



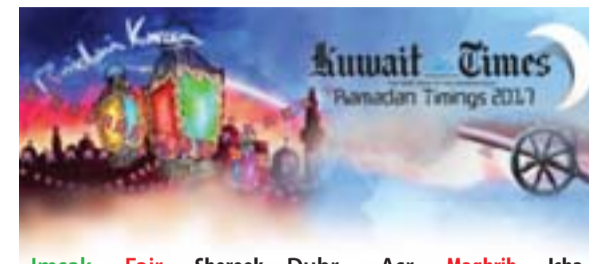
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2017

RAMADAN 26, 1438 AH

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**Father admits
he sprayed
pesticides in
dead kids' room**

**US student
freed by North
Korea dies
at age 22**

**Mourinho
accused of
Spanish
tax fraud**

 Imsak Fajr Shorook Duhr Asr Maghrib Isha
 03:03 03:13 04:49 11:50 15:23 18:50 20:23


150 FILS NO: 17262 40 PAGES

STRANDED INDIAN MIGRANT RECOUNTS ORDEAL IN GULF

MY HOME WAS A GOAT SHELTER, RAJAMARIAN SAYS


 Min 34°
 Max 45°
 High Tide
 08:40 & 22:12
 Low Tide
 02:35 & 15:48


JIHAD

By Teresa Leshar

In this life, we have many responsibilities toward God, towards ourselves, and towards others. Striving and struggling to fulfill our responsibilities through sustained effort and adherence to personal, spiritual and social ethics is the essence of jihad, a word that literally means effort, striving or struggle.

The Quran tells us to 'jaahidu' (the verb form of the word jihad): "Strive in the cause of Allah in a manner worthy of that striving. He has chosen you (for His task), and He has not laid upon you any hardship in religion. ... So establish prayer, and pay alms, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protector. What an excellent Protector; what an excellent Helper!" (22:78)

We can divide jihad in relation to the three categories of our responsibilities - to God, self and others. Our responsibility toward God is to strive for purely monotheistic worship. It means not only worshipping the sole Creator and Sustainer of all that exists, but also reading His Book to learn what He expects from us and trying hard to obey Him, rely on Him, and thank Him. Through gratitude, reliance, obedience, trust, glorification, remembrance, repentance, contentment and patience, we can meet our responsibilities toward God.

We also have a responsibility to ourselves. Almighty God said, "And by the soul and He who fashioned it, and informed it with consciousness of its wickedness and its righteousness, truly, whoever purifies it (causes it to grow) has succeeded and whoever defiles it (stunts its growth) has failed." (91:7-10) This shows that we should strive for personal growth and virtue.

Continued on Page 13



SANAA: Yemeni women sit next to aid baskets donated by Kuwait during the holy month of Ramadan in the capital Sanaa. — AFP

CHENNAI: Gnanaprakasham Rajamarian was short on cash. Two years into his job at a construction site in Saudi Arabia, his sponsor demanded money to renew his work permit or to get back his passport to return home. But Rajamarian, who had left his home in the coastal district of Kanyakumari in south India in 1994, didn't have the money to buy his freedom. More than 20 years after he was stranded in Saudi Arabia with an expired work permit, no pay, little food and no means to fly back, Rajamarian came home to India last week under an amnesty scheme offered by the Saudi government.

"For the last one year, I survived only on black tea and dry chappati," said the 61-year-old. "I kept trying to come back, but people kept saying I needed to get documents from my sponsor, which was impossible. So I stayed on, doing odd jobs to survive." There are an estimated six million Indian migrants in the six Gulf states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Oman, many of them trafficked and exploited, campaigners say.

Under the kafala sponsorship system, foreign workers are required to have an in-country sponsor, who is usually their employer and is responsible for their visa and legal status. As many employers taking away passports, the system encourages exploitation of workers, human rights campaigners say. Rajamarian's account of his life as an illegal migrant in the Saudi city of Al Baha, doing odd jobs and chasing officials is a familiar story for thousands of migrant workers, they add.

Rajamarian left home when he was in his late thirties, to save money for the weddings of his four daughters.

Continued on Page 13

COURT SCRAPS FILIPINA MAID DEATH SENTENCE

DUBAI: An Appeals Court in the United Arab Emirates acquitted a maid from Philippines of the murder of her employer and scrapped her death sentence, the Philippines Foreign Ministry and UAE media said yesterday. The maid, 30, was sentenced to death by a lower tribunal in the city of Al-Ain in May 2015 for fatally stabbing her Emirati employer in 2014, UAE-based newspaper The National said. She had argued she was acting in self defense after he tried to rape her, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

An Appeals Court in Al-Ain on Monday overturned the verdict, convicted her only of stealing a mobile telephone and handed her a five-year jail term, the statement said, identifying her as Jennifer Dalquez. "Ms Dalquez was declared innocent without 'diyyah' or payment of blood money," the statement said. It said she would serve the jail sentence minus the time she had already spent in prison. Officials at Al-Ain Federal Appeal Court were not immediately available for comment.

Hundreds of thousands of domestic workers from

countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Ethiopia work in the UAE, according to Human Rights Watch. The UAE's Federal National Council last month approved a new draft law which the rights group said was a step forward in improving living conditions for domestic workers, noting that enforcement mechanisms were needed. It also said improvements to the bill were required to bring the country into line with the International Labor Organization's Workers Convention. — Reuters



LONDON: Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn (left) meets locals at Finsbury Park Mosque in north London, after an incident where a van struck pedestrians in London. — AP

BRITAIN ISLAMOPHOBIA BREEDS 'VICIOUS CIRCLE'

LONDON: The attack at Finsbury Park Mosque was the depressingly logical outcome of demonization by tabloid headline writers and rightwing demagogues who portray Muslims as the enemy within, British commentators and Islamic leaders worry. From opposition politicians to JK Rowling and cartoonists in the liberal press, condemnation is building against the swirling currents of hatred that led to a white driver slamming his van into worshippers outside the mosque in north London, shouting "I want to kill all Muslims".

Neighbors of Darren Osborne, the Cardiff man arrested after the attack early Monday, said he was a heavy drinker who had become increasingly deranged after Islamist extremists used a vehicle and knives in a murderous rampage in London this month. Tommy Robinson, former leader of the far-right English Defense League, made the link explicit in describing Osborne's attack as "revenge"

for the bloodshed in London. Rowling, for her part, pointed to heated rhetoric by Daily Mail columnist Katie Hopkins, as the Harry Potter author tweeted "let's talk about how the #FinsburyPark terrorist was radicalized".

After the suicide bombing at a pop concert in Manchester last month, Hopkins had tweeted: "Western men. These are your wives. Your daughters. Your sons. Stand up. Rise up. Demand action. Do not carry on as normal. Cowed." According to government statistics, British whites accounted for 91 of 260 arrests for terrorism-related offences last year, an increase of 28 percent from 2015 and the only ethnic group to show an increase. Anti-Muslim hate crimes are also rising yearly and there have been particular spikes after incidents like the attack in London and the November 2015 massacre at the Bataclan concert hall in Paris.

Continued on Page 13

News

in brief

Lightning kills 22

DHAKA: Lightning strikes have killed at least 22 people in Bangladesh in the last 48 hours, authorities said yesterday, a week after monsoon rains triggered a series of deadly landslides in the country. The deaths came as storms swept the country on Sunday and Monday, the head of the disaster management department Reaz Ahmed said. Among the dead were a couple and their young daughter who were working on a peanut farm when they were struck by lightning. Hundreds of people die every year from lightning strikes in Bangladesh and experts say climate change has exacerbated the problem. They also blame deforestation and the loss of taller trees like palms that used to act as lightning conductors. Last year authorities declared a natural disaster when the official toll topped 200 deaths, with 82 people dying on a single day in May.

Bomb blast in Bahrain

DUBAI: A bomb in a Shiite village outside the Bahraini capital has killed one person, the second blast in a suburb of Manama this week, the interior ministry said yesterday. The Sunni-ruled Gulf state has been rocked by unrest among its Shiite majority since 2011, when security forces crushed Shiite-led protests demanding a constitutional monarchy and an elected prime minister. The interior ministry gave no date for the latest bombing saying only that a body discovered on Monday was found to have been killed in a bombing. "An initial investigation into a body found on a farm in the village of Hajar on June 19 showed the death was the result of a bomb blast," the ministry said, without elaborating.

Iran drone shot down

WASHINGTON: A US warplane shot down an Iran-made drone operated by pro-regime forces in southern Syria yesterday, officials said, the second such incident in less than two weeks. The US-led coalition said in a statement that an F-15E Strike Eagle jet destroyed the Shaheed-129 drone around 12:30 am northeast of the Al-Tanaf garrison, which is close to the Jordanian border. "It displayed hostile intent and advanced on coalition forces," the statement read. Coalition troops were working in the area alongside local forces who are being trained to fight the so-called Islamic State group. A US military official said the drone was "on a run toward our folks to drop a munition on them," so the coalition shot the unmanned aircraft down in self defense.

SAUDI ARABIA, IRAQ HAIL A 'LEAP' IN TIES

JEDDAH: Saudi Arabia and Iraq have made a "qualitative leap" in relations, they said yesterday after a visit by Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi that followed years of strained ties. It was Abadi's first visit to Saudi Arabia since he became prime minister in 2014. After a quarter century without diplomatic relations, which were cut following Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, Riyadh sent an ambassador back to Baghdad last year.

But he left amid controversy, reflecting the challenge of improving relations despite Abadi's support for better ties. In a joint statement, Iraq and Saudi Arabia expressed "their happiness over... a qualitative leap in relations" after Abadi met King Salman on Monday. Talks also included Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef and Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The talks stressed the need "to explore opportunities to support economic and trade relations," the statement said.

It made no mention of Gulf tensions

with Qatar, but the two sides agreed to intensify efforts against extremism and "terrorism". Abadi's visit came with the Gulf region in turmoil after Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other allies cut ties with Qatar more than two weeks ago. They accuse Doha of supporting extremist groups, including some backed by Iran. Qatar strongly denies the charges. Abadi, from his country's largest Shiite political bloc, is to also visit Kuwait and Iran, Saudi Arabia's Shiite-dominated regional rival.

Riyadh has long expressed concern about Iran's alleged interference in the region, including through Iraq's Hashed Al-Shaabi paramilitary group which has played a major role in reclaiming parts of the country seized by the Islamic State group. Saudi Arabia said on Monday that it captured three Iranian Revolutionary Guards aboard an explosive-laden boat heading to an oil platform in the Gulf, further ratcheting up tensions in the region. Iran said the three people detained were fishermen. — AFP



MAKKAH: Saudi King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (right) meets with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi in the holy city of Makkah. — AFP

ALGHANIM INDUSTRIES AND AMIDEAST LAUNCH ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND SKILLS FOR SUCCESS SUMMER PROGRAM AT LOCAL ORPHANAGE

KUWAIT: Alghanim Industries, one of the largest private companies in the region, announced the launch of the English Language and Skills for Success summer program in association with AMIDEAST for children at the Children's Home orphanage in Kuwait.

The program is being offered to children between the ages of 6 and 10, and is aimed at developing their language skills in four areas which include listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as broadening other language abilities and grammar.

The Children's Home is an orphanage operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Social Welfare Sector. Over the course of the last three years, Alghanim Industries pledged to bear the full cost of restoring six houses, in addition to the outdoor playground and central kitchen.

Commenting on the summer program, Kutayba Yusuf Alghanim, Chairman of Alghanim Industries and Member of the Board at AMIDEAST, said: "In the current economic and technological climate, mastering the English language has become essential. In fact, it is a pre-requisite for any employment or educational opportunities. Although the English language is taught as part of the curriculum during the year, a summer program that is properly structured by experts, such as the ones at AMIDEAST, will greatly improve and hone the children's abilities. That is what



**Chairman of Alghanim Industries
Kutayba Yusuf Alghanim**

makes me one of the biggest proponents of such educational initiatives in Kuwait, and even more so because they support our children at the orphanage. This will help them become engaging members of our society in the future

and provide them with a competitive advantage throughout their careers."

Speaking about the program, Samar Khleif, Director of AMIDEAST in Kuwait, said: "We are excited to once again partner with Alghanim Industries on educational initiatives that enable the future generation of Kuwait to succeed in a competitive economy. Kutayba has been a long-standing supporter of AMIDEAST since its establishment and continues to support our educational endeavors. Through our partnership with Alghanim Industries, we are able to reach and engage with an untapped youth demographic in Kuwait."

This initiative comes as part of Alghanim Industries' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, which is committed to empowering the underprivileged, supporting education and encouraging entrepreneurship. It is worth noting that the company was a major sponsor of the "Give Them a Chance" campaign that was launched by the Kuwait Red Crescent Society to provide quality education opportunities to all non-Kuwaiti children living within the country whose families are not able to afford paying school fees. The company also recently entered a partnership with the UNHCR, signing a MoU through which Alghanim Industries will support the education of Syrian refugee children in Lebanon.

