that he's (in) the wrong era. He just happened to come into the sport, he's 39 years old, and he's (fighting) a guy who's in his prime, a guy who's doing everything in his power to make sure this is his era. I wish he could just swallow that and say, 'I'm the baddest (man) outside Jon Jones, and I can go to sleep with that.'"

The UFC 214 pay-per-view card starts with two absolute corks: Veteran brawlers Robbie Lawler and Donald "Cowboy" Cerrone meet after light heavyweight prospects Jimi Manuwa and Volkan Oezdemir. Even the undercard is strong, featuring fights for Ricardo Lamas, Renan Barao, Aljamain Sterling and Brian Ortega. — AP



ANAHEIM: (L-R) Daniel Cormier poses with Jon Jones during the UFC 214 weigh-in at Honda Center on Friday in Anaheim, California. Cormier is fighting Jon Jones in the light heavyweight title bout in Anaheim, California. — AFP

FELIPE MASSA PULLS OUT OF HUNGARIAN GP

BUDAPEST: Brazilian driver Felipe Massa has pulled out of the Hungarian Grand Prix due to illness and will be replaced by reserve Paul di Resta for qualifying later yesterday and for today's race. The Williams team said in a statement that the 36-year-old Massa went to the Formula One medical center and then Honvedkorhaz hospital on Friday for "precautionary tests" after feeling "unwell and dizzy" during the second practice session.

Although he was cleared to take part in yesterday's third and final practice run, he again felt unwell and made the decision to withdraw after

clocking the 17th time out of 20 drivers. Williams says it "supports Felipe's decision and the team will work with him to ensure he makes a full recovery, with a view to return to the race track for the Belgian Grand Prix" in late August.

Di Resta will race alongside 18-year-old Canadian driver Lance Stroll. For the 31-year-old Di Resta, it is an unexpected chance to get back behind the wheel in F1. The last of his 58 F1 races was the Brazilian GP in November 2013.

In three seasons with the Force India team, he had a best result of fourth at the Singapore GP in 2012 and at the Bahrain GP in 2013. Di

Resta had not driven the Williams F1 car on track before and had very little time to prepare. Deputy team principal Claire Williams said before qualifying that Di Resta would be "a bit nervous" about driving on the Hungaroring circuit. Qualifying is split in three sessions, with five drivers eliminated after the first and another five after the second to leave the last 10 to battle it out in the third.

Although Di Resta failed to make it into the second, and qualified only 19th out of 20 drivers for today's race, his team hailed it over the radio as a "fantastic effort." — AP

GOLF

SINGH, WOODLAND LEAP INTO HUNT BUT FLORES LEADS CANADIAN OPEN

MONTREAL: Vijay Singh jumped into contention for his first victory since 2008 and Gary Woodland was just off the course record but it was unheralded Martin Flores who grabbed the 36-hole lead Friday at the Canadian Open. Flores, a 35-year-old American ranked 299th in the world, fired his second consecutive six-under par 66 to seize the second-round lead at 12-under 132 in the US PGA Tour event at Glen Abbey in Oakville, Ontario.

"I was putting the ball in the fairway, that's for sure," Flores said. "I kept getting the ball up and down, kept the momentum going in my favor." Flores, who began his bogey-free round on the back

nine, birdied the par-3 12th, then closed his opening nine with birdies at the par-5 16th, par-4 17th and par-5 18th. He added a 20-foot eagle putt at the par-5 second to claim a one-stroke lead after 36 holes.

Americans Woodland, Brandon Hagy and Matt Every shared second on 133, one stroke ahead of Singh, Australian teen Ryan Ruffels and Americans Kevin Chappell, Charley Hoffman and Harold Varner. Fiji's Singh, 54, skipped the Senior British Open in Wales to play in Canada, where the 50-and-over Champions Tour standout could become the oldest US PGA Tour winner in history, eclipsing the feat of Sam

Snead when he won at Greensboro in 1965 at age 52.

World Golf Hall of Famer Singh, a three-time major champion, has 34 career wins but has not won a US PGA event since taking the 2008 Deutsche Bank Championship on his way to the season money crown.

"Champions Tour is way different than this," Singh said. "To come over here and play, you've got to bring it. You've got to get your game out there and play hard." Singh, another back-nine starter, had three birdies in his first nine holes, then opened with birdies on the first and second holes, the first on a 32-foot putt. After a bogey at the third,

Singh sank a 22-foot birdie putt at the par-4 fifth but stumbled with a bogey at the par-3 seventh.

Woodland threatened the course-record of 62, shot four times, most recently by Aussie Greg Norman in 1986. But he settled for his US PGA career-low round with a 63. Woodland opened on the 10th holes as well and after two birdies in four holes suffered his lone bogey at 14.

But Woodland followed with six birdies in a row, the most impressive of them being a 26-foot chip from a bunker at the 18th. "I was trying to just keep it going," said Woodland. "Holding the bunker shot was huge. I drove the

ball in play and gave myself a lot of chances."

A tap-in birdie at the par-3 fourth and 12-foot birdie at the par-3 seventh put him on the brink of the mark, but a 13-foot birdie miss at 18 ended his bid for a 62.

"I had everything clicking," Woodland said. "It has been coming together for a while. I just hadn't done it. I was driving it well and the putts were going in." Woodland has two runner-up finishes this season, at the Honda Classic and Mayakoba Classic in Mexico, as he chases a third PGA title after the 2011 Transitions Championship and 2013 Reno-Tahoe Open. —AFP

KERR SHOOTS 73 TO TAKE LADIES SCOTTISH OPEN LEAD

IRVINE: Cristie Kerr birdied three of the last six holes in strong wind Friday at Dundonald Links for a 1-over 73 and a one-stroke lead over Hall of Famer Karrie Webb in the Ladies Scottish Open. Kerr played the first 11 holes in 4 over, with a double bogey on the par-5 third and bogeys on Nos. 6 and 11. The 39-year-old American had a 5-under 139 total.

"It was tough," Kerr said. "I didn't hit it that great today, but I still managed. My caddie and I managed the golf course well, and we made the recovery shots when we needed to. I'm just going to go



AYRSHIRE: USA's Cristie Kerr plays her approach to the par 4, 1st hole during day three of the Ladies Scottish Open at Dundonald Links, North Ayrshire, Scotland, yesterday. — AP

hit a few balls and try to find the feel. It's hard when you play back-to-back in heavy wind with the swing, but we'll work on it."

She won the LOTTE Championship in April in Hawaii for her 19th LPGA Tour title. "You never know with the weather. I'm trying not to get ahead of myself in this weather," Kerr said. "Just try to hit it pretty well and make some putts and get up-and-down sometimes, and we'll see what happens." Webb, a stroke ahead of Kerr after a first-round 65, shot a 75 to drop behind. The 42-year-old Australian star had a double bogey, four bogeys and three pars.

"Well, disappointing, because I bogeyed the last two," Webb said. "I fought really hard to be 1 over with two to go. Just a couple of bad swings and a couple of bad tee shots, really, that made it difficult to hit the greens. Disappointed with that but, obviously, if you'd have told me before I teed off yesterday, that I would be 4 under, probably would have taken it."

South Koreans Sun Young Yoo (69) and Sei Young Kim (72) were tied for third at 3 under. "I'm very pleased," Yoo said. "It wasn't easy out there. It was windy. Tried to make par every hole. Didn't try too hard. I think that worked really good."

Michelle Wie was tied for 11th at 1 over after a 73. Lydia Ko missed the cut with rounds of 74 and 79. She has gone a full year without winning on the LPGA Tour. "I missed like three 1-yard putts in a row," Ko said. "I just couldn't stroke the putt."

She played her first 11 holes in 8 over. Starting play on No. 10, Ko bogeyed five of the first seven and made a double bogey on No. 1 and a bogey on No. 2. Her lone birdie came on No. 8. "I think this is one of the windiest conditions I've played in," Ko said. "Especially because it is so wide open from like 10 to 13, there's no trees covering it, and normally when I played the British Opens, or even here a couple years ago, there was rain and that kind of softens up everything. It just makes it a touch easier than what it could be playing. But I think today was probably one of the most difficult rounds I've played in my career, and I think just physically, mentally." The Ricoh Women's British Open is next week at Kingsbarns. — AP



CHRISTCHURCH: Crusaders' Israel Dagg attempts to break the tackle of Chiefs' Charlie Ngatai during their Super Rugby semifinal in Christchurch, New Zealand, yesterday. — AP

RUGBY

CRUSADERS BEAT CHIEFS 27-13 IN SUPER RUGBY SEMIFINAL

CHRISTCHURCH: Winger Seta Tamanivalu scored two tries against his former team as the Crusaders beat the Chiefs 27-13 yesterday to reach the Super Rugby final for the 12th time and to move within a match of their eighth championship.

The Hamilton-based Chiefs had an abundance of possession but the Christchurch-based Crusaders showed playoff smarts, seizing a handful of chances to score four tries that propelled them into the final for the first time since 2014. The seven-time champions will play the winner of Saturday's second semifinal between the Johannesburg-based Lions and Wellington-based Hurricanes as they attempt to win Super Rugby for the first time since 2008.

Tamanivalu touched down twice in the second half and scrumhalf Bryn Hall and fullback Israel Dagg also scored tries for the Crusaders. All Blacks lock Brodie Retallick scored a late consolation try for the Chiefs, who had a try contentiously disallowed by the television match official at a crucial stage of the first half. The Chiefs were at odds for much of the match with referee Glenn Jackson, a former Chiefs flyhalf and now one of Super Rugby's leading referees.

Against expectations, the Chiefs made most of the play in the first half, forcing the Crusaders into constant defense during which they had to make four times as many tackles as their opponents. The Crusaders scrambled well in defense and the Chiefs' attempts to turn possession into points were often thwarted by desperate tackling or by handling errors.

"The Chiefs had a lot of ball in the first half and the boys were definitely blowing and the legs were heavy," Crusaders captain Sam Whitelock said. "But credit to our boys, they were hanging in tough out there through determination and grit. "We all know that defense is half of the game. The Chiefs held the ball and really attacked us, especially that first 50 minutes, and we knew that if we could weather that storm which could hope to come over the top of them in the end."

After being under almost constant pressure in the first quarter, the Crusaders managed to break out at their first opportunity and to score a try through Hall against the run of play. All Blacks center Ryan Crotty made the initial half-break, thrusting his arms through a tackle and passing to Dagg, who made a long break down the left-hand touch.

Dagg then turned the ball infield to Hall, who ran a perfect line in support, then scampered away for the opening try that gave the Crusaders a 10-0 lead. The match's most contentious moment occurred three minutes later when Samoa winger Tim Nanai-Williams seemed to score a crucial try for the Chiefs. He dived on James Lowe's infield kick and skidded over the line for a try, awarded by Jackson.

Fullback Damian McKenzie was lining up the conversion when the television referee called a halt and instructed Jackson to disallow the try because Nanai-Williams had knocked on in the act of scoring. Captain Aaron Cruden, playing his last Super Rugby match before quitting New Zealand rugby, said the TMO was mistaken and "it was a try any day of the week."

"Rugby's a momentum game and we thought we created a lot of chances, had momentum at times, but you've got to give credit to the

Crusaders," Cruden said. "They're a great side, they scrambled really well, and when it looked like we had them on the ropes, they were able to do just enough to hold us out."

The Chiefs were also assertive at the start of the second half but the Crusaders gradually took

control. Flyhalf Richie Mo'unga made a tackle on Lowe that popped the ball into the hands of Dagg, who scored an opportunistic try that turned the tide of the match. Tamanivalu then scored in the 57th and 72nd minutes to make the lead 27-6 before Retallick's late try. — AP

SWIMMING

'PHENOMENAL' DRESSSEL SET FOR WORLD SPRINT GOLDS

BUDAPEST: Caeleb Dressel is on the verge of a super yesterday at the world championships after clocking the fastest times into both the men's 50m freestyle and 100m butterfly finals. America's Dressel already has three gold medals in Budapest following victories in the 100m freestyle, plus 4x100m freestyle and mixed 4x100m medley relay wins.

The 20-year-old clocked 21.29 secs in Friday's freestyle semi-final, then half an hour later blasted out 50.07 in the fly semis to make him the name to beat in both finals yesterday. Singapore's Joseph Schooling, the men's Olympic 100m butterfly champion, was fourth fastest into the butterfly final at 0.71 behind Dressel and could only admire the American's stamina.

"Caleb's just been phenomenal—he's just had an amazing meet," said Schooling. "He's been on form, no one can touch him right now. It's pretty impressive actually, it makes for an exciting race tomorrow."

Katie Ledecky can pick up her 14th career world gold, while sprinter Sarah Sjöström hopes to fix her freestyle heartache with butterfly gold.

FIVE-STAR LEDECKY

Ledecky, the most decorated female swimmer in world championships' history, was the fastest into the women's 800m freestyle final. Should the 20-year-old favorite defend her title, it will give her a fifth gold in Budapest.

She has already won freestyle golds over 400m and 1500m, plus the 4x100m and 4x200m relays, as well as silver in the 200m freestyle, and it would be her 14th overall. "I'm excited. I always enjoy my last race at a meet, just giving it all and leaving it all in the pool," said Ledecky.

Sweden's Sjöström is hoping to heal her

hurt from losing the women's 100m freestyle final on Friday, by just 0.04secs to America's Simone Manuel, before clocking 25.30 seconds as the fastest qualifier into Saturday's 50m butterfly final. She can complete the butterfly sprint double after winning the 100m gold tomorrow.

"When I was on the podium (for the 100m freestyle), I saw how close I was to the gold, my finish was really bad, you don't deserve to win the gold if you swim like that," said Sjöström.

"I won't talk about a comeback, if I'm fourth or fifth tomorrow that's how it is—I want to talk about medals."

STORMING SEEBOHM

Australia's Emily Seebohm, the defending world champion, says she will learn from Sjöström's freestyle defeat when she races in Saturday's 200m backstroke final after clocking the fastest time of 2:05.08 in Friday's semis.

"Anything can happen tomorrow night—we saw that on the 100m freestyle—just because someone's in lane four and got the world record and has the fastest time, doesn't mean they're going to win," said Seebohm, who has a bronze in Budapest over 100m.

Canada's Kylie Masse, the world record holder over 100m, was just behind at 0.16 behind Seebohm. The Australian said fear of missing out on a place in the final inspired her fast time in the semi. "I guess I was watching the heat before and I decided that if I was too slow I might not get through," said Seebohm. "I'm just going to go out there and enjoy it. "I have a world title from 2015, it's not like I need the pressure of getting a second. "I'm just going out there to enjoy it if I can go a little bit faster than tonight I'll be happy." —AFP

SUN A SURPRISE NO-SHOW IN 1500M HEATS AT WORLDS

BUDAPEST: Sun Yang was a surprise absentee in the men's 1500m freestyle heats yesterday as the world-record holder again opted out at the world aquatic championships. A Chinese official told reporters the decision was taken to 'protect his health' as Sun has complained of tiredness. Despite his no-show, the 25-year-old Chinese giant trained yesterday and is due to race in the men's 4x100m medley relay today.

Sun has a history of dropping out of the 1500m at the 11th hour at world championships. He was a no-show for the men's final in 2015 after citing heart problems during the warm-up. After winning freestyle golds over 200m and 400m in Budapest, Sun had complained of fatigue before flopping in the men's 800m freestyle final on Wednesday.

He finished fifth, 8.10 seconds adrift of winner Gabriele Detti of Italy. In Sun's absence, Ukraine's Mykhailo Romanchuk was the fastest qualifier for today's 1500m final in 14 minutes, 44.11 seconds. Defending champion Gregorio Paltrinieri was right behind at 0.20sec. Australia's Mack Horton was the seventh fastest and 15.13sec off the pace. "It was a slow heat, I felt pretty good early on," said Horton, who won silver behind Sun in last Sunday's 400m final.

"I've just been doing 1500 heats in the last couple of days to blow away the cobwebs after sitting around for the last couple of days."

STORMING SJOSTROM

Elsewhere, Sarah Sjöström used her frustration at missing gold by 0.04sec in Friday's 100m freestyle final to blast her way into the 50m freestyle semis. Sjöström clocked 24.08sec as the fastest into yesterday's semis. "I'm still disappoint-

ed about the silver last night, so it's nice to only swim 50 this time," she said.

"I just need to keep that speed and swim fast when it matters." Denmark's Pernille Blume, bronze medalist over 100m on Friday, was second fastest at 0.24sec. "It was a fine feeling for me. It was a powerful swim but I didn't sprint at all," said Blume. Japan's Junya Koga was the fastest into the men's 50m backstroke semi-finals, touching the wall at 24.54sec. France's Camille Lacourt, the defending champion was second quickest at 0.04sec behind.

"I'm happy with the way it's going, there's a bit more left," said Lacourt, 32. "I just want to do the job now in the semi-final." China's Xu Jiayu, who won the men's 100m backstroke gold on Tuesday, and America's Matt Grevers, 32, the 100m silver medalist, clocked a joint third fastest time at 0.24sec.

KING EDGES EFIMOVA

Russia's Yuliya Efimova and America's Lilly King resumed their battle royal in the women's 50m breaststroke heats. King sparked a war-of-words at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics by dubbing Efimova a "drug cheat" following the Russian's 16-month doping ban, which ended in 2015.

In Budapest on Tuesday, King won the women's 100m breaststroke final in a world record time, while Efimova took bronze. The Russian extracted an impressive revenge on Friday by blasting to gold over 200m, finishing two seconds clear of the field.

King faded to fourth after leading early on. Yesterday morning, America's King was the fastest qualifier into the 50m semi-finals, clocking 29.76sec with Efimova just 0.23sec behind her and the pair both avoiding questions. —AFP



BUDAPEST: China's Sun Yang reacts after competing in the men's 200m freestyle final during the swimming competition at the 2017 FINA World Championships in Budapest. — AFP

MLB PLANS ASIAN, ENGLAND GAMES FOR 2019, 2020

NEW YORK: Major League Baseball plans to start the 2019 and 2020 seasons in Asia and play regular-season games in England in June of both years. The collective bargaining agreement reached in November was finalized and sent to the clubs Friday, and it contains a schedule for international play through 2021 along with how much extra money each player will receive for making the trips.

"Playing major league games abroad is critically important to growing the game internationally, and we are very pleased that the parties were able to agree on a very comprehensive international play plan in bargaining," MLB Chief Legal Officer Dan Halem said in an email to The Associated Press.

The agreement calls for the season opener to be played in Asia in 2018 and 2020 and specifies Japan for 2019. However, plans have not progressed for a 2018 Asian opener and those games are now unlikely, according to a baseball official familiar with the planning. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because no statement was authorized.

A two-game series between Cleveland and Minnesota in San Juan, Puerto Rico, already has been announced for next April 17-18, and the agreement calls for an additional series in Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic in May 2020.

"I think it's probably been in the works for a while for MLB to try to find out how to expand on the interna-

tional and global market," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "You try to market your product the best way you can into the most expansive areas you can. ... The fact we were able to pique enough interest in fan bases from parts maybe we never would have imagined a decade or two ago can only be good for the game."

Series in Mexico are planned for each April from 2018-21 and for May 2019 and 2021. London's Olympic Stadium, West Ham's Premier League home, has been looked at as a possible venue for the games in Britain, and the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox are the most likely teams for 2019.

The NFL has played regular-season games in London since 2007 and has

expanded to four games there next season, when it also will play in Mexico City for the second straight year. The NBA has held regular-season games in Japan, London and Mexico City since 1990, and NBA Finals MVP Kevin Durant of the champion Golden State Warriors is currently in India as an ambassador supporting the sport's growth.

"Sharing my love of basketball with thousands of boys and girls across India was an unbelievable experience," said Durant, who along with 3,459 Indian children set a Guinness World Record for the largest basketball lesson ever with some participating via satellite. Baseball players will receive an extra \$60,000 each for regular-season trips to Asia or England,

and an additional \$15,000 for trips to Mexico, Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic. Each event can be one, two or three games.

No games in Australia are in the works during the five-year deal, which began this season. The deal calls for spring training trips in the next three years: two Mexico series in 2018,

Mexico and either Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic in 2019 and one Mexico series in 2020. Players receive an extra \$5,000 for each international spring training series. Most-World Series tours are planned for Japan in 2018 and 2020, and Asia or Mexico in 2019. Players get \$100,000 for postseason All-Star trips to Japan, \$50,000 for the rest of Asia and \$25,000 for Mexico. — AP



LOS ANGELES: Second baseman Joe Panik #12 of the San Francisco Giants tags out Austin Barnes #15 of the Los Angeles Dodgers attempting to steal second in the eighth inning at Dodger Stadium on Friday in Los Angeles, California. The Dodgers won 6-4.— AFP

BASEBALL

MOUSTAKAS' 30TH HR LIFTS ROYALS OVER RED SOX FOR 9TH STRAIGHT WIN

BOSTON: Salvador Perez and Mike Moustakas homered off emergency starter Rick Porcello, who took over when David Price went back on the disabled list with left elbow inflammation, and the Kansas City Royals beat Boston 4-2 Friday night for their season-high ninth straight win. The Red Sox have lost five of six and nine of 14, dropping out of the AL East lead for the first time since June 29 and falling a half-game behind the New York Yankees. Price began the season on the DL and didn't make his first start until May 29. The 31-year-old lefty, winner of the 2012 AL Cy Young Award, is 5-3 with a 3.82 ERA. Porcello (4-14), who had been scheduled to pitch Saturday, leads the major leagues in losses, a year after winning the AL Cy Young. He allowed four runs and six hits in seven innings. Jason Vargas (13-4) gave up one run and five hits in six innings. Kelvin Herrera pitched a one-hit ninth for his 22nd save in 25 chances.

RANGERS 8, ORIOLES 2

Adrian Beltre had two RBI singles to increase his hit total to 2,998, Elvis Andrus homered and Texas beat Baltimore. Beltre, the 38-year-old third baseman in his 20th major league season, is on the brink of becoming only the 31st player in the 3,000-hit club. Nomar Mazara hit three doubles for the Rangers. Andrew Cashner (6-8) allowed only a solo homer by Jonathan Schoop in

seven innings. Chris Tillman (1-6) allowed eight runs and nine hits in 4 1-3 innings.

CARDINALS 1, DIAMONDBACKS 0

Arizona starter Robbie Ray was hit in the head by a line drive and driven off the field in a cart during the Diamondbacks' loss to St. Louis. Ray was struck in the second inning by a liner off the bat of rookie Luke Voit. The ball caromed in the air into foul territory where third baseman Daniel Descalso caught it for the out. Ray lay prone on the mound for several minutes before sitting up with his teammates surrounding him. He was taken off to be examined. Michael Wacha pitched six innings and Jedd Gyorko drove in the lone run with one of his three hits. Wacha (8-4) allowed three hits. He has won five of his last six starts and improved to 7-1 in 12 starts at Busch Stadium this season. Trevor Rosenthal, the third reliever for St. Louis, earned his fifth save with two innings. T.J. McFarland (4-3) took the loss.

ASTROS 6, TIGERS 5

Josh Reddick hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning, lifting the Houston Astros over Detroit. The Astros trailed 5-3 when the Tigers brought in reliever Bruce Rondon (1-2) to start the eighth. He allowed singles to Derek Fisher and Jose Altuve before Reddick's drive sailed well beyond the wall

in right field. Reddick drove in five runs, and the Astros won despite getting only three innings from starter Dallas Keuchel in the left-hander's return from a neck injury. Keuchel, who hadn't pitched since June 2, allowed three runs and six hits in three innings, walking three and striking out three. Manager A.J. Hinch indicated before the game that he would be on a pitch count, and he was pulled after throwing 79. Brad Peacock (9-1) allowed two runs in four innings of relief, then Chris Devenski pitched the eighth and Ken Giles finished for his 22nd save in 24 chances. Altuve had three hits, extending his hitting streak to 19 games and raising his average to .369.

YANKEES 6, RAYS 1

Japan's Masahiro Tanaka took a perfect game into the sixth inning and struck out a career-high 14, pitching the New York Yankees past Tampa Bay for their fifth straight win. Brett Gardner hit a leadoff home run, Aaron Judge lined his AL-leading 33rd homer and Clint Frazier added a three-run shot to boost Tanaka (8-9). Tanaka struck out the first five batters, all swinging. He set down 17 in a row before Adeiny Hechavarria grounded a sharp, two-out single up the middle. Tanaka allowed two hits and walked none, and finished up by striking out the side in the eighth. Lucas Duda homered in the seventh, a day after Tampa Bay got him a trade with the Mets. Austin Pruitt (5-2), called up from Triple-A to take the turn of injured Jake Odorizzi, gave up all three homers. The Rays have lost seven of nine and are 0-5 in the Bronx this year.

BREWERS 2, CUBS 1

Brent Suter tossed seven scoreless innings and Milwaukee edged Chicago, moving within a half-game of the NL Central-leading Cubs. Suter (2-1) limited the Cubs to four hits. He struck out five and walked one in a career-long outing. Corey Knebel notched his 18th save in 23 attempts, striking out pinch-hitter Kyle Schwarber with the tying run on third. Jose Quintana (6-9) gave up four hits and two runs in six innings.

MARLINS 7, REDS 4

J.T. Realmuto had three hits, including a tiebreaking home run, to spark a four-run seventh inning and help Miami top Cincinnati. Mike Aviles added a pinch-hit two-run homer and Tyler Moore had an RBI

double in the seventh for the Marlins, who have won six of eight. Dustin McGowan (6-1) pitched an inning in relief for the victory. Realmuto's home run to left field off Wandy Peralta (3-2) was his 12th of the season, a new career-high, and his sixth game with at least three hits. Cincinnati has dropped five straight and has lost 13 of 15 since the All-Star break.

PHILLIES 10, BRAVES 3

Aaron Altherr homered twice and Jake Thompson pitched five scoreless innings in an emergency start to lead Philadelphia over Atlanta. Tommy Joseph and Cameron Rupp also homered and Freddy Galvis had three hits for the Phillies, who have scored 19 runs on seven homers and 14 extra-base hits while winning the last two. Thompson (1-0) replaced Jeremy Hellickson, who was scratched an hour before the game. Hellickson is thought to be among the players the Phillies are likely to move before Monday's non-waiver trading deadline. Thompson, who the Phillies acquired from Texas in the 2015 trade that sent Cole Hamels to the Rangers, gave up five hits while striking out five and walking two. He was making his fourth appearance this season but first start since last September. Julio Teheran (7-9) allowed eight runs in 4 2/3 innings.

ANGELS 7, BLUE JAYS 2

Parker Bridwell pitched a career-high 7 1/3 innings to win his third straight decision. C.J. Cron hit a two-run homer and Los Angeles beat Toronto. Mike Trout had two RBIs and Yunel Escobar had two doubles and an RBI for the Angels. Toronto's Justin Smoak hit a solo homer off Cam Bedrosian in the ninth, his 29th. Bridwell (5-1) allowed one run and three hits. J.A. Happ (3-8) allowed three runs in six innings and is 0-4 with a 6.00 ERA over his past four starts.

INDIANS 9, WHITE SOX 3

Jose Ramirez had four hits, including a homer, and Carlos Santana and Michael Brantley also went deep as Cleveland extended its winning streak to eight and sent Chicago to its 13th loss in 14 games. Danny Salazar (4-5) allowed two runs and three hits in six-plus innings to win his second straight start since being activated from the disabled list. Derek Holland (5-10) allowed six runs and nine hits in 4 1/3 innings and has given up five or more runs in five of his last seven starts.

TWINS 6, ATHLETICS 3

Jaime Garcia (1-0) struck out seven over 6 2/3 innings in his debut for Minnesota, which acquired him Monday from Atlanta, and the Twins stopped a four-game losing streak. Jason Castro hit RBI doubles in consecutive innings, and Ehre Adrianza and Miguel Sano added run-scoring singles. Brandon Kintzler got three outs for his 28th save as the Twins won for just the third time in their last 17 games at the Coliseum. Daniel Gossett (2-6) was chased after just 3 2/3 innings, allowing five runs - four earned - and nine hits.