News

in brief

AMIR, BRITISH PM DISCUSS REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah discussed with British Prime Minister Theresa May Monday the latest developments in the region, and issues of mutual interest. This came in a phone call that His Highness the Amir received from May, during which he congratulated her anew on formation of her government. His Highness the Amir expressed appreciation for May for initiating the phone call, which reflected "historic and solid" relations between Kuwait and Britain. May wished further development and prosperity for the Kuwaiti people under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir. — KUNA

Travel season

KUWAIT: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has introduced a raft of new measures to ensure smooth travel just in time for the start of summer travel season. Speaking yesterday, DGCA's Deputy General Manager of Airport Affairs Mohammad Al-Thuwaini said that the airport will beef up the presence of its staff members to cater to the legions of travelers. He underscored that DGCA is fully prepared to cooperate with travelers and control traffic at the airport during the summer, which could get unruly due to the propensity of citizens and expatriates alike to spend the summer months abroad. The DGCA official also thanked the Ministry of Interior (MoI) for its efforts to uphold security. — KUNA

Food supplies

IRBIL: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) distributed yesterday 45 tons of food supplies to displaced Iraqis in Mosul, said an official. KRCS coordinator, Mohammad Al-Enizi said that delivering food supplies would continue in the region to enable displaced Iraqis to overcome their dire situation. He affirmed that the KRCS was keen on helping the displaced Iraqis who have fled military operations carried out by the Iraqi forces and allies against the so-called Islamic State (IS) in Mosul since late 2016. The KRCS began recently a weeklong aid campaign targeting around 40,000 displaced people in Mosul. — KUNA

2,000 parcels

RIYADH: The 'Kuwait Besides You' humanitarian aid campaign has doled out 2,015 food baskets in Yemen. In a press statement issued Monday, Member of the Kuwaiti-Yemeni Relief Agency Tawfiq Hussein said that the baskets were distributed to needy people in Sanaa and Amanat Al-Asimah governorates. He added that this is the second batch of the food aid to the two governorates, noting the first one included dispersing of over 5,500 food baskets. He pointed out that Kuwait has also executed a number of projects for providing drinking water to several areas in Yemen. Kuwait has also sent medical supplies and vaccines to the cities hit by the outbreak of cholera. Meanwhile, the public relations official at Yemeni Al-Aman society for caring for blind women Hanaa Al-Ghazali expressed gratitude to Kuwait for its support to Yemeni people. — KUNA

Relics' experts

KUWAIT: Director of Antiquities and Museums at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, Dr Sultan Al-Deweish, affirmed on Monday significance of the 12th meeting of the Arab experts committee for international heritage which kicked off earlier the same day. Dr Deweish said in a statement that participants in the meeting discussed the cultural heritage in the Arab states and plans to safeguard the treasures in addition to the ancient sector of the ancient city, Jerusalem. The conferees will discuss, during a second session scheduled tomorrow, Arab landmark ancient sites nominated to be enlisted in the international heritage—namely Al-Khalil (Hebron) town in Palestine, the Jordanian town of Al-Salt and Dubai Bay. Kuwait is seeking to enlist epic sites, namely Kuwait Towers, Al-Ahmar Palace, the old Al-Jahraa Farms, Failaka Island and the historic Kadhma Al-Bohour region. — KUNA

Oil price down

KUWAIT: The price of Kuwaiti oil went down by 45 cents to \$43.28 per barrel Monday after being at \$43.73 pb last Friday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) yesterday. At the global level, the price went down due to production increase in the US, Libya, and Nigeria. The price of the Brent crude was down by 46 cents to \$46.91 per barrel, the same case with the West Texas Intermediate, which went down by 54 cents to \$44.20 pb. — KUNA

In my view

CONVEYING A MESSAGE

By Labeed Abdal



local@kuwaittimes.net

The 'Bike Tripoli 4' race was recently held under the theme of 'Empowering Women in Decision Making Positions,' and organized by the Social Way Association in cooperation with UNIC Beirut, Bike Lebanon, Beirut by Bike, and Tripoli and Al-Mina municipalities. The event gives a highly significant social message. The bike ride witnessed the participation of more than 1,500 cyclists hoisting various slogans like 'Tripoli, ideal city for bikes' and 'for a clean environment' and various others expressing concern for other unsolved problems.

'Bike Tripoli 4' was also escorted by artistic and folkloric activities with participation from Lebanese artists and amateurs performing on an amphitheater in the open. The bike ride attracted a large crowd of politicians, social and environmental activists, and media representatives. Lebanese explorer and Ambassador of 'Bike Tripoli' Maxime Chaya also took part in the event, in addition to representatives of UN agencies working in Lebanon, and other diplomatic missions.

The event also featured entertainment shows and musical performances throughout the day. It was a smart move to have Sunnis, Shiites and Christians take part in the activity because they all share the same miseries and poverty and hope to convey the same messages to heads of governments and parliaments demanding radical long-existing reforms.

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In my view

KEEP ON DREAMING



By Talal Al Ghannam

local@kuwaittimes.net

Good morning dear and honorable brothers and sisters, and I wish all of you a happy Eid Al-Fitr to come. In this article, I would like to pretend that I had dreams over various issues in the Kuwaiti society and wish they would come true. There are so many wrongdoings taking place around us here that have not been probed or studied thoroughly. Instead, they are left unresolved; a matter that would make finding a solution a difficult task.

The first dream was that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor established a complaint center for people who want to complain against bad services from which expatriates usually suffer at some departments. The ministry was very efficient in receiving complaints from expatriates, and referred these complaints to the undersecretary. Stiff punishment has been imposed on violators, making the clients very satisfied. The ministry also set up a call center hotline for anyone who wants to inquire about his or her papers with a promise to resolve any difficulty within a 24-hour period. Furthermore, the ministry also extended the working hours of the concerned departments, including running afternoon shifts to ease the suffering of clients, in addition to the provision of tea and coffee for them with a big smile.

The second dream I had was that new domestic helpers who arrive in Kuwait are received with flowers and a big smile right at the entrance of the airport. Many bad sponsors changed their attitudes towards their workers and began assisting them in their daily chores with big smiles. From now on, the domestic workers' salaries will not be delayed or confiscated by some sponsors, as they know that Almighty Allah is watching and hearing every single word uttered, and sponsors are now becoming afraid of Allah's punishment. The sponsors who used to be bad earlier ask their domestic workers to do their duties with a big smile and a thank you. The domestic helpers now want to stay here forever as they feel relieved and satisfied due to the change of sponsors' attitudes towards them.

The third dream was that all drivers on the road are now starting to abide by the rules and regulations set for their safety. They are beginning to respect each other, especially the expats who drive small and cheap cars who now will not be run over by monster trucks driven by some maniacs. The signal given by a driver is now highly respected and the right of way is also appreciated. No one would flash his or her high beams on you from now on, and you can drive peacefully without being harassed by reckless drivers anymore. Horns will not be heard as well, and if your car breaks down suddenly at the traffic light, you will be assisted and not looked down at or be annoyed by ceremonial-like horns.

The fourth dream was related to parking in handicapped parking spaces. From now on, handicapped persons will enjoy parking their cars close to their destination without being annoyed or competed with. In European countries, occupying the handicapped parking spot is a crime punishable by law, whereas here, many irresponsible drivers pay no attention to the situation of handicapped persons, and force them to walk a long distance till they reach their destination. I hope one day I will wake up from this dream and all these wishes will come true.

Till the next article, in sha Allah.



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Belgian Ambassador to Kuwait Andy Detaille. — KUNA



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah meets with the Commander of the US Marine Battalion General Robert Neller.

FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS OUTGOING BELGIAN ENVOY

INTERIOR MINISTER CALLS FOR VIGILANCE IN LAST DAYS OF RAMADAN

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday received outgoing Belgian Ambassador to Kuwait Andy Detaille. During the meeting, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled lauded the Belgian diplomat's efforts to promote and consolidate relations between both friendly countries. Several senior officials of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs were present at the meeting.

Separately, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah met yesterday with Chairman of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, as talks centered on efforts to improve coordination between both sides. The discussions between both officials also included the progress on plans to refurbish the buildings of Kuwait International Airport, noted a statement by the Ministry of Defense. The meeting, which was attended by senior military officials, was part of efforts to bring the country's civil and military institutions closer together.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled held a meeting on Monday with the Commander of the US Marine Battalion General Robert Neller. The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that the discussions dealt with means of boosting mutual military cooperation between the two states. The US is a close ally of the State of Kuwait. It led an international coalition in 1991 to liberate the country from the Iraqi invasion.

In other news, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Jarrah Al-Sabah on Monday instructed security bodies to take all precautionary measures to keep people safe during the last days of the holy fasting month of Ramadan. In a press state-

ment following Sheikh Khaled's visit to Mubarak Al-Kabeer Security Directorate and meeting with the directorate's leaders and staff, the Interior Ministry said that the minister has stressed that these measures should be part of a comprehensive plan to guarantee people safety.

He also lauded the outstanding performance of the

Public Security Department personnel and urged more vigilance from all sectors. He called on nationals and residents to cooperate with security bodies to achieve the highest level of security and safety for the country and people. The minister expressed appreciation of the political leadership's unlimited support to the Ministry of Interior. — KUNA



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah is seen during his visit to Mubarak Al-Kabeer Security Directorate.

FATHER ADMITS THAT HE SPRAYED PESTICIDES IN DEAD KIDS' ROOM

CAR FIRE KILLS MOTORIST AT KABD HIGHWAY

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A man could face manslaughter charges after he admitted that he sprayed pesticides in a room where his two young children slept and where later found dead. The man had noticed that his seven-year-old son and five-year-old daughter were unconscious in their Farwaniya apartment, so he rushed them to Farwaniya Hospital, where they were pronounced dead. Police questioned the father who said that he entered his children's room at 11:00 am Sunday and sprayed it with pesticides while they were still asleep after he had noticed bugs inside it before. Criminal detectives retrieved a pesticides' can found in the scene, in addition to the children's blankets and other items from the room. The father is expected to be referred to the relevant authorities pending the investigations' report.



controlled a fire that started at an open yard at the technical examination division of the Capital Traffic Department. Firefighters arrived to the scene five minutes after the blaze was reported at 11:42 am. The fire was extinguished before it could spread to other parts of the building. No injuries were reported. Meanwhile, an investigation was opened to determine the cause of the fire.

Unlicensed store

An Asian was arrested for selling large quantities of Ministry of Health medications in an unlicensed Jleeb Al-Shuyukh grocery store.

Airport traffic

The Interior Ministry's relations and security media department said that Kuwait International Airport's traffic police held 4,085 security missions in April and May. During the operation, 119 vehicles were impounded, 3,956 citations were filed and 10 accidents were examined.

Transactions

Mubarak Al-Kabeer municipality's safety manager Mysaa Boshehri announced that the branch had completed 217 transactions and issued 75 licenses in May. She added that the total fees collected for doing these transactions were KD 1,217.

Vehicle fires

A man was killed yesterday morning after an accident reported at Kabd highway. The man's vehicle reportedly caught fire and he could not escape from it, said security sources. An investigation was opened to determine the cause of the accident. Separately, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) said that a fire broke out in a vehicle along Doha Spur and that on reporting to the scene, firemen found two men trapped inside the vehicle. The fire was controlled and the two passengers were rescued and evacuated to Jahra hospital for treatment. Salmiya firemen were also dispatched to deal with a third automobile fire where a vehicle's engine caught fire, said security sources noting that firemen managed to control the fire preventing it from spreading to other parts of the vehicle. No casualties were reported. Meanwhile, two citizens were trapped inside their vehicle when the driver lost control and it turned over and rolled several times, said security sources noting, that rescue forces managed to free the two men and rushed them to the hospital for treatment.

No injuries

In other news, KFSD announced yesterday that firemen

MANPOWER SYSTEMS DON'T ACCEPT LESS THAN KD 75 MINIMUM WAGE

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Ministerial decision number 14/2017 set the minimum monthly wages paid for workers in the private and oil sectors at KD 75, said Ahmad Al-Moussa, Acting Director of the Public Authority for Manpower said. This applies for new or renewed contracts including government ones signed after the decision was issued, he added, further explaining that the authority's systems will not accept wages less than the aforementioned number.

Meanwhile, Moussa announced amending the work permit issuing mechanism. He explained that the amendments include cancelling the work permits committee and adding new lines of business for which employers will get work permits. Moussa further added that employers will be divided into three categories; including one for compa-

nies fully-owned by the government or those in which the government owns at least 25 percent of the shares like hospitals, clinics, banks, insurance and investment companies and hotels.

New activities

Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan issued a ministerial decision on adding 221 new commercial activities to the list of commercially licensed ones. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) explained that the new activities include professional jobs, computer programming, sports, services and retail trade. MCI urged other relevant government bodies and ministries such as the Interior Ministry to set their own regulations on issuing those licenses.

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KUWAIT

Heritage



The Sheikh Mubarak Kiosk, one of the most important historical places in Kuwait. Founded in 1897 Kuwait's seventh ruler Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah (1840 -1915), it was regarded as the seat of government, where Sheikh Mubarak used to sit in the morning and monitor the affairs of government. The kiosk was surrounded by a variety of markets such as the vegetable, dates and water markets. The state renovated and officially reopened the kiosk as a tourist attraction in 2011. (Source: Sons of Sindbad, the Photographs, by Yacoub Hijji and Grace Pundyk, London, 2006. Prepared by Mahmoud Zakaria Abu Alella, heritage researcher in the Ministry of Information)



KUWAIT: Adel Jassim Al-Ghareeb and his brothers held a ghabqa in their diwaniya in Masayel area, which was attended by former information minister Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy Sheikh Ali Al-Khalid Al-Sabah, Secretary at His Highness the Crown Prince Office Sheikh Ahmad Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah, Sheikh Khalid Al-Ahmad Al-Khalid Al-Sabah, Major General Sheikh Ali Al-Youssef Al-Sabah and MP Salah Khourshed.



BURGAN BANK DEEPENS TIES DURING RAMADAN

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, a leading contributor to society, recently concluded its annual visit to celebrate gergian with the residents of the Care Center of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor as part of its corporate social responsibility Ramadan program.

Honoring the rich Kuwaiti traditions during the holy month of Ramadan, Burgan Bank distributed gergian gift bags to the children, elderly and people with disabilities with the aim of spreading joy and happiness and celebrating the giving spirit of

Ramadan. The annual visit is part of Burgan Bank's long-established Ramadan program, which falls under the umbrella of the Bank's corporate social responsibility strategy aimed at benefiting different segments of the community. Burgan Bank's full-fledged

community program entitled is titled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural, social and health initiatives.

Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the Kuwaiti society.





KUWAIT: The ibis Hotel Kuwait - Salmiya recently hosted its annual Ramadan ghabqa for the media, which was attended by representatives of local newspapers and other media agencies. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



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Crime

Report

MURDER PROBE IN TODDLER'S DEATH

KUWAIT: A three-year-old boy was taken to Adan hospital where he was pronounced dead. Doctors who examined him noticed bruises on his body, and his parents claimed that they were caused by a fall. Police authorities were informed; forensics went to the scene as the deputy prosecutor ordered the case be registered as a murder, in waiting for the coroner's report. This comes on the heels of the death of the two children in Farwaniya under mysterious circumstances.

Felony

An Indian man was found dead behind a factory in Abdullah Port by passersby who called 112. Police and paramedics rushed to the scene and confirmed he was dead. Forensics examined the body which was then transferred to the coroner and the case was registered as a felony.

Accident

A fire truck that responded to a call about a fire in Abdullah Port found itself in need of help when it flipped on its side. The vehicle was up righted by fire cranes, as an investigation is underway to find out what caused the accident.

Murder threat

An Ethiopian domestic helper told her sponsor's children she will slaughter them after Ramadan because it is forbidden (haram) to do so now. The children told their father, who feared for their safety and rushed to the police station. A police patrol went to the house and arrested the maid to question her over the charges.

Rapist still at large

A fourth victim was added to the three Egyptian girls who were raped by a 20-year-old bedoon - an Indonesian boy who was raped in Riggae. Detectives investigating the case of the Egyptian girls reviewed similar crimes and found the case of the Indonesian boy. The man was brought from the central prison and identified by the victim. The bedoon confessed, saying he was searching for victims in a Riggae building yard, and lured the boy to his car and raped him.

Police attacked

A 20-year-old reckless driver and his friends attempted to escape from police, hit a police car and attacked policemen in Dhaher. Patrols noticed a speeding car, so they asked it to pull over, but the driver did not oblige, so a chase ensued. Another patrol car noticed what was going on and joined the chase. The driver hit and damaged the police car, then the suspects got out of their vehicle and attacked the policemen. Two suspects escaped, leaving the 20-year-old behind, who was drunk.

Stab wound

An Indian man was found in a pool of blood inside a Farwaniya mall toilet as a result of a stab wound. Patrons told police about the man, so police and paramedics responded and transferred him to Farwaniya Hospital in a critical condition. Detectives are working on the case. —Translated from the Arabic press



الجريدة Al-Jarida

KIND BLAME

By Yousif Al-Enaizi

In the period of 2000-2003, I headed Kuwait's diplomatic mission in Sanaa, Yemen with all of its civilization and history. It is said that it was Sam, the son of Noah was the one who built the city of Sanaa. Following my previous article and the journey of a thousand miles, I received some kind remarks of blame from some dear friends from Yemen. They said that they noticed I have been talking about so many places

The Diwan was surrounded by glass windows that allowed us to watch clouds go past and below. It was a spectacular scene.

I have worked in or visited worldwide without mentioning the three years I spent in Yemen and the trips I made around the happy Yemen.

In December 2001, Kuwait's cultural week was held in Sanaa. It was truly outstanding. The embassy's media officer Yahya Al-Hadi had exerted great efforts to make that week successful. The activities included a kind invitation from friend and artist Abdul Rahman Al-Akhfash to the city of art, poetry and charming nature; the City of Koukaban, where his family's Diwan is located on top of mount Dale, which is 2,800 meters above sea level and 45 kilometers away from Sanaa.

It was really a very generous invitation that was attended by many Kuwaitis and Yemenis including Yemeni ministers of foreign affairs Abu Bakr Al-Qurabi, culture Abdul Wahab Al-Rouhani, information Dr Hussein Al-Awadhi, the head of Kuwait's delegation Dr Mohammed Al-Rumaihi, as well as iconic Kuwaiti actress Soad Abdullah and actor Mohammed Al-Mansour. We all enjoyed listening to then Yemeni MP Mohammed Marshad Naji singing his famous song 'Ala Meseer'.

The Diwan was surrounded by glass windows that allowed us to watch clouds go past and below. It was a spectacular scene. Talking about Yemen is very touching. Yemen includes the throne of the Queen of Sheba, the skyscraper city of Shibam, the Thahar Valley, Darulhajar and other monuments that tell the story of history childhood, the civilizations of Hemyar, Tobba', Sayf ibn Dhi-Yazan, Queen Arwa, and the so-called tombs of prophets Hud and Job. —Translated by Kuwait Times

الانباء

Al-Anbaa

WE ARE TO BLAME, NOT EXPATS

By Dr Adel Al-Ibrahim

For such a long time, many parliamentary and official statements have been made about Kuwait's demographic imbalances, and pointing fingers at expats blaming them for this problem. The most recent of such accusations pointed to expats is 'they have eaten up everything', as stated by MP Safa Al-Hashem. In addition, the Interior Ministry recently decided banning the renewal of residency visas of expats' parents and siblings, with the excuse of reducing the pressure on public hospitals.

Well, to be honest, one has to admit that we, Kuwaitis, are the reason of such imbalances that have been formulating over long decades. Let us just ask ourselves; how did these expats come to Kuwait? Aren't they sponsored by Kuwaiti individuals, companies or even the government? They did not come out of the blue to force parliamentary committees and the Supreme Council for Planning and Development to convene for several years now to face their growing number.

Yes, indeed. We the Kuwaitis are the reason for the demographic imbalances our country is suffering from. Why haven't we heard that from any official? Has blaming everything on expats and harassing them around become a means to cover up for the failure of a true confrontation? Don't officials realize the psychological impact such statements might have?

The problem does exist but the main reason is us,

Kuwaitis who are authorized by all laws and regulations to sponsor expats, issue visas for them as well as issue commercial licenses and rent them to expats. There are so many other practices that we, Kuwaitis, have been doing for the sake of making quick and easy money. I know so many might disagree with this established fact.

In the United States, all NGOs rejected president Donald Trump's decision to ban certain Arab and Islamic nationalities from entering the country. He was sued and the cases were won. Unfortunately, we have been behind making things worse by such statements without seeing a single response or reaction from NGOs. Well, let me say this loud and clear; enough blaming everything on expats. These people do have feelings that we ought to respect instead of blaming them for our government's failure in any given field.

Expats are judges, teachers, engineers, doctors, university professors, experts, military and civil advisors, journalists, cleaners, sales people and domestic helpers who all are paid in return for the jobs they do. How would they all feel on hearing such statements? Wouldn't it be wiser to take quieter measures towards adjusting Kuwait's demography without so much humiliating media propaganda made about it? We should reconsider the privileges of recruiting expats that we Kuwaitis have! —Translated by Kuwait Times



The Yarmouk team members pose with Ooredoo staff.

OOREDOO HOLD IFTAR FEAST IN YARMOUK HEALTH CENTER

KUWAIT: Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, held an iftar feast for the on-call medical staff and security personnel in Yarmouk area last week. The event took place in the Yarmouk Health Center and was attended by the mayor of Yarmouk Abdulaziz Al-Meshari.

The event was held in collaboration with the Yarmouk Co-Operative Society and Yarmouk Health Center, and Yarmouk Healthy City initiative. The event reflects Ooredoo's core values of caring and connecting, and stems from the company's deep-rooted belief in enriching the community. Ooredoo reiterated in a statement to that this event an attempt to embody the values of the holy month of Ramadan, by extending an invitation to the hardworking public servants who are on-call during the time of Iftar as a humble token of appreciation for their efforts.

On his part, the mayor of Yarmouk Abdouaziz Al-Meshari lauded Ooredoo's initiative, observing that it stems from true sense of citizenship. "It is such a great sign when companies and corporates come up with such initiatives, and we are always more than happy collaborate with such socially-responsible entities in the future," he said.

Meanwhile, the co-founder of AtaHub volunteers app Fared Al-Fouzan thanked Ooredoo for their ongoing support to volunteers across Kuwait, saying that it is a continuation of the company's ongoing efforts over the past several years to enrich the community.

Ooredoo meanwhile is continuing its iftar meal distribu-



Mayor of Yarmouk Abdulaziz Al-Meshari

tion across Kuwait, through its iftar tent placed opposite its head office and its volunteer program truck, which visits different areas across Kuwait where close to laborers residential areas. The initiatives are executed by Ooredoo's own volunteer program members, led by the company's Corporate Communications department in collaboration with Spread the Passion non-profit organization.

Ooredoo stated that supporting volunteer work stems from its deep-rooted values of caring, connecting and challenging, noting that this support comes to foster an environment that supports volunteer work and giving selflessly to help others, noting that this is especially true during the holy month of Ramadan which instills the values of caring for others. Ooredoo is also proud to be working with different entities, such as the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science and the non-profit organization Spread the Passion which have put together a training program for youth, with lectures and workshops delivered by people with expertise in the field of volunteer work.

Empowering youth is among Ooredoo's top priorities through its CSR strategy. The company has recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, to support youth projects and initiatives, making it the first telecom provider in Kuwait to sign such a high-level agreement. Ooredoo is continuously working with the Ministry to enrich youth experience in a variety of fields, with a focus on volunteerism.

KFH CELEBRATES GERGIAN FESTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN IN HOSPITALS

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) celebrated gergian festivities with the children in hospitals as part of its keenness to strengthen social ties with the society, yet to put smile on children's faces. KFH's gergian confectionery and gifts distribution comes as a continuation of its eventful Ramadan program 'Increase Good Deeds in Ramadan 3'. This program has a plethora of social, voluntary and humanitarian activities that reinforce its firm commitment towards its social responsibility.

The event was very successful, and the children enjoyed the gergian event that is considered to be a folklore annual event aiming at bringing joy to children, yet promoting cultural heritage. Such charitable activities and events bolster the relationship between KFH and the society.

Meanwhile, hospitals' staff and children's guardians praised this initiative that KFH is keen on taking every year. They lauded its key role in optimally assuming the social responsibility which reflects its prestigious status as a leading Islamic financial institution.



KIB SPONSORS BLUE CIRCLE'S 'DIABETES CHALLENGE TRIP'

KUWAIT: As part of its ongoing commitment to promote health awareness across all segments of the community, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently sponsored the 'Diabetes Challenge Trip' organized by Blue Circle; the non-profit movement founded by a group of local diabetic youth. The initiative focused on raising awareness about diabetes by sending a group of diabetic youth on a trip to Austria to take part in a number of challenging sporting activities.

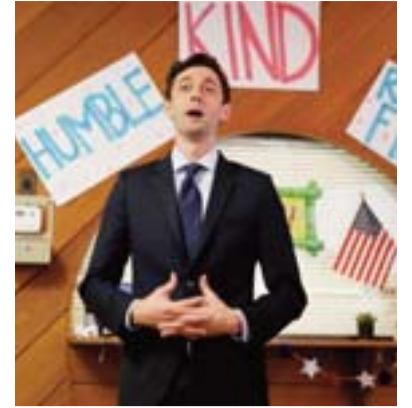
Every year, Blue Circle, a voluntary group working with the support of Kuwait Diabetes Society (KDS), seeks to highlight how diabetic patients are able to take charge of their conditions and successfully take part in demanding and challenging activities, irrespective of their diagnosis. This year, Blue Circle members embarked on an empowering trip, highlighting a diabetic's ability to live a normal and fulfilling life and in doing so, correct misconceptions about diabetic patients, both locally and internationally. Most importantly, the trip

provided members with the opportunity to learn about a range of valuable nutritional information, and engage in healthy physical activity, thereby encouraging a healthier and more active lifestyle. Additionally, the entirety of the trip was filmed to create a documentary to showcase the various physical challenges faced throughout the trip, meanwhile underscoring a diabetic patient's determination and strong will.

Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, said: "KIB is

always eager to support and sponsor health-based initiatives that seek to enhance the quality of life for all segments of the community, actively seeking to raise awareness and drive real change in the community. As a leading local financial institution, we believe we are active partners in social development, and thereby must continue to offer our support to local youth projects and initiatives. Our sponsorship of Blue Circle's initiative reflects our shared goal of promoting a better quality of life and well-being across Kuwait."