METS 7, MARINERS 5

Michael Conforto returned to his hometown and hit a pair of solo home runs, Neil Walker and Curtis Granderson had two-out RBI singles off David Phelps (2-5) to cap a three-run eighth inning and New York rallied after wasting a 4-0 lead. Playing his first professional game at Safeco Field, Conforto excited the 30 or so friends and family he left tickets for with the fourth multi-homer game of his big league career. Conforto grew up in nearby Redmond. Jerry Blevins (5-0) worked 1 1/3 innings, and Addison Reed pitched the ninth for his 19th save. New York attempted to solidify its bullpen by acquiring closer A.J. Ramos from Miami for a pair of prospects

PADRES 3, PIRATES 2

Travis Wood (1-0), making his Padres debut after being acquired Monday from Kansas City, struck out seven over six innings and allowed two runs and two hits. Three relievers finished a three-hitter, with Brad Hand getting his sixth save. Cory Spangenberg tripled in the tying run in the sixth and scored the go-ahead run on a ball four wild pitch by Daniel Hudson (2-5).

DODGERS 6, GIANTS 4

Corey Seager hit two home runs, including a go-ahead, two-run drive in the seventh as Los Angeles overcame a 4-2 deficit. The Dodgers have won six straight games and 37 of their last 43. Seager homered leading off the first off Matt Moore and capped a four-run seventh with a drive over the right-field wall against Josh Osich. Alex Wood (12-1) gave up four runs and eight hits in seven innings, and Kenley Jansen struck out the side in the ninth for his 26th save. — AP

MLB Results/Standings

NY Mets 7, Seattle 5; San Diego 3, Pittsburgh 2; LA Dodgers 6, San Francisco 4; Minnesota 6, Oakland 3; St. Louis 1, Arizona 0; Milwaukee 2, Chicago Cubs 1; Cleveland 9, Chicago White Sox 3; Texas 8, Baltimore 2; Miami 7, Cincinnati 4; Houston 6, Detroit 5; Kansas City 4, Boston 2; LA Angels 7, Toronto 2; Philadelphia 10, Atlanta 3; NY Yankees 6, Tampa Bay 1.

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division				
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	NY Mets	Miami	Atlanta	
NY Yankees	55	46	.545	-	61	39	.610	
Boston	56	48	.538	0.5	48	53	.475	
Tampa Bay	53	51	.510	3.5	48	53	.475	
Baltimore	48	54	.471	7.5	36	64	.360	
Toronto	48	55	.466	8				
Central Division				Central Division				
Cleveland	56	45	.554	-	Chicago Cubs	54	48	.529
Kansas City	54	47	.535	2	Milwaukee	55	50	.524
Minnesota	50	51	.495	6	St. Louis	51	52	.495
Detroit	45	56	.446	11	Pittsburgh	50	53	.485
Chicago White Sox	39	61	.390	16.5	Cincinnati	41	62	.398
Western Division				Western Division				
Houston	68	34	.667	-	LA Dodgers	72	31	.699
Seattle	51	53	.490	18	Arizona	59	44	.573
Texas	50	52	.490	18	Colorado	58	45	.563
LA Angels	50	54	.481	19	San Diego	46	57	.447
Oakland	44	59	.427	24.5	San Francisco	40	64	.385

US FANS SHOW APPETITE FOR EUROPEAN STARS

LANDOVER: Having paid nearly \$500 for a ticket to watch his team in a pre-season friendly against Barcelona, Manchester United fan Vikrom Ahuja could hardly contain his excitement. "It's a lifetime opportunity because you're not going to see this kind of opposition in the US," said Ahuja as he savored the prospect of seeing Jose Mourinho's side take on the likes of Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez at a stadium in the suburbs of Washington.

"I don't support a local team because the way they play, it doesn't excite me, it doesn't get me out of my seat." Domestic soccer has long struggled to draw big crowds in the United States, even though ticket prices often are significantly cheaper than for sports such as baseball or American football. But huge attendance figures at a series of friendly matches involv-

ing the biggest teams in European football have underlined a decided American interest in the game-as long as the quality is top-notch.

Tickets for last night's match between Real Madrid and Barcelona at the 65,000-seat Hard Rock stadium have been selling for nearly \$1,000 on the black market. A match between Real and Manchester City drew a crowd of more than 90,000 in Los Angeles earlier in the week, while upwards of 82,000 fans watched Barcelona take on Italian giants Juventus just outside New York last weekend.

For years, Europe's top clubs tended to head to Asia in the close season in a bid to grow their fan base, but the United States appears to be increasingly the number one choice. Other teams to have toured the States this

year include Paris Saint-Germain, Roma and Tottenham-some them competing in the grandly titled International Champions Cup.

STAR SIGNINGS

The matches give US-based fans a chance to watch their team's newest stars even before they make their debuts back home, such as United's new record signing of Romelu Lukaku. Barcelona fans meanwhile got to see Brazilian star Neymar score the winner in what could turn out to be one of his last matches for the Catalan team if a much-touted move to PSG comes to fruition.

Eric Wesner, part of the 82,000-strong crowd at a stadium which is normally home to the NFL's Washington Redskins, said he had no regrets about paying \$200 for a seat even if the venue is a good two-hour

drive north of the capital. "I paid 200 bucks after fees when I usually pay \$30-\$40 for DC United," he said in reference to the local MLS franchise which plays in the center of Washington and which gets average crowds of around 16,000 per match.

"It's interesting because there are a lot of stars, and the level is much higher than the MLS." Back in the 1970s, US fans did have the chance to watch the game's biggest names on a regular basis when the likes of Pele and George Best played in the now defunct North American Soccer League. The MLS has managed to attract some big names in the autumn of their career such as France's Thierry Henry and England's Frank Lampard but struggles to compete with the likes of China and even India when it comes to wages.

But Laurent Dubois of North

Carolina's Duke University, who has written a book which demystifies the game for Americans, was not surprised crowds had flocked to the pre-season friendlies "Soccer is of course overshadowed in the media by American football, basketball, and baseball and yet I think probably more people play soccer in this country than any other sport," Dubois told AFP.

Dubois was confident that it is only a matter of time for the MLS to build up its fan base and for those fans to go to see their hometown heroes, not just save up to watch foreign stars. "There will be a problem for a while that many in the US will feel like the best soccer is being played elsewhere, and they would rather watch Chelsea or Barcelona than an MLS team.

"But the fan cultures for local teams will keep growing I think." —AFP

REAL CAPTAIN RAMOS WOULD WELCOME TEEN STAR MBAPPE

MIAMI: Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos says French teen striker Kylian Mbappe will become a welcome addition for the reigning Champions League and La Liga champions should he decide to leave Monaco. The 18 year-old forward is wanted by Real Madrid manager Zinedine Zidane, with the Spanish giants poised to make him one of the most expensive players of all time in a move that could cost around \$211 million (180 million euros).

Ramos was adamant Mbappe has the qualities to become of the best in the world. "It's not a decision for me but Mbappe is a great prospect. There are not young players around like him. We have an important year ahead of us and already have excellent players," Ramos said ahead of yesterday's meeting with arch-rivals Barcelona in Miami.

"But it's money which moves football and people can pay what they want. If he wants to come to Real Madrid, the doors will be open." While Zidane smiled through his press conference here, Barcelona have been fighting to keep superstar Neymar from accepting Paris St Germain's riches.

The French legend declined to twist the knife regarding Neymar. "We will see what happens," Zidane said. "He's a good player. They are our most important rivals but we lost our last match against

Manchester City and we want to put in a strong performance.

"We are happy, want to perform, we want to be physically better. That's our goal, but we are so happy to be here," Madrid will boast a strong squad although Real enters the match without Cristiano Ronaldo, who has missed the US tour.

"Yes I am happy with what we have right now," said Zidane. "But we have a good squad even though we are missing Cristiano here. He is on vacation, and he can enjoy that and be ready for the season."

Ronaldo kept the International Champions Cup organizers waiting until the very last minute before deciding he would not be playing. The Portuguese star has been in Asia completing commercial obligations and is expected in court on Monday in Madrid to testify in a tax-evasion case, meaning his presence in South Florida was always highly doubtful.

"Unfortunately, Ronaldo's personal commitments precluded him from being here," Charlie Stillitano, chairman of organisers Relevent Sports, told the Miami Herald. "He really wanted to be here. This is not a diva situation. He was hoping that he could make it. He waited until today to let us know, but it just didn't work out. We still have the two best teams and the top stars minus one." — AFP



EPE: Spain's team players take part in a training session during the UEFA Women's Euro 2017 football tournament in Epe city on Friday. — AFP

RONALDO TO START SEASON IN COURT

MADRID: Cristiano Ronaldo faces a brutal return to Madrid before starting pre-season training with Real Madrid as he is expected in court tomorrow, accused of evading millions in taxes. The 32-year-old-the world's highest paid athlete according to Forbes magazine-will be questioned by a court in Pozuelo de Alarcón, a wealthy suburb of Madrid where he lives, over allegations he evaded 14.7 million euros (\$17.2 million) in tax.

The Portuguese star follows in the steps of his arch-rival, Barcelona forward and Argentina star Lionel Messi, who was found guilty of the same offence last year, although the sums involved were smaller. Madrid's public prosecutors accuse Ronaldo of having taken "advantage of a company structure created in 2010 to hide income generated in Spain from his image rights from tax authorities".

They say this was a "voluntary and conscious breach of his fiscal obligations in Spain". Prosecutors accuse the four-time world player of the year of evading tax via a shell company based in the British Virgin Islands and another in Ireland, known for low corporate tax rates.

In addition, they say the Real Madrid striker only declared 11.5 million euros of Spanish-related income from 2011 to 2014, while what he really earned during that time was close to 43 million euros. And finally, they accuse him of "voluntarily" refusing to include 28.4 million euros in income linked to the sale of his image rights for the 2015 to 2020 period to a Spanish company.

'CONSCIENCE IS CLEAR'

Ronaldo has defended himself, saying his "conscience is clear". But the allegations still took their toll, and the man with the "CR7" brand, Real's all-time top goalscorer, threatened to leave Spain over the affair, giving supporters a fright.

He has since hinted he will stay on, telling Spanish sports daily Marca that he would like to continue to win trophies for Real. Ronaldo

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

His prison sentence has since been replaced by another fine of 252,000 euros, which corresponds to 400 euros for each day of jail. Barcelona's Argentine defender Javier Mascherano, meanwhile, agreed a one-year suspended sentence with authorities for tax fraud last year. Brazil star Neymar, another Barcelona forward, and his parents are also due to stand trial for alleged corruption over his transfer from Santos in 2013.

SUPER-AGENT MENDES

Real have not been spared either. Apart from Ronaldo, former player Angel di Maria, Portuguese defender Fabio Coentrao and Jose Mourinho, who coached the club from 2009 to 2013, have all been accused of tax fraud.

All are clients of super-agent Jorge Mendes, who was also questioned and put under official investigation last month by a Spanish court investigating alleged tax evasion by Monaco striker Radamel Falcao, another footballer in his stable.

Mendes defended himself, telling the closed door hearing that he "never" advised players in tax matters. Where Ronaldo is concerned, Mendes's company Gestifute has denied any "fiscal set-up" and said "the player didn't hide anything". But if he were put on trial and found guilty, Ronaldo risks "a fine of at least 28 million" euros and could potentially be jailed for three-and-a-half years, the Gestha union of experts at Spain's Inland Revenue has said.

Since extending his contract last November until 2021, Ronaldo is the highest paid sports star in the world with \$93 million (80 million euros) earned in 2016-2017, according to Forbes. — AFP



CARDIFF: Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo arrives at the team's hotel in Cardiff, south Wales, on June 2, 2017. Ronaldo heads to court tomorrow, accused of evading 14.7 million euros in tax through offshore companies. — AFP

SOCCER

SPAIN WON'T BUDGE FROM POSSESSION GAME: LOSADA

EPE: Spain will stick to their possession-based game despite almost missing out on the women's Euro knock-out stages after group losses to England and Scotland, midfielder Vicky Losada said. Tipped as one of the favourites to win the women's Euro, Spain were one goal away from elimination as a 1-0 defeat to minnows Scotland on Thursday, coupled with a 2-0 defeat to England, meant they squeaked through to the knock-out stages only on goal difference.

"We had a lot of chances and we couldn't score, we had maybe 15 long-distance shots," Losada told AFP on Friday from Spain's training centre in the central Dutch town of Epe. "The Scottish keeper yesterday (Thursday) was really good, I think we had eight clear chances to score and we were a bit unlucky."

"Yesterday it was hard for us to manage the situation, we were a bit nervous and we didn't show our real game that we've been playing."

Spain dominated possession in both games, with an impressive 74 percent against England and 69 percent against Scotland, but the goals did not come.

"I think we've been working since we were five years old on this philosophy of having long possession," said Losada, who has spent most of the last 13 years with Barca, barring brief stints with Espanyol, Western New York Flash and Arsenal. "Our players always want the ball. That's our philosophy, always have the ball and never give it away."

"But against England we missed a little bit of more direct football, and we're trying to get better at that." In today's quarter-final in Tilburg, Spain will face Euro newcomers Austria, the tournament's surprise package after topping their group following wins over Switzerland and Iceland and a 1-1 draw with France. "We're so happy now to be in the quarter-finals, we are one of the eight best

teams of Europe, so we're so proud as a team," said Losada, who scored the first of Spain's two goals in the tournament in the opening 2-0 win against Portugal.

She added it was time for Spain to start scoring against Austria, who are ranked 24th in the world to Spain's 13th.

"All the teams that we've played against, they had two narrow lines-that's been a problem for us, but we'll try to be better in that side of the game, try to shoot from long distance and then have more chances (on the rebound).

"That's what we want to try to do if Austria decide to play with a really compact team." Losada was on the Spanish team that reached the Euro quarter-finals in 2013, but didn't play in the 3-1 loss to Norway. "When you play all or nothing, it's easier. You just go to the pitch and we want to show our style, our game," she said. "I can't wait." — AFP



VIVA CONCLUDES VIVA MU SOCCER ACADEMY'S PLAYERS TRAINING CAMP

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the conclusion of VIVA Manchester United Soccer Academy's players training camp 2017, in Manchester.

The program included several workshops and activities educating the players on the best maneuvers, attacks, different scenarios and conditioned games. The program also

focused on different technical areas, such as dribbling, short passing, turning and finishing.

During the camp, the players visited Old Trafford Stadium and 5 special players have been honored: Makki Al-Gallaf, Khaled Al-Obayyan, Hasan Dashti, Hussein Dashti and Anwar Al-Jassar.

Commenting on this occasion, Abdelrazzaq Bader Al-Essa, Corporate Communications

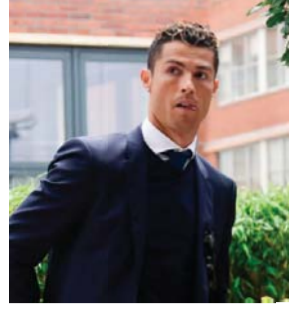
Director at VIVA said: "We are proud of the Kuwaiti players who engaged in this training camp and demonstrated high and significant soccer skills. We shared those players this unrivalled experience during their trip and we hope they carry on in this journey to reach more success." He added: "VIVA will keep supporting the Kuwaiti youth athletes to fulfill their dreams and accomplish their goals."

Sports

Crusaders beat Chiefs 27-13 in Super Rugby s-final



Ronaldo to start season in court



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GALLE: Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli plays a shot during the fourth day's play of the first Test cricket match between India and Sri Lanka in Galle, Sri Lanka, yesterday. — AP

INDIA THRASH S LANKA IN FIRST TEST

GALLE: India captain Virat Kohli completed his 17th Test ton yesterday and then let his bowlers demolish injury-hit Sri Lanka to claim a 304-run victory inside four days in the first Test. It was India's biggest winning margin in Sri Lanka and showed just why they are the top-ranked Test side in the world. Set a daunting 550 to win, Dimuth Karunaratne made 97 for Sri Lanka, but after his departure in the final session their hopes sank in Galle. With all-rounder Asela Gunaratne and stand-in captain Rangana Herath unable to bat through injury, Sri Lanka called it a day with eight wickets down and the total on 245. Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin each took three wickets for the dominant tourists. Kohli modestly called it a "clinical performance" after his side scored 600 in the first innings and then restricted Sri Lanka to 291. India lost the opening match in Galle two years ago, but went on to take the series 2-1 and then return to number one in the Test rankings in the following months.

"We are a more experienced side now. We are playing more consistent cricket and that shows," Kohli said after the big win. The captain reached an unbeaten 103 at the start of the day before declaring India's second innings on 240-3. He then gave his bowlers the job of grinding down the home side. Karunaratne's stubborn 208-ball innings took him past 2,500 career Test runs but there was not enough support at the other end. Mohammed Shami forced Karunaratne's fellow opener Upul Tharanga to play the ball onto his stumps for 10. Danushka Gunathilaka went for two, giving an easy catch to Cheteshwar Pujara at short square leg two overs later. Kusal Mendis made a promising 36 before he made the thinnest of touches to wicket-keeper Wriddhiman Saha. The TV umpire gave it out after a Kohli appeal. Former Sri Lanka skipper Angelo Mathews, with two to his name, gave the easiest of catches to Hardik Pandya as he skipped down the wicket looking for a big hit.

Wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella made 67 and his 101 partnership with Karunaratne raised Sri Lankan hopes for a while, before he was also caught behind. That brought in Dilruwan Perera, top scorer in Sri Lanka's first innings with 92. But Karunaratne paid the price for a rare rash shot and was bowled by Ashwin, who is now on 275 Test wickets. Nuwan Pradeep and Lahiru Kumara went within three overs, leaving Dilruwan stranded on 21. India's brilliant first innings-in which Shikhar Dhawan scored 192 and Pujara 153 — broke Sri Lanka on the first day. "We need to improve ourselves fast-the batting, bowling and fielding," said Sri Lankan captain Herath. Gunaratne has been ruled out of the rest of the series with a fractured finger but veteran Herath said his injured finger would be better again in a few days. The second Test starts in Colombo on August 3. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

GALLE: Final scoreboard from first Test between Sri Lanka and India at Galle yesterday.

India 1st innings 600: Dhawan 190, Pujara 153, Pradeep 6-132	D. Karunaratne not out 97
2nd innings (overnight 189-3)	U. Tharanga b Shami 10
S. Dhawan c Gunathilaka b Perera 14	M. Gunathilaka c Pujara b Yadav 2
A. Mukund lbw Gunathilaka 81	K. Mendis c Saha b Adejaja 36
C. Pujara c Mendis b Kumara 15	A. Mathews c Pandya b Jadeja 2
V. Kohli (c) not out 103	N. Dickwella c Saha b Ashwin 67
A. Rahane not out 23	Dilruwan Perera not out 21
Extras (w2, nb1 lb1) 4	N. Pradeep c Kohli b Ashwin 0
Total (53 overs - three wickets) 240	L. Kumara c Shami b Jadeja 0
Did not bat: H. Pandya, W. Saha, R. Ashwin, R. Jadeja, U. Yadav, M. Shami	Extras (w7, lb3) 10
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-56, 3-189	Total (76.5 overs) 245
Sri Lanka 1st innings 291: Tharanga 64, Mathews 83, Perera 92no; Jadeja 3-67	R Herath and A. Gunaratne did not bat injured
Sri Lanka 2nd innings	Bowling: M. Shami 9-0-43-1, U. Yadav 9-0-42-1, R. Jadeja 24.5-4-71-3, R. Ashwin 27-4-65-3, H. Pandya 7-0-21-0.
	Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-29, 3-108, 4-116, 5-217, 6-240, 7-240, 8-245.
	India win by 304 runs

BIZARRE OWN GOAL STEALS SHOW, INTER BEAT CHELSEA

SINGAPORE: Inter Milan's Geoffrey Kondogbia entered the annals of sporting infamy with a remarkable own goal but the Italian side held on to win 2-1 and condemn Chelsea to a successive pre-season defeat yesterday in Singapore. Inter led by two goals from the impressive Ivan Perisic and Stevan Jovetic, before what was supposed to be a routine backpass from substitute Kondogbia looped over his own goalkeeper and nestled into the top corner from fully 40 yards, stunning the crowd of over 32,000. Inter goalkeeper Daniele Padelli, who had no chance and held out his hands in astonishment, shrugged off the embarrassing mishap, saying afterwards it was merely "unlucky". Chelsea boss Antonio Conte was sympathetic: "It can happen, can happen-this is football." But the French midfielder Kondogbia was soon trending on Twitter with many calling his unintentional long-distance lob the best own goal of all time. It overshadowed what had otherwise been an impressive performance by Inter, and in particular Manchester United target Perisic. The Croatian winger played a central role and scored the Serie A side's second goal in the 53rd minute, latching on to a pass from Jovetic before applying a smart finish. In contrast, Chelsea's big-money signing Alvaro Morata was quiet on his first start since moving from Real Madrid last week and made little impact before being substituted in the 64th minute. Conte said that Morata, captured in a deal reported to be worth up to 80 million euros (\$94 million), was "working well" but conceded he needed to do better. "Today he tried to do his best, for sure, but he has to improve," said Conte. Inter dominated the early stages. In the first few minutes a defence-splitting Milan Skriniar pass found Antonio Candreva-reportedly a Chelsea transfer target-who forced Chelsea goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois into a fingertip save. With the game going a bit flat, the English

champions grew into their own. Willian had Chelsea's first real chance with a deflected effort in the 27th minute, before David Luiz fizzed a free-kick over. Inter found the breakthrough in the third minute of first-half stoppage time when Jovetic was awarded a penalty after being fouled in the box. His first effort was saved but the striker slotted

home the rebound. After Perisic's second, Inter nearly made it 3-0 as he squared to substitute Joao Mario, only for the midfielder to shoot straight at Courtois. Kondogbia's unfortunate intervention set up a nervy finish but Chelsea were unable to force the leveller. It was a second defeat on the spin after losing 3-2 to Bayern Munich in Singapore. — AFP



SINGAPORE: Chelsea's Willian (L) fights for the ball with Inter Milan's Joao Miranda during their International Champions Cup football match in Singapore yesterday. — AFP

JENNINGS RIDES HIS LUCK AS ENGLAND EXTEND LEAD

LONDON: Keaton Jennings survived a couple of scares against his native South Africa as England maintained their grip on the third Test at The Oval yesterday. England were 74 for one in their second innings, a lead of 252 runs at stumps on a gloomy third day where rain meant only 32 overs out of scheduled 98 were bowled. Jennings was 34 not out and Tom Westley, one of three debutants in England's XI, unbeaten on 28 in what is the 100th Test at The Oval. Johannesburg born and raised Jennings, the 11th man tried as an England Test opener alongside Alastair Cook since Andrew Strauss retired in 2012, was under pressure for his place after a run of low scores-including a duck in the first innings of this match. The 25-year-old Durham left-hander, England-qualified through his mother and by residence, nearly fell cheaply again to another slip catch by Dean Elgar off Vernon Philander only for an edge on six to be dropped on this occasion. Earlier, Temba Bavuma's gutsy 52 helped South Africa avoid the follow-on. His innings was the cornerstone of the Proteas' 175 all out. That left then 178 runs behind England's first innings 353, which featured Ben Stokes's 112 and former captain Cook's 88. Toby Roland-Jones, who'd removed all of South Africa's top four in a sensational debut display on Friday, had Bavuma caught behind to end the innings. Middlesex seamer Roland-Jones finished with figures of five for 57 in 16.4 overs. In the process he became

just the sixth England cricketer, and first since Graham Onions in 2009, to take five or more wickets in a debut Test bowling innings. South Africa resumed on 126 for eight, still 28 runs shy of avoiding the follow-on. Bavuma was 34 not out and Morne Morkel unbeaten on two, with this four-match series in the balance at 1-1 and the continued overcast conditions again favouring the faster bowlers.

PHILANDER RETURNS

South Africa were bolstered by knowing Philander had been passed fit after a night on a hospital drip that followed a second day's play from which the all-rounder was largely absent. The diminutive Bavuma had a reprieve on 40 when an edged drive off Stuart Broad flew low to gully where a diving Stokes could not hold what would have been a stunning catch. Bavuma subsequently ensured South Africa avoided the follow-on by driving a Broad half-volley through the covers for four. And he then produced an even better cover-driven four off James Anderson, with England's record Test wicket-taker hit on the up. But a valuable ninth-wicket partnership of 47 ended when Morkel (17) nicked Anderson to Cook at first slip. Bavuma's edge to the third man boundary off Roland-Jones saw him complete a hard-earned fifty off 111 balls, including eight fours. The worth of his more than three-hour innings was acknowledged by South Africa captain Faf du Plessis, who led the applause from the dressing room balcony.—AFP

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18 LESSONS FOR EVERY YOUNG JOB-SEEKER



COLOMBO: In this March 15, 2016 file photo, a Sri Lankan couple walk on the Galle Face green as the China Port City project is seen behind in Colombo, Sri Lanka. —AP

SRI LANKA, CHINA SEAL CONTROVERSIAL \$1BN PORT DEAL
MERCHANTS PORT HOLDINGS TAKES 70% STAKE IN HAMBANTOTA PORT

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka yesterday sealed a billion-dollar deal to let a Chinese state firm take over a loss-making port in a move that worries many, including its giant neighbor India.

The long-delayed \$1.1 billion sale of a 70 percent stake in Hambantota port, which straddles the world's busiest east-west shipping route, was confirmed by Sri Lanka's Ports Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe. The government used tough laws against industrial action to stop workers going on strike this week to oppose the sale to China Merchants Port Holdings. India is nervous about China's infrastructure moves into its traditional sphere of influence. "We have addressed geo-political concerns," the minister said at a signing ceremony in Colombo. "China has accepted that everything in this agreement will operate under Sri Lankan law." Negotiations over the

deal were held up for months amid opposition from trade unions and political parties.

The minister said this week that several countries had raised fears about the sale. India and the United States are known to be concerned that China getting a foothold at the deep-sea port could give it a military naval advantage in the Indian Ocean.

Samarasinghe said that Hambantota, 240 kilometres (150 miles) south of Colombo, will not be a military base for any country. China Merchants built and operates Sri Lanka's only major deep-sea terminal in Colombo, which can accommodate the world's largest container carriers.

Strategic partner

Executive vice president Hu Jianhua said the company wanted to make Hambantota the

gateway to expanding economies in South Asia and Africa where it has similar port operations. "(The) business of Hambantota port will be cross border, across the Indian ocean, stretching to the Far East, to Europe and to the globe," Hu said.

"Sri Lanka will be well positioned to play a strategic role in the one-belt-one-road initiative of the government of the People's Republic of China," Hu said. Sri Lanka has signed up to President Xi Jinping's signature foreign policy initiative, which aims to strengthen China's land and sea trade routes. India has snubbed Xi's plan and skipped a May summit in Beijing that was attended by world leaders. Samarasinghe said Hambantota will be purely a commercial port, but any routine port calls by foreign navies will be regulated by Sri Lanka as in the case with the Colombo port. Two Chinese sub-

marines called at Colombo in 2014 during the final year of former president Mahinda Rajapakse's tenure, angering New Delhi.

The new government of President Maithripala Sirisena turned down a Chinese request in May for another submarine call at Colombo shortly after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the island. Sirisena came to power in January 2015 promising to loosen ties with China after a decade of hefty funding by Beijing under his predecessor.

He suspended all big ticket Chinese funded projects amid allegations of corruption. These have resumed after modifications to the contracts with the previous government. Apart from the \$1.12 billion sale price, the Chinese firm will invest another \$600 million to develop Hambantota, Samarasinghe said. The port has racked up losses of \$300 million in the last six

years, according to official figures. In addition, the government pays more than \$60 million annually to service the port's debt.

China's influence in Sri Lanka makes neighboring India anxious because it considers the Indian Ocean region to be its strategic backyard. President Maithripala Sirisena has been trying to balance both Asian giants.