Dems eyes anti-Trump upset in Georgia race

AMERICA'S WIDENING ROLE IN SYRIA CIVIL WAR

US STUDENT DIES AFTER RELEASE FROM N KOREA

TRUMP SLAMS PYONGYANG REGIME • TRAVEL AGENCY STOPS DPRK TRIPS FOR AMERICANS

CHICAGO: US President Donald Trump slammed the "brutal regime" in Pyongyang following the death of Otto Warmbier, the US student released in a coma last week after nearly 18 months in detention in North Korea. The 22-year-old was medically evacuated to the United States last Tuesday, suffering from severe brain damage. He died six days later surrounded by relatives in his hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio. "The awful torturous mistreatment our son received at the hands of the North Koreans ensured that no other outcome was possible," the family said in a statement Monday announcing Warmbier's death.

Warmbier was on a tourist trip when he was arrested and sentenced in March last year to 15 years hard labor for stealing a political poster from a North Korean hotel, a punishment US officials decried as out of proportion to his alleged crime. Trump condemned Pyongyang following news of his death. "It's a brutal regime," he said during a White House event. "Bad things happened but at least we got him home to his parents." He then added with no explanation: "We'll be able to handle it."

In a separate written statement, Trump said, "Otto's fate deepens my Administration's determination to prevent such tragedies from befalling innocent people at the hands of regimes that do not respect the rule of law or basic human decency." "The United States once again condemns the brutality of the North Korean regime as we mourn its latest victim." Added Secretary of State Rex Tillerson: "We hold North Korea accountable for Otto Warmbier's unjust imprisonment, and demand the release of three other Americans who have been illegally detained."

Ex-Vietnam war POW Senator John McCain said in a statement that Warmbier "was murdered by the Kim Jong-Un regime," and added that the United States "cannot and should not tolerate the murder of its citizens by hostile powers." On Twitter, Republican Senator Marco Rubio wrote that Warmbier "should never have been in jail for tearing down a stupid banner. And he most certainly should not have been murdered for it."

Kenneth Bae, a Korean-American missionary who spent almost two years in a North Korean prison before he was released in November 2014, asked people to pray for Warmbier's family. "For Otto to be returned to the US in

the state he was in - and then for him to die because of it - is not only an outrage, but it is a tragedy for his entire family," Bae said in a statement. "This did not have to happen and should never happen again."

'At peace'

Doctors last week said that Warmbier had suffered severe neurological injuries, and described him as being in a state of "unresponsive wakefulness," opening his eyes and blinking, but showing no signs of understanding language or of being aware of his surroundings. His family said Monday that he first appeared anguished when he first arrived home, but died "at peace". Kim Jong-Un's regime claimed Warmbier fell into a coma soon after he was sentenced last year, and that he had contracted botulism and been given a sleeping pill.

Tests carried out in the United States offered no conclusive evidence as to the cause of his neurological injuries, and no evidence of a botulism infection. Warmbier's doctors said he had suffered extensive tissue loss in all regions of his brain, but showed no signs of physical trauma. They said that Warmbier's brain injury was probably caused by cardiopulmonary arrest cutting the blood supply to the brain.

'No excuse'

Warmbier's release came amid mounting tensions with Washington following a series of missile tests by Pyongyang, an arms buildup that Pentagon chief Jim Mattis has dubbed "a clear and present danger to all". His death also brought attention to North Korea's human rights record. The Washington-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea tied Warmbier's fate to "millions of unknown North Koreans" who are "starved, tortured, brutalized and killed in North Korea's political prison camps."

Warmbier's family said they believed the student had found peace after being flown home. "When Otto returned to Cincinnati late on June 13th he was unable to speak, unable to see and unable to react to verbal commands. He looked very uncomfortable - almost anguished," they said. "Although we would never hear his voice again, within a day the countenance of his face



PYONGYANG: In this Feb 29, 2016 photo, American student Otto Warmbier cries while speaking to reporters. — AP

changed - he was at peace. He was home and we believe he could sense that," they added. Three more US citizens are currently being held by North Korea. Two were teachers at a Pyongyang university funded by overseas Christian groups, and the third a Korean-American pastor who was accused of espionage for the South. Following Warmbier's death, the tour group that arranged his trip to North Korea said it would no longer take Americans into the isolated country.

"The devastating loss of Otto Warmbier's life has led us to reconsider our position on accepting American tourists. There had not been any previous detainment in North Korea that has ended with such tragic finality and we have been struggling to process the result," China-based Young Pioneer Tours said in a statement. "Now, the assessment of risk for Americans visiting North Korea has become too high. The way his detention was handled was appalling, and a tragedy like this must never be repeated," it said. — AFP

US POLICE PROBE MUSLIM GIRL'S KILLING AS 'ROAD RAGE' INCIDENT

WASHINGTON: A teenage Muslim girl killed by a bat-wielding motorist near a Virginia mosque was an apparent victim of "road rage" and her death is not being investigated as a hate crime, police said on Monday. Nabra Hassanen, 17, was attacked early on Sunday in Sterling, Virginia, about 30 miles (50 km) west of Washington, after attending late-night prayers for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan,



Nabra Hassanen

when many Muslims fast from dawn until sunset.

Darwin Martinez Torres, 22, of Sterling, has been arrested and charged with murder in the incident that began with a road dispute with a boy on a bicycle who was among a group of teenagers that included Hassanen, Fairfax County police spokeswoman Julie Parker said. "It appears that the suspect became so enraged over this traffic argument that it escalated into deadly violence," she told a news conference.

Parker said there was no indication the attack near the All Dulles Area Muslim Society mosque was motivated by race or religion. Police said there was no sign that Martinez used racial slurs during the attack. Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, expressed solidarity with the Muslim center and said a prayer vigil would be held on Wednesday at a high school. "With regard to this case, I am confident justice will be served," she said at the news conference.

The attack took place about 3:40

a.m. as up to 15 teenagers who had attended prayer services at the mosque were returning from a fast-food restaurant, Parker said. Some of the teenagers were in the road and Martinez began arguing with the boy on a bicycle as he was driving in his car, Parker said. Martinez chased the youths into a parking lot, emerged from his car with a baseball bat, and struck Hassanen, she said.

He loaded Hassanen into his car and dumped her in a pond in neighboring Loudoun County, Parker said. A search team recovered the body on Sunday, and an autopsy showed she had suffered blunt force trauma to the upper body, she added. The Washington Post reported that Hassanen and her friends were dressed in abayas, the robe-like dress worn by some Muslim women, prompting fears the victim was targeted because she was Muslim. Police arrested Martinez about 90 minutes after the assault and a judge ordered that he remain jailed without bail, officials said. He has been assigned a public defender. — Reuters

MOGADISHU BLAST KILLS 15

MOGADISHU: At least 15 people are dead after a suicide car bomber posing as a milk delivery van detonated at a district headquarters in Somalia's capital, police said yesterday. The death toll may rise, as some were badly hurt in the explosion at Wadajir district headquarters in Mogadishu, Capt. Mohamed Hussein told AP. Most of the dead were civilians, Hussein said. Aamin Ambulance service said it had transported 18 wounded, seven of them women. Two of the eight bodies it transported were women, it said.

The Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Shabab extremist group quickly claimed responsibility for the attack via its Shahada News Agency, according to the SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors jihadist groups. At the blast scene, debris was burning and bricks and body parts were scattered among destroyed cars. One man was pulled alive from under a large stone after a wall fell on him in the explosion. Weeping women stood nearby, anxiously waiting for news about loved ones.

The blast comes less than a week after Al-Shabab gunmen carried out an overnight siege on a popular restaurant in the Somali capital, killing at least 31 people. The Somalia-based

Al-Shabab often targets high-profile areas of Mogadishu, including hotels, military checkpoints and areas near the presidential palace. It has vowed to step up attacks after the recently elected government launched a new military offensive against it.

Al-Shabab last year became the deadliest Islamic extremist group in

Africa, with more than 4,200 people killed in 2016, according to the Washington-based Africa Center for Strategic Studies. The extremist group also faces a new military push from the United States after President Donald Trump approved expanded operations, including airstrikes, against Al-Shabab. — AP



MOGADISHU: People stand next to wreckage of vehicles on the scene of a car bomb attack in Mogadishu in the southern district of Wadajir yesterday. — AFP

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POLICE QUESTION 'TROUBLED' ANTI-MUSLIM VAN ATTACKER

LONDONERS HOLD VIGIL FOR TERROR ATTACK VICTIMS

LONDON: Police yesterday questioned a man suspected of deliberately mowing down Muslims in London, as the interior minister said Britain was "bruised but not broken" by a series of terror attacks. Britain was coming to terms with the aftermath of its fourth bloody assault in three months following Monday's van attack on worshippers leaving the Finsbury Park Mosque in north London. The string of attacks had "bruised but not broken the heart of this great nation", Home Secretary Amber Rudd said.

The family of Darren Osborne, the man suspected of deliberately driving into the Muslim group, said he was "troubled", describing his action as "sheer madness". Osborne, 47, a father of four from Cardiff, was arrested. Police believe the suspect acted alone and searches were being conducted at a residential address in the Welsh capital. Police are treating the incident as a terror attack and British Prime Minister Theresa May described it as "sickening", vowing Monday to fight extremism in all its forms.

The attack raised fears of retaliation against Muslims after a series of deadly assaults in Britain by Islamist extremists. One man who was already receiving first aid at the time died following the assault, while nine people were taken to hospital and two others were treated for minor injuries. "I'm sorry that my brother has been that troubled that it has taken him to this level of troubledness," said the suspect's sister Nicola Osborne. "He has just been troubled for a long time."

His mother Christine, 72, said she screamed when she saw her son in television footage. "My son is no terrorist - he's just a man with problems," The Sun newspaper quoted her as saying. In a statement on behalf of his family, his nephew Ellis Osborne, 26, said: "We are massively shocked. Our hearts go out to the people who have been injured." His uncle was "not a racist", he said. "It's madness. It is obviously sheer madness."

Suspect saved by imam

Londoners bearing flowers and messages of solidarity gathered late Monday at the scene of the attack,

some carrying signs reading "United Against All Terror". Another vigil was planned for yesterday. The van driver was pinned down by locals before being shielded from retaliatory violence by an imam and detained by police. The man suspected of driving the van was arrested on suspicion of "the commission, preparation or instigation of terrorism including murder and attempted murder", police said.

London police chief Cressida Dick said the incident was "quite clearly an attack on Muslims" and promised a stepped-up police presence near mosques as the holy month of Ramadan draws to a close. Rudd said Muslims needed to feel safe in Britain and the government was working to tackle all forms of hate crime and extremism. "Indicative figures suggest that over half of those who experience hate because of their religion are Muslim. Any hate crime is unacceptable but this stark figure is something we will not shy away from," she wrote in The Guardian newspaper. "We stand with the Muslim community - you are not alone, we share your pain and we will not let you down."

'Does not remember anything'

One victim of Monday's attack has no memory of what happened, according to a nephew who did not wish to be identified. "He is bleeding out of his ear, but in general his health was stable," he said after visiting his uncle Hamza Sharif in hospital. "He has a fracture in his skull - but they still don't know why the bleeding from his ear is not stopping yet," the Somali-born man said. Sharif "does not remember anything" of the attack and kept asking "what was wrong?"

The three previous terror attacks in recent months were all Islamist-inspired. A car and knife attack on March 22 in London killed four pedestrians on Westminster Bridge and a police officer guarding the British parliament. Two months later, on May 22, 22 people were killed when a suicide bomber blew himself up outside a pop concert in the northern city of Manchester. On June 3, eight people were killed in a van and knife attack on London Bridge and nearby Borough Market. —AFP



LONDON: A man holds a banner reading "Finsbury Park - We Stand Together" as he stands outside the Finsbury Park Mosque in the Finsbury Park area of north London yesterday following a van attack on pedestrians nearby. — AFP

LONDON ATTACK SUSPECT: PUB FIGHTS AND ANTI-MUSLIM RANTS

LONDON: The 47-year-old accused of driving a van into a crowd of Muslim worshippers outside a London mosque was "troubled", according to his family, while those who know him described a man who verbally abused Muslim children. Darren Osborne, a father of four from Cardiff in Wales, was arrested after the attack near Finsbury Park Mosque early Monday and is being questioned by police on suspicion of attempted murder and terrorism. According to witnesses who detained the man before police arrested him, he was shouting that he wanted to "kill all Muslims" before he was taken away.

Neighbours said Osborne had been thrown out

of The Hollybush, his local pub in Pentwyn, a suburb of Cardiff, on Saturday for drunkenly insulting Muslims. "He was cursing Muslims and saying he would do some damage," according to a regular at the pub quoted by The Sun. His Muslim neighbor, Khadijah Sherizi, said she had never had any problems with Osborne until this weekend, when he insulted her children. Her son Nadeem, 12, was quoted in The Guardian as saying: "I was on my bike and he just came up to me and said 'inbred'." His sister Nadia, 10, said she and her grandmother had heard Osborne using the same word. "All of a sudden we heard him say 'inbred'."

Other neighbors said that Osborne's behavior

had become erratic in recent weeks, and that he was living in a tent in the woods after splitting up with his long-term partner. "Around two weeks ago I saw him and he was a right state," Peter Mackuin, 53, told The Sun. "His missus had been out looking for him, I saw him wandering out of the woods."

Sherizi told AFP of her shock when she recognized the suspect, saying: "I saw him on the news and I thought, Oh my God, that is my neighbor. He has been so normal. He was in his kitchen yesterday afternoon singing with his kids." His mother Christine, 72, said she screamed when she saw her son in television footage. — AFP

YEAR OF TURMOIL PUTS UK ON EDGE

LONDON: From a lawmaker's assassination to a string of terror attacks and a devastating fire, Britain has suffered a heart-wrenching year that has put the government and society as a whole under severe strain. Even Queen Elizabeth II has been struck by the bleak series of events which have hit her subjects in recent months, just as the country prepares for a period of uncertainty when it leaves the European

Monday by London Mayor Sadiq Khan as he condemned an anti-Muslim terror attack by a white man who drove a van into a crowd of Muslim worshippers near Finsbury Park Mosque.

But others warn that divisions are deepening. "Goaded by extremists on the left and right, and amplified by social media, hard-boiled minorities defined less by citizenship than by half-baked and pernicious belief

was dragged into another battle for votes, only to see the campaign suspended when a suicide bomber attacked a crowd of music fans in Manchester.

In Britain's worst terror attack in more than a decade, Salman Abedi killed 22 people and injured more than 100 others outside an Ariana Grande pop concert on May 22. Shock was tinged with fear as the prime minister temporarily raised the terror threat level to critical, bringing soldiers onto the streets. Politicians cautiously restarted their pleas for votes, only to be called back into crisis talks when terror struck the capital once again on June 3. In an echo of the Westminster attack, three men drove a van through pedestrians before going on a stabbing spree in bars near London Bridge.

Three assailants - Khuram Shazaf Butt, Rachid Redouane and Youssef Zagbha - wore fake suicide vests to increase panic among revellers. Both the London rampage and the Manchester bombing were claimed by the Islamic State group. As a result, an election in which May had seemed certain to triumph ended with the premier losing her majority, leading her to seek the support of the 10 MPs from Northern Ireland's ultra-conservative Democratic Unionist Party.

Tower block inferno

In the wake of May's disastrous election gamble and three deadly terror attacks, Britain awoke on June 14 to another catastrophe - a devastating fire ripping through a London tower block. Seventy-nine people are known to have died or are missing and presumed dead in the Grenfell Tower inferno, which wrought such destruction the police said some victims may never be identified. Less than a week after the fire, Britain's fourth terror attack in three months hit. Muslims were taking a break from evening prayers in Finsbury Park, north London, when a man drove a van into the crowd on Monday, injuring 11 people before being apprehended.

An elderly man who had collapsed just before the incident died at the scene. "We had a terrible few weeks," Mayor Khan said at the scene of the attack. "One of the things that all these terrorists share is a perverse ideology that wants to fuel division and divide our communities. We're not going to let them". —AFP



LONDON: The burned-out shell of the Grenfell Tower block is seen behind terraced houses as local residents look on near the scene of the fire in North Kensington yesterday. — AFP

Union. "It is difficult to escape a very somber national mood," she said over the weekend in an unusual show of emotion to mark her 91st birthday celebrations.

It drew comparisons to her "annus horribilis" ("horrible year") speech a quarter of a century ago in 1992 when her children's marriages broke down and her Windsor Castle summer residence was hit by fire. Throughout the past year Britons have responded with private soul-searching and public showings of solidarity, most recently holding street parties over the weekend to mark one year since the murder of Jo Cox.

The Labour party MP was stabbed and shot by neo-Nazi sympathizer Thomas Mair in her northern England constituency on June 16 last year, in Britain's first political assassination since 1990. "We are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us," Cox had said in her inaugural speech to parliament a year earlier. Those words were repeated

systems are making this country less, not more united," The Times said in an editorial.

Terror hits Manchester

Cox's killing came during a bitterly divisive campaign ahead of the EU membership referendum, in which Britain ended up voting by 52 percent to leave the European Union. The historic moment when Britain formally notified the EU in March of its intention to leave came days after a terrorist attack on the home of British democracy. An Islamist-inspired attacker drove a rental car into pedestrians on Westminster Bridge before stabbing to death an unarmed police officer guarding parliament.

Five people were killed in the March 22 attack before Khalid Masood was shot dead by police. Politics took no respite, with May calling a snap election for June 8 under the guise of boosting her Conservative Party's slim majority ahead of Brexit talks. A nation already weary of going to the polls

شركة مركز الإمارات العربية المتحدة للصرافة

UAE XCHANGE
Kuwait - الكويت

Warning and Announcement

VIVEK P NAIR	RENIITH PILLAI	HARI KRISHNAN	FREDERICK NIRMAL	DOLFY D'COSTA
ARUNKUMAR RENGANATHAN	VINAYAN MANGALASSER	SAJOOOTH RAVEENDRAN	PRADEEP ACHAR	MOHAMMAD SAHAL
BOBIN PAUL	RESHMI PREM	MOHAMMAD ZAGHLOOL	MOHAMMAD SAEED	VIVEK PILLAI

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UN: SPLINTERING OF S SUDAN WAR MAKES PEACE ELUSIVE

JUBA: South Sudan's civil war has mutated from a two-way fight between the president and his ousted former deputy to a fragmented conflict, making it harder to put it back together and peace more elusive, the top UN peacekeeper in the country said. David Shearer, head of the 13,000-strong United Nations mission, welcomed signs that regional leaders were rejuvenating the peace process but said any initiative must include all factions, including that of former Vice President Riek Machar, and discourage the multiplication of armed groups.

South Sudan slipped into civil war in 2013, just two years after becoming independent from Khartoum, and some 4 million people - around one third of the population - have fled to neighboring countries or to pockets of relative safety. The conflict, ignited by a feud between President Salva Kiir

and Machar, has resulted in ethnic cleansing between the leaders' respective Dinka and Nuer communities.

However, an escalation of fighting since last July that forced Machar to flee the country a month later has seen clashes spread to previously unaffected areas. "The situation now is somewhat different to what it was a year ago, when it was largely bipolar," Shearer told Reuters in an interview late on Monday. "We are seeing a lot more of the conflict being played out at a very local level and that is worrying because as it fractures it becomes more difficult to try to put the pieces back together again."

Fighting has in particular affected the southern Equatoria regions, previously largely spared violence. The spike in fighting resulted in South Sudan having the fastest growing refugee population in

the world as civilians poured into Uganda. Tens of thousands of civilians have fled to camps within South Sudan that are ringed by UN troops. Peacekeepers have frequently been criticized for failing to do enough to protect civilians but the UN leadership says troops are obstructed and restricted by the army. A combination of red tape and unwillingness meant it took eight months for the first of 4,000 U.N. reinforcements approved to start deploying after last year's fighting.

Places at the Table

Analysts and diplomats say regional peace efforts have stumbled for much of the last year as Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya adopted a more bilateral approach to the conflict. But Shearer was optimistic that a recent meeting of regional leaders in Ethiopia would result in a more collective approach

to the crisis. "There was a sense that they want to rejuvenate the peace agreement and start moving that forward. That collective effort hasn't been apparent for the last year," he said.

Machar remains in exile in South Africa, excluded from the process. Shearer said while regional leaders were reluctant to return to the "old formula" of insisting on a potentially explosive face-to-face between Kiir and Machar, there was recognition that Machar's camp needed to be represented in talks and he could too, further down the line. The UN chief said there was a delicate balance between a rejuvenated and broadened push for peace and creating incentives to add to the plethora of armed groups. "What we don't want to do is to encourage a greater degree of conflict or arming of groups in order to be relevant and have a place at the table," he warned. — Reuters



A firefighter plane drops water as Spanish military firefighters from the Emergency Military Unit (UME) work on the ground in Cernache de Bomjardim in Serta yesterday. — AFP

QUESTIONS OVER RESPONSE AS PORTUGAL BATTLES BLAZE

PEOPLE IN RURAL HAMLETS NOT HAPPY

PEDROGAO GRANDE, Portugal: Questions were mounting yesterday about the government's response to the raging forest fires that have claimed 64 lives, as more than 1,000 firefighters battled to contain it. The blaze around Pedrogao Grande was expected to be under control shortly, said civil protection chief Vitor Vaz Pinto. But as water-bombing planes made regular passes over the flames, there were growing questions as to whether the response to the disaster could have been better.

There were also suggestions that forestry practices and outdated emergency planning might have contributed to the disaster. Some people in the hamlets scattered through this rural region were not happy with the response of the emergency services. Father Jose Gomes, the priest in Figueiro dos Vinhos, told AFP that some locals had "lacked the support of the fire fighters, and sometimes even water." "There is a spirit of revolt towards the emergency services," he said.

Other people were asking if the roads where so many people died had been closed quickly enough on Saturday when the fires started. Of the 64 people who died, 47 of them perished on the N236 highway, 30 of them trapped in their cars as the flames surrounded them. An addi-

tional 157 were listed as injured, the emergency services said. They included seven people in a serious state, one of them a child.

Details were emerging of the victims, many of whom were caught in their cars as they tried to flee the blaze. They included a four-year-old boy, Rodrigo. His parents had left with him with relatives while on honeymoon and posted frantic messages on social media when they heard about the fires sweeping through the village of Nodeirinho in the Leiria region. The bodies of Rodrigo and his uncle were found burnt beside a car, caught by the flames as they tried to flee the inferno. Yesterday, 1,150 firefighters and nearly 400 vehicles were still battling the fires, helped from the air by water-bombing planes including some sent from France, Italy and Spain.

'This can't be nobody's fault'

Press reports suggested that the fire plan had not been revised for four years and that there had been communications problems while trying to contain the blaze. Portugal's Publico newspaper reported that while the fire plan was meant to be revised every two years, in recent years lawmakers had not considered it a priority. Le Jornal de Noticias said emergency services communications antennae had been damaged

by the heat of the fires, hampering the work of the firefighters.

Climate change expert Joao Camargo pointed to the industrial-scale planting of eucalyptus, which is highly inflammable, in comments to Publico. "These last decades, we have seen a rise in the frequency of forest fires" in Portugal, more than in other Mediterranean countries, he said. The emptying out of the countryside as people leave for more urban areas also meant that there were fewer people to clear the brush that has fed the fires. "This can't be nobody's fault," said Helder Amaral of the rightwing opposition People's Party (CDS) in a Facebook post. "It is not enough for the president of the republic to kiss it better. Saying there is nothing to be done is not enough," he said.

Columns of smoke were still rising from the hills yesterday morning, some of them still black, indicating active fire sights, AFP journalists reported. The sky was clearer than a day earlier, and the water-bombing planes made regular runs over the lake below the village of Pedrogao Pequeno to refill and try to finish off the last seats of fire. Nearly 26,000 hectares of forest have already been destroyed by the fires, according to the European Forest Fire Information System. — AFP

PARIS ATTACKER, ON TERRORISM WATCHLIST, HAD GUN LICENSE

PARIS: Questions arose yesterday over how a known radical Islamist who rammed a car into a police van on Paris's Champs-Elysees was able to hold a gun license. Adam Djaziri, a 31-year-old who had been on a watchlist for radical Islamists since 2015, was killed on Monday as his car loaded with a gas canister smashed into the van on the French capital's most famous avenue. Two handguns and a Kalashnikov-style assault rifle were found in the car, while a weapons stash was found at the home of the assailant, who died in the incident.

Djaziri's father, who has since been detained, told AFP that his son was a licensed gun-owner, and a source close to the probe said he owned nine weapons including pistols and an assault rifle. The attempted attack comes with France still under a state of emergency after a wave of jihadist assaults that have left more than 230 people dead since 2015.

As the one-month-old government of President Emmanuel Macron prepares to unveil a tougher new anti-terrorism law, Prime Minister Edouard Philippe expressed dismay that Djaziri was able to have a gun permit despite being on a jihadist watchlist. "What I know at this stage is that the first weapons permit was given before this individual was flagged up," he said in an interview with BFM television and RMC radio, but he added that "no one can be satisfied - and certainly not me" that Djaziri had evidently still been able to possess dangerous weapons.

Relatives detained

Djaziri's ex-wife, brother and sister-in-law were detained late on Monday after

police questioned them at the family home in Plessis-Pate outside Paris. Djaziri's father was also taken into custody, a judicial source said. Burn marks were found on Djaziri's body but it was not yet clear how he died, according to a source close to the investigation. There were no other casualties from the attempted attack, and no group claimed responsibility.

Since the Nov 2015 Paris attacks that saw 130 people slaughtered, and last year's Nice truck assault that claimed 86 lives, the country has seen a string of smaller attacks targeting security forces. Djaziri died just a short distance on the Champs-Elysees from the spot where a jihadist shot dead a police officer two months ago. Earlier this month an Algerian man attacked a policeman with a hammer outside Notre Dame cathedral, another key tourist draw, while troops shot dead a man at the capital's Orly airport in March after he attacked a soldier on patrol.