Sri Lankan officials have repeatedly reiterated that the port's security will be handled by Colombo in an attempt to allay the fears that the port could be used by Chinese as a military hub.

The agreement has ignited protests inside the country too and in January, hundreds of farmers and opposition supporters protested the plan to lease the port, saying the proposed partnership was akin to a sellout of the country. —Agencies

PHYSICAL OIL MARKET TIGHTENS AS REFINERS SCRAMBLE FOR CRUDE

LONDON: Physical crude markets are at last showing signs of tightening as record refinery consumption in the United States coincides with a slowdown in oil exports from the Middle East Gulf.

US refineries processed an average of almost 17.3 million barrels of crude per day last week, an increase of 620,000 barrels per day (bpd) compared with the same week in 2016. Fuel consumption by US motorists remains largely flat but US refineries are seeing higher demand for gasoline and diesel from Latin America where supplies have been hit by local refinery problems.

Refinery crude consumption remains high in most other geographical markets in an indication fuel demand is growing strongly, especially in emerging economies. OPEC exports have been rising as a result of increasing output from Libya and Nigeria, which are not capped under the organization's production deal, and poor compliance from some members.

But Saudi Arabia has been restricting exports in recent weeks and has stated exports will be below 6.6 million bpd in August, compared with 7.3 million bpd in August 2016, and the lowest for the month since 2010. Saudi Arabia and Iraq both tend to export less during the summer because they use more crude domestically to burn in power plants to meet air-conditioning demand.

So some of the slowdown in Saudi exports may be seasonal, but officials are keen to frame it as a deliberate policy to accelerate the reduction of global oil stocks. Saudi sources have said export allocations to the United States, Europe and Asia will all be cut

sharply in August.

The prospective reductions have left refiners scrambling to find replacement crude which is tightening the physical market for all grades. Demand for medium and heavy crudes, with a high yield of middle distillates, has been strong since the start of the year, helping narrow the light-heavy differential.

But intensive refinery runs during the second and third quarters have seen strong demand for light crudes as well, tightening the market for light oils, even as supplies from North America and Africa have increased. One consequence is that commercial crude stocks in the United States have fallen more rapidly than normal at this time of year and are now below year-ago levels.

The tightening supply-demand balance has been reflected in a sharp improvement in the calendar spreads for Brent crude for the remainder of 2017 and through 2018. The Brent spread between September and October 2017 has tightened to just 3 cents per barrel contango on Thursday, from 32 cents per barrel in the middle of June. Other inter-month spreads have also tightened significantly with a tighter contango indicating traders now expect a lower level of inventories throughout the period. The physical crude market now looks significantly tighter than it did in the first half of June, which has coincided with a renewed rise in bullish hedge fund positions and a modest rise in spot prices. The critical question is how much of this improvement is seasonal and how much will be sustained once summer is over. —Reuters

IMF: DOLLAR OVERVALUED; EURO, YEN, YUAN IN LINE WITH FUNDAMENTALS

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund on Friday said that the US dollar was overvalued by 10 percent to 20 percent, based on US near-term economic fundamentals, while it viewed valuations of the euro, Japan's yen, and China's yuan as broadly in line with fundamentals.

The IMF's External Sector Report - an annual assessment of currencies and external surpluses and deficits of major economies - showed that external current account deficits were becoming more concentrated in certain advanced economies such as the United States and Britain, while surpluses remained persistent in China and Germany. While the report assessed the euro's valuation as appropriate for the eurozone as a whole, it said the euro's real effective exchange rate was 10-20 percent too low for Germany's fundamentals, given its high current account surplus.

Britain's pound, meanwhile, was assessed as up to 15 percent overvalued compared to fundamentals, which include a high level of uncertainty over Britain's post-Brexit trading relationship with the European Union.

The Fund said the dollar's appreciation in recent years was based on its relatively stronger growth outlook, interest rate hikes versus looser monetary policy in the eurozone and Japan, as well as expectations for fiscal stimulus from President Donald Trump's administration.

But so far this year, the dollar index, the broad measure of its value against other major currencies, is down more than 8 percent this year and is off to the worst start to a year since 2002.

The IMF recommended that US authorities take steps to shrink a current account deficit that remains too large, by reducing its federal budget deficit and passing structural reforms to increase the savings rate and improve the economy's productivity. "It's important to address imbalances, because if they're not dealt with appropriately and through the right policies, we could have a backlash in the form of protectionism," IMF Research Division Chief Luis Cubeddu told a news conference.

Cubeddu said that the persistence of current account surpluses in export countries such as China and

the growth of deficits in debtor countries such as the United States suggested that the problem would not clear up automatically. "That is, prices, savings and investment decisions don't seem to be adjusting fast enough to correct imbalances. This partly reflects rigid currency arrangements, but also certain structural features, like inadequate safety nets, barriers to investment, which leads to undesirable levels of savings and investment," he said.

The report said that while China's yuan was broadly in line with its fundamentals, IMF models showed wide divergences with desired policies from a 10 percent overvaluation to a 10 percent undervaluation due to uncertainties over Beijing's policy outlook.

The US Treasury in April refrained from declaring China a currency manipulator despite Trump's campaign promises to do so, citing Beijing's interventions last year to prop up the yuan's value in the face of capital outflows. But it kept China, South Korea, Taiwan, Germany and Switzerland on a monitoring list for large external surpluses. —Reuters

STRONG DEMAND AT AMERICAN AIRLINES; LEAN TIMES AHEAD?

Q2 PROFIT FALLS 15% ON FUEL AND LABOR COSTS

DALLAS: Double-digit increases in fuel and labor costs caused second-quarter profit at American Airlines to fall 15 percent despite higher revenue. The world's biggest airline still beat Wall Street expectations, earning \$803 million in the quarter, which marks the start of the key summer-vacation travel season.

Like other airlines, American is enjoying demand that is strong enough to push up average fares and fees. A key figure that roughly parallels fares jumped 5.7 percent in the quarter, but American on Friday predicted a much more modest increase - between 0.5 percent and 2.5 percent - in the same figure during the July-through-September period. An executive told analysts the fourth quarter would be better than the third, although he gave no numbers.

Investors, increasingly worried about airlines cutting prices to hang on to their share of passengers, sold off shares Friday afternoon. Shares of American Airlines Group Inc. fell 58 cents, to \$49.42. American's results wrapped up a rocky earnings season for the major US airlines. It started with a thud when United Airlines gave a poor revenue prognosis for the third quarter and continued with a weak third-quarter forecast on average fares from Southwest Airlines, which carries more US passengers than anyone. Along the way, executives at several airlines spoke about lower fares in markets stretching from New York to Florida to Denver.

Price-cutting during the peak summer season is rare, said Cowen and Co. analyst Helene Becker. She said it was understandable that American would try to calm nervous investors by sounding upbeat about the fourth quarter, but it was too early to tell what might happen given all the talk from other airlines about discounting domestic fares.

Airlines are looking for new ways to raise revenue, including cramming more people in their planes. American recently backed off a plan to move the last three rows in new Boeing 737 jets closer together. It would have brought in more money by making room for another row of roomier, higher-priced seats toward the front of each plane.

Pushback

"We got a lot of pushback from our cus-



MIAMI: In this May 27, 2015 file photo, an American Airlines jet taxis to the gate at Miami International Airport, in Miami. American Airlines Group, Inc reported earnings on Friday.—AP

tomers and most notably" from flight attendants, said CEO Doug Parker. So the airline yielded - by an inch. Instead of rows being 29 inches apart - that distance is called "pitch" in the airline business - they will be 30 inches apart.

Parker said management learned that while the move might have raised revenue, it "wasn't worth it." Some lawmakers responded by proposing federal regulations on seat size and legroom. American and other big US airlines have an ambitious agenda in Washington but so far appear stymied in efforts to address what American, Delta and United claim is unfair competition from three Middle Eastern carriers, to privatize the air traffic control system, and to block increases in government fees on airline tickets. "Let's face it, there is a lot going on in Washington and a lot of drama," and it's not a good environment to discuss airline issues, said Stephen Johnson, the execu-

tive vice president who oversees American's lobbying efforts. He noted that there is opposition to American's issues. Johnson said that after Congress takes its August recess, "hopefully we will be able to reset and focus on other things in September and October and be able to move these issues forward." American, based in Fort Worth, Texas, reported that second-quarter profit fell \$147 million from the same period last year. Excluding one-time items, the company said adjusted profit was \$1.92 per share. That beat the \$1.87 per share average forecast among analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research.

Revenue rose 7 percent to \$11.11 billion, but costs jumped 11 percent, leading to lower profit. Labor, American's biggest expense, increased more than 12 percent after the company granted pay increases last year, and fuel spending climbed 15 percent on higher pump prices.—AP

WELLS FARGO IN ANOTHER SCANDAL, THIS TIME IN AUTO LENDING

NEW YORK: Scandal-plagued Wells Fargo is back in hot water for signing customers up for products that they didn't need or want. This time it's auto insurance, and the bank says it may have cost about 20,000 people their cars. San Francisco-based Wells Fargo acknowledged late Thursday that it enrolled roughly 570,000 auto loan borrowers for what's known as collateral production insurance on their vehicles when the customers already had appropriate insurance. It will pay \$80 million in refunds and account adjustments to those people.

"We take full responsibility for our failure ... and are extremely sorry for any harm this caused our customers, who expect and deserve better from us," said Franklin Codel, the head of Wells Fargo Consumer Lending, in a statement.

If the situation seems familiar, it is. Nearly a year ago, Wells Fargo admitted that its employees opened up to 2 million accounts for customers without getting their permission in order to meet overly aggressive sales goals. The bank paid \$180 million in fines and penalties and recently reached a settlement to pay an additional \$142 million to customers through a class-action lawsuit.

That scandal cost then-CEO John Stumpf his job, and the bank's once-sterling industry reputation was in tatters. The bank's new management has been trying to amend with customers, politicians and the public ever since. Politicians from both parties were angry with Wells Fargo when the scandal broke last year, and a couple high-profile Democrats were quick to turn up the heat again.

"The constant drip drop of fraudulent activities coming out of Wells Fargo is absolutely outrageous," said

Rep. Maxine Waters of California, the top-ranking Democrat on the House Financial Services Committee. Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts called for the Federal Reserve to remove Wells' board of directors. This is not the first time Wells Fargo's auto lending business has come under scrutiny. The bank reached a \$4 million settlement with the Justice Department last September for illegally repossessing vehicles from servicemen and women.

In this case, the bank reviewed auto policies placed between 2012 and 2017. Like most auto loan companies, Wells Fargo required borrowers to have comprehensive and collision insurance. If they didn't have comprehensive coverage, Wells would purchase it for the customer and charge them for it.

Wells acknowledged its systems signed up customers who already had insurance. Worse, roughly 20,000 customers were unable to afford the car payment plus the insurance that some did not realize had been added to what they owed, and that "may have contributed to a default that led to their vehicle's repossession," the bank said.

The damage may be even larger. The New York Times reported that as many as 800,000 customers may have been affected, of which 274,000 fell into default because they could not afford the premiums and monthly payment and 25,000 of them may have had their vehicles repossessed.

The problems with the insurance program were found in July 2016, the bank said, and it was discontinued in September of that year. The bank said it will start contacting affected customers in August and will reach out to the major credit bureaus to correct customers' credit histories.—AP

NEW YORK START-UPS SHINE LIGHT ON NEW PATHS FOR WORLD CITIES

NEW YORK: Snapping off a leaf of crisp baby lettuce, entrepreneur Andrew Shearer can demonstrate how colored lights in a hydroponic cabinet boost nutrients or alter the flavors and colors of plants that can be grown in a restaurant kitchen. Strawberries, peppers and tomatoes are the next crops for his start-up Farmshef, which aims to cut food miles and waste by selling the automated systems to grow vegetables for commercial use, home kitchens and even mobile vans.

"Going the next step, changing the way the food supply system can work for the highly perishable items that often end up in the landfill," said Shearer, 27, at the New Lab workspace at Brooklyn Navy Yard (BNYDC).

Farmshef is one of 95 companies at New Lab in the former shipyard, home to firms such as Honeybee Robotics, which makes arms for Mars rovers and mouse-sized robots, and Spacial, where one of its drone blimps hangs from the ceiling. Cities around the world are looking to BNYDC for inspiration as they struggle to replace declining industrial jobs with well-paid alternatives while regenerating areas left vacant and neglected by dying industries. Once a thriving center on New York City's East River employing 70,000 people, Brooklyn's waterfront fell into dereliction as the shipbuilding business shut down, said David Ehrenberg, BNYDC chief executive. Packs of feral dogs would chase prospective tenants away as

efforts at a revamp got underway, he said. Fifteen years later, the yard is home to 330 companies and employs 7,000 people in what has become a hip neighborhood dotted with housing projects and chic apartment buildings.

BNYDC partners with struggling local schools to get children interested in fields such as robotics and internships or jobs with one of the cutting-edge companies, Ehrenberg said. "If things work out well, other cities can end up where we've ended up, he said. Alongside entrepreneurs developing nanotechnology or designing kinetic furniture, other companies at BNYDC are creating hundreds of blue-collar jobs, which urban experts say is key to making communities economically resilient.

At Steiner Studios, where the hit HBO series "Girls" was filmed, more than half the employees work in jobs such as on-set carpenters or electricians. Crye Protection employs more than 200 people, many of whom sew specialized camouflage gear and bendable body armor.

To be resilient, "any city can't be over reliant on a single industry, whether that be Rotterdam and the port, New Orleans and petrochemicals, New York and finance," said Michael Berkowitz, president of the 100 Resilient Cities program.

The Rockefeller Foundation-backed \$164 million program aims to help urban areas protect themselves from stresses and shocks.

"There's no one magic bullet," Berkowitz said. For cities such as Glasgow in Scotland, once the world's biggest shipbuilder, a challenge is making growth inclusive as it looks to fill the space left vacant by industry and find new ways to use existing manufacturing skills.

"We're looking at the diversification of our economy. We're too dependant on bashing metal. But those same engineering skills and links to universities are ones we can use again," said Duncan Booker, chief resilience officer for Glasgow.

"We're not going to get that mass employment again, but we can get lots of lots of clusters of smaller companies and some of the larger manufacturing companies and utilities to take on people," he said. Repurposing a one million-

square foot (305,000 square meters) of space for entrepreneurs seeking solutions to flooding and climate change is an option being considered in New Orleans as the city tries to shift away from dependence on the petrochemical industry.

"For us, it's also about transitioning our people from the oil economy to the blue and green economy of the future," said Jeff Hebert, chief resilience officer and deputy mayor of New Orleans, using terms used to describe sustainable ocean and environmental practices. "The most important part for us is to make sure we are training the people of the city, not just kids ... but people who are currently unemployed or underemployed so they can take advantage of innovations in the new economy," he said.—Reuters

SWITZERLAND'S UBS SEES Q2 PROFIT JUMP 14%

BERLIN: Swiss bank UBS says its earnings rose 14 percent in the second quarter as its wealth management operation performed strongly. UBS said Friday that net profit for the April-June period was up to 1.17 billion francs (\$1.2 billion) from 1.03 billion francs a year earlier. The company also saw operating expenses decline and said that it is on track to reach its cost-saving target for the year.

UBS said increased client activity and US dollar interest rate rises helped drive profit growth in its global wealth management business. CEO Sergio Ermotti said that "considering market conditions, the second quarter results were very good and contributed to a strong first half of the year." First-half net profit was up 40 percent from a year earlier at 2.44 billion francs.—AP

NA ISLAND BUSINESSES FRET ABOUT POWER OUTAGE LOSSES

A power outage that drove tourists from two North Carolina islands wiped out a significant chunk of the lucrative summer months for local businesses. It could take days or weeks to repair an underground transmission line damaged early Thursday by construction crews working on a new bridge between islands.

Business owners were upset that the disaster was caused by human error, not Mother Nature. The construction company drove a steel casing into an underground transmission line, causing blackouts on Ocracoke and Hatteras islands. "It's a hard pill to swallow that someone forgot where the power cable was," said Jason Wells, owner of Jason's Restaurant on Ocracoke Island. "How do you forget where the power cable is?"

Wells said his restaurant, closed by the outage, is missing out on at least \$5,000 a day in sales. He said many seasonal businesses close for one-third of the year, making the summer months essential to their bottom lines. His 25 workers typically make between \$75 and \$250 a day.

"So when you take this hit in July and factor in that you're only open eight months out of the year, it's big," he said. "It's a lot more than people even realize."

He estimated that total losses for shops, hotels and restaurants on the island could easily top \$100,000 per day. Cars lined up Friday to get on ferries, the only way off Ocracoke Island, after about 10,000 tourists were ordered to evacuate. Visitors to Hatteras Island, south of Oregon Inlet, were told to evacuate by 6 am yesterday.

Evacuation

Several evacuating visitors said they were more worried about the local businesses than their shortened vacations. "It's going to be hard on the economy. I think that's the thing that bothers me the

most," said Stacy Huggins, a Virginia resident leaving Ocracoke Island on Friday. "They work really hard during the tourist season to create that experience for everybody else, and the impact of this for them, economically, is going to be really, really bad, really devastating for the next few weeks."

The company doing the bridge construction, PCL Construction, was digging at the site Friday to determine the extent of the damage to the underground transmission line. A better estimate of how long the power would be out was expected during the next day or two.

Emergency generators were brought in, but they were intended to power only necessities such as refrigerators and fans. Dawn Taylor opened up the doors and windows in her home on Hatteras Island to keep it as cool as possible. Taylor works at a gift shop that features clay pottery and other crafts. The shop was slated to hold three classes on Friday, but the outage scuttled those plans.

While her shop may have lost classes, Taylor is worried that others are losing even more. Hatteras and Ocracoke islands have about 5,000 permanent residents. "We just really have to ride it out and wait and see," she said. "But there are so many on the island who live paycheck to paycheck. How are they going to make it? "No one's in the cottages. They're not going to the restaurants. It all trickles down," Taylor said. "It affects everyone on the island."

One of the few Ocracoke restaurants that stayed open with its own generator was Howard's Pub, but owner Ann Warner said business had plummeted as tourists streamed off the island. Her restaurant would usually be packed for Friday lunch. "It's sort of like someone came in with a sweeper," Warner said.—AP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

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

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

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

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	302.700
Euro	358.090
Sterling Pound	399.560
Canadian dollar	244.900
Turkish Lira	86.490

Swiss Franc	315.310
Australian Dollar	244.730
US Dollar Buying	301.500

GOLD	
20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

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

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.280
Thai Baht	10.050
Turkish Lira	86.255

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
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

18 LESSONS FOR EVERY YOUNG JOB-SEEKER

It seems like a maze. You don't know which path to take, which turn to make, and which tools to use. Searching for a job for the very first time can be an overwhelming experience.

Everyone remembers the days of applying for their first jobs; constantly enlarging CVs, submitting applications left and right, ignoring strict qualifications and requirements, and just trying to be considered for more and more career opportunities.

By looking back at the early job search days, we can certainly see which avenues job seekers pursue correctly, and which they are blinded to. The nervousness and the eagerness to get a job can cause many mistakes. By working for the Middle East's #1 Job Site, Bayt.com, one comes to understand more deeply the tricks and tools that are most effective during a job search and application process.

Here are 18 of the most important lessons that will benefit all of you in your next job search:

1. More is not always better

Many of us are faulty of this. We think that the more items and details we have on our CVs, the more impressive it is. But that is just wrong. If the employer is unable to quickly find the most relevant and most impressive details about a job candidate, they will quickly ignore the entire application.

2. Relevancy is key

This also relates to our tendency to do more and more. Applying to as many jobs as possible, without regard to the requirements and specifications of the vacancies, is not wise. Do not waste your time on jobs that are completely out of your field or experience level. Stick to the ones you are truly interested, qualified, and available for.

3. Research is underrated

We say this at Bayt.com often, but many job seekers ignore it: Do the research. Understanding what industry, country, company, and position you are applying for will make your application much stronger and your performance during the interview process more impressive.

Bayt.com weekly report

4. Optional is not really optional

Very often, we look at these application items (sans asterisk) and smile at the fact that they are optional. Things like cover letters, questionnaires, and recommendations are often not mandatory. But, in reality, the employer will be much more likely to follow up with you if you give them sufficient information and show them that you go the extra mile.

5. Generic cover letters are silly

It is almost better to not send a cover letter than to send one that is completely irrelevant or obviously generic. Trust me, employers will instantly tell if your cover letter has been recycled over and over. Make sure your cover letters are very specific to every job you apply for.

6. Typos are rarely tolerated

With only written documents at hand, the employer has to be extra strict during the first round of evaluation. Therefore, a CV or a cover letter that has typos or grammatical error will almost always get rejected. Don't underestimate the power of proofreading (multiple times) before submitting any item.

7. Ego-centrism is an automatic rejection

It is easy to get carried away and spend hours and hours talking about how qualified you are, how amazing your skills are, and how this company and position will help you grow, succeed, and make your dreams come true. Sadly, it is not about you. Your application needs to be more about "them" or the employer. How are you going to add value? How are you going to benefit the company?

8. Less telling, more showing

Anyone can say that they are "great team-players" or that they have "amazing leadership skills" or that they are "highly attentive to details." But that is

called telling. To have a more effective application you should show the employer your qualification by providing very specific examples and descriptions of your experience and skills.

9. Practice makes perfect

How tempting is it to just wing an interview and trust your communication skills? It is very tempting, but why take the risk? Always research the company, prepare answers to the most common interview questions, and practice with a friend or in front of a mirror.

10. Questions are smart

Being able to answer questions on the job application or during an interview is great! But so is asking questions. Don't feel shy or apologetic about asking questions. It will show the employer how serious, determined, and invested you are for the vacant position.

11. Money comes last

Never, ever, bring the salary question too early. By too early we mean before you have at least a verbal offer. Talking about money at the beginning of the application journey is never a good signal to the employer.

12. Waiting for a response is wasteful

Don't sit by your phone waiting for the employer to call you. Don't glue your eyes to your email anticipating that follow up letter. This may sound harsh, but you should always assume that you have been rejected. After you submit a job application, get ready and start applying for the next relevant position.

13. No-response is not a dead-end

Yes, we don't recommend getting hung up on one opportunity. However, if you have not heard from an employer and you are still interested, then

follow up! Show the company that you are truly determined. There is always a chance that they will listen and give you another chance.

14. It is never too early to apply

Many job seekers wait until the last minute, when they absolutely need a job, to start researching and applying. The reality is, getting a job can be a very lengthy process. So, it is recommended that you always plan ahead of time. If you are a student, start searching and applying before you graduate.

15. It is never too late to apply

Sometimes, an older job posting or a long period of unemployment may cause job seekers to feel less interested in applying for jobs. Forget about that and know that you should always chase your career passions and apply to jobs that interest you.

16. Be on alert mode

Alert mode means you are actively looking for jobs, pursuing many options and opportunities, but also maintaining a strong professional presence and profile. You never know, jobs may come your way! In fact, employers who use Bayt.com can contact registered professionals for unadvertised jobs.

17. Break the rules

Sometimes, you may need to be as creative as possible. For example, if you are highly (and truly) interested in a particular position but don't have the relevant experience, you can still apply and communicate your interest. Likewise, you can get innovative with your application material, whether through video CVs, portfolios, or presentation, you can always find a new way to reach your dream job.

18. Trust Yourself

Much of how you portray yourself, whether verbally or in written format, relates to your confidence. Trust your skills and qualifications, be assertive, speak with conviction and balance, and enjoy the process. Now where do you do? You can start by applying for over 10,000 jobs on Bayt.com!

FTA - LAND & MARITIME HOLDS CONFERENCE FOR IMO MEMBERS

DUBAI: Dr Abdullah Belheif Al-Nuaimi, Minister of Infrastructure Development and Chairman of the FTA, chaired the delegation participating in the meetings of the General Committee of the International Maritime Organization, which will continue until July 28, 2017, to discuss the most important issues related to the maritime sector.

In his speech, Dr Al-Nuaimi showcased the UAE's proven contributions to the global maritime industry as one of the world's major influencers, in addition to the country's unprecedented achievements in maritime infrastructure. The UAE boasts of 20 leading world-class ports, a majority of which are among the top 10 international ports in terms of advanced transport and maritime shipping infrastructure.

He also noted that the UAE has solidified its leading maritime position by hosting well-known maritime-related events and conferences, including the UAE Maritime Week, Dubai Maritime Week, Dubai Maritime Summit, Abu Dhabi Summit of Global Marine and Maritime Leaders, International Fujairah Bunkering and Fuel Oil Forum, and many other regional and international gatherings. These initiatives have placed the UAE among the ranks of the most prominent international maritime capitals.

According to Al-Nuaimi, the country's highly competitive advantages have positioned it alongside the world's most prominent and leading countries with best-in-class maritime industries. As such, the UAE is qualified as an IMO Category B member. Ten countries with major interests in the international maritime trade have won membership in the category.

Furthermore, he noted that the local maritime sector's steady growth is the result of the UAE Government's relentless improvement efforts. Thanks to its strategic geographical location as well, the country has one of the busiest commercial waterways in the world. It is considered as one of the leading maritime trading platforms in the Arabian Gulf, East Africa, Indian Subcontinent, Europe, and Asia. The global maritime market has increased over the past years in a world where 90 per cent of trade activities is still dependent on shipping.

The UAE has been a productive IMO member since 1980 due to its highly diversified maritime sector and rich maritime heritage. With a strong presence on the global maritime map, the country has been continuously reinforcing its regional and international cooperation. The UAE, considered one of the world's fastest-growing maritime hubs and one of the most economically and commercially developed maritime markets in the Middle East, has also consistently sought ways to add value to world trade, the international maritime transport, and marine shipping. To maintain its competitive edge, the UAE constantly develops and implements maritime transport regulations as part of its commitment to help improve the international maritime system. "For all these reasons, we stress that the candidacy and winning the nomination to the Council Membership is the UAE's fundamental and inalienable right. To prove its eligibility even more, the country will

continue to implement initiatives that will ensure international maritime success, maintain its leadership, and promote greater regional growth. We will strive harder under the guidance of our forward-looking leaders, leveraging our vast experiences to succeed in our goal," concluded H.E.

The meeting witnessed a detailed presentation on of the UAE's candidacy filed before the Executive Council was featured during the conference. With its filing done in the presence of high-level international delegations, the presentation threw the spotlight on the country's contributions to the international maritime system; its active involvements in a number of IMO agreements; its role in supporting the local, regional, and global maritime sectors; and its deep-rooted maritime history.

During the meeting, Abdullah Al-Nuaimi was also able to meet with Kitack Lim, Secretary General of the IMO, wherein he shared the role of the UAE in improving the international maritime system and boosting the growth of international maritime trade. He also talked about the UAE's successful experience as an incubator for 20 of the world's most important ports. He shared the most important laws and regulations pertaining to the maritime sector in the UAE and its conformity with the most important international standards. As well as the file nominating the UAE to the membership of the Organization.

Kitack Lim praised the unique features of the maritime sector in the UAE and the important role it plays in supporting the global maritime sector and the keenness of the UAE side to develop the maritime transport sector, implement international maritime safety standards, and build new human and technical capacities and resources to keep pace with the continuous development in the transport sector, through the cooperation between the organization and the UAE authorities working in this field. The members are scheduled to be elected at the 30th Ordinary General Assembly meeting between November 24 and December 5.

In the presence of Dr Abdullah Al-Nuaimi, the authority held a coordination meeting in London, of the Member States of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The meeting witnessed a detailed presentation of the UAE's candidacy for the Council in the presence of high-level delegations from around the world. The presentation included the contributions of the UAE in upgrading the international maritime system, its participation in the IMO conventions and its role in supporting the marine sector locally, regionally and globally, as well as its long history in the maritime field and maritime industry.

The UAE team was formed to oversee the country's bid to join the IMO's Executive Council. The team is composed of representatives from the FTA; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Energy; the General Authority for the Security of Ports, Borders and Free Zones; the Federal Customs Authority; the Dubai Maritime City Authority; the Department of Municipal Affairs and Transport; the Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. (ADNOC); Dubai International Ports; DP World; the Abu Dhabi Ports Company; Sharjah Department of Seaports and Customs; SAQR Ports Authority in Ras Al-Khaimah; and the UAE Classification Society - TASNEEF.



On the sidelines of the press conference.

KFH, MASTERCARD LAUNCH INNOVATIVE 'MOBILE WALLET PAYMENT SERVICE'

KFH FIRST BANK IN MEA TO LAUNCH A MOBILE WALLET BASED SERVICE



Mandani speaking at press conference.

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH), the world's leading Islamic financial institution and MasterCard, a leading technology company in the global payments industry, have announced the launch of a 'Mobile Wallet Payment Service' for the bank's MasterCard credit and prepaid cardholders.

Group Chief Retail and Private Banking Officer at KFH, Waleed Mandani said that KFH is the first bank in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region to launch a mobile wallet based on the MDES platform.

He added, during his speech at a press conference held to unveil the service, that the innovative 'KFH Wallet' service is powered by the MasterCard Digital Enablement Service (MDES), a revolutionary platform that helps transform any connected device into a commerce device to conveniently make and receive payments. By replacing card numbers with a digital token unique to the mobile device, MDES creates EMV-like security for every transaction, giving cardholders peace of mind wherever they tap for payments.

Mandani indicated that the new service will enable KFH customers to pay for their purchases by simply tapping their smart phones at Point of Sale (POS) terminals equipped with Near Field Communication (NFC) technology. Customers holding KFH MasterCard credit or prepaid cards can easily add their card details on the KFH Wallet mobile



Demonstrating the service.

application and activate their cards through a secured authentication process. After loading their cards on the app, customers can safely use the service to make payments at all NFC-enabled POS terminals in Kuwait and abroad.

"As part of its commitment to continuously enhancing the customer experience, KFH remains dedicated to utilizing technology in a way that optimally meets their evolving needs, especially as they become more and more digitally savvy. KFH will continue to update and improve its technological service offerings in an effort to become the best and most technologically-advanced bank in the region, using the highest and most advanced tools and developments in both banking and innovation," he continued.

"The service is similar to Apple Pay and Samsung Pay and other mobile payment services that are currently being introduced by banks around the globe. The transactions, in addition to being EMV-compliant, will have an additional layer of security that requires users to enter a PIN or a fingerprint ID before completing the transaction," he concluded.

"The 'KFH Wallet Service' is based on our advanced tokenization service, which is used by leading banks worldwide for their mobile payment solutions through the MasterCard Digital Enablement Service. The service lets KFH customers replace their wallets with their smart-

phones, allowing them to make fast and secure in-app payments everywhere they see the 'contactless' symbol, whether at home or abroad," said Pankaj Kathuria, Area Business Head, Northern Gulf, MasterCard.



KFH Wallet
 The innovative 'KFH Wallet' service is powered by the MasterCard Digital Enablement Service (MDES), a revolutionary platform that helps transform any connected device into a commerce device to conveniently make and receive payments. By replacing card numbers with a digital token unique to the mobile device, MDES creates EMV-like security for every transaction, giving cardholders peace of mind wherever they tap for payments.

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In a Luxurious and Privileged Compound at Abou Halifa Region Facing the National Park and the Sea

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Ask about your offer

Duplex & Triplex Villas

3/4 Bedrooms + 3/4 Bathrooms
 +Big Salon + Separate pool
 All Master Bathrooms is Marble

Volleyball Court / Basketball Court / Hotel Lobby
 Pools + Jacuzzi / Billiard / 213 Car Parking Areas

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SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY					SECTORS INDICES PERFORMANCE				
Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %	Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
OIL & GAS	26,470,732	4.18%	1,188,625	1.17%	OIL & GAS	1,012.46	1,009.07	0.34%	29.69%
BASIC MATERIALS	4,551,668	0.72%	1,833,862	1.80%	BASIC MATERIALS	1,263.25	1,239.18	1.94%	25.72%
INDUSTRIALS	21,610,750	3.41%	9,419,849	9.27%	INDUSTRIALS	1,887.23	1,894.60	-0.39%	40.42%
CONSUMER GOODS	3,361,355	0.53%	2,040,495	2.01%	CONSUMER GOODS	1,023.35	1,073.22	-4.65%	-9.04%
HEALTH CARE	31,575	0.00%	5,459	0.0054%	HEALTH CARE	1,510.51	1,499.39	0.74%	21.38%
CONSUMER SERVICES	5,055,249	0.80%	768,114	0.76%	CONSUMER SERVICES	1,040.94	1,042.72	-0.17%	12.59%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	24,695,074	3.90%	8,356,205	8.22%	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	609.91	598.67	1.88%	-4.13%
BANKS	120,724,329	19.05%	44,000,937	43.31%	BANKS	956.70	923.89	3.55%	14.27%
INSURANCE	397,803	0.06%	26,840	0.03%	INSURANCE	1,020.81	1,005.53	1.52%	2.67%
REAL ESTATE	186,155,575	29.37%	11,125,147	10.95%	REAL ESTATE	959.30	955.82	0.36%	10.24%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	240,114,189	37.88%	22,745,365	22.39%	FINANCIAL SERVICES	690.87	687.91	0.43%	15.71%
TECHNOLOGY	664,739	0.10%	91,378	0.09%	TECHNOLOGY	702.98	696.44	0.94%	15.78%

BOURSA KUWAIT EQUITIES RALLY ON POSITIVE SENTIMENT

BAYAN WEEKLY MARKET REPORT

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week in green zone. The Price Index closed at 6,805.31 points, up by 0.36 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index increased by 2.36 percent after closing at 417.34 points, whereas the KXS-15 Index closed at 954.42 points up by 2.48 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover increased by 40.73 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD20.32 million, whereas trading volume average was 126.77 million shares, recording an increase of 45.68 percent.

The three Boursa indices were able to end the week's trading in the green zone supported by the heavy purchasing operations that targeted some leading stocks, especially in the Banks sector, in addition to the speculative operations that concentrated on the small-cap stocks and the idle stocks, especially the ones priced less than its book-value. The market witnessed such performance during the last week amid an optimism in the half-year results of many listed companies, especially for the leading companies' stocks, which positively reflected on the performance of the Weighted and KXS-15 indices in particular, which were able to realize large increases during the week to reach its highest levels since last April. The positive performance for the Boursa during the last week came in parallel with the increase in the trading activity, compared a week earlier, especially the cash liquidity which was the highest, as it reached 43.31 percent.

As a result to the good performance, the Boursa was able to add more than half billion dinars to its market capitalization during the last five sessions, as the total value for the listed stocks in the official market reached by the end of last week KD27.58 billion, against KD26.96 billion at the end of the previous week, up by KD610.09 million and by 2.26 percent. On an annual level, the gains of the market cap reached 8.52 percent compared to its value at end of 2016, where it reached then KD25.41 billion. (Note: the market capitalization for the listed companies in the primary market is calculated based on the average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available financial statements)

As per the daily trading activity, Boursa Kuwait initiated the first session of the last week recording different gains for the three indices, amid a noticeable increase in the trading activity, especially the cash liquidity, which recorded a growth of 28.95 percent to reach by the end of the session around KD 21.4 million, supported by the purchasing activity that was present during the session and the collection operations that concentrated on the leading stocks, in addition to the quick speculations executed on some small-cap stocks. On the next session, the Boursa continued its gains, and the three indices were able to end the session in the green zone supported by the continued strong purchasing power that concentrated on the leading and heavy stocks, in addition to the quick speculative operations on some small-cap stocks, amid a continued increase in the value for the second consecutive session, to reach more than KD25 million.

The Boursa continued its active performance in the mid-week session and was able to realize gains for the three

indices amid the continued purchasing operations in controlling the trading activity, and the concentration of the traders over the leading stocks which disclosed positive results for the first half of the year, in addition to the continued quick speculation on a number of small-cap stocks.

On Wednesday, the Boursa witnessed mixed closings for the three indices, whereas the Price Index and the Weighted index were able to continue realizing small gains at the end of the session, supported by the active speculations and the random purchasing operations executed on a number of small-cap stocks and some heavy stocks, while KXS-15 Index declined affected by the profit collection operations that targeted some leading and operational stocks that falls within the Index. The end of week session witnessed mixed performance with changing positions, as the Price Index and the Weighted Index fell under the influence of the profit collection operations to close at the end of the session in the red zone, while the KXS-15 Index was able to return to the green zone supported by the positive trading witnessed by some leading stocks. For the annual performance, the Price Index ended last week recording 18.39 percent annual gain compared to its closing in 2016, while the Weighted Index increased by 9.80 percent, and the KXS-15 recorded 7.84 percent growth.

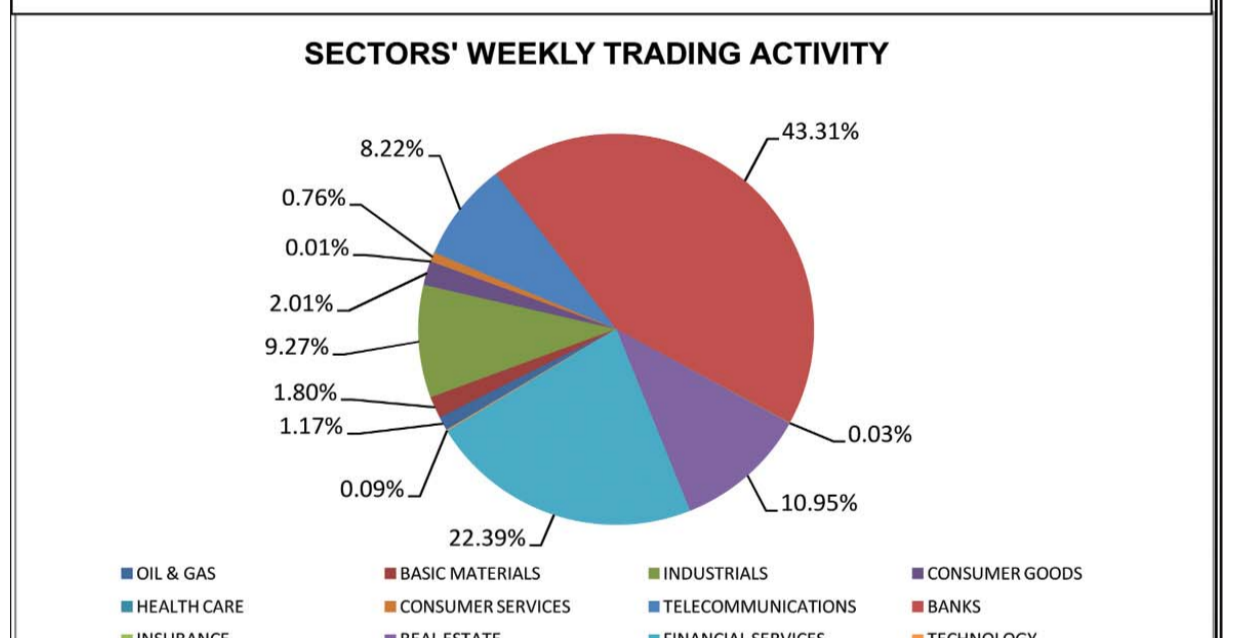
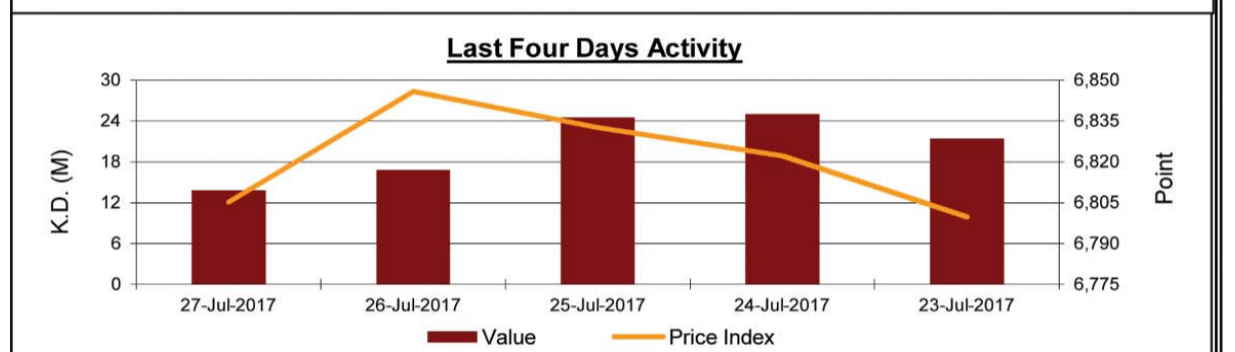
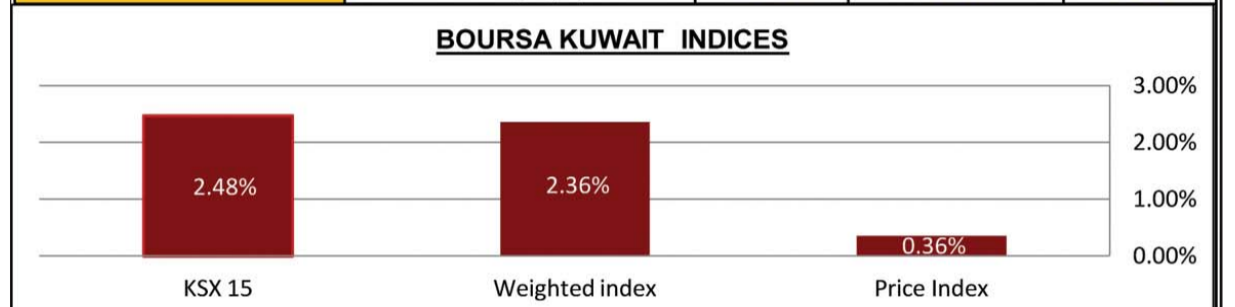
Sectors' Indices

Nine of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the green zone, while the other three recorded decreases. Last week's highest gainer was the Banks sector, achieving 3.55 percent growth rate as its index closed at 956.70 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Basic Materials sector's index closed at 1,263.25 points recording 1.94 percent increase. The Telecommunications sector came in third as its index achieved 1.88 percent growth, ending the week at 609.91 points. On the other hand, The Consumer Goods sector headed the losers list as its index declined 4.65 percent to end the week's activity at 1,023.35 points. The Industrial sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 0.39 percent, closing 1,887.23 points, followed by the Consumer Services sector, as its index closed at 1,040.94 points at a loss of 0.17 percent.

Sectors' Activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 240.11 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 37.88 percent of the total market trading volume. The Real Estate sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 29.37 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 186.16 million shares. On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD44 million or 43.31 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Financial Services sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD22.75 million representing 22.39 percent of the total market trading value. — Prepared by: Studies & Research Department - Bayan Investment Co.

BOURSA KUWAIT INDICES				
	Price Index	Weighted index	KXS 15	
Weekly	Last week	6,805.31	417.34	954.42
	Previous week	6,781.02	407.70	931.35
	Change (Point)	24.29	9.64	23.07
	Change (%)	0.36%	2.36%	2.48%
Annual	Last year	5,748.09	380.09	885.02
	Change (Point)	1,057.22	37.25	69.40
	Change (%)	18.39%	9.80%	7.84%



MARKET ACTIVITY			
	Last Week	Previous Week	Ch. %
Volume	633,833,038	435,075,202	45.68%
Value (K.D.)	101,602,276	72,196,545	40.73%
Deals	19,647	15,862	23.86%

MARKET CAPITALISATION (K.D.)				
	Last Week	Previous Week	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
	27,571,697,717	26,961,602,931	2.26%	8.52%

TOP GAINERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
NAPESCO	830.00	1,455.00	-625.0	-42.96%
SANAM	36.00	46.00	-10.0	-21.74%
PAPCO	80.00	100.00	-20.0	-20.00%
AFAQ	105.00	130.00	-25.0	-19.23%
AMAR	38.20	47.00	-8.8	-18.72%

GLOBAL STOCKS SAG FOLLOWING DISAPPOINTING PROFIT REPORTS

NEW YORK: Stock markets around the world sagged on Friday after Amazon and other big companies reported quarterly results that underwhelmed investors. The Standard & Poor's 500 index lost 3.32 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,472.10 and closed a week packed with corporate earnings reports almost exactly where it started. It set a record during the middle of it.

The Dow Jones industrial average gained 33.76 points, or 0.2 percent, to 21,830.31 and set another all-time high. The Nasdaq composite fell 7.51, or 0.1 percent, to 6,374.68. A little more than half the companies in the S&P 500 have now shown how much profit they made during the spring, and the results have been mostly encouraging. Earnings for the index are on pace to be about 9 percent higher than a year earlier, according to FactSet. But expectations were high coming into the reporting season, and the few companies that have fallen short of forecasts have seen their stock prices punished.

Amazon dropped \$25.96, or 2.5 percent, to \$1,020.04 after its profit missed expectations. Its forecast for operating income this fiscal year was also below many analysts' forecasts, though revenue for the latest quarter beat expectations. Earnings reports were the main focus for markets during a busy week, where the Federal Reserve also decided on Wednesday to hold interest rates steady and the government on Friday gave an update on

the economy's health. The economy grew at an annual rate of 2.6 percent in the second quarter, revved up by a rise in consumer spending, the Commerce Department reported. Last quarter's growth rate was more than double that of the year's first quarter, which was revised down to 1.2 percent. The faster growth, though, was still a shade below the 2.7 percent that economists expected.

"Overall, the economy continues to move along, but it's hard to see where the fuel is going to come from for further acceleration," said Rich Weiss, chief investment officer of multi-asset strategies at American Century Investments. He says the economy reminds him of what golfers call a "son-in-law" shot, one that's not bad but not great.

No new money

"We're not throwing new money into the stock market at this point," Weiss said. Instead of US stocks, he prefers foreign markets where he says economies have more potential for improvement. Many other investors have shifted their money using a similar philosophy, and the falling value of the dollar against other currencies has helped boost foreign stocks' returns. Excitement about the US economy had been higher earlier in the year, when many investors expected the Republican takeover of Washington to lead to more pro-business policies. But inaction in the Capitol,



HONG KONG: An electronic stock board shows the Hang Seng Index at a bank in Hong Kong on Friday. —AP

capped by the Senate's latest failed attempt to revamp the nation's health care system, is raising doubts about whether tax reform or a big infrastructure plan will happen.

WEEKLY MARKETS ROUNDUP

Tobacco stocks were some of Friday's worst performers after the US government said it's considering limiting the amount of nicotine in cigarettes so that they're no longer addictive.

Altria Group, which sells Marlboro and other cigarettes in the US, fell \$7.02, or 9.5 percent to \$66.94. It had been down as much as 18.9 percent shortly after the Food and Drug Administration's announcement.

Flowserve, which sells pumps, valves and other parts for the oil and gas industries, dropped to the biggest losses in the S&P 500 after reporting weaker earnings for the latest quarter than Wall Street had forecast. It sank \$5.06, or 10.9 percent, to \$41.30.

Starbucks fell \$5.50, or 9.2 percent, to \$54.00 after it lowered its forecast for earnings this fiscal year, and Goodyear Tire & Rubber sank \$2.97, or 8.4 percent, to \$32.51 after it gave a forecast for 2017 operating income that fell short of analysts' expectations. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 2.28 percent from 2.32 percent late Thursday. The two-year yield dipped to 1.34 percent from 1.36 percent, and the 30-year yield dropped to 2.90 percent from 2.93 percent.

Stock markets around the world were weak. Japan's Nikkei 225 index dropped 0.6 percent, South Korea's Kospi lost 1.7 percent and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong fell 0.6 percent. France's CAC 40 lost 1.1 percent, the FTSE 100 in London fell 1 percent and Germany's DAX dropped 0.4 percent. The dollar fell to 110.60 Japanese yen from 111.09 yen late Thursday. The euro rose to \$1.1760 from \$1.1681, and the British pound rose to \$1.3149 from \$1.3070. —AP



DUBAI: Huawei and the Executive Council during signing of the agreement.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF DUBAI, HUAWEI SIGN MOU TO INCORPORATE DUBAI FONT ON HUAWEI SMARTPHONES

DUBAI: The Executive Council of Dubai and Huawei Consumer Business Group on Wednesday announced a partnership that will see it include Dubai Font on its mobile operating systems as one of its standard pre-loaded fonts. The font will be automatically available on the upcoming Huawei flagship smartphone starting with the Middle East and Africa later this year, and in the rest of the world as of next year. Designed to reflect the modernity and culture of innovation that exists within Dubai, the signing is the latest move in a series of steps that has seen it cement its position as a global cultural hub.

The signing was attended by Ahmad bin Amer Al-Mahri, Assistant Secretary General of the Executive Council and General Secretariat Affairs, as well as Gene Jiao, President of Huawei Consumer Business Group Middle East & Africa at The Executive Council's offices in Emirates Towers in Dubai.

Commenting on the signing, Abdullah Al-Shaibani, Secretary General of the Executive Council of Dubai, said: "This signing solidifies Dubai's position as a forward-thinking city that is consistently on the cusp of innovation. Dubai Font is a new tool for self-expression and communication in the region and around the world, and we are confident that this agreement will leave its mark on the world. Huawei has a good reputation and future, and this seemed a natural fit for us moving forward."

"Dubai's digital imprint on the world is already significant, but Dubai Font only serves to reinforce this. Led by an ambitious leadership that refuses to rest on its laurels, Dubai Font is one of the latest in a number of innovations that has seen us set the global digital agenda. This font sets itself apart from other fonts because it was designed based on the core principles that have turned Dubai into a remarkable symbol of success and tolerance - principles that, through this partnership, we are working to introduce to the rest of the world."

For his part, Al-Mahri said: "Dubai Font is not just a digital medium for expression, but it also combines the past with the present - our traditions with our thirst for innovation. This partnership will allow individuals from all over the world to express themselves, which was one of our key aims when we set out to create the font."

Gene Jiao said: "We are excited to announce our partnership with The Executive Council of Dubai, and to be one of the first smartphone company to introduce Dubai Font to our users. At Huawei, we share the same vision as that of Dubai to continuously innovate. Relying on our strong Research and Development (R&D) capabilities and market reach, we also seek to create technologically advanced services that will enable us to provide customers with the ultimate experience while using our devices."

The font is available to more than 100 million users of Microsoft Office 365 around the world, and is the first font to be created by a city and named after it. It could also be downloaded through the Dubai Font website for other usages and operating systems. Designed for more than 180 countries and 23 languages integrating Arabic and Latin typefaces, Dubai Font, will soon expand over the next phase to include more languages.

Huawei Consumer Business Group (CBG), one of Huawei's three business groups, is committed to becoming a signature culture and technology brand among consumers worldwide. According to market research statistics from prominent agencies such as IDC, SA and TransForce, Huawei ranked the third in terms of market share in the global smartphone market in Q1 2017, and number one in China.

Huawei's brand value is also recognized by multiple authoritative global agencies. As per the Fortune 500 ranking announced on July 20th, Huawei ascended the list to the 83rd place from the 129th of last year, with revenue of \$78.51 billion, making the top global 100. On the same note, Huawei has also ranked number 49 in the 2017 BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands list and number 40 on the Brand Finance 2017 Global 500 list of the top most valuable brands in the world.

As a leading technology company, Huawei invests a significant amount of its annual sales revenue to research and development efforts, and has established 16 research centers around the world. In 2016, Huawei continued to invest in the future, with the company's annual spending on research and development reaching CNY76.4 billion (\$11 billion).

KIPCO ANNOUNCES NET PROFIT OF KD 14.1M FOR FIRST HALF OF 2017

'OUR CORE BUSINESSES ARE DELIVERING AS PROJECTED': ABDULSALAM

KUWAIT: KIPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - has announced a net profit of KD 14.1 million (\$46.5 million), or 7.76 fils per share (\$2.6 cents), for the first six months of 2017, compared to KD28 million (\$92.4 million), or 18.30 fils per share (\$6 cents), reported for the same period last year.

In the second quarter (the three months ended 30 June, 2017), KIPCO made a net profit of KD 9.1 million (\$30 million), compared to KD14.5 million (\$47.9 million), reported in the same period of 2016.

KIPCO's consolidated assets remained at the KD 10 billion (\$33 billion) reported at year-end 2016. Tariq AbdulSalam, KIPCO's Chief Executive Officer - Investment,

said the company's results during the first six months of the year were in line with expectations for a challenging year: "While we are still facing a number of external challenges that are affecting our performance, as projected earlier this year, our core businesses continue to exceed the results expected from them during these difficult times. Our continued internal streamlining efforts and building of capacity across the Group will allow us to emerge stronger from 2017. We continue to see positive signs that transitory factors affecting some of our portfolio companies are being handled well, and these companies are moving in line with our expectations. This makes us cautiously optimistic for the coming years."



Tariq AbdulSalam



INTERNATIONAL MORTGAGE FACILITY WITH NBK

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait offers exclusive opportunity for customers interested in buying properties abroad to finance their dreams. NBK customers can avail of mortgages to buy property in six countries: France, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, United Arab Emirates and the UK. High loan amounts in local currency and attractive loan to value make mortgages for homes abroad easily accessible with repayment rates up to 20 years. Mortgage loan requests are easy to apply for and easy to process in the dedicated Overseas Center at the NBK branch in Ras Salmiya. The NBK International Mortgage facility provides customers with a convenient, reliable and easy way to process and service their mortgage from Kuwait no matter where they buy their home.

NBK offer a comprehensive real estate service in conjunction with leading property agents and advisers in the residential and commercial property sectors in London and Paris; National Bank of Kuwait customers travel frequently and often own homes in more than one country. NBK caters to the wide range of customers' lifestyle needs through a variety of products and services that include: Searching the market, assisting with sales and purchases of residential and commercial properties, Bill payment service, Liaison in relation to lease extensions and freehold enfranchisement, Arranging valuations and surveys from a chartered surveyor that can value the property the customer intend to purchase or sell, Liaising with rental agents to find a suitable tenant for our client property, Insurance cover to protect customer's property and its contents. Safe custody of property title deeds, Lease extensions and Enfranchisements and Offshore services.

30% GROWTH IN VOLUME OF LGs IN H1 2017: KFH

KUWAIT: Executive Manager Trade Finance at Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Abdelaziz Alhaqan said that the volume of letter of guarantees LGs transactions offered by the bank surged by 30 percent in the first half of 2017 over the same period last year.

He added, in a press release, that the growth is attributed to high end systems, streamlined procedures and high caliber manpower at KFH that work tirelessly to cover customers' trade need with the highest quality. Alhaqan indicated that encountering the increasing volume of documentary credit and letter of guarantees transactions, KFH adopts best practices and highest standards at the level of its human resources and systems in an attempt to ensure outstanding performance whilst safeguarding customers' commercial needs and safety of their goods, ensuring speedy commercial exchange at most convenient time.

He explained that KFH offers services and products that support import and export operation with high standard with accuracy and speed through a wide range of superior correspondent banking services.

He continued: "The products that KFH offers in Trade Finance are Letter of Credit by Sight which creates security for merchants for importing goods or supplies it in the local market, letter of credit on acceptance basis: It is a kind of LC, which gives importer to settle the draft to the beneficiary after receiving the goods or documents in Kuwait against acceptance present range from 60, 90 or as usage period agreed. KFH also offers Murabaha where KFH

imports goods in its name and in its own risk in which the customer willing to import goods such when goods arrived KFH enables customer to buy it with an agreed profit to be settled in installments suitable with customer cash flow. Moreover KFH offers export L/C, which helps in activities of the foreign export and support local products



Abdelaziz Alhaqan

as KFH can advise this L/C to exporter and added their confirmation in case it is needed. As exporter will present to KFH documents comply with L/C terms and he can get value of goods exported as per L/C terms."