Few details have emerged of the new anti-terrorism law due to be unveiled Wednesday, but a draft leaked to the daily Le Monde has sparked concern among civil liberties campaigners who worry the emergency measures could become permanent. The measures allow security forces to monitor suspects and carry out searches without warrants, place suspects under house arrest and ban public gatherings. The current state of emergency is due to expire on July 15 but the government is seeking to extend it until Nov 1 - presumably after the new anti-terrorism law takes effect. Interior Minister Gerard Collomb said Monday that the Champs-Elysees incident "shows once again that the threat level remains extremely high in France". — AFP



PARIS: A French gendarme kneels near the dead body of a man who rammed into a police convoy and detonated an explosive device on the Champs Elysees avenue on Monday. — AP

EUROPE TOP RIGHTS COURT BLASTS RUSSIAN GAY LAW

STRASBOURG, France: The European Court of Human Rights yesterday blasted as discriminatory Russian legislation banning the promotion of homosexuality, saying it fuelled homophobia and prejudice. The ruling was welcomed by gay activists in Russia who had lodged the case, but Moscow said it would appeal. The legislation had made "promoting non-traditional sexual relationships" among minors an offence punishable by a fine. It was also an offence to say that gay relationships were equal to heterosexual ones.

The Strasbourg-based court said the Russian laws "reinforced stigma and prejudice and encouraged homophobia," which was "incompatible with the values of a democratic society". Although homosexuality was decriminalized in Russia in 1993, prejudice is common and human rights activists allege widespread abuse. Three gay activists - Nikolay Bayev, Aleksey Kiselev and Nikolay Alexeyev - had staged protests outside a school, a children's library and a government building holding banners that said homosexuality was not a perversion.

They were subsequently fined and appealed against the ruling in Russian courts. But their complaints - right up to the Constitutional Court - were unsuccessful. The Constitutional Court had said the ban was justified on the grounds of protection of morals and spoke of the potential dangers of "creating a distorted impression of the social equivalence of traditional and non-traditional marital relations".

'These laws must be abolished'

The trio then filed applications with the European rights court in 2009 and 2012. The Strasbourg court said the fines imposed on them breached articles in the European Convention of Human Rights regarding freedom of expression and discrimination. It ordered Russia to pay 8,000 euros (\$8,900) in

damages to Bayev, 15,000 euros to Kiselev and 20,000 euros to Alexeyev. Russia's justice ministry said it would appeal, and was "preparing legal arguments explaining Russia's position".

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov did not react immediately, saying: "Certainly we will be examining this decision. I have not seen the wording of it, so I cannot comment." Alexeyev, who runs the GayRussia website, told AFP: "This is an enormous legal victory for the LGBT in Russia. The ruling is yet one more proof that LGBT activists are discriminated in Russia and their rights are violated. These discriminatory laws now must be abolished," he said in a statement, adding that they had no place "in a free, civilized and democratic and country in the 21st century".

Under the various Russian laws, if individuals use media or the Internet for homosexual "propaganda" they can be fined up to 100,000 rubles (\$3,000). Organizations can be fined up to one million rubles and risk being closed down for up to 90 days. Foreign nationals who use media or the internet for propaganda, can be fined up to 100,000 rubles, detained for up to 15 days and deported. Another law makes "public actions expressing clear disrespect for society and committed to the goal of offending religious feelings of the faithful" punishable with up to a year in jail and fines of up to 300,000 rubles.

The same actions committed in places of worship are punishable by up to three years in prison and a fine of up to 500,000 rubles. The ruling dismissed Russia's defense that it was defending traditional values, said a statement from the court. People had the right to "openly identify themselves as gay, lesbian or any other sexual minority, and to promote their own rights and freedoms," it said. The ruling also rejected Moscow's claims that minors risked being swayed by others into becoming homosexual. — AFP

FRENCH DEFENSE MINISTER QUILTS OVER FAKE JOBS CLAIMS

PARIS: French Defense Minister Sylvie Goulard announced her resignation yesterday over a fake jobs scandal that has hit her small centrist MoDem party, which has allied itself with President Emmanuel Macron's party. Goulard, who was a member of the European Parliament from 2009 to May this year, said she could not remain in the government while facing a possible investigation of alleged misuse of expenses at that parliament.

Her resignation comes as Macron carries out a minor shuffle of his government following parliamentary elections on Sunday which handed him and his MoDem allies a commanding majority. Goulard was named to the defense job only a month ago following Macron's election to the presidency. But she said the possibility of an investigation made it difficult for her to stay in the post given Macron's pledge to clean up politics. "The president is committed to restoring confidence in public office, reforming France and relaunching Europe," she said in a statement. "This reform agenda must take precedence over any personal considerations. That is why I have asked the president, with the agreement of the prime minister, to leave the government."

Macron accepted her resignation and said he "respected" Goulard's choice. Paris prosecutors opened a preliminary investigation this month into claims in the Canard Enchaîné newspaper that MoDem was using European parliamentary



Sylvie Goulard

funds to pay assistants who were actually based in France. MoDem's leader Francois Bayrou was a key backer of Macron's one-year-old Republic on the

Move (REM) movement during the presidential campaign, and his support was crucial in winning centrist votes for the new president.

Bayrou, whom Macron named justice minister as a reward for his support, last week dismissed the claims, saying there had "never been" fake jobs among his party's European Parliament staff. On Tuesday, the MoDem leader said he respected Goulard's "personal" decision.

No stains on cabinet

MoDem won 42 seats in the parliamentary election while Macron's party crushed its rivals by winning 308 seats, giving their centrist alliance a solid majority in the 577-seat National Assembly. Macron has already used the post-election period to fine tune his government and remove a scandal-hit minister. On Monday, the president asked close ally Richard Ferrand, who is embroiled in a conflict-of-interest scandal, to leave the cabinet and instead seek the leadership of REM's parliamentary group.

In accusations also leveled by the Canard Enchaîné, Ferrand is said to have favored his wife in a lucrative property deal with a public health insurance fund when he headed the company. Ferrand, who was a minister with responsibility for territorial cohesion, has accepted to make the switch. Macron is expected to name his new cabinet yesterday. — AFP

AS VENEZUELA BURNS, OAS PROVES SHORT ON SOLUTIONS

CANCUN, Mexico: Ministers from the Organization of American States failed Monday to agree on a resolution to address the crisis in Venezuela, as the death toll from weeks of clashes at anti-government protests rose to 74. New violence erupted in the South American nation as protesters marked the 80th day in their current campaign to oust President Nicolas Maduro. Meanwhile, as the OAS opened its annual general assembly in Mexico, foreign ministers from the 34-nation regional group scrambled to adopt a joint response to the crisis - and came up short.

Since April 1, after Venezuela's Supreme Court tried to strip the powers of the opposition-majority legislature, the country has descended into running street battles between anti-government protesters and Maduro's security forces and supporters. Maduro's opponents accuse the president of clinging to power by repressing opponents, eradicating checks and balances, and seeking to write a new constitution. Violent scenes played out again Monday, as riot police and soldiers used tear gas and water cannons to block demonstrators from marching on central Caracas. A 17-year-old boy was shot in the chest and killed in Altamira on the capital's east side, while six others were wounded by bullets, officials said.

Three votes short

The crisis has the rest of Latin America increasingly worried. In the Mexican resort city of Cancun, OAS foreign ministers tried bridge their mistrust and ideological divisions to address the standoff. The ministers had two competing proposals on the table. On one side stood Venezuela's leftist allies and Caribbean countries that for years received discounted crude exports from the oil giant. They back a domestic resolu-



CARACAS: Opposition activist stand in front of a riot police vehicle during clashes in a demonstration against the government of President Nicolas Maduro along the Francisco Fajardo highway on Monday. — AFP

tion to the crisis. On the opposite side were the United States, Canada, Mexico, Peru and Panama, which want to create a "contact group" on Venezuela - comprising countries that would seek to make Maduro's government respect OAS democratic norms. Using the Caribbean states' proposal as a

base, the two sides sought to forge a compromise in which the OAS would call on Maduro to halt the constitution-drafting assembly he has convened, guarantee human rights, and hold talks with the opposition mediated by a group of regional countries.

But the proposal fell three votes shy of the 23 it

needed. "It's sad," said US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Michael Fitzpatrick in Cancun. "We continue to extend our hand to the people of Venezuela and indeed to the government of Venezuela looking for a pacific and democratic solution." Mexican Foreign Minister Luis Videgaray persuaded his colleagues to adjourn the meeting to an unspecified date while they continue to negotiate behind the scenes.

"While we're here failing to reach an agreement, in the streets of Caracas and other Venezuelan cities today the violence and repression continue," he said. It is unclear in any case how much power the OAS can wield over Venezuela, which is in the process of quitting the group. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez, who is in Cancun, defiantly told journalists: "Venezuela recognizes nothing produced by this organization."

No end in sight

Pummeled by the plunge in oil prices since mid-2014, Venezuela is in the grip of an economic and political crisis that is causing desperate shortages of food, medicine and other basic essentials. Maduro says the crisis is a US-backed conspiracy. More than 1,000 people have been injured so far, prosecutors say, and more than 3,000 arrested, according to rights group Forum Penal. The OAS crisis talks are the latest in a series of foreign ministers' meetings that caused Maduro to announce Venezuela's withdrawal from the regional group in April - a process that will take two years. OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro, a vocal Maduro critic, warned there would be no immediate solution. "The issue of Venezuela will continue, because the crisis in Venezuela isn't going to end today, either," he said. — AFP

DEMOS EYE ANTI-TRUMP UPSET IN HIGH-STAKES GEORGIA RACE

RUNOFF MOST EXPENSIVE US HOUSE RACE IN HISTORY

WASHINGTON: Voters headed to the polls in the state of Georgia yesterday to decide the most expensive US congressional race, a \$60-million political brawl where a Democratic novice could score an upset in a conservative stronghold and strike a blow against the presidency of Donald Trump. The race - seen as an indicator for next year's mid-term elections - appeared virtually deadlocked as both candidates sprinted to the finish, polls showed.

Republicans are facing a sobering reminder

turnout now," Ossoff told WSB television Monday. "That's why we're so focused on get out the vote" operations. Ossoff and his Republican rival, the former Georgia secretary of state Karen Handel, spent the last days crisscrossing the southern state's sixth congressional district speaking to voters. Despite Trump's low approval ratings the president expressed support for Handel, 55.

"Democrat Jon Ossoff, who wants to raise your taxes to the highest level and is weak on

al candidates in April, but fell just shy of outright victory. The June 20 runoff quickly became the most expensive US House race in history, with the campaigns, political action committees and other outside groups raising nearly \$60 million, according to government reform and ethics group Issue One. Ossoff has unleashed a massive ground operation reportedly consisting of 12,000 door-knocking, call-making volunteers. The two campaigns and political groups have bombarded Atlanta airwaves with election advertising.

'Wake-up call'

Republicans have held Georgia's sixth district since 1979. But as an increasingly well-educated, diverse suburban district it is exactly the kind of territory which Democrats need to flip if they want to gain the 24 seats necessary to reclaim the House of Representatives in 2018. "If the Democrats win the Georgia Sixth it should be a wake-up call to the Republican Party," GOP strategist Rick Tyler, ex-spokesman for Senator Ted Cruz's 2016 presidential campaign, told MSNBC.

Some observers were also eyeing the race for clues into how voters perceive the Republican healthcare bill currently making its way through Congress. Handel has aligned herself with Trump, who campaigned heavily on repealing Obamacare. If she loses, Republicans in swing districts may be forced to reassess their positions on healthcare. Tuesday's runoff is the third chance opposition Democrats have to win a House seat since Trump took office.

Special congressional elections in Kansas and Montana - also to replace Republicans who joined Trump's team - were seen as a chance for Democrats to score first strikes against the administration. But with Democrats falling short in those races, and the Republican expected to win in South Carolina - a second state which is also holding a special congressional election yesterday - all eyes have turned to Georgia.

Should Democrats fail to convert at least one of the special election seats, it could be a demoralizing blow for administration opponents who have seen these races as early tests of the national strength of an anti-Trump movement.

The shooting of Republican congressman Steve Scalise - who remains hospitalized in serious condition after being shot in the hip - last Wednesday in Washington however has cast a shadow over the Georgia race. Both candidates have reported receiving threats, prompting heightened security in the final days of the race. — AFP



TUCKER, Georgia: Democratic candidate Jon Ossoff speaks with volunteers and supporters in a campaign office on Election Day as he runs for Georgia's 6th Congressional District yesterday. — AFP

of their president's poor approval ratings, as 30-year-old centrist Democrat Jon Ossoff, a filmmaker and onetime political assistant, clings to the narrowest of leads. Polls opened from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm (1100-2300 GMT). With Democrats potentially striking the first blow against Trump in 2017, the race has drawn substantial national attention - and vast outside contributions to both candidates. "It's a neck and neck race, and it's all about

crime and security, doesn't even live in district," he tweeted just before sunrise yesterday. "KAREN HANDEL FOR CONGRESS. She will fight for lower taxes, great healthcare strong security-a hard worker who will never give up! VOTE TODAY," he then added.

Ossoff is trying to flip the suburban Atlanta district that Republican Tom Price left to become Trump's health secretary. The Democrat won the first round against sever-

al candidates in April, but fell just shy of outright victory. The June 20 runoff quickly became the most expensive US House race in history, with the campaigns, political action committees and other outside groups raising nearly \$60 million, according to government reform and ethics group Issue One. Ossoff has unleashed a massive ground operation reportedly consisting of 12,000 door-knocking, call-making volunteers. The two campaigns and political groups have bombarded Atlanta airwaves with election advertising.