As for letter of guarantees, KFH issued various types of guarantees which are suitable for different types of projects either tender, performance or advance payment and or maintenance contract and so on and also for personal guarantees like telephone and others. KFH offers bills for collection in which KFH acts as a mediator to deliver documents to companies, individuals, or institutions as per the instructions received along with these documents.

NISSAN REPORTS FIRST QUARTER RESULTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

DUBAI: Nissan Motor Co, Ltd yesterday announced first quarter financial results for the three months to June 30, 2017. Nissan generated an operating profit of 153.3 billion yen on net revenues of 2.76 trillion yen. Overall, results were in line with the company's expectations for the first quarter and the company expects improved profitability for the remainder of the year driven by its product cadence.

The Nissan's financial results for the three-month period to June 30, 2017 (today), calculated under the equity accounting method for the Group's China joint venture. Operating profits declined 12.8 percent compared to the prior year primarily due to the conditional change resulting from the divestiture of Calsonic Kansei, rising raw material costs, and adverse foreign exchange impacts. Net income was down 1.1 percent.

On a management pro forma basis, which includes the proportionate consolidation of results from Nissan's joint venture operation in China, operating profit was 185.7 billion yen on net revenues of 3.03 trillion yen, representing a margin of 6.1 percent.

Sales performance

For the first quarter, Nissan total unit sales were 1.351 million units, an increase of 5 percent. Sales in Japan continued to improve following the resumption of Kei car sales and encouraging strong demand for registered vehicles, including models such as the Note e-POWER and the Serena with ProPILOT autonomous drive technology. Nissan saw unit sales rise by 45.6 percent to 131,000 units, resulting in a market share improvement of 2.6 points to 10.9 percent.

In the US, Nissan's sales increased 1.2 percent to 403,000, equivalent to a market share increase of 0.4 points to 9.1 percent, amid continued demand for SUVs including the Rogue and recently launched

Rogue Sport. Nissan unit sales in China, which reports figures on a calendar year basis, increased 5.3 percent to 314,000 units. The market share in China was flat at 4.7 percent for the quarter.

In Europe, including Russia, Nissan's sales totaled 185,000 units, an increase of 1.1 percent. Excluding Russia, Nissan's sales decreased 0.2 percent to 162,000 units due primarily to planned model changeovers. Nissan's market share in Europe was flat at 3.6 percent.

In other markets, including Asia and Oceania, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa, Nissan's sales increased 1.2 percent to 188,000 units despite volatile demand in some markets.

Outlook

As previously stated this past May, the company expects to sell 5.83 million units in fiscal 2017 as models such as the Rogue Sport, refreshed Qashqai and X-Trail, Kicks, Navara, and the all-new Nissan LEAF are expected to contribute to sales growth for the year as a whole.

Given this outlook, the company has maintained its fiscal-year forecasts. Calculated under the equity accounting method for Nissan's joint venture in China, the forecasts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018 remain:

Nissan also continues to forecast a 10.4 percent increase in the dividend to 53 yen per share for fiscal year 2017.

1 Since the beginning of fiscal year 2013, Nissan has reported figures calculated under the equity method accounting for its joint venture with Dong Feng in China. Although net income reporting remains unchanged under this accounting method, the equity-accounting income statements no longer include Dong-Feng-Nissan's results in revenues and operating profit.

2 Net income attributable to owners of the parent.



QATAR AIRWAYS BOOSTS COLOMBO SERVICE TO 4 DAILY NON-STOP FLIGHTS

DOHA: Qatar Airways has announced it will introduce a fourth daily non-stop service from Doha to Colombo from 1 August, 2017. In addition two of the four daily flights will be serviced by the B777-300ER aircraft to accommodate the increased travel demand to and from Sri Lanka. The increased frequency and aircraft upgauge will boost overall capacity to and from Colombo by 3,136 seats weekly, a 20 per cent increase from current weekly capacity.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Akbar Al Baker, said: "We are delighted to be able to cater to the buoyant leisure and business travel demand by increasing our frequency and capacity to Colombo, the gateway to Sri Lanka and one of the most vibrant cities in South Asia. Besides our acclaimed inflight service, our passengers can now also enjoy our modern B777 aircraft when they travel with us on our non-stop service to Doha and onward to destinations in Europe, Americas and the Middle East. The additional fre-

quency will provide passengers with even greater flexibility and convenience when planning their next trip with Qatar Airways."

Sri Lanka's Minister of Tourism Development the John Amararatunga said: "Tourism is expected to be one of Sri Lanka's major growth engines as we seek to further strengthen our economy. Sri Lanka, Asia's leading destination for 2017, has a wealth of places waiting for travellers to discover. With the support of major carriers like Qatar Airways which has invested additional capacity, we are confident that Sri Lanka can achieve the target of 2.5 million tourists this year."

The Qatar Airways Boeing 777-300ER features 24 Business Class seats and 388 seats in Economy Class. Besides a spacious environment throughout the entire aircraft, passengers across both cabins can enjoy up to 3,000 entertainment options throughout their journey with Qatar Airways extensive Oryx One collections.

Business Class passengers can relax in their

comfortable, fully-flat beds with 78 inches of seat pitch. The on-demand a la carte menu service, luxurious Bric's amenity kits coupled with Qatar Airways cabin crew's renowned Arabian hospitality will ensure passengers arrive at their destination feeling refreshed and energized.

Qatar Airways has received a number of accolades this year, including Airline of the Year by the prestigious 2017 Skytrax World Airline Awards, which was held at the Paris Air Show. This is the fourth time that Qatar Airways has been given this global recognition as the world's best airline. In addition to being voted Best Airline by travellers from around the world, Qatar's national carrier also won a raft of other major awards at the ceremony, including Best Airline in the Middle East, World's Best Business Class and World's Best First Class Airline Lounge. Now in its twentieth year of operations, Qatar Airways has a modern fleet of 200 aircraft flying to business and leisure destinations across six continents.

AUTHORITIES WARN ABOUT THE RISE OF VIRTUAL KIDNAPPING SCAMS

LOS ANGELES: The caller who rang Valerie Sobel's cellphone had a horrifying message: "We have Simone's finger. Do you want to see the rest of her in a body bag?" Then came the sound of her daughter, screaming in terror. "She called me Mom (and said) 'I'm terrified, please help,'" Sobel recalled. In the hours that followed, the kidnappers talked her into wiring \$4,000 for ransom. Only later did she find out there had been no kidnapping. It was a scam. "I was in bad shape for days," she said.

On Tuesday, police and federal agents warned that so-called virtual kidnappings are on the rise, and dozens of people already have found themselves terrorized into giving money to con artists. Los Angeles police alone have received more

than 250 reports of such crimes in the past two years, and people have wired more than \$100,000, said Capt. William Hayes, who commands the Robbery Homicide Division. By comparison, actual kidnappings for ransom are rare.

Los Angeles police typically receive 10 to 15 cases a year, including kidnappings performed by other family members and acquaintances, Hayes said. In the fake kidnappings, the callers demand that the victims remain on the phone so they don't have a chance to call their loved ones, officials said. "If you get a phone call like this, immediately hang up," Hayes said. "Contact that loved one." The FBI began investigating a spurt of cases in 2013.

A multiagency probe dubbed Operation Hotel Tango identified at least

80 people in several states who had received such calls, although not all sent money, said Gene Kowel, acting special agent in charge of the FBI's criminal division in Los Angeles. However, many of the crimes go unreported, he said. "It's fair to say there have been thousands of calls made to US victims, primarily from Mexico," he said. Last week, a Texas woman became the first person in the nation to be indicted in connection with a virtual kidnapping scheme.

Ransom demands

Yanette Rodriguez Acosta, 34, of Houston is charged with wire fraud, conspiracy to commit wire fraud and conspiracy to launder money. She is facing up to 20 years in prison for each of 10 counts if con-

victed. The indictment alleges that Acosta and her partners used Mexican telephone numbers to call people in Texas, California and Idaho. They allegedly fooled people into giving them tens of thousands of dollars either through money drops or wire transfers.

In some cases, the scammers choose area codes and make cold calls, hoping to catch an unsuspecting victim, officials said. In others, the crooks may use social media to obtain names of children and other facts that can be used to frighten specific victims. In Sobel's case, she believes the phony kidnappers obtained her daughter's voice, perhaps from her voicemail, and then altered it. "I was convinced that this was real," she said. Fear for a child's safety can override skepticism, authorities said.

Even Los Angeles Police Department Sgt. O.C. Smith was victimized. Smith said he received a cellphone call about two years ago while driving on a freeway. "There was a woman ... screaming 'Daddy, Daddy help me. I'm in a van being taken somewhere,'" Smith said. Although he didn't recognize the voice, Smith said he couldn't take the risk that it was his daughter. The callers threatened to "put a bullet in the back of her head" if he didn't pay a ransom, Smith said. He talked the phony kidnappers' ransom demands down from \$1 million to a mere \$350, although in the end he never paid. While on the phone with them, he managed to flag down Torrance, California, police officers who were able to call and verify that his children were safe at school.—AP

OUT OF 45M EMAILS 25% ARE 'UNSAFE'

DUBAI: Mimecast Limited (NASDAQ: MIME), a leading email and data security company, yesterday announced the results of its third quarterly Email Security Risk Assessment (ESRA), a report of the results of tests which measure the effectiveness of incumbent email security systems. This quarter's assessment noted a continued challenge of securing organizations from malicious attachments, dangerous file types, impersonation attacks, as well as spam - with nearly a quarter of "unsafe" email being delivered to users' inboxes.

Among the email security services assessed, the tests found that using Mimecast in conjunction with prominent cloud-based email service providers, including Google G Suite and Microsoft Office 365, would substantially improve results by blocking thousands more email-borne attacks. The report indicates the need for organizations to enhance their cyber resilience strategies for email with a multi-layered approach that includes a third-party security service provider.

"To achieve a comprehensive cyber resilience strategy, organizations need to first assess the actual capabilities of their current email security solution. Then, they should ensure there's a plan in place that covers advanced security, data management and business conti-



Ed Jennings

nity, as well as awareness training to the end user, which combined help prevent attacks and mitigate business impact," said Ed Jennings, chief operating officer at Mimecast. "These quarterly Mimecast ESRA reports highlight the need for the entire industry to work toward a higher standard of email security."

Malware attachments on the rise

The risks to email remain whether delivered to a cloud-based, on-premises, or to a hybrid email environment. Email remains the top attack vector for delivering

security threats such as ransomware, impersonation, and malicious files or URLs. Attackers motives include credential theft, extracting a ransom, defrauding victims of corporate data and funds and in several recent cases, sabotage with data being permanently destroyed. To date, Mimecast's ESRA reports have inspected the inbound email received for 62,323 email users over a cumulative 428 days. More than 45 million emails were inspected, all of which had passed through the incumbent email security system in use by each organization - of this, 31 percent were deemed "unsafe" by Mimecast. These assessments have uncovered more than 10.8 million pieces of spam, 8,682 dangerous file types, 1,778 known and 503 unknown malware attachments and 9,677 impersonation emails to date.

Common threats

When the data was sliced by incumbent email security vendor the report found that even some of the top email cloud players were missing commonly found advanced security threats, highlighting the need for a multi-layered approach to email security. Notably these cloud vendors are leaving organizations vulnerable by missing millions of spam emails

and thousands of threats and allowing them to be delivered to the users' email inboxes. Many organizations have a false sense of security believing that a single cloud email vendor can provide the appropriate security measures to ensure protection from email threats. This quarterly ESRA report strongly indicates the need for organizations to consider third party email security services to more effectively secure their email and increase their overall cyber resilience.

Late last year, Mimecast commissioned Forrester Consulting to evaluate drivers of cloud-based email adoption and to evaluate their related business concerns and expectations. The report, titled Closing The Cloud Email Security Gap, revealed that only 5 percent of respondents are very confident in the overall security capabilities of their chosen email cloud provider. In fact, 44 percent of respondents said they would review the security implications of their cloud provider more thoroughly if they were to deploy a cloud-based email platform again. In this report, Forrester Consulting recommended that to enhance their cyber resilience, these organizations should leverage a third-party security services provider to defend against all forms of email-borne threats.



NEW YORK: In this file photo, from left, an iPod, iPod Nano and iPod Shuffle are displayed at an Apple store in New York. —AP

APPLE KILLS IPOD NANO, SHUFFLE AS MUSIC MOVES TO PHONES

SAN FRANCISCO: The iPod Nano and iPod Shuffle have played their final notes for Apple. The Cupertino, California, company stopped updating the Nano and Shuffle several years ago. Apple has long predicted iPods would gradually fade away as more people bought iPhones or other smartphones capable of playing music.

The company's sales of iPods peaked in its fiscal year 2008 when the devices generated revenue of \$9.2 billion. The then-nascent iPhone accounted for \$1.8 billion in revenue that same year. Last year, the iPhone generated revenue of nearly \$136 billion. Sales of iPods have plunged by so much that Apple no longer provides specifics about the devices in its financial statements.—AP

smaller alternatives to Apple's standard iPod. The Cupertino, California, company stopped updating the Nano and Shuffle several years ago. Apple has long predicted iPods would gradually fade away as more people bought iPhones or other smartphones capable of playing music.

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HOW INSIDERS COULD COMPROMISE ANY CORPORATE NETWORK WITH A \$20 DEVICE

DUBAI: Kaspersky Lab researchers have examined publicly available hardware and software tools for covert password interception and discovered that a powerful hacking tool can be created for as little as \$20, and just a few hours of work by someone with basic programming knowledge. In an experiment they used a DIY Raspberry Pi based USB-device, configured in a specific way, and carrying no malicious software. Armed with this device, they were able to covertly collect user authentication data from a corporate network at a rate of 50 password hashes per hour.

The research started with a real story: in another investigation that Kaspersky Lab experts participated in, an insider (the employee of a cleaning company) used a USB-stick to infect a workstation inside a targeted organization with malware. Upon hearing the story, Kaspersky Lab security enthusiasts became curious about what else could be used by insiders to compromise a targeted network? And, would it be possible to compromise a network without any malware at all?

They took a Raspberry-Pi microcomputer, configured it as an Ethernet adapter, made some additional configuration changes in the OS running on the microcomputer, and installed a few publicly available tools for packet sniffing, data collection and processing. Finally, the researchers set up a server to collect intercepted data. After that, the device was connected to the targeted machine and started to automatically feed the server with stolen credential data.

The reason why this happened was that the OS on the attacked computer identified the connected Raspberry-Pi device as a wired LAN adapter, and automatically assigned it a higher priority than other available network connections and - more importantly - gave it access to data exchange in the network. The experimental network was a simulation of a segment of a real corporate network. As a result, researchers were able to collect authentication data sent by the attacked PC and its applications, as they tried to authenticate domain and remote servers.

In addition, researchers were also able to collect this data from other computers in the network segment. Moreover, as the specifics of the attack allowed for intercepted data to be sent through the network in real time, the longer the device was connected to the PC, the more data it

was able to collect and transfer to a remote server. After just half an hour of the experiment researchers were able to collect nearly 30 password hashes, transferred through the attacked network, so it is easy to imagine how much data could be collected in just one day.

In the worst-case scenario, the domain administrator's authentication data could also be intercepted should they login to their account while the device is plugged-in into one of the PCs inside the domain. The potential attack surface for this method of data interception is big: the experiment was successfully reproduced on both locked and unlocked computers running on Windows and Mac OS. However, researchers were not able to reproduce the attack on Linux based devices.

"There are two major things that we are worried about as a result of this experiment: firstly - the fact that we didn't really have to develop the software - we used tools freely available on the Internet. Secondly - we are worried about how easy it was to prepare the proof of concept for our hacking device. This means that potentially anyone, who is familiar with the Internet and has basic programming skills, could reproduce this experiment. And it is easy to predict what could happen if this was done with malicious intent. The latter is the main reason why we decided to draw public attention to this problem. Users and corporate administrators should be prepared for this type of attack," said Sergey Lurye, a security enthusiast and co-author of the research at Kaspersky Lab.

Although the attack allows for the interception of password hashes (a cipher-alphabetic interpretation of a plaintext password after it has been processed by a specific obfuscation algorithm), the hashes could be deciphered into passwords, since the algorithms are known or used in pass-the-hash attacks. In order to protect your computer or network from attacks with help of similar DIY devices, Kaspersky Lab security experts recommend the following advice:

For regular users:

- On returning to your computer, check if there are any extra USB devices sticking out of your ports.
- Avoid accepting flash drives from untrusted sources. This drive could in fact be a password interceptor.

- Make a habit of ending sessions on sites that require authentication. Usually, this means clicking on a "log out" button.
- Change passwords regularly - both on your PC and the websites you use frequently. Remember that not all of your favorite websites will use mechanisms to protect against cookie data substitution. You can use specialized password management software for the easy management of strong and secure passwords, such as the free Kaspersky Password Manager.
- Enable two-factor authentication, for example, by requesting login confirmation or use of a hardware token.
- Install and regularly update a security solution from a proven and trusted vendor.

For system administrators:

- If the network topology allows it, we suggest using solely Kerberos protocol for authenticating domain users.
- Restrict privileged domain users from logging into the legacy systems, especially domain administrators.
- Domain user passwords should be changed regularly. If, for whatever reason, the organization's policy does not involve regular password changes, be sure to change this policy.
- All of the computers within a corporate network have to be protected with security solutions and regular updates should be ensured.
- In order to prevent the connection of unauthorized USB devices, a Device Control feature, such as that available in the Kaspersky Endpoint Security for Business suite, can be useful.
- If you own the web resource, we recommend activating the HSTS (HTTP strict transport security) which prevents switching from HTTPS to HTTP protocol and spoofing the credentials from a stolen cookie.
- If possible, disable the listening mode and activate the Client (AP) isolation setting in Wi-Fi routers and switches, disabling them from listening to other workstation traffic.
- Activate the DHCP Snooping setting to protect corporate network users from capturing their DHCP requests by fake DHCP servers. Besides intercepting the authentication data from a corporate network the experimental device can be used for collecting cookies from browsers on the attacked machines.



SEOUL: In this file photo, a wafer of 8-gigabit NAND flash memory device, left, is displayed at a Samsung's showroom in Seoul, South Korea. —AP

SAMSUNG POISED TO UNSEAT INTEL AS KING OF MICROCHIPS

SEOUL: Intel's more than two decade-long reign as the king of the silicon based semiconductor is poised to end Thursday when South Korea's Samsung Electronics elbows the US manufacturer aside to become the leading maker of computer chips. Samsung reported record-high quarterly profit and sales Thursday. Analysts say it likely nudged aside Intel in the April-June quarter as the leading maker of semiconductors, the computer chips that are as much a staple of the 21st century wired world as crude oil was for the 20th century.

Samsung said its semiconductor business recorded 8 trillion (\$7.2 billion) in operating income on revenue of 17.6 trillion won (\$15.8 billion) during the April-June period. Intel, which reports its quarterly earnings later Thursday, is expected to report \$14.4 billion in quarterly revenue. On an annual basis, Samsung's semiconductor division is widely expected to overtake Intel's sales this year, analysts at brokerages and market research firms say.

Mobile devices and data are the keys to understanding Samsung's ascent as the new industry leader, even as its de facto chief is jailed, battling corruption charges, and it recovers from a fiasco over Galaxy Note 7 smartphones that had to be axed last year because they were prone to catch fire. Manufacturers are packing more and more memory storage capacity into ever smaller mobile gadgets, as increased use of mobile applications, connected devices and cloud computing services drive up demand and consequently prices for memory chips, an area dominated by Samsung.

Just as Saudi Arabia dominates in oil output, Samsung leads in manufacturing the high-tech commodity of memory chips, which enable the world to store the data that fuels the digital economy. "Data is the new crude oil," said Marcello Ahn, a

Seoul, South Korea-based fund manager at Quad Investment Management. For over a decade, Samsung and Intel each ruled the market in its own category of semiconductor. Intel, the dominant supplier of the processors that serve as brains for personal computers, has been the world's largest semiconductor company by revenue since 1992 when it overtook Japan's NEC.

'Super cycle'

Samsung is reaping the rewards of dominating in the memory chip market which is growing much faster than the market for computers that rely on processing units dominated by Intel, said Chung Chang Won, a senior analyst at Nomura Securities. "Greater use of smartphones and tablet PCs instead of computers is driving the rise of companies like Samsung," Chung said. Since 2002, Samsung Electronics has been the largest supplier of memory chips, called DRAMs and NANDs. But for years demand for memory chips was vulnerable to boom and bust cycles depending on output and on demand from the consumer electronics industry.

At times, competition was brutal as supply gluts arose. That changed in 2012 when Japan's Elpida filed for bankruptcy and was sold to Micron Technology, leaving only three major suppliers of DRAM, a type of memory chip used in servers, computers and handsets: Samsung Electronics, SK Hynix and Micron. Tight supplies coupled with rock solid demand have pushed prices of memory chips higher, with average selling prices of DRAMs and flash memory chips doubling over the past year, bringing South Korea's memory chip makers record wide profit margins. Both Samsung and SK Hynix are expected to report all-time high profits this year.—AP

INDONESIA ORANGUTAN SANCTUARY SAYS VILLAGERS ENCROACHING

JAKARTA: A conservation group says nearly a fifth of the forest in an orangutan sanctuary on the Indonesian part of Borneo has been taken over by people, threatening efforts to rehabilitate the critically endangered great apes for release into the wild. People thought to have migrated from other parts of Indonesia have occupied part of the sanctuary, cut down trees and planted crops including palm oil, Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation spokesman Nico Hermanu said Thursday.

The human activities are near a "forest school" where more than 20 orangutans live semi-independently and learn how to find food, build nests and other skills they need for survival - a crucial part of their rehabilitation from trauma often inflicted by people, who take babies for pets or kill the animals for wandering into plantations. The foundation bought

the land for the 1,850-hectare (4,571-acre) sanctuary from locals over several years and restored its forest. The facility now cares for 170 orangutans overall.

Hermanu said the foundation told the residents they were encroaching, "but their activities keep continuing." Local police have refused to prosecute and recommended talks instead "which won't solve anything," he said. The foundation is now seeking the help of the local government in East Kalimantan province to ensure its rights over the land. Nearly 340 hectares of the sanctuary have been encroached, and Hermanu said some of it may have stemmed from dry season fires in 2015 when part of Samboja Lestari burned.

Plantation companies and villagers often deliberately set the fires to clear land for planting. The number of orang-

utans in Borneo and on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, recognized as separate species and both classified as critically endangered has fallen precipitously since the 1970s. The orangutans are protected species in Indonesia and Malaysia but deforestation has dramatically shrunk its habitat, with about 40 percent of Borneo's forests lost since the early 1970s and another huge swath of forest expected to be converted to plantation agriculture in the next decade.

Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation, one of several groups focused on orangutan conservation, also has 60-year concession rights to about 86,000 hectares of forest in Borneo that it bought from the government in 2011 for 12.9 billion Indonesian rupiah. About a quarter of it is suitable habitat for releasing orangutans after their years-long rehabilitation.—AP



SUMATRA: Veterinarian Yenni Saraswati of Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Program (SOCP) carries a baby orangutan at SOCP's orangutan rehabilitation Centre in Batu Mbelin, North Sumatra, Indonesia.—AP

SCIENTISTS SET SAIL TO UNLOCK SECRETS OF 'LOST CONTINENT'

SYDNEY: Scientists are attempting to unlock the secrets of the "lost continent" of Zealandia, setting sail Friday to investigate the huge underwater landmass east of Australia that has never been properly studied. Zealandia, which is mostly submerged beneath the South Pacific, was once part of the Gondwana super-continent but broke away some 75 million years ago. In a paper published in the Geological Society of America's Journal GSA Today in February, researchers made the case that it should be considered a new continent.

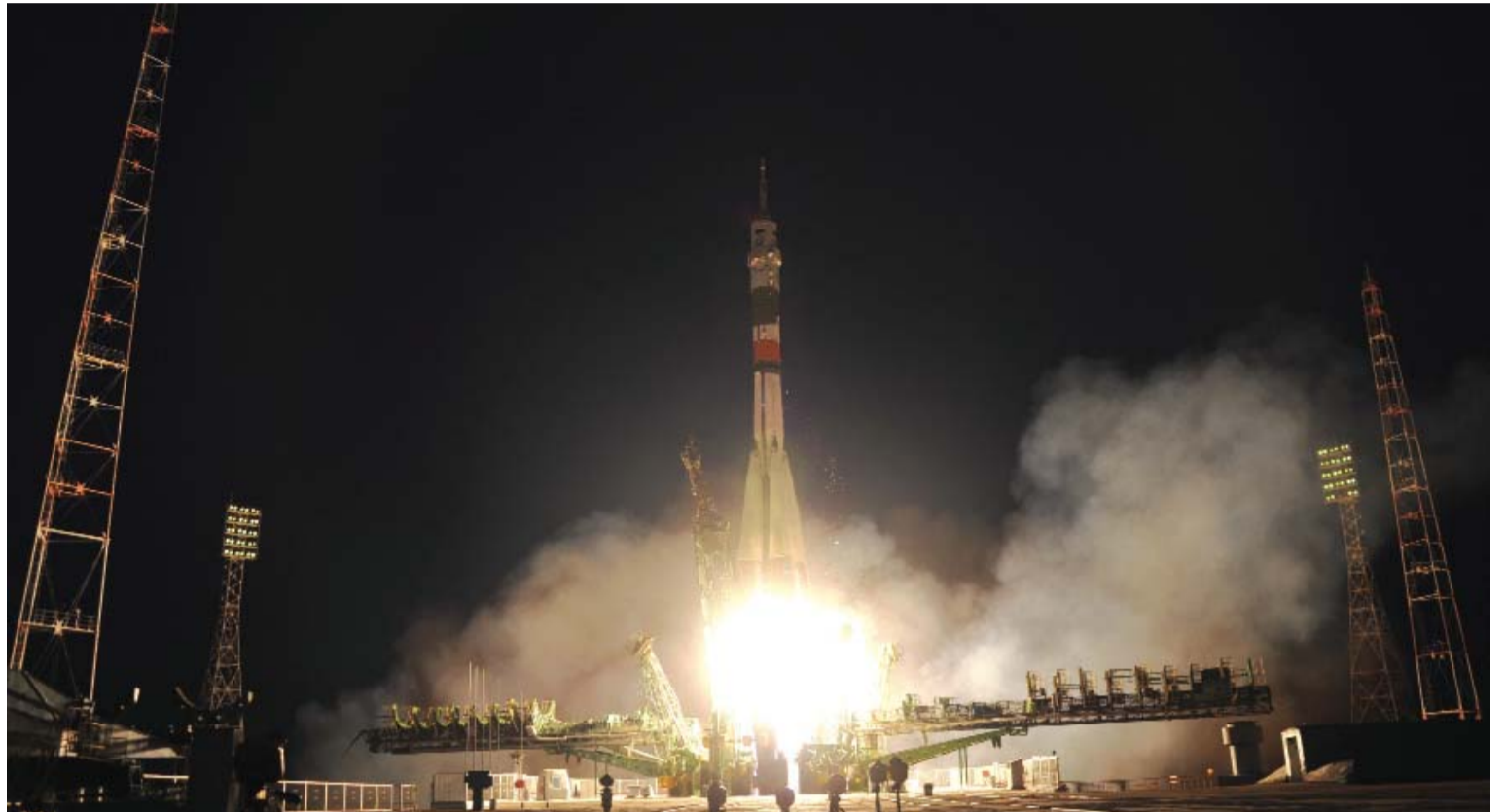
They said it was a distinct geological entity that met all the criteria applied to Earth's other continents, including elevation above the surrounding area, distinctive geology, a well-defined area and a crust much thicker than that found on the ocean floor. Covering five million square kilometers, it extends from south of New Zealand northward to New Caledonia and west to the Kenn Plateau off Australia's east. Drill ship Joides Resolution will recover sediments and rocks lying deep beneath the sea bed in a bid to discover how the region has behaved over the past tens of millions of years.