MEXICO CITY: (From left) Mexican journalists Ana Cristina Ruelas, Rafael Cabrera and Carmen Aristegui and the director of Mexican Human Rights Center Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Mario Patron, deliver a press conference in Mexico City on Monday on an article published by the New York Times: "Using Texts as Lures, Government Spyware Targets Mexican Journalists and Their Families". — AFP

MEXICAN JOURNALISTS, ACTIVISTS ACCUSE GOVT OF SPYING ON THEM

MEXICO CITY: A group of prominent journalists and activists in Mexico accused the government Monday of spying on them, saying their phones had been hacked with Israeli spyware sold exclusively to the state. The group said at a press conference that it has pressed charges with the attorney general's office, accusing the government of illegally accessing private communications and other offenses. The nine plaintiffs at the news event included journalists who have published embarrassing exposes on government corruption and activists who have investigated human rights violations by the state.

"This is an operation by the Mexican state, in which state agents - far from doing what they should legally do - have used our resources, our taxes, our money to commit serious abuses," said journalist Carmen Aristegui. Aristegui, a veteran reporter, is known in Mexico for a 2014 expose revealing that President Enrique Pena Nieto's wife had bought a \$7 million Mexico City mansion from a government contractor. She said members of her staff and her 16-year-old son were also targeted. She is among the 76 cases the plaintiffs say they have documented of high-tech spyware being installed on their phones and those of their families and associates.

The accusation were first published in a New York Times report detailing how Pegasus was used against top human rights lawyers, journalists and anti-corruption activists in Mexico. "What does the Mexican president have to say today about this treacherous, illegal spying?" Aristegui said. Pena Nieto's office responded with a letter to the editor of the New York Times. "There is no proof whatsoever that Mexican government agencies are responsible for the alleged spying," wrote spokesman Daniel Millan Valencia.

'Your husband's having an affair'

Victims said they received text messages with eye-catching news headlines, social media posts or even communications from the United States embassy - all of which were fake. The messages would prompt users to click on a link that would secretly install the spyware on their phones. The software in question, known as Pegasus, effectively turns a target's cell phone into a pocket spy, accessing the user's communications, camera and microphone to enable a highly detailed level of surveillance.

The spyware is made by a secretive Israeli firm called NSO Group, owned by US private equity firm Francisco Partners Management. According to the New York Times report, at least three Mexican federal agencies have purchased some \$80 million of spyware from NSO Group since 2011. The company, which claims it only sells Pegasus to governments, says it has an agreement with clients that the software be used only to target terrorists and criminals.

In Mexico, alleged targets say the spying went far beyond that. The group includes lawyers who investigated the disappearance and suspected massacre of 43 students in 2014 and transparency advocate Juan Pardo, sponsor of a tough new anti-corruption bill. Pardo, the head of the Mexican Institute for Competitiveness, told the Times his wife had received a text message on her iPhone saying that he was having an affair and inviting her to click on a link to see proof.

"We are the new enemies of the state," he said. Ana Cristina Ruelas, head of media rights group Article 19 in Mexico, called the alleged spying an attempt to muzzle government critics. Espionage "has become an effective tool to intimidate human rights advocates, activists and journalists," she said. — AFP

SHARP RISE IN SUICIDES BY GUN AMONG AMERICAN CHILDREN

LOS ANGELES: American children died of self-inflicted gunshot wounds at a sharply higher rate in 2014 than seven years earlier, according to a study released on Monday, which said that the safe storage of firearms could make a big difference in preventing youth suicides. Among children and teens aged 17 or younger, 1.6 per 100,000 killed themselves with guns in 2014, compared with 1.0 per 100,000 in 2007. An average of 493 children died of gun-related suicides each year covered by the study, which was led by Katherine Fowler and Linda Dahlberg of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and published in the online journal Pediatrics.

"Suicides are often impulsive in this age group, with previous findings indicating that many who attempt suicide spend 10 minutes

or less deliberating," the research paper said. All told, nearly 1,300 children in the United States age 17 or younger died of gunshot wounds each year, with boys accounting for the vast majority of the victims, according to the study. For decades, gunshot wounds have ranked second behind car crashes as the leading cause of death from injuries for US children. But while car travel has become safer, gun fatalities have remained high in that age group, pediatric experts say.

"Firearm injuries are an important public health problem, contributing substantially to premature death and disability of children," the study said. "Understanding their nature and impact is a first step toward prevention." The rise in fatal gunshot wounds runs counter to a decline in the overall death rate among American children over the

last several decades, as well as a decrease in the number of children who were homicide victims.

African-American boys are the most likely of any demographic group to be shot and killed by someone else, while white and Native American children are four times more likely to kill themselves by firearms than black and Hispanic children, the study found. The study is the most comprehensive analysis of firearm deaths and injuries among American children ever conducted, according to two pediatric experts who were not involved in it.

"We take care of these kids, as pediatricians it's not abstract," Dr Robert Sege, chief medical officer of the Massachusetts-based research group Health Resources in Action, said by phone. Firearm deaths among children have remained roughly constant, with

the higher suicide rate canceling out progress in lowering homicides with guns, Sege said. The American Academy of Pediatrics has said the safest household are those with no firearms.

But parents often are not open to hearing that message from a doctor, given the widespread acceptance of gun ownership in the United States, writes Dr Eliot Nelson, a University of Vermont College of Medicine professor who did not participate in the latest research. Doctors should focus on sharing information about safe storage of firearms, he wrote in a separate paper in Pediatrics. "Given the impulsivity, risk-taking and unpredictability of adolescence, we should promote safe storage as a routine measure rather than only when a concern or crisis arises," he said. — Reuters

DEMOCRATS FUME OVER SECRET GOP HEALTH PLAN

WASHINGTON: US Democrats furious with Republican secrecy brought Senate business to a standstill Monday, launching an hours-long protest against President Donald Trump's party crafting a back-room Obamacare repeal plan and refusing to hold public hearings about it. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has said he wants the legislation passed by June 30. Democrats fear he is purposely keeping the bill under wraps until the last minute so he can jam the controversial plan through with just a few hours of floor debate.

The strategy is a 180-degree shift from the Republican position during the 2009-2010 debate on Barack Obama's health care reforms, when conservatives demanded transparency and dozens of public hearings in a months-long process. In the six weeks since the House of Representatives passed its Obamacare repeal legislation, Senate Republicans have insisted they will craft their own bill, but few details have emerged. With just

10 legislative days before McConnell's deadline, all that most lawmakers and the public have to work on is the House bill, which a non-partisan congressional review predicted would leave 23 million fewer people insured over the next decade. "Republicans are drafting this bill in secret because they're ashamed of it, plain and simple," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, shortly before Democrats took to the Senate floor in anger.

Republicans argue that Obamacare has failed to prevent premiums and other health costs from skyrocketing. Democrats warn that Trump's delay of government subsidy payments is leading to instability and causing costs to rise. Senator Cory Booker called the Republican strategy "tragic" and broken. "People (are) working in secret on a bill that they're going to try to force through Congress with no public input, no hearings, no meetings, no markups, no debate, no public accountability," he said in the talk-a-thon, which dragged into a fifth hour. — AFP

INDIAN WORKPLACES GET TRANSGENDER-FRIENDLY

MUMBAI: During a training session for its first set of transgender recruits, officials from the new metro rail company in the southern Indian city of Kochi asked them if they had any concerns. They had just one: Bathroom access. "The project construction was complete by then and the stations were ready," said Reshmi Chandrathil Ravi, a spokeswoman for Kochi Metro Rail, a new network in the port city launched at the weekend by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "So we are now turning the big bathrooms for the differently-abled into all-gender bathrooms to be shared with the disabled," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The washroom signs have now been removed and sent for a fresh "inclusive design". And the company has allowed its transgender recruits to choose a male or female uniform. Kochi Metro Rail is the first government-owned company to recruit staff from the transgender community as part of Kerala state's initiative to give the marginalized group better access to job opportunities. Since India's Supreme Court gave transgender people "third gender" recognition in 2014, a growing number of Indian companies have actively hired transgender people and drafted policies to ensure they are not discriminated against in the workplace.

India's 2011 census recorded half a million transgender people but campaigners estimate the number at about 2 million. Less than half are literate and even fewer have jobs, according to the census. Traditionally, transgender people in India have been confined to the margins of society. Male-to-female "hijras", the most visible group in the transgender community, feature in Hindu mythology and are seen as auspicious oddities whose blessings are sought at weddings and births.

This popular perception of transgender people has meant they have struggled to find regular jobs, campaigners said. But attitudes are slowly starting to change. "At least 12 to 13 of our member companies already have all-gender bathrooms. This started happening since last year," said Rashmi Vikram, senior manager with Community Business, a charity that supports firms seeking to be more socially inclusive. "Some companies have turned the disability restroom to all gender, all-abilities restroom, promoting it in a way that there is no stigma attached to it. It didn't require a big infrastructural change, but it sent out a positive message."

Buddies and Benefits

A handful of firms have gone beyond ensuring

bathroom access. Global technology firm ThoughtWorks hired a transgender person in its Bangalore office as part of a diversity initiative last year and went on to provide an office buddy and an external counselor to its new employee to smooth the settling-in period. And in a first, IBM - named as the world's most LGBT-inclusive company by Amsterdam-based Workplace Pride Foundation - will from this year cover gender affirmation surgery under its corporate health benefit plan, a spokeswoman for IBM India said.

Another major Indian IT firm that opened a new campus in Mumbai last year ensured at the planning stage it would have a unisex bathroom following requests from transgender employees. Some firms are also hand-holding transgender staff during the initial employment period and keeping their identities discreet on request, but campaigners say the trend is restricted to big companies.

Many Challenges

Nyra D'Souza, a transgender woman, never took a bathroom break when she worked at a Mumbai outsourcing firm - uncomfortable in the men's washroom and not allowed in the women's facility. It meant holding on for 15 hours before she reached

home. At job interviews, she had been told to consider fashion, beauty or films for a job "where I could be myself". But when she was interviewed at Mumbai-headquartered Godrej - a leading Indian conglomerate with interests ranging from consumer goods to real estate - she was asked about her work experience, not gender.

This, a Godrej spokeswoman said, was in tune with the company's policy to make all interactions gender-neutral. "Such experiences are limited only to big companies, not small," said D'Souza, who finds others from her community struggling to find jobs, or dignity in the workplace if they do. After the Supreme Court ruling, campaigners said more companies are coming forward to recruit transgender people, but are reluctant to make adaptations. "Over the past year, we have got nearly 15 requests from companies that wish to hire a transgender, but they retreat when I ask them about bathroom access," said Konika Roy of the Mumbai-based Humsafar Trust that works with the LGBT community and tries to match them with jobs. The trust had one successful placement in the last year. But Solidarity Foundation, a Bangalore-based rights group that works with sexual minorities, had more success - it placed 15 transgender people over the last year. — Reuters

PHILIPPINES LAUNCHES OFFENSIVE IN MARAWI, AIMS TO END BATTLE

POLICE CHECK FOR ANY MANILA ATTACK PLAN

MARAWI CITY: Philippine aircraft bombed rebel positions and ground troops launched a renewed push against Islamist militants holed up in a southern city yesterday, with the aim was to wrap up the fighting before the weekend Eid festival, a spokesman said. The offensive came amid worry that rebel reinforcements could arrive after Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Fighting in Marawi City has entered a fifth week, and nearly 350 people have been killed, according to an official count. Fleeing residents have said they have seen scores of bodies in the debris of homes destroyed in bombing and cross-fire.

"We are aiming to clear Marawi by the end of Ramadan," said military spokesman Brigadier-General Restituto Padilla, as army and police commanders met in nearby Cagayan de Oro city to reassess strategy and operations against the militants, who claim allegiance to Islamic State. "We cannot definitely say when we could end this because we are fighting door to door and there are booby traps which pose danger to our troops."

The seizure of Marawi has alarmed Southeast Asian nations which fear Islamic State - on a backfoot in Iraq and Syria - is trying to set up a stronghold in the southern Philippines that could threaten the whole region. Padilla said the military aimed to prevent the conflict from escalating after Ramadan ends. "We are closely watching certain groups and we hope they will not join the fight," Padilla said. Some Muslim residents of Marawi said other



ILIGAN, Philippines: President Rodrigo Duterte gestures as he mimics "slitting of the throat" during a speech to evacuees from Marawi at an evacuation center in on the southern island of Mindanao yesterday. Duterte apologized for aerial bombings that have destroyed a large part of the Philippines' main Muslim city, but said it was necessary to crush self-styled Islamic State followers. - AFP

groups could join the fighting after Ramadan. "As devout Muslims, we are forbidden to fight during Ramadan so afterwards, there may be new groups coming in," said Faisal Amir, who has stayed on in the city despite the battle.

Fighting was intense early yesterday as security forces made a push to drive the militants, entrenched in Marawi's commercial district, south towards a lake on the

edge of the city. Planes flew overhead, dropping bombs while on the ground, automatic gunfire was sustained with occasional blasts from bombs and artillery. Armored vehicles fired volleys of shells while the militants responded with gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades. An army corporal near the front line told Reuters soldiers were tagging houses and buildings that had been cleared.

"We still have to clear more than 1,000 structures," he said, adding infantry units were left behind at "cleared" areas to prevent militants from recapturing ground they have lost. As of Monday, the military said 257 militants, 62 soldiers and 26 civilians had been killed. Hundreds of people are unaccounted for, believed to be hiding in the basements of the city.