The recovered cores will be studied onboard, allowing scientists to address issues such as oceanographic history,

extreme climates, sub-seafloor life, plate tectonics and earthquake-generating zones. Co-chief scientist Jerry Dickens, from Rice University in Texas, said the region was a vital area to study changes in global climate. "As Australia moved north and the Tasman Sea developed, global circulation patterns changed and water depths over Zealandia fluctuated," he said. "This region was important in influencing global changes."

Australian National University's Neville Exon said the two-month expedition, setting out Friday from Townsville, would also help better understand major changes in the global tectonic configuration that started about 53 million years ago. This is around the time that the Pacific "Ring of Fire", a hotspot for volcanoes and earthquakes, came into existence.

In the February scientific paper, lead author Nick Mortimer said experts had been gathering data to make the case for Zealandia being a continent for more than 20 years. But their efforts had been frustrated because most of it was hidden beneath the waves. "If we could pull the plug on the oceans, it would be clear to everybody that we have mountain chains and a big, high-standing continent," he said at the time.—AFP



KAZAKHSTAN: Russia's Soyuz MS-05 rocket carrying a three-man crew from Italy, Russia and the United States, blasts off from the Baikonur cosmodrome for a five-month mission on the International Space Station (ISS).—AFP

THREE-MAN CREW REACHES INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

BAIKONUR, Kazakhstan: A three-man space crew from Italy, Russia and the United States on Friday arrived at the International Space Station for a five-month mission Friday. Footage broadcast by Russia's space agency Roscosmos showed the Soyuz craft carrying NASA astronaut Randy Bresnik, Russian cosmonaut Sergey Ryazansky and Paolo Nespoli of the European Space Agency take off into the dusky sky from Kazakhstan's Baikonur cosmodrome.

Six hours later, after orbiting Earth four times, the Soyuz docked with the space station. The hatches between them were to open later, after pressurization and leak checks are carried out, according to the US space agency NASA. The arrival of the three astronauts boosted the ISS back up to its full capacity of six for the first time since April, after Russia decided to cut the number of its cosmonauts to two.

NASA has responded to Russia's reduction by boosting the number of astronauts that will operate in its half of the ISS. In total, four astronauts-Peggy Whitson, Jack Fischer, Bresnik and Nespoli-will now conduct experiments in the NASA-run segment, with Ryazansky joining Fyodor Yurchikhin to man the Russian section.

Ton of science

Bresnik said at a pre-launch press conference on Thursday that the extra member would help the crew conduct experiments and carry out repairs. "There is a ton of science to do," he said ahead of the flight. Bresnik-who is on his second flight-also praised the work of Whitson, Fischer and Yurchikhin, already aboard the orbital lab. "They've really got their groove on. They are working very, very well. They have good technique and tempo," he said.

Ryazansky, 42, who is embarking on his third stint aboard the ISS said at the press conference that he would be taking a small gnome into space in tribute to a song beloved by his family. Live footage broadcast on Roscosmos's website showed the toy gnome hanging inside the capsule as the trio prepared for takeoff. At 60 years old and with 174 days logged in space, Nespoli is the most experienced of the three fliers, but the Italian made it clear his love for space travel hasn't faded over time with a tweet showing him pulling his space suit on Friday.

"Beam me up S...oyuz! Hitching another ride soon to the @Space_Station," he wrote. Nespoli

became the oldest astronaut onboard, edging Fyodor Yurchikhin, 59 and Whitson, 57. But Whitson is the oldest female astronaut in the history of space exploration and has broken other records during her latest mission at the ISS. In April, Whitson became the NASA astronaut with the most cumulative time spent in space, having already broken the record for spacewalks by a woman the month before. Whitson was expected to return home in June with Russian Oleg Novitsky and Frenchman Thomas Pesquet, but had her mission extended into September by NASA in a decision connected to the Roscosmos crew reduction. Roscosmos has said its two-man crew format will help it save costs while the ISS waits on the arrival of a long-delayed Multipurpose Laboratory Module that will generate enough work on board to justify a third cosmonaut on board.

The \$100 billion ISS space laboratory has been orbiting Earth at about 28,000 kilometers per hour since 1998. Space is one of the few areas of international cooperation between Russia and the US that has not been wrecked by tensions over Ukraine and Syria.—AFP



AT SEA: This undated handout aerial photo received from Australian National University in Canberra shows the drill ship Joides Resolution at sea.—AFP

CLINIC PAGE

248 33 199

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Dr Mohammad Abdulatif Al-Fares, Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education hands the Kuwaiti flag to representative of the Committee of the Marine Heritage.



The Ahmadi governor Sheikh Fawaz Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah recently met members of the Co-Societies Union where they discussed the importance of the Co-operation movement in the state of Kuwait. They also discussed the distinguished cooperation between Ahmadi governorate and the union.

ANNUAL PEARL DIVING JOURNEY KICKS OFF WITH 'AL-DASHA' CEREMONY

With the traditional 'Al-Dasha' ceremony, Gulf Bank has announced the official kick off of the 29th memorial journey for Pearl Diving, which runs from July 27 to August 3, 2017. Organized each year by the Committee of the Marine Heritage of the Kuwait Sea Sport Club, the journey is taking place under the Patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Sponsored by Gulf Bank for the 8th consecutive year, the journey kicked off on July 27, 2017 at 8:30 am, with a special "Al-Dasha" ceremony. Representing HH the Amir, the ceremony was attended by Dr Mohammad Abdulatif Al-Fares, Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education. The ceremony was also attended by Kuwait Sea Club's Chairman,

Major General Fahad Ahmed Al-Fahad, in addition to friends and family members of the participants.

The dhow leaves carrying captains as well as other participants heading to Al-Khairan for an entire week trip. The return ceremony "Al-Qoffal" is planned on August 3, 2017. The Pearl Diving Memorial Journey is one of the initiatives that Gulf bank spon-

sors on an annual basis, it is a key part of its long-term commitment towards preserving the heritage and continuing the traditions of Kuwait's unique past.

The journey aims to remind young Kuwaiti generations of the difficulties and challenges faced by their forefathers in earning their living, along with a message urging these generations to uphold the tra-

ditions and values their ancestors developed during that time. Gulf Bank continues to maintain and strengthen its position as an integral part of the Kuwaiti society. The Bank supports and emphasizes the true Kuwaiti identity and the importance of the Kuwaiti traditions and customs, through sponsoring different of social activities and events.



Captain Thamer Al-Sayyar, Sea Heritage Committee Consultant.



NBK DEVELOPS ITS SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN PARTICIPATION WITH LOYAC

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) in collaboration with LOYAC is offering social educative training programs for youth participating in NBK's annual summer internship program. These programs aim at developing knowledge and responsibility towards society. This new collaboration aims at enhancing the Summer Internship Program with new challenges and is part of the ongoing partnership between NBK and LOYAC. The new training sessions will include an introduction to the civil society sector, highlighting Civic Engagement and how values influence behavior.

Yaqoub Al-Baqer, NBK Public Relations Officer, said: "The participation of LOYAC in this program is an added value for the students this year. They will have the chance to experience the value of volunteering and the importance of social work." Al-Baqer added: "NBK's relationship with LOYAC extends for years. We are happy to have this long standing partnership with

LOYAC". The Summer Internship first two sessions started on the 2nd and 16th of July, while the following sessions start on 30th of July today and 13th of August respectively. The Summer Internship Program stands as an extension to NBK's educative initiatives and is a part of its corporate social responsibility.

The two-week courses in this program are specially designed for high school and college students, between 15 and 20 years old. The Program features a mixture of theoretical and practical training. It is dedicated to providing the interns with invaluable knowledge on a variety of subjects such as: the teamwork, creative thinking, means of self-expression and modern banking, in addition to helping them to have greater exposure to daily banking work procedures.

The participation of LOYAC in this program extends to include activities and volunteering initiatives. Trainees will have the chance to participate in LOYAC's park renovation project.



Yaqoub Al-Baqer



AM MOVIES ACTION

00:30 REC 4: Apocalypse
02:05 Blackhat
04:20 Tracers
06:00 Fast & Furious 7

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:45 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
01:40 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
02:35 Life At Vet University

BBC FIRST

00:00 EastEnders
00:30 Cold Feet
01:20 Cold Feet
02:10 War And Peace

crime investigation network

00:00 My Ghost Story: Caught On Camera
01:00 I Was Possessed
02:00 Private Crimes

COMEDY CENTRAL

00:05 Chappelle's Show
00:30 Chappelle's Show
00:55 Tosh.O
01:20 Tosh.O

18:59 Disaster Date
19:22 Lip Sync Battle
19:45 Lip Sync Battle
20:07 Ridiculousness Arabia

Discovery Family

00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
01:20 The Big Brain Theory
02:10 Dirty Jobs
03:00 Dirty Jobs

ID

00:30 Scene Of The Crime With Tony Harris
01:20 Is O.J. Innocent? The Missing Evidence
02:10 Murder Calls

Disney CHANNEL HD

00:00 Hank Zipzer
00:25 Alex & Co.
00:45 The Hive

COMEDY CENTRAL

00:05 Chappelle's Show
00:30 Chappelle's Show
00:55 Tosh.O
01:20 Tosh.O

01:05 Loopdidoo
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
01:50 Zou

Discovery CHANNEL HD

00:20 Ocean Warriors
01:05 Shark-Croc Showdown
01:50 Return To The Isle Of Jews
02:35 The Lost Cage

XHD

06:00 Supa Strikas
06:25 Supa Strikas
06:50 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6

H2 HD

00:00 Ancient Discoveries
01:00 Ancient Discoveries
02:00 Ancient Discoveries
02:50 Ancient Discoveries

H2 HD HISTORY

00:20 JFK Declassified: Hunting Oswald
01:10 Mountain Men
02:00 Counting Cars: Best Of

Henry
06:50 El News
07:20 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry

food network

00:00 Man Fire Food
00:30 Man Fire Food
01:00 Restaurant: Impossible
02:00 Mystery Diners

itv HD CHOICE

00:05 Coronation Street
00:30 Coronation Street
01:00 Victoria
02:00 Coronation Street

H2 HD

00:00 Ancient Discoveries
01:00 Ancient Discoveries
02:00 Ancient Discoveries
02:50 Ancient Discoveries

H2 HD HISTORY

00:20 JFK Declassified: Hunting Oswald
01:10 Mountain Men
02:00 Counting Cars: Best Of

13:30 Ice Road Truckers
14:20 Mountain Men
15:10 Fifth Gear
16:00 Storage Wars

NAT GEO people HD

00:15 Places We Go
00:45 Sinful Sweets
01:10 David Rocco's Dolce India
01:40 Bad Trip

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

00:10 Invasion Earth
01:00 King Fishers
02:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
03:00 Caper Megabuild

NAT GEO WILD HD

00:20 1000 Days For The Planet
01:10 Dangerous Encounters
02:00 Ultimate Predators GPU

nick HD

00:12 Henry Danger
00:36 Get Blake
01:00 Sanjay And Craig
01:24 Rabbids Invasion

13:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
14:12 The Thundermans
14:36 Henry Danger
15:00 The Boy Who Cried Werewolf

nick jr

00:18 Blaze And The Monster Machines
00:41 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:04 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:28 Blaze And The Monster Machines

AM MOVIES HD FAMILY

00:20 Toy Story 3
02:05 Pirates Of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides
04:20 A Sunday Horse

AM MOVIES HD COMEDY

01:25 The Hot Chick
03:10 Accidental Love
04:55 Clifford
06:30 Ride Along 2

AM MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

00:05 The Birdcage
02:05 Ed Wood
04:15 A Perfect Day
06:05 Quiz Show

AM MOVIES HD KIDS

01:20 Outback
02:50 Pet Pals In Windland
04:15 Ratchet And Clank
05:50 Doctor Proctor's Fat Powder

15:40 Pooh's Heffalump Movie
16:50 Big Baby
18:15 Capture The Flag
19:50 Lego: Scooby Doo Haunted Hollywood

AM MOVIES HD

01:40 Blown Away
03:45 War Horse
06:10 The Guardian
08:30 Blown Away

SC DISCOVERY SCIENCE

00:30 Prototype This
01:20 Prototype This
02:10 Prototype This
03:00 Prototype This

STAR MOVIES HD

00:00 Arthur Newman
01:45 Christmas Truce
03:20 The Quiet American
05:00 Cassandra's Dream

STAR WORLD HD

00:00 Black Box
01:00 The Listener
02:00 The Listener
03:00 American Idol

TLC HD

00:20 My 600lb Life: Where Are They Now?
01:05 Weighing Up The Enemy
01:50 Suddenly Rich

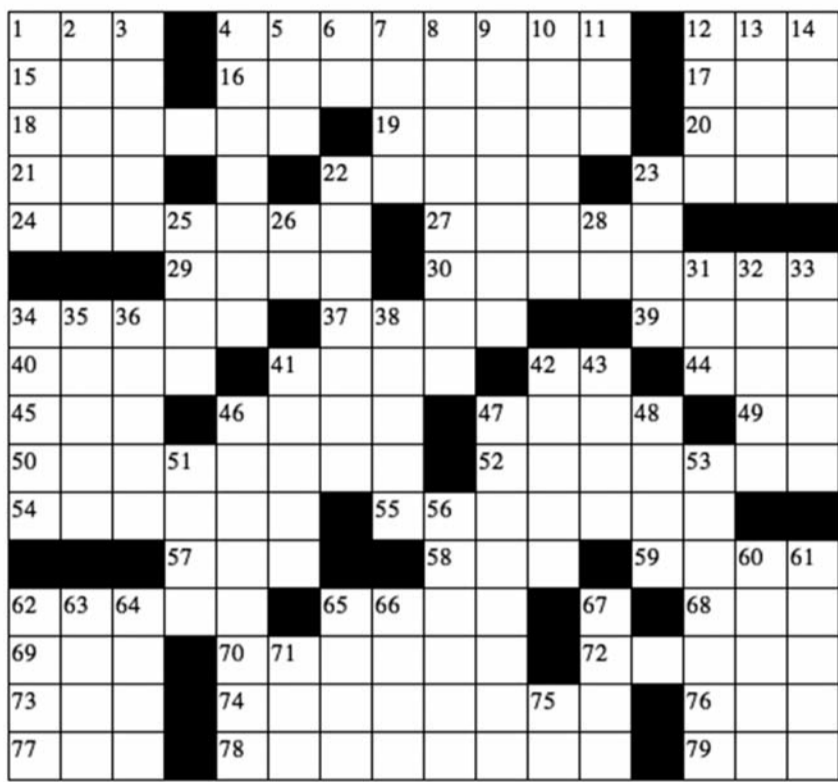
AM MOVIES HD COMEDY

01:25 The Hot Chick
03:10 Accidental Love
04:55 Clifford
06:30 Ride Along 2

travel CHANNEL

00:00 Xtreme Waterparks
00:30 Xtreme Waterparks
01:00 Island Explorers
01:30 Island Explorers

CROSSWORD 1672



ACROSS

- Standard temperature and pressure.
 - Steady recurrent ticking sound as made by a clock.
 - A change in the electrical properties of the skin in response to stress or anxiety.
 - (in golf) The standard number of strokes set for each hole on a golf course, or for the entire course.
 - Be around.
 - A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
 - Someone who leaves one country to settle in another.
 - Equipped with wire or wires especially for electric or telephone service.
 - A rapid escape (as by criminals).
 - An accountant certified by the state.
 - The capital and largest city of Uganda on the north shore of Lake Victoria.
 - A Hindu goddess who releases from sin or disease.
 - Not fake or counterfeit.
 - English literary critic who collaborated with C. K. Ogden and contributed to the development of Basic English (1893-1979).
 - A cloud of fine particles suspended in a gas. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
 - An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
 - Wrap us in a ceceroth, as of a corpse.
 - A master's degree in business.
 - A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
 - A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
 - Small genus of deciduous trees of tropical America and Asia.
 - Not necessarily inaudible but not heard.
 - Motivation based on ideas of right and wrong.
 - Very small northern fish.
 - Lacking self-confidence.
 - Large brownish-green New Zealand parrot.
 - A member of a North American Indian people speaking one of the Hokan language.
 - Italian lawn bowling (played on a long narrow dirt court).
 - One-thousandth of an equivalent.
 - Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
 - Highly seasoned fatty sausage of pork and beef usually dried.
 - Jordan's port.
 - A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.
 - A boat for carrying mail.
 - A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.
 - A human limb.
 - A musical composition for voices and orchestra based on a religious text.
 - A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- DOWN
- A very small spot.
 - A resort city in western Florida.
 - (Greek mythology) The last king of Troy.
 - Usually paved outdoor area adjoining a residence.
 - Used of a single unit or thing.
 - Being ten more than one hundred ninety.
 - Climbing vine native to China.
 - A fast sailboat with 3 parallel hulls.
 - Grasshopper with short antennae.
 - A clergyman or other person in religious orders.
 - (Brit) A tough youth of 1950's and 1960's wearing Edwardian style clothes.
 - Offering fun and gaiety.
 - Speaking a Slavic language.
 - Avatar of Vishnu.
 - A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
 - 10 jiao equal 1 yuan.
 - A Chinese breed of small short-legged dogs with a long silky coat and broad flat muzzle.
 - A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
 - The fifth day of the week.
 - Rate of revolution of a motor.
 - Bar temporarily.
 - A burn cause by hot liquid or steam.
 - Any admirable quality or attribute.
 - Any of various herbaceous plants of the genus Atriplex that thrive in deserts and salt marshes.
 - English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
 - Improperly forward or bold.
 - Transient cessation of respiration.
 - Tropical woody herb with showy yellow flowers and flat pods.
 - Exaggerated masculinity.
 - Of high or superior quality or performance.
 - Not only so, but.
 - (computer science) A kind of computer architecture that has a relatively small set of computer instructions that it can perform.
 - Genus of beetles whose grubs feed mainly on roots of plants.
 - (used of arms and legs) Bent outward with the joint away from the body.
 - Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
 - Jordan's port.
 - Look at with amorous intentions.
 - Open-heart surgery in which the rib cage is opened and a section of a blood vessel is grafted from the aorta to the coronary artery to bypass the blocked section of the coronary artery and improve the blood supply to the heart.
 - English essayist (1775-1834).
 - A milkshake made with malt powder.
 - An international organization created in 1949 by the North Atlantic Treaty for purposes of collective security.
 - A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
 - The branch of computer science that deal

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may find yourself awake at an early hour this morning. You could be helping someone move or driving someone to the airport. Whatever the case, you are available to help. Sympathy and understanding are emotional qualities that take on a greater importance now. Even though it is the top of the morning when you help this person, you are reflective and may be a mirror for this person's focus. You are equality-minded and easy to talk with—a good mediator as well. As a sociable and slightly frivolous orientation sets in this afternoon, you may find yourself planning a neighborhood get-together. There is time to relax—perhaps a massage or some leisure time in a pool. You are driven to excel in any form of physical or creative expression today.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are good at relations regarding politics, diplomacy and sales—not to mention considerate and helpful. This is a good day for you to deal in sales or presentations. You have an inner urge to be all things to all people and would rather bend than argue. You will be helping a friend today because you are willing to listen and not criticize. You are a natural diplomat, always concerned with the comfort and welfare of others. You stay in the background, but are able to manipulate and bring out cooperation in others every time. A real estate profession is something you might seriously consider. This is a day you should enjoy—relax. With your strong drive to do and accomplish, every bit of relaxation you get will be beneficial.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Progressive people and idealistic groups or concepts play a more important role in your life now—a new cycle begins. There is a concern for something bigger than any one person—perhaps an interest in civic affairs or even some new recycling technique. You are very communicative, flexible, mental and other-oriented today. You will find many, particularly young people, listen to your ideas and advice. Your laser-like mind makes conversations fast-paced and illuminating. A ready wit and a great sense of humor create a rewarding day. You may join a self-help group or find yourself talking about a self-help book to a close friend this evening. Whatever the case, you have insight into your own emotions and drive. You can be a good mentor.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Easy does it—this is one of those busy days. If you need to concentrate on a particular chore, it would be a good idea to suggest that others either help you or leave you alone to do your work. This way, you will not get as many interruptions—and who knows—someone might help you with your special chore or project. A family gathering may be planned for later this day, perhaps a picnic. Tonight could complete your little gathering with a nearby outdoor concert. A music festival or some other type of fun activity with lots of children and unique exhibits just gives everyone the perfect opportunity to get to know each other better. There are opportunities to teach young people a sense of sharing and support of each other.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Having and appreciating things of beauty and value plays a big role in your life at this time. Making the most of what you have, striving for security and stability; that's the impulse that stirs in you now. You find yourself talking about investing and may even have a personal plan. Provided you do not spend the entire budget on the fancy things that catch your eye, a shopping expedition can be a financially favorable one for you now. Circumstances may expand your appreciation and enjoyment of your life situation. Your system of values may deepen, providing you with a better sense of discrimination and good taste. There is a desire to purchase items and you might forget when to stop adding to your basket. You are inspired to write poetry.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are not bound by relationships and are thus not much of a domestic. You find it easy to work with other people and tend to pour a lot of energy into those around you. Foreign affairs may catch your attention at this time. Perhaps an investment you are thinking about is beginning to show quite an upswing in potential. You will find support from others when you turn your attention to health, food, nutrition and areas where service or attention to detail is in high focus. You may enjoy working with a group of people that have similar thinking or politics. With your powerful spirit, you enjoy your strong emotions and have an active social life. There are opportunities to show off your charming side this evening at an upscale social affair.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You are very much the creature of habit. The encircling network of friends and relationships are crucial to your success or lack thereof from time to time. You are nourished in great measure by the atmosphere and conditions you are able to set up. You may, however, tend to fluctuate between uninspired routine and crazy binges. For the next few days you may want to spend some time in organizing your thoughts and goals-making lists. Do not forget to walk around your home and make any necessary notes about updates. This is a good time to change the air filters, set out a soaker hose, clean vents, etc. Enjoy a bit of time away from work and responsibilities, perhaps by short trips to fun places this weekend. Consider creating a butterfly garden.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

It is easy for you to express yourself to others—you always manage to make a good appearance. You have an easy manner and find it easy to communicate with just about anyone. You like beautiful surroundings, everything that is calm, tasteful and harmonious. You may be planning a water garden for those hot summer days—maybe a few goldfish. This afternoon you will find yourself involved in several fun conversations with those you love. You are very giving, conciliatory and even flattering in relationships, able to adjust to any situation. Budget restraints are definitely needed so that some item you want in the future will become more attainable. Suggestions by young members in the family will give you new ideas.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You would like your conversations and thinking to stay somewhere near the surface today. This is a day of rest, and deep problem-solving conversations are certainly not on your to-do list. You can create new subjects easily with all the interests you have. You will enjoy your friends today—you love to interact with them. There may be an occasion to teach someone how to write music or to put one of your poems to music. You appreciate change, variety and making local connections—there may be an open house or opening day for some new business. You have many avenues to explore this weekend and many positive things to accomplish. You are more attractive than usual. Intimacy with a person you love will go beyond the usual.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Circumstances may press you and tend to bring out the rebel in you. A little bicycle ride or just a change of scenery for a short while will help to bring your emotions back in balance. Self-control is the accepted and admired behavior, and you are able to respond in positive ways. Circumstances work together to bring out your ideals—making it easier to make your dreams real. You are very original when it comes to home and surroundings—the environment you build around you. This could also manifest in new ideas for unusual ways of supporting yourself in the future. Get outside and be with friends this afternoon—enjoy a breath of fresh air! This evening, literature is on your mind. That book you want to write or read may hold your attention.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

There are changes around your household that may not be the most pleasant for you. Change would be easier if you could have more control. However, if you are paying for these changes, you have the power! This doesn't mean you could be bossy, but it does mean you could become more influential with the price, color, style, etc. If you do not care about any of these, the changes will probably stay. Progressive people and idealistic groups or concepts play an important role in your life. This may be a special day when you have been looking forward to a trip to a museum, art show or the opening night of a play where a family member is performing. You enjoy a bit of culture from time to time and this experience is special.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Everything points to your taking the lead in today's activities. You could feel great support from those around you. You feel healthy and natural. You will find that today is packed full of communication with friends, especially those you may not have seen in some time. Perhaps it is time for a reunion. Practical and effective ideas are the ones that make the most sense—putting them to good use is a focus for you. Material things are foremost on your mind in many respects; an emphasis on the real rather than the ideal. This is the time you may decide to install a porch instead of a deck. Now when company comes, there will be a place to put them. If it is a porch with wide windows, you will enjoy sitting out there for meditations.

WORD SEARCH

Movie Actors 2

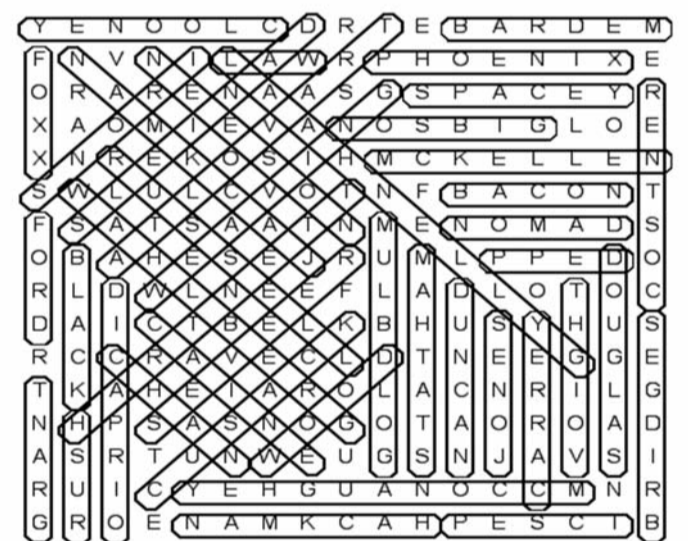
Find and circle all of the Movie Actors that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a movie for which William Hurt won an Oscar.



- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| ASTIN, Sean | FIENNES, Ralph | MARTIN, Steve |
| BLOOM, Orlando | FREEMAN, Morgan | MORTENSEN, Viggo |
| BROSNAN, Pierce | GERE, Richard | MYERS, Mike |
| BUSCEMI, Steve | GOSLING, Ryan | PATTINSON, Robert |
| CAGE, Nicolas | HANKS, Tom | FENN, Sean |
| CONNERY, Russel | HARRELSON, Woody | REYNOLDS, Ryan |
| CROWE, Sean | HOFFMAN, Philip Seymour | RODGO, Seth |
| CRUISE, Tom | HOWARD, Terrence | RUDD, Paul |
| DAFNE, Willem | HURT, William | SMITH, Will |
| DE NIRO, Robert | JACKSON, Samuel L. | STALLONE, Sylvester |
| DIESEL, Vin | JONES, Tommy Lee | STEWART, Patrick |
| DOWNEY JR, Robert | KEATON, Michael | VAUGHN, Vince |
| DREYFUSS, Richard | KILMER, Val | WILKINSON, Tom |
| DUVALL, Robert | LABOUF, Shia | WILLIAMS, Robin |
| EVERETT, Rupert | MAGUIRE, Tobey | WILSON, Owen |
| FERRELL, Will | | |

Friday's Solution

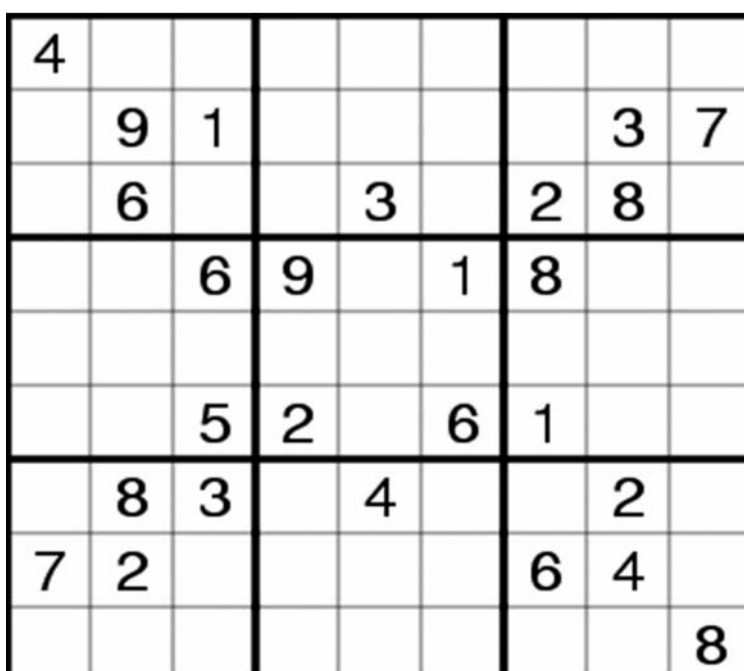
Movie Actors 1



- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| BACON, Kevin | DUNCAN, Michael Clarke | MCKELLEN, Ian |
| BARDEM, Javier | FORD, Harrison | NEESON, Liam |
| BLACK, Jack | FOXX, Jamie | PESCI, Joe |
| BRIDGES, Jeff | GIBSON, Mel | PHOENIX, Joaquin |
| CAINE, Michael | GOLDBLUM, Jeff | REEVES, Keanu |
| CARREY, Jim | GRANT, Hugh | RUSH, Geoffrey |
| CHAN, Jackie | GYLLENHAAL, Jake | RUSSELL, Kurt |
| CLOONEY, George | HACKMAN, Gene | SPACEY, Kevin |
| COSTNER, Kevin | HARTNETT, Josh | STATHAM, Jason |
| CUSACK, John | IRONS, Jeremy | TRAVOLTA, John |
| DAMON, Matt | JACKMAN, Hugh | VOIGHT, Jon |
| DANIELS, Jeff | JONES, James Earl | WAHLBERG, Mark |
| DEPP, Johnny | LAW, Jude | WEAVING, Hugo |
| DICAPRIO, Leonardo | MCCONAGHEY, Matthew | WOOD, Elijah |
| DOUGLAS, Michael | | |

The hidden movie title is: REVERSAL OF FORTUNE

Daily SuDoku



Friday's Solution



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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (27/07/2017 TO 02/08/2017)

Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme
1:00 PM	SHARQIA-1 CARS 3	1:35 PM	TISBAH ALA KHAIR FRI	3:30 PM	DUNKIRK
3:15 PM	CARS 3	3:30 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE CARS 3	5:45 PM	DUNKIRK
5:30 PM	BANK AL HATH	5:45 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE CARS 3	8:00 PM	DUNKIRK
8:00 PM	BANK AL HATH	8:00 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE	10:15 PM	BABY DRIVER
10:30 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE	10:15 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE	12:30 AM	BABY DRIVER
12:45 AM	ATOMIC BLONDE	12:30 AM	ATOMIC BLONDE		
12:45 PM	SHARQIA-2 DUNKIRK	11:30 AM	FANAR-2 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	11:30 AM	AVENUES-1 DUNKIRK
3:00 PM	DUNKIRK	2:15 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	1:45 PM	BANK AL HATH
5:15 PM	BABY DRIVER	5:00 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	4:15 PM	BANK AL HATH
7:30 PM	DUNKIRK	7:45 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	6:45 PM	BANK AL HATH
9:45 PM	BABY DRIVER	10:00 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	9:15 PM	BANK AL HATH
12:05 AM	DUNKIRK	12:45 AM	BABY DRIVER	11:45 PM	BANK AL HATH
11:30 AM	SHARQIA-3 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	12:30 PM	FANAR-3 MUBARAKAN -Hindi	12:15 PM	DUNKIRK -2D-4DX
2:15 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	1:40 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	2:30 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3
4:15 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	3:35 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	4:30 PM	DUNKIRK
6:15 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	5:30 PM	MUBARAKAN -Hindi	7:15 PM	DUNKIRK
9:00 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	8:30 PM	BABY DRIVER	9:45 PM	BABY DRIVER
11:45 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	10:45 PM	BOYKA: UNDISPUTED	12:05 AM	DUNKIRK
		12:40 AM	BOYKA: UNDISPUTED		
11:35 AM	MUHALAB-1 SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:30 AM	FANAR-5 BANK AL HATH	11:40 AM	AVCARS 3
2:20 PM	TISBAH ALA KHAIR	2:00 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	1:55 PM	CARS 3
4:15 PM	GOUTHAM NANDA - Telugu	4:15 PM	BABY DRIVER	4:10 PM	CARS 3
4:45 PM	SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	6:30 PM	BANK AL HATH	8:00 PM	CARS 3
7:30 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE	9:00 PM	BANK AL HATH	10:15 PM	MUBARAKAN -Hindi
9:45 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE	11:30 PM	BANK AL HATH	12:30 AM	MUBARAKAN -Hindi
12:05 AM	ATOMIC BLONDE				
11:45 AM	MUHALAB-2 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	1:30 PM	MARINA-1 TISBAH ALA KHAIR	11:40 AM	AL-KOUT3 WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES
2:30 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	12:45 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	2:15 PM	CARS 3
4:30 PM	CARS 3	3:30 PM	SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	4:30 PM	CARS 3
6:45 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	6:15 PM	TISBAH ALA KHAIR	6:45 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES
9:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	8:15 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE	9:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES
12:15 AM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	10:30 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE	12:15 AM	BABY DRIVER
		12:45 AM	ATOMIC BLONDE		
11:30 AM	MUHALAB-3 DUNKIRK	12:00 PM	MARINA-2 CARS 3	12:00 PM	AL-KOUT4 DUNKIRK
1:45 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	2:15 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	1:30 PM	BOYKA: UNDISPUTED
3:45 PM	DUNKIRK	4:15 PM	CARS 3	3:30 PM	BOYKA: UNDISPUTED
6:00 PM	DUNKIRK	6:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	5:30 PM	BOYKA: UNDISPUTED
8:15 PM	DUNKIRK	9:15 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	7:30 PM	BANK AL HATH
10:30 PM	BABY DRIVER	12:05 AM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	10:00 PM	BANK AL HATH
12:45 AM	BABY DRIVER			12:30 AM	BOYKA: UNDISPUTED
1:00 PM	FANAR-1 CARS 3	1:35 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM	BAIRAQ-1 DUNKIRK
		1:15 PM	DUNKIRK	1:35 PM	CARS 3
				3:35 PM	CARS 3

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PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr: 03:37
 Shorook: 05:07
 Duh: 11:54
 Asr: 15:30
 Maghrib: 18:42
 Isha: 20:08

Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)
DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 30/7/2017				Departure Flights on Sunday 30/7/2017			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:15	JZR	1540	Cairo	00:20
MSC	411	Asyut	00:30	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
KAC	786	Jeddah	00:30	MSR	2615	Cairo	00:30
JZR	267	Beirut	00:35	MSC	411	Asyut	00:30
KAC	504	Beirut	00:45	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
KAC	102	London	00:55	KAC	677	Dubai	01:30
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	MSC	412	Asyut	01:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	THY	773	Istanbul	01:40
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:35
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	KKK	6505	Istanbul	02:55
KKK	6506	Istanbul	01:55	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:05	AEE	943	ATH	03:15
QTR	1086	Doha	02:10	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
JZR	553	Alexandria	02:10	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:30
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	RJA	645	Amman	03:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	THY	753	Istanbul	04:00
AEE	942	ATH	02:25	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
KAC	418	Manila	02:50	QTR	1087	Doha	04:10
THY	752	Istanbul	03:05	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	KAC	417	Manila	04:20
RJA	644	Amman	03:10	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:25
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	JZR	560	Sohag	04:45
FDB	069	Dubai	03:15	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00
KAC	382	Delhi	03:15	RBG	550	Alexandria	05:00
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	KAC	103	London	05:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:45	QTR	1091	Doha	05:05
KAC	1544	Cairo	03:50	QTR	1077	Doha	05:35
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:50
QTR	1090	Doha	04:05	THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00
RBG	559	Alexandria	04:10	UAE	874	Dubai	06:15
UAE	873	Dubai	04:15	RJA	643	Amman	06:25
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	THY	771	Istanbul	06:25
KAC	358	Kochi	04:50	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
KAC	784	Jeddah	05:00	QTR	8320	Beirut/Doha	06:50
THY	1414	TZK	05:05	JZR	552	Amman	07:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	KAC	070	Dubai	07:05
QTR	8320	Doha	05:20	JZR	164	Dubai	07:15
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	MSC	406	Sohag	07:45
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	501	Beirut	07:50
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	171	Frankfurt	07:50
KAC	362	Colombo	05:50	IRC	529	Ahwaz	08:00
BAW	157	London	06:05	WAN	953	GVD	08:15
KAC	678	Dubai	06:25	BAW	156	London	08:20
KAC	1802	Cairo	06:35	KAC	177	Vienna	08:25
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:35	KAC	741	Dammam	08:30
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
MSC	412	Asyut	06:45	KAC	773	Riyadh	08:35
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:55	KAC	513	Tehran	08:45
IRC	528	Ahwaz	07:00	KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	09:00
KAC	156	Istanbul	07:05	JZR	256	Beirut	09:00
JZR	1541	Cairo	07:10	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	117	New York	09:15
KAC	354	Bangalore	07:50	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	165	Rome	09:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	JZR	534	Cairo	09:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KAC	691	Muscat	09:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	JZR	482	Istanbul	09:40
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	KAC	101	London	09:45
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00
SAW	703	Damascus	10:45	KAC	617	Doha	10:15
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:25
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KAC	153	Istanbul	10:30
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00				
PAL	668	Manila	11:00				
JZR	561	Sohag	11:10				
KAC	742	Dammam	11:45				
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50				
JZR	239	Amman	12:25				
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45				
KAC	774	Riyadh	12:45				

GOSSIP

Shania Twain's movie role



Shania Twain is launching an acting career. The 51-year-old singer has signed up to star alongside John Travolta in action movie 'Trading Paint'. A source told The Sun: "Shania is one of the world's best songwriters and has no problems feeling and connecting with emotions. "Until now she has expressed that in her songs but she is ready for a new challenge and is giving acting a go. "The past 10 years have been tough for Shania. After the break-

down of her marriage in 2008 she feared she would never sing again. "But she has recovered from that and is back stronger than ever. Her new album proves that, and so will her acting talent." Meanwhile, Shania - who has son Eja, 15, with ex-husband Mutt Lange - recently admitted she feared she would never sing again after being diagnosed with Lyme disease. She said: "It's a very debilitating disease, very degenerative. So I was very lucky at all that it

affected the nerves on my vocal cords, not the vocal cords. "I lost my voice for several years and I could speak but I couldn't yell. I could never yell for my dog or my son or whatever. "I also felt that I was never going to make another album-that was probably my truth. It was devastating. I really grieved about that. It did bring me down and I struggled with it every day."

Gomez 'obsessed' with Gucci Mane

Selena Gomez is "obsessed" with Gucci Mane. The pair previously worked together on 2012 movie 'Spring Breakers' and when Selena decided to release 'Fetish' as her new single, she knew she wanted Gucci to collaborate. She told Dazed magazine: "Gucci is so cool. I'm obsessed with him, we worked on 'Spring Breakers' together and I asked him to be on the song. I hadn't had seen him for a long time (but) when I asked he was like 'Yeah fam! Let's do it!' He loves it!" The evocative video for the new single was filmed by Selena's pal Petra Collins and Selena was most excited by the kitchen scene where she ate soap, lipstick and glass. She told Petra: "The kitchen scene was so liberating, to lose control of my body and lose sight of myself. "I felt great and I felt like tomatoes, eggs and dirt and it was amazing, but seriously? I love that. It felt so good. "I remember being a little nervous, and when things hit the wall - I just lost it and left myself in that scene. It was so cool. You were behind the camera, screaming. "Um, I'm not saying I've ever done something similar to the kitchen scene in real life, but I can say right now, I do weird thing all the time when I'm alone in my house. "I love the video because it shows the very dirty, gross and weird love you can have towards someone. This is how obsessive some people get and how they release. I'm obsessed with these weird ASMR videos. I think about how our bodies react to sounds and movement."



Justin Bieber won't quit music

Justin Bieber will record new music. Although the 23-year-old musician recently axed the remainder of his 'Purpose' world tour in order to reportedly "rededicate his life to Christ" and focus on his religion, he has insisted that his faith won't stop him from working on new material. A source told TMZ that "music has always been a major release for Justin and he's constantly in and out of studios working on new tunes". He also plans to return to touring but will not embark on such a lengthy world tour like 'Purpose' as it left him exhausted. Previously, Hillsong Church pastor Carl Lentz described Justin as a "good Christian", and quashed speculation the singer is paid to attend church events, as he insisted the star is simply using his faith to guide himself through new chapters in his life. He said: "We don't pay him to attend. He comes on his own. "I think that Justin is a good Christian. I don't think his problems are behind him, but we all have to deal with other stuff to come. "His relationship with Jesus is changing his life daily. It is one of those things where you never really get it, it takes a while to keep growing as a person. Every day he is getting older, and with each chapter comes new growth... This is what conference is all about. "Everyone here would buy a ticket and be a part of it. He feels like it is a big part of his year." Meanwhile, Justin's tour cancellation was confirmed last week via a post uploaded to his website. The statement read: "Due to unforeseen circumstances, Justin Bieber will cancel the remainder of the Purpose World Tour concerts. Justin loves his fans and hates to disappoint them. He thanks his fans for the incredible experience of the Purpose World Tour over last 18 months. He is grateful to have shared that experience with his cast and crew for over 150 successful shows across 6 continents during this run. However, after careful consideration he has decided he will not be performing any further dates. Tickets will be refunded at point of purchase."



Delevingne was under guard when she read Valerian script

Cara Delevingne's 'Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets' script had its own bodyguard. After the 24-year-old beauty - who plays special operative Laureline in the sci-fi saga - auditioned for her role, director Luc Besson kept the details of the film as tightly under wraps as he possibly could by employing security to sit with Cara as she read the script for the first time. She told Look magazine: "We just met in LA and then I went to see him in Paris and he put me through an actor's test where you pretend to be an animal. "It was about physicality and throwing yourself into something. "The script was so top secret it had to be sent with its own bodyguard and I had to sit there and read it all while the bodyguard was there." Cara was determined to do whatever it took to be in the film because she is such a big fan of the director and was desperate to work with him. He said: "I've been a fan of the director ever since I can remember. "To even meet the man, let alone be in one of his films, was a dream come true. "The way he spoke about the film was like a child speaking about their fantasy. From that moment on, I fell in love with it. I knew I needed to do it. "I really wanted to prove to him I'd do whatever it took." The 'Paper Towns' actress doesn't want to limit herself to particular film genres and her only criteria when looking for parts is they are "strong" characters. She said: "I've been lucky with the parts I've had. They're all strong female characters. It's very important for me to be a role model for young girls. There isn't any limit in terms of what I want to do as an actress. "I want to do some comedy, scary movies, even musicals. I'm a big film buff. Any movie that comes my way I'd be happy to look at."

Pellow quits Wet Wet Wet



Marti Pellow has quit Wet Wet Wet. The 52-year-old singer of the popular Scottish pop group - who had hits with 'Love Is All Around' and 'Angel Eyes' - has decided to focus on his solo career and does not see himself fronting the band for the "foreseeable future". Announcing the news on Twitter, he wrote: "Hi all, wanted you to know for foreseeable future I'll be concentrating on my solo work, am excited by the future and seeing you out there x (sic)" Marti was the lead singer the group - also comprised of Tommy Cunningham and Neile Mitchell - for more than three decades, but says his "heart and soul" is no longer into it. He explained to Music Week: "When I started in Wet Wet Wet I gave it 100% of my heart and soul and that's what it demands and that is also what the fans demand - and if I can't do that because my focus is elsewhere, then this is not fair on the fans or the rest of the guys in the band." Marti insists there are no bad feelings and he will always look back fondly on his time in the group. He said: "I will be spending more time on my solo work - performing concerts, acting and my own songwriting - as an artist I feel a lot more settled in this world. I have had a great time and loved my career with Wet Wet Wet and to me they will always be the best band in the world. Marti previously quit the group in 1999 after battling with a heroin addiction. Speaking about being drug free, he said previously: "It was textbook. I couldn't function without it. But there's no romantic side to heroin - it's no good." Following his first departure they disbanded, but reunited in March 2004 and they dropped their eighth studio LP 'Timeless' in 2007. As for Marti's solo career, his latest record 'Mysterious' was released in March.



McAvoy's intense fight scenes with Theron

James McAvoy loved getting his "ass kicked" by Charlize Theron in 'Atomic Blonde'. The 38-year-old actor plays Cold War-era spy David Percival in the action thriller alongside Charlize as Lorraine Broughton and James admitted his character cannot compete with Charlize's in physical combat. He told PEOPLE: "I didn't have a lot of fight scenes but I was pretty pleased with myself for figuring out how to keep a cigarette in my mouth while I was getting my ass kicked by Charlize Theron. And by the way I actually did, there was no camera trickery, I actually kept it in my mouth the whole time." James sports a buzz cut in the movie but is currently bald as he prepares to reprise the role of Charles 'Professor X' Xavier in 'X-Men' movie 'Dark Phoenix', but James admitted he hates when he has to shave his head. He explained: "I used to like the fact that it afforded me a certain amount of anonymity but it no longer does that. Since I did two movies that everybody saw where I had a bald head, now it's like a beacon. But what do I like about it? Not a lot at the moment. I like when it's been about five or seven days going in, then it's cool but when it's properly skinhead I look a bit weird. I do like the fact that I don't have to do anything in the morning." And when he's not working, James prefers to chill out at home rather than throw himself into the Hollywood lifestyle. He said: "What do I enjoy most when I'm not working? Hard drinking and drugs! No, like most good people, I enjoy the usual thing. Playing football, reading, I like cooking. All these boring things I like to do when I'm not flying around the world crazy, just being safe at home."



Alice Cooper: My best song is yet to come

Alice Cooper doesn't think he's written his "best song" yet. The 69-year-old rocker has enjoyed decades of success but is showing no signs of slowing down and wants to continue being creative and striving to do better with every record. He said: "I'm sure Dylan doesn't think he's written his best song yet, nor Paul McCartney. And I believe my best song is still out there somewhere too. "I don't know how many years I've got left but as long as I'm here I'm going to do what I do best." And the 'School's Out' hitmaker has no desire to retire because he still "belongs" on stage and both he and his wife Sheryl Goddard, one of his dancers, get "restless" if they take too much time off. He told MOJO magazine: "I feel better now physically than I ever have in my life. I'll get up on stage and do that show and be the only one who's not breathing hard. "I'm not making records now to build a new audience, I'm making records because there's a huge fanbase around the world that wants to hear new songs. "So why wouldn't I make albums? It's what I do. Why wouldn't I go up on stage? "I feel more at home on stage than just about anywhere else. It's where I belong. "If Sheryl and I go six months without a tour, we both get a little restless. And then in the middle of the tour we're like, 'We can't wait for the tour to be over?' I don't have any desire to retire and I'm not going to go fishing. What am I gonna do?"



GOSSIP

T.J. Miller promises 'more Deadpool' movies after sequel



T.J. Miller has promised there will be plenty more 'Deadpool' movies. The 36-year-old actor will reprise his role as Weasel - the best friend of Ryan Reynolds' titular superhero - in the upcoming sequel to the 2016 eponymously titled Marvel movie and is confident about the franchise's future. Although he admits he is "surprised" at how well received the first 'Deadpool' was. Asked if he expected it to do so well, he said: "Oh yeah... We had no idea! Now we're going to make more 'Deadpoos' and there will be more R-rated superhero genre films. So that's, really good. "All we need is

for 'Deadpool 2' to be great." The flame-haired star is proud of 'Deadpool' and thinks it is the perfect movie to "cleanse the palate" after movies like 'Fantastic Four'. He told SFX Magazine: "He's almost the antidote to the poison that is those very milk-toast superhero genre films. "Like 'Fantastic Four' came out and everyone was like, 'What are they doing?' "I like 'Deadpool' being present every couple of years to cleanse the palate." In the meantime, Miller said the second installment won't follow the "same [story] in a different location" and will instead involve "different stakes". He said recent-

ly: "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 thing 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."

Ella Eyre set to play at Fusion Festival

Ella Eyre has joined the Fusion Festival line up. The 'Waiting All Night' hitmaker is set to perform on Sunday, September 3 at the event, which will take place at Otterspool Promenade in Liverpool, north England. The two-day event will be headlined by Take That on September 3 and by Little Mix on Saturday, September 2. Ella said: "I'm so excited to be playing Fusion Festival for the first time ever this year, I've heard big things and I can't wait to play some new music!" Meanwhile, 'Touch' hitmakers Little Mix - which includes Perrie Edwards, Jesy Nelson, Jade Thirlwall and Leigh-Anne Pinnock - are just as excited about the event. They said: "We're really excited to be headlining Fusion Festival with absolute legends, Take That. We can't wait to see all our fans up in Liverpool for what we know will be a sensational weekend of live pop music." They will be joined on Saturday, September 2 by Tinie Tempah, 'Love Me Again' singer John Newman, Louisa Johnson, 'X Factor' favourites 5 After Midnight, pop trio M.O, Aussie singer Stanley and Pop/Funk band Club Drive. Take That will be supported by Ella Henderson, The Vamps, JP Cooper, DJ-and-producer Jax Jones, urban singer-songwriter Raye and boy band New Hope Club on Sunday, September 3. The 'Giant' hitmakers added: "We love Liverpool and can't wait to close Fusion Festival on the Sunday night. It's going to be the best finale to the summer, playing our only UK festival show of the year! Can't wait to see you all!" Whilst Damien Sanders, Event Director of Fusion Festival, said: "We are more excited than ever about this year's festival, having two of the world's biggest pop acts perform on our stage is a major coup and we are all really looking forward to a truly memorable weekend."



Jonas Blue in talks for Shawn Mendes collaboration



Jonas Blue is in talks for a collaboration with Shawn Mendes for his debut studio album. The 'Perfect Strangers' 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 - whose real name is Guy Robin - 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." In the meantime, fans of the DJ will have to make do with the compilation. Speaking about the collection of songs, made up of remixes of some of the biggest hits in the charts hand selected by Jonas and two collaborations with Mark Villa and EDX, he said: "This compilation album came about from a lot of people asking me for my DJ sets so I decided to put together a compilation of 60 songs that I play when I DJ that are current that I really love and songs that I've loved for a while and I've put them into a massive DJ mix. They're great tunes and it's a great way of getting my brand Electronic Nature out there. I know people can put these tracks together themselves but people want to experience the music like a DJ set. I'm always looking at other DJ's sets and love discovering new tracks. I feel like a kid where I'm looking for the freshest, newest tracks." 'Electronic Nature - The Mix 2017' is out now.



Louisa Johnson wants Paul Weller collaboration

Louisa Johnson wants to follow in the footsteps of her pal Olly Murs and collaborate with Paul Weller. The 58-year-old rocker penned the track 'Let Me In' for the 33-year-old hunk's 2014 LP 'Never Been Better' and Louisa - who did 'Unpredictable' with Olly this year - has revealed she is keen to setup a duet with the 'Modfather' and former Jam frontman. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz at MTV Crashes Plymouth on Thursday, Louisa said: "I really love Paul Weller, I didn't know that Paul Weller wrote a song for Olly Murs, I might have to give him a ring." The 'So Good' hitmaker has a surprisingly eclectic taste in music and would also like to dabble in rap with dreams of teaming up with hip-hop icon Eminem. She said: "I really love Eminem, he's like my favorite artist. My love of Eminem comes from my dad, he always would be listening to his songs and albums when we'd be driving around, you just pick these things up. I have a really random love of different music from like garage to Eminem, people don't know how I like these songs." Meanwhile, the 19-year-old beauty has brushed off romance rumors between her and Olly, insisting she doesn't find him attractive. She told Metro.co.uk: "There's absolutely nothing going on with Olly. It's strictly platonic. I do not fancy him, not even a teeny bit. He doesn't do it for me. We are like brother and sister - we have never even kissed." MTV Crashes Plymouth continues today with Martin Garrix, Wilkinson (DJ Set), Duke Dumont B2B Gorgon City, R3WIRE & Varksi and many more performing on Plymouth Hoe in Devon, South West England.



Denis Villeneuve: Blade Runner 2049 is homage to original

Denis Villeneuve insists 'Blade Runner 2049' is an "homage to a world that doesn't exist anymore". The 49-year-old filmmaker is currently helming the sequel to the classic movie 'Blade Runner' and claims the film honors the original by featuring businesses which previously went bankrupt or ceased operations, including Atari and Pan American Airlines. Speaking to Collider at the San Diego Comic Con, he said: "There are some components in the original movie that made it stand out for me. "Seeing the adverts when I first saw the movie was like an extension of my reality and it was like [Sir] Ridley Scott had just taken a time-travelling machine into the future. "He had the guts to get real companies in the film. I tried to do the same which is to take some of the companies and like they are still alive. "It's a homage to a world that doesn't exist anymore." Sir Ridley Scott's movie - which had 17 different cuts - was first released in 1982. Villeneuve is now working on the sequel and admitted he doesn't like to use a lot of dialogue. He said: "The truth is I am someone who doesn't believe in a lot of dialogue. "I realized that just the actor looking out the window says more than the three pages of dialogue. I have a tendency to remove as much as I can. "Cinema is more powerful than dialogue." The filmmaker also said the music and cinematography were both inspired by the original movie's DNA and he wanted to stay faithful to the classic motion picture. 'Blade Runner 2049' sees Harrison Ford reprise his role as Rick Deckard and Ryan Gosling and Jared Leto also star in the sequel. The film is slated for release in October this year.

Corey Taylor: Chad Kroeger is Captain Ego from Planet Douche

Corey Taylor has labelled Chad Kroeger "Captain Ego from Planet Douche". The Slipknot and Stone Sour frontman insists he has nothing against Nickelback and that his problem lies with the 'Photograph' group's 42-year-old frontman after he called his band a "gimmick" earlier this year. Speaking to Philadelphia's 93.3 WMMR radio station, Corey said: "That just tells you the level of ego you're dealing with. "And I've said this since day one - it's not the band. As soon as that story hit, the band called and apologised. They were like, 'It's not us, we promise. It's this guy. We don't...' And I had hung out with the band before and they're super-cool dudes. "I don't want people holding it against the band, because it's not them. It's Captain Ego from Planet Douche." The pair have been embroiled in a war of words after Chad called Stone Sour "Nickelback lite" during an interview. Asked about their feud, Corey previously said: "I'm not talking about that d***head. Why do I care what Chad Kroeger says? "I'll tell you what. This is how I figured it out... Chad Kroeger is to rock what KFC is to chicken. "Is that wrong? I feel like I'm not wrong. I'll still eat it, but I'm not gonna feel good about it. It tastes like the same thing." However, the 'Duality' rocker has previously insisted that his animosity does not extend towards the other members of the Canadian rock group. Speaking last month, the singer explained that he has no problem with Ryan Peake, Mike Kroeger, and Daniel Adair. He shared: "Everybody else in that band I'm very, very cool with; I've hung out with them. "It's just 'Face Like A Foot' who I can't really hang out with. He's got a face like a foot. Am I wrong?"



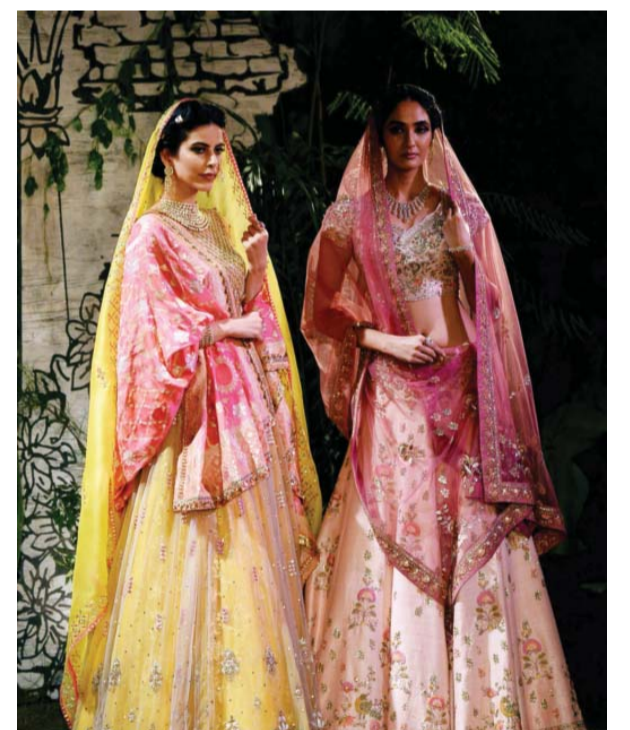
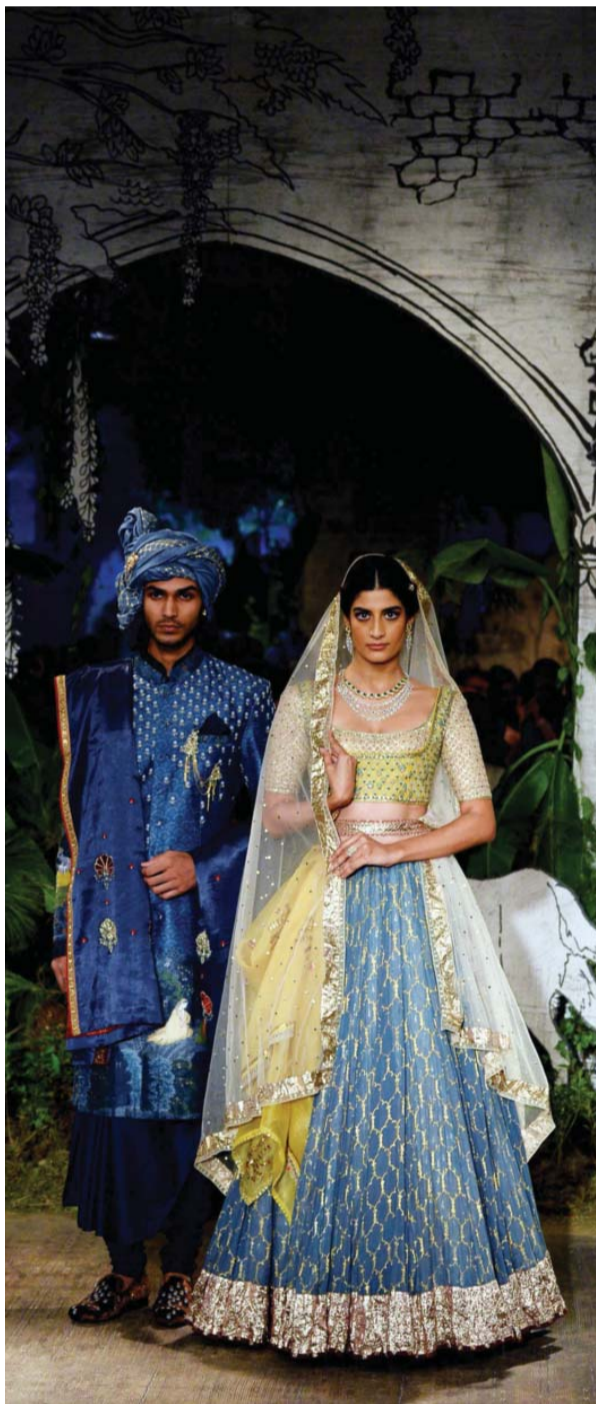
Lily Collins hit Prince Charles with a telephone

Lily Collins once hit Prince Charles with a telephone. The 'To The Bone' actress met the heir to the British throne and his former wife, the late Princess Diana, when she was just a child but the meeting did not go well when she smacked Charles with a toy phone he gave to her. Speaking on Vanity Fair's In The Limelight podcast, she said: "I met the family but when I was barely walking. There are photos of me giving Princess Diana flowers and then trying to take them back from her. "Apparently I was told that Prince Charles gave me a phone to play with and I proceeded to try to smack him with it. My mom was like, 'Oh my God, we're gonna get kicked out!'" Lily, 28, met the royals through her famous father, musician Phil Collins. Lily is Phil's only child from his second marriage to American Jill Tavelman and in her recent memoir 'Unfiltered: No Shame, No Regrets, Just Me', Lily said she forgave him for not "being the dad I expected". She wrote: "I forgive you for not always being there when I needed and for not being the dad I expected. "I forgive the mistakes you made. And although it may seem like it's too late, it's not. There's still so much time to move forward. "We all make choices and, although I don't excuse some of yours, at the end of the day we can't rewrite the past. "I'm learning how to accept your actions and how they made me feel. I accept the sadness and anger I felt toward the things you did or didn't do, did or didn't give me."





The FDCI India Couture Week 2017



Models present creations by Indian fashion designer Anju Modi during the FDCI India Couture week 2017 in New Delhi.—AFP photos

India blesses its snakes as charmers face the venom of modern life

Officially the snake charmers' profession is banned in India, but its devotees were at the center of prayers and milk blessings offered to cobras and other deadly serpents in an annual tribute Friday. The country's 800,000 charmers and their young apprentices come to the fore each year for the centuries-old Nag Panchami festival, celebrated in honor of a serpent god prominent in Hindu mythology. Children sat cross legged at temples in Allahabad and other cities around the country with elongated cobras and pythons wrapped around their necks.

Many play with the snakes as though they are toys-in

traditional snake charmer villages, like Kapari in Uttar Pradesh state, children are taught the art from a young age to avoid fear. Milk—a traditional tribute—is poured on the snakes' faces, as the charmers play music. Rice and flowers are also offered to the reptiles. The charmers who pretend to hypnotize their animals for tourists outside monuments and in the streets say they earn as little as 200 rupees (\$3) a day—not enough to keep their family, or feed their snakes.

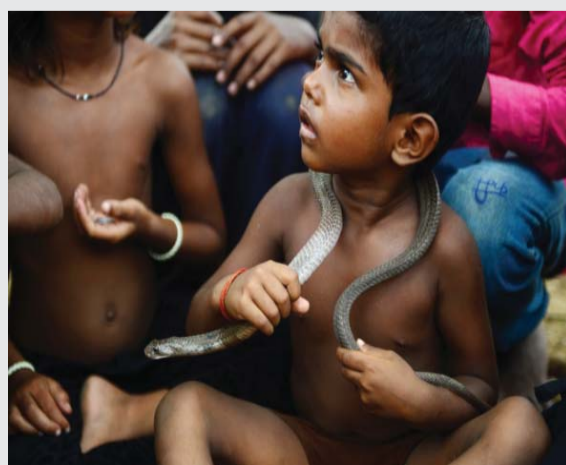
In doing so, they are risking arrest. The practice was banned under wildlife legislation implemented in 2002. Animal rights group PETA (People for the Ethical

Treatment of Animals) has called for an end to the "cruel" practice. PETA says snakes are captured in suffocating bags, kept in tiny boxes and forced to drink milk. The group says snakes' fangs are often violently torn out, and many snakes' mouths are sewn shut to avoid bites.

But while authorities have tried to discourage the shows, the charmers say it is impossible to completely stop them. "There is nothing else for us to do," said Vikas Penna, a charmer in his 30s. "What do you want me to do, become a rickshaw driver?"—AFP



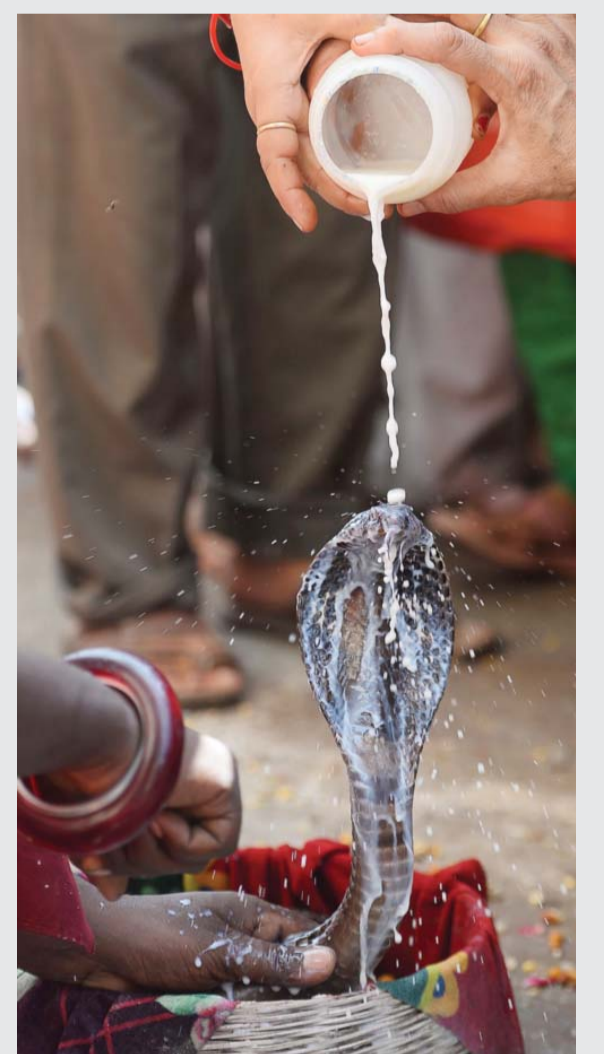
The son of an Indian snake charmer holds a cobra snake in Kapari village.



The son of an Indian snake charmer holds a cobra snake around his neck in Kapari village, around 40km southwest of Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh state.



An Indian snake charmer plays a flute as family members gather around cobra snakes.



An Indian Hindu devotee pours milk on a snake as an offering during the annual Nag Panchami festival, dedicated to the worship of snakes.—AFP photos



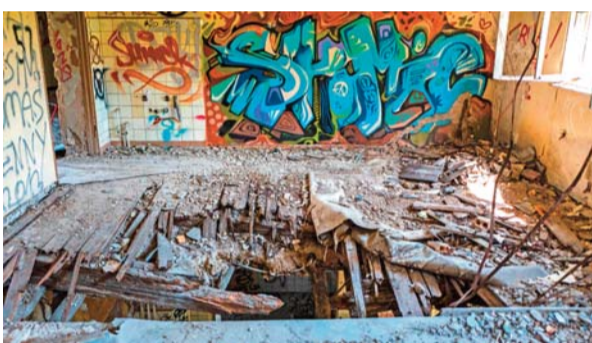
A journalist takes notes as he explores an abandoned building in Berlin.



Graffiti adorns a room in an abandoned building in Berlin.



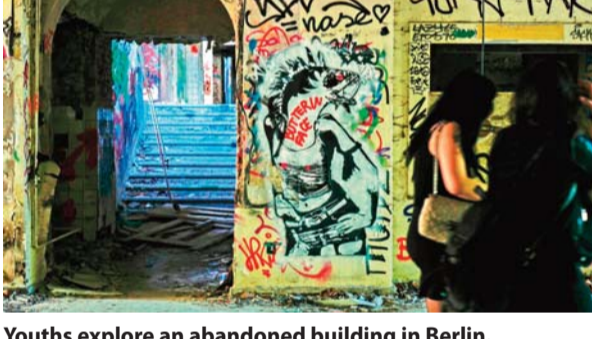
Urban exploration specialist Ciaran Fahey walks through an abandoned building in Berlin. — AFP photos



Graffiti adorns a room in an abandoned building.



Youths explore an abandoned building in Berlin.



Youths explore an abandoned building in Berlin.



Graffiti adorns an abandoned building in Berlin.

'Urban explorers' time-travel through Berlin's lost places

To many the nerve-tingling trips have a flavor of post-apocalyptic tourism'

With its deserted bunkers, abandoned barracks and ghostly hospital ruins, Berlin is a magnet for urban explorers who seek out abandoned places and time-travel through the German capital's Cold War past. "It's amazing, I've never seen so many people," said 'Urbex' veteran Ciaran Fahey during a visit to an overgrown and graffiti-covered former children's hospital in what was once communist East Berlin. Two dozen thrill-seeking visitors—Germans, Russians, Latvians—were gingerly stepping over shattered glass, bricks and piles of rubble in the dilapidated, partially burnt and slightly haunting complex.

Abandoned in 1991, it is nicknamed the "zombie hospital" after one of the hundreds of murals on its cob-webbed corridors and dank former patient wards, now occasionally used by partying youths and homeless people. Like other "lost places", it is potentially dangerous and officially off limits, meaning visitors trespass as they enter through a hole in the chain link fence while they keep a nervous eye out for authorities. Berlin city official Eva Henkel said police take a dim view of such urban adventures, that visitors enter illegally and at their own risk. "If you have any brains at all, you don't go in there," she said. To Urbexers, this is as enticing as a holiday brochure, and the hospital is firmly on their Berlin sightseeing map.

Ravages of time

Fahey, an Irish-born longtime Berlin resident, knows such lost places better than most, having lovingly photographed and described them in his blog and photo book, both called "Abandoned Berlin". The trend took off after the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall opened up a vast hinterland, replete with former Nazi bunkers, Soviet army barracks, shuttered red-brick factories and

even an old fun-fair with rides and replica dinosaurs. As the East German economy collapsed and the country reunified, these places were left to the ravages of weather and time.

Over a quarter-century on, as a property boom has remade the face of the city, the Urbex fashion has caught fire, with ever more explorers searching out ever fewer abandoned places. The movement is global, with hotspots from Melbourne to Detroit, and sometimes dubbed "roof-and-tunnel hacking". A Google search for "urbex" nets more than seven million hits. "Interest has exploded in recent years, it is becoming more and more popular," said Fahey. The movement's unspoken code is: take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints. Inside the "zombie hospital", Max and Mila, two young Latvians, were walking under caved-in ceilings, dead lamp fittings dangling precariously from overhead wires, and admiring a vast gallery of urban street art. To many the nerve-tingling trips have a flavor of post-apocalyptic tourism. Max said it was fascinating to witness "how nature has taken over".

'Keep the secret'

Where there is a trend, private business is quick to follow, and several Berlin operators now offer tours for paying guests. One takes the curious up a wooded hill in the former West Berlin, to a graffiti-covered Cold War-era listening post of the US National Security Agency (NSA). For years, rave parties were held under its tattered geodesic domes, which loom like giant golf balls atop Teufelsberg (Devil's Hill), a mound made of World War II rubble. Such tours offer "authorized and secure" access and allow everyone "to feel the fascination of these places", said Andreas Boettger, co-founder of operator Go2know.

As early Urbex pioneers, he said the company



Graffiti adorns an abandoned building in Berlin.

could understand that purists object to such for-profit tours. But he said these also helped preserve old sites, "an ideology shared by many hobby photographers, history buffs and other interested people". Fahey said commercial visits are "not something I like... People are bringing people to places that they can see for themselves for free. But if people want to pay tour companies, it's up to them." The veteran has himself drawn fire from the community for what some consider a no-no—describing in detail how to get to, and around, the hidden marvels he has discovered. "I publish the addresses, it's controversial," he admitted. "Some people want to 'keep the secret'." "But these places have a very short life expectancy... I think they should be open to everyone." — AFP

Public gardens work to pass on prized horticultural skills

Growing the so-called "thousand bloom mum" - a showstopper at Longwood Gardens' fall Chrysanthemum Festival - takes 18 months and thousands of worker hours. In the week before the annual event, at least six people work full-time prep the plant. But with fewer young people choosing careers in horticulture, Longwood is working to ensure that the effort and expertise that goes into growing this Japanese specialty plant is preserved for future generations. Three college students are documenting how to successfully raise a thousand bloom mum by creating a video archive that can be used to teach future generations of horticulturists and also spark interest in the field.

"The younger generation can't see the reward of doing this," said Jim Harbage, floriculture Leader at the 1,000-acre (405-hectare) garden and education center in Kennett Square, about 35 miles west of Philadelphia. "It's not enough to have a sense of pride. It's not something that pays a lot of money." The fear of losing the tricks of the horticulture trade is not limited to growing chrysanthemums. Patricia Binder, spokeswoman for National Garden Clubs Inc., said there is a concern "about the potential loss of institutional knowledge and the loss of gardening knowledge in general."

In an effort to spark interest in the trade, the nonprofit organization annually awards scholarships to students studying horticulture and related fields. Similarly, the American Public Gardens Association has partnered with public gardens nationwide, including Longwood, on the Seed Your Future initiative, which promotes horticulture as a career for young people. Longwood Gardens decided to partner with the University of Delaware as part of its "succession planning," said gardener Tim Jennings, who specializes in water lilies.

In days past, a young gardener would learn trade secrets from a master gardener. Current Longwood mum master, Amanda Galano, worked in the shadow of now-retired Yoko Arakawa, who brought the thousand bloom mum to the public garden. Arakawa learned the intricacies of growing the complex plant through multiple trips to her native Japan,

where successfully growing a thousand bloom is considered an art some call "high-wire horticulture."

Finding new methods

By the end of this summer, the students will have produced nine videos that document part of the mum growing process. Each student has a different role in documenting the processes. Sophomore Rebecca Ralston, who is studying wildlife and the environment, writes the script for the video. Junior Joy McCusker, who is studying landscape architecture and landscape horticulture design, is "the lens," following the master gardeners around as they work and taking precise

notes. Senior Max Gold handles visuals and has used drones, a GoPro and a gimbal camera to get his shots.

"We have to find new methods to add to the toolbox to teach new horticulturists what's important," said Ralston, who admitted she wasn't aware chrysanthemums and mums were the same thing until her first day on the job. This year, Longwood would like to see its thousand bloom top 1,500 blooms in time for the Chrysanthemum Festival in October. It can't get much bigger, Galano said, because it wouldn't fit through the greenhouse door. Attention to detail is critical. Some practices are simply hard to explain, Galano said, and a carefully narrated how-to video makes a big difference.

That said, best gardening practices are always evolving, Jennings said. He's confident that while the videos will serve as starting points for newcomers, they'll need to be updated as years pass. "Gardening is not a stagnant field. The nature of being a gardener is wanting to try something new," he said. "Every year it's, 'What if we did this? What if we changed that?' We're always trying to make things easier and less labor-intensive while balancing that with tradition and not straying too far afield." — AP



Amanda Galano, third from right, demonstrates how she encourages the growth of a Thousand Bloom Chrysanthemum to students Rebecca Ralston, right, Joy McCusker, and Max Gold at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square. — AP photos



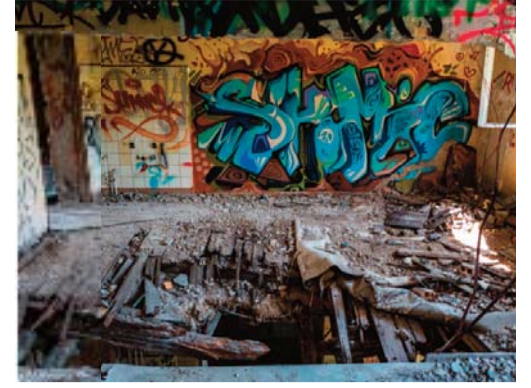
Amanda Galano demonstrates to students how she encourages the growth of a Thousand Bloom Chrysanthemum in a greenhouse.

Lifestyle

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'Urban explorers' time-travel through Berlin's lost places



In this picture taken on July 28, 2017 an ethnic Malaysian-Chinese Cantonese opera actress from the Sound of Tai Hei group poses backstage before an opera performance in Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia's National department for Culture and Arts is organizing a Traditional Arts showcase in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism. Cantonese opera — where actors wear elaborate costumes and make-up, and must be adept at elaborately choreographed martial arts as well as singing — was recognized as 'intangible cultural heritage' by UN cultural agency UNESCO in 2009. — AFP

Clooney to sue Voici over images of twins

Hollywood A-lister George Clooney is fuming mad at Voici for publishing images of his twins and will sue the French entertainment magazine. "Over the last week, photographers from Voici magazine scaled our fence, climbed our tree and illegally took pictures of our infants inside our home," Clooney said in a statement. "Make no mistake, the photographers, the agency and the magazine will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. The safety of our children demands it."

Paparazzi photos of the babies on the cover of the latest Voici issue show one with each parent apparently at their home in Italy. The twins, Ella and Alexander, were born in London in June. The actor-director, 56, and wife Amal Clooney, a human rights attorney, 39, wed in 2014. — AFP



File photo shows US actor George Clooney (right) and his wife Amal Clooney at the 69th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Frank Ocean, gentle R&B voice, finds live intimacy at NY festival

Frank Ocean has captivated audiences since his debut with his tenderness, a gentle but unwavering voice in the often hyper-macho world of R&B and hip-hop. Nearly a year after he released his long-awaited second album, "Blonde," Ocean has presented his ever-patient fans with a live vision of his music, one that creates a kind of cinematic intimacy. Headlining the first day Friday of Panorama, a year-old festival on New York City's Randall's Island, Ocean shunned the stage—which became a giant audiovisual project—as he performed in the round from an island in the crowd.

Ocean emerged to the boisterous beats of his track "Pretty Sweet" before immediately dialing down the exuberance with "Solo," his bare, organ-backed confessional on embracing solitude. Clicking a button on a mountain of equipment, Ocean appeared on the stage-screen in grainy footage akin to an old home video. But soon it became a slick, real-time concert movie with shots of Ocean and cheering fans fading into each other and occasional bursts of color including Ocean's signature orange.

A rare performer

In a hint that the show may eventually wind up in a new form, director Spike Jonze filmed Ocean up-close through the entire set with a steadicam—a scene that could have figured as a subplot to his movies "Her" or "Being John Malkovich." Ocean has returned from a three-year touring hiatus but is only playing a handful of shows. Only two are in the United States; the other one, a week ago in Los Angeles, again saw Jonze trailing Ocean as well as a cameo appearance by Brad Pitt. Ocean—who made waves in the hip-hop world in 2012 by declaring that his

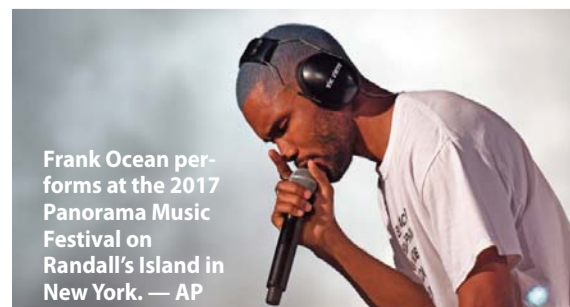
life's first love was a man—delivered a statement for the current political moment by wearing a T-shirt that read: "Why be racist, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic when you can just be quiet?"

Ocean reconfirmed the emotional power of his falsetto on tracks such as "Thinkin' Bout You," one of his best-known hits, infused with a jangly guitar by stage guest Alex G. Yet the band and Ocean veered out of step at points, with the perfectionist singer himself acknowledging to the crowd that the show remained a work in progress. The show culminated in a surround sound, rare for festivals, as instrumentation from guitar riffs to organ boomed from alternating speakers.

Closed stage and memorable dance moves

Panorama was inaugurated in New York last year by the promoters behind Coachella, the premier festival that takes place each year in the California desert, as the market for live music thrives across the United States. Panorama suffered a setback Friday as an indoor, air-conditioned concert stage was damaged. Fan footage posted online showed the wooden floor breaking open during a packed performance by rapper Isaiah Rashad.

No one was hurt but the stage was shut for the day, forcing cancellations of sets by prominent hip-hop producer DJ Shadow and French house DJ Breakbot. Frank Ocean was preceded on stage by another leading figure of alternative R&B, Solange, who brought brassy takes to last year's album "A Seat at the Table," an introspective tour through the state of black America. With a stage resembling the flag of Japan, Solange and her eight-piece band had a touch of Prince as they played decked out in matching red outfits and Solange showed off free-flowing dance moves from fluid shoulders to a shaking head. As for dancing, Future Islands again showed themselves to be among the most passionate performers in indie rock. Frontman Samuel T. Herring opened with an apology, saying the Baltimore-based band was jet-lagged after returning from Australia. But the intensity was on full display—especially on "Cave," which touches on the US political climate—as the sweat-dripped Herring repeatedly growled, leaped across the stage and pounded his chest. — AFP



Frank Ocean performs at the 2017 Panorama Music Festival on Randall's Island in New York. — AP

Jessica Williams says it's a 'great time' to be an actor of color

Jessica Williams says it's a great time to be an actress of color, and applauds Netflix for leading the way in promoting diversity. Williams, who cut her teeth as a correspondent on "The Daily Show," takes on her first starring role in the streaming network's original film, "The Incredible Jessica James." The actress feels Netflix helped shape stories about people of color, citing original programming like "Master of None" and "Orange Is the New Black" that are able to "showcase people of color in an amazing way."

While inclusion continues to improve, especially on Netflix, Williams says the struggle for racial equality is far from over. "I think it's a difficult time in some ways to be a person of color, and I think the same for actors of color, but I also think it's a great time. Because I think now ... there's so much more room, I think, for us to be seen, and there's room for us to create our own stories," Williams said. Williams feels great pride that she's part of movement toward greater diversity on screen, calling it something that makes her heart warm and sing. She said she remains mindful of the actresses who paved the way.

"It's like so many black actresses that came before me and my generation. They came before and they did not necessarily have this opportunity that I feel like I have now, and so I'm really grateful for that, and I really do think it's a really great time to be an actress that is black, in a way," she said. But that doesn't make shifting gears from a comedy news show to a feature film an easy choice. Williams certainly felt some trepidation with the move. "I was really nervous because this movie does have comedy in it. It also has a lot of heart, and some sweet moments. So I was worried whether I would be able to portray that or not. But I had a lot of fun doing it, and I found out that I could," she said.

Written and directed by Jim Strouse - who previously directed Williams in his 2015 film, "People Places Things" - the story was written with Williams in mind. Her desire was to correctly depict the "life of a modern, young black woman," and took it a step further by also taking on the role as an executive producer. "Just in case I had things to say creatively," Williams said. Strouse called Williams a comedy ninja and the right actress to portray the ever-changing nature of romantic relationships. "I remember when a relationship goes astray or



Photo shows actress and comedian Jessica Williams in New York. — AP

whatever, you break up, you don't talk and in like maybe months down the road you have coffee," he said. "Now it's like, you ghost and maybe a couple months down the road you start liking each other's photos again. It's a weird time."

He called the dynamic interesting, then with a knowing smile said, "I don't know if it's healthy." As for her previous gig, Williams has the distinction of being the youngest correspondent hired for "The Daily Show." Now she's hoping to join the list of the show's alumni who have moved on to bigger and better things. "To be mentioned among people like Samantha Bee or Hassan Minaj and Steve Carrell and Steve Colbert is insane," she said. "It's, it's very surreal and I think - I packed up everything to move and be on the 'Daily Show' and I was nervous because I was 22. I was, umm, I had a lot of big shoes to fill working with Jon Stewart. I felt like in the beginning I had a lot to prove, and it's really an honor to be among those people." — AP

BROOKS, YEARWOOD BUY WEDDING GIFTS FOR FANS

Married country stars Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood are sharing the love by handing out wedding gifts to fans. Jude and Jamie Blanchard attended Brooks' show in Lafayette, Louisiana, last month with a sign that read: "Best Week Ever. Garth this Friday, our wedding next Friday." Brooks took notice and serenaded them with "To Make You Feel My Love." He also asked if they wanted anything off their wedding registry, and Jamie passed along a wedding invitation to the stage.

The Lafayette Daily Advertiser reports a pair of lounge chairs, a KitchenAid mixer and other items from the stars showed up at the Blanchards' door. This month, Brooks and Yearwood offered to pay for a Hawaiian honeymoon for a couple who got engaged at an Oklahoma City show. — AP



In this file photo Garth Brooks, left, and Trisha Yearwood perform at the 50th annual CMA Awards at the Bridgestone Arena in Nashville, Tenn. — AP