Meanwhile, police said yesterday they were checking reports that militants might be plotting bombs in the capital, but they had no confirmation of any plan and the public should not be alarmed by a leaked police report on possible attacks. Police in Manila have been on high alert since fighting erupted last month in Marawi. "We have no confirmation whatsoever of any terror attack in Manila," Police Director Oscar Albayalde told ANC television, responding to concern about a leaked police intelligence report warning of bomb attacks that spread on social media.

He said the leaked report was genuine but said it contained raw information that was distributed to police units to check and seek verification. The internal memo, dated June 16, said police had information that members of the Maute group - the Islamic State-linked faction that is fighting in Marawi - were planning to set off bombs in the capital. "The content of the memorandum is meant for validation and confirmation, it's not meant to scare the public," Albayalde said, adding that he had ordered an investigation into how the document was leaked. He said police were "on top of the situation" and people should not be alarmed. — Reuters



This photograph shows monitor lizard genitalia discovered by researchers which are being sold as "Hatha Jodi" and available for purchase from major online retailers in the UK and US. — AP

DRIED LIZARD PENISES FROM INDIA SOLD AS LUCK CHARMS

NEW DELHI: Wildlife investigators from India and Britain said yesterday they have uncovered an international fraud in which dried penises of endangered monitor lizards are being sold as a plant root regarded as a good luck charm and used in religious rituals. The London-based group World Animal Protection said the dried penises of Bengal monitor lizards and yellow monitor lizards look similar to a rare plant root sought by people who believe it brings good luck. Wildlife authorities conducted raids in five Indian states last month and some raids are continuing, said Neil D'Cruze of WAP.

While the plant has all but disappeared from the Indian countryside, wildlife traffickers have been buying the dried lizard penises and fraudulently selling them online, said the Wildlife Trust of India in New Delhi. The two lizard species are on India's list of endangered animals, said Jose Louies, who investigates wildlife crime control at WTI. During raids in the eastern Indian state of Odisha, several dozen hemipenis, or paired male reproductive organs of the lizards, were recovered, he said. "The dried lizard hemipenis looks like two hands joined in prayer and

is similar to the "hatha jodi" root that people believe can ward off evil," Louies said. "There is a widespread belief that it saves you from court cases."

Scientists at Manchester Metropolitan University in England have confirmed that various specimens of the "magical" root were actually the dried hemipenis of monitor lizards, WAP said in a statement. "These lizards are being illegally poached from the wild, caught in traps and snares. Some will have their throats slit or skulls smashed in before their genitals are removed," it said. Wildlife activists said the volume of the item being sold online was huge. "We were shocked at the sheer audacity and scale of the illegal wildlife trade," D'Cruze said. "Deceitful traders claiming to sell holy plant root labeled as 'hatha jodi' are in fact peddling dried lizard penis to their unwitting customers." Tribal people in remote forests in central and eastern India used to hunt and eat the large-sized lizards, with most of them unaware that killing or possessing the animal is a crime punishable by seven years' imprisonment, said Aniruddha Mookerjee, a researcher who was part of the investigation. —AP

MOON URGES NORTH KOREA TO RETURN DETAINEES SWIFTLY

SEOUL: South Korean President Moon Jae-in yesterday said North Korea should swiftly return South Koreans and Americans detained in the reclusive nation and that it had "a heavy responsibility" in the death of a US university student, Otto Warmbier, the 22-year-old student who had been held prisoner in North Korea for 17 months, died at a Cincinnati hospital on Monday just days after North Korea released him from captivity in a coma, his family said. Three other US citizens, who are ethnic Koreans, and six South Koreans remain in custody in North Korea.

Warmbier was arrested while visiting as a tourist and accused of trying to steal an item bearing a propaganda slogan, according to North Korean media. Doctors caring for him last week described him as having extensive brain damage that left him in a state of "unresponsive wakefulness". In an interview with CBS News, Moon said that while "we cannot know for sure that North Korea killed Mr Warmbier... I believe it is quite clear that they have a heavy responsibility in the process that led to Mr Warmbier's death." "I believe we must now have the perception that North Korea is an irrational regime," Moon told the CBS television network.

South Korea's Blue House yesterday cited Moon separately as saying: "It is very deplorable that North Korea does not respect human rights." The South Korean

government will make every effort for the return of those held in North Korea, presidential spokesman Park Soo-hyun told a briefing. US President Donald Trump blamed the "brutality of the North Korean regime" for Warmbier's death. North Korea said last month it was its sovereign right to "ruthlessly punish" US citizens it had detained for crimes against the state.

Korean-Americans Tony Kim and Kim Hak Song, who worked at the foreign-funded Pyongyang University of Science and Technology, were recently detained for hostile acts against the government, according to North Korea's state media. In March 2016, Kim Dong Chul, a 62-year-old Korean-American missionary, was sentenced to 10 years of hard labor for subversion. North Korea is also holding Canadian pastor Hyeon Soo Lim. He was charged with subversion and given a hard-labor life sentence in 2015.

Three South Korean nationals were detained in North Korea during their missionary work since 2013, and the remaining three South Koreans are North Korean defectors who returned and are in custody, a lawmaker briefed by the South Korean spy agency told reporters last week. Dozens of North Korean missile launches and two nuclear bomb tests since the beginning of last year have heightened tensions on the Korean peninsula. — Reuters



PYINGYANG: North Koreans are seen in silhouette as they start their morning commute down a road intersection yesterday. —AP

News

in brief

Modi to discuss visa issue with Trump

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will take up the issue of visas for skilled workers when he meets US President Donald Trump next week in Washington, a senior Indian government official said yesterday. Trump has ordered a review of the US visa program for bringing high-skilled foreign workers into the United States, putting technology firms and the outsourcing companies that serve them on notice of possible changes ahead. "The H-1B visa issue will be one of the issues on the table during the PM's visit," Trade Secretary Rita Teotia told reporters. Modi will meet Trump in Washington on June 26. The first meeting between them is expected to lay the ground for a further expansion in ties, which grew rapidly under former US President Barack Obama. Aside from the visa review, the Trump administration has launched an investigation of countries including India with which the United States runs a bilateral trade deficit.

Top US Navy commander in Japan over destroyer collision

TOKYO: The US Navy's top commander visited Japan yesterday to meet the grieving families of seven sailors killed in a weekend accident, as investigators probe questions over the timing of the collision with a container ship. Admiral John Richardson arrived at the US naval base in Yokosuka on the outskirts of Tokyo to meet bereaved relatives and officers who served on the USS Fitzgerald. The sailors, aged 19 to 37, were found in flooded sleeping berths a day after the collision tore a huge gash in the side of their guided-missile destroyer. Their bodies were being flown back to the US yesterday morning, according to the Commander US Naval Forces Japan. Japanese coast-guard investigators have been interviewing the Filipino crew of the cargo ship ACX Crystal, and hope to directly hear accounts of sailors aboard the much-smaller US destroyer. The cargo ship's crew - who were not injured - apparently took nearly an hour to report the collision in a busy shipping channel near the warship's home base, a gateway to container ports in Tokyo and nearby Yokohama.

Punjab to forgive over \$1.5bn in farm debts

NEW DELHI: India's northern Punjab state will waive more than \$1.5 billion in loans to farmers, becoming the third state to do so in response to growing rural distress caused by food oversupply and weak prices. The South Asian nation is carrying a huge inventory of food grains from last year's record harvest, while exports have been hit by an appreciating rupee, falling global prices and restrictions on overseas shipments. Punjab will waive loans to farmers with holdings of up to 5 acres and debts of up to 200,000 rupees (\$3,100), state finance minister Manpreet Singh Badal told Reuters. About 975,000 farmers will be completely debt-free after the scheme is implemented. Punjab, a major producer of wheat and rice, will settle farmers' debts to the banks through annual budget provisions, he said. To pay off the loans, Punjab is banking on a 14 percent rise in state revenues after the July 1 launch of a new national Goods and Services Tax (GST). It is also planning to cut some of its capital investments. Punjab is one of a handful of states ruled by the opposition Congress party.

Separatists kill two naval officers in Baluchistan

QUETTA: Pakistani separatists riding motorcycles killed two naval officers in the restive southwestern province of Baluchistan, police officials said on Tuesday, near the site of a major Chinese-funded project. Senior police officer Abdul Hafeez Baloch said four armed men on Monday attacked a vehicle taking food to a naval base in the coastal town of Jewani, about 80 km west of the port city of Gwadar. "One officer died on the spot while another succumbed while being moved to hospital," Baloch said, adding that three officers were wounded in the attack. A spokesman for the separatist Baluch Liberation Army (BLA) claimed responsibility for the attack. Baluchistan, which has rich mineral and natural gas reserves but remains Pakistan's poorest province, is the site of long-running rebellion by separatists who argue the state is taking over their lands and have targeted Chinese-funded projects.

Protester killed in street clashes near bombing site

KABUL: Kabul authorities yesterday demolished a sit-in camp erected to protest spiralling insecurity, triggering street clashes that left at least one demonstrator dead in the latest bout of violence to shake the city. Tensions have been high in Kabul since a truck bomb on May 31 killed more than 150 people and wounded hundreds in the fortified diplomatic quarter, the deadliest attack in the Afghan capital since 2001. People enraged by rising insecurity had established a protest tent near the bombing site, demanding the resignation of President Ashraf Ghani's government. Authorities moved in unannounced after midnight yesterday to mow down the tent, prompting a backlash from protesters as police responded with live rounds. "In this unfortunate incident... one person was killed and six wounded," said Afghanistan's Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, pledging an investigation.

BRITAIN ISLAMOPHOBIA BREEDS 'VICIOUS...

Continued from Page 1

Until this week, the assassination of lawmaker Jo Cox a year ago was the most visible manifestation of the darker undercurrents at play among far-right fanatics in Britain. But many Muslims say they have long been suffering from daily abuse which has only intensified as tensions surface over flashpoints such as Europe's refugee crisis and Britain's Brexit vote to quit the EU. Some attacks are physical or verbal, others involve graffiti, the hurling of faeces and vomit, or the smearing bacon on car windscreens.

Fiyaz Mughal, founder of Tell Mama, a group that collates figures on anti-Muslim incidents, said the hatred that appeared to have motivated Osborne did not come from nowhere. The biggest factor fomenting anti-Muslim feeling is Islamist violence, he said. "But sadly, whenever you have a major incident, you have headlines and opinion writers who are allowed to spew out some of the most inflammatory content simply to spawn click-bait and newspaper sales," Mughal said. "It makes what people feel privately respectable and real," he said, arguing that an attack like Osborne's was inevitable in that context.

Raffaello Pantucci, a counter-terrorism expert at the Royal United Services Institute, concurred that the spread of "poisonous rhetoric" from far-right websites to mainstream media and politics legitimized it in public discourse. "It's unfortunately a vicious circle," he said, pointing to extremist reactions among some Muslims, "and it's going to be hard to stop in this febrile atmosphere." Guardian cartoonist Martin Rowson

responded to the Finsbury Park attack with a drawing of Osborne's hired van bearing an advertisement on the side: "Read The Sun and Daily Mail."

"They hate us" One notorious headline in The Sun in November 2015 reported a "shock poll" finding with the words: "1 in 5 Brit Muslims' sympathy for jihadis." Britain's press watchdog said later that the headline was "significantly misleading" about the opinion poll in question. But some Muslims also detect official indifference.

There was criticism that it took police three hours to publicly characterize the Finsbury Park attack as terrorism, compared with a much quicker response after other incidents, such as the van and stabbing attack near London Bridge this month. Mughal expressed sympathy for hard-pressed police battling to counter a proliferation of hatred with stretched resources. But he agreed that a vicious circle was now the norm, under which young Muslim men become alienated in response to the perception that they are a malign presence in British society, making them more vulnerable to radicalization.

"When I speak to them, I can't get through to them. 'They hate us,' they say. I tell them this is their country. They say: 'No it isn't,'" Mughal said. But Mohammed Kozbar, chairman of the Finsbury Park Mosque, insisted that extremists were the real minority, pointing to the attendance of people of all faiths and none at a vigil on Monday evening. "Terrorism has no faith, no religion. They are trying to damage our relationship: we will not let them do that," he said at the mosque. — AFP



KUWAIT: A bird flies past the waning crescent moon in Kuwait City yesterday. Muslims throughout the world will celebrate the Eid Al-Fitr festival after the holy month of Ramadan in which they refrain from sexual activities, eating and drinking from sunrise until sunset. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

STRANDED INDIAN MIGRANT RECOUNTS ORDEAL...

Continued from Page 1

"I was not earning enough at home and also tended to spend a lot on drinking," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I saw a better opportunity and decided to go for it." For two years, the decision to migrate to Saudi Arabia seemed like a good one and he got a job on a construction site. But sometime in 1996, two years into the job, Rajamarian's sponsor demanded more money to renew his residence and work permits.

"I didn't have enough saving to pay for it, so I requested them to give me an exit visa and return my passport," he said. "They asked for 5,000 riyals (\$1,300). I bargained hard and they brought it down to 1,000. But I had only 350 in my pocket." Stuck, with no work and little money, he went to the police to lodge a complaint. They sent him to some labor officials who sent him back

to the sponsor. "I tried very hard but didn't have enough money to even reach the Indian embassy in Riyadh," he said. "I called home a couple of times but decided against telling them about my situation. They would have just worried and not known what to do."

Rajamarian started looking for odd jobs, to survive and send home money every few months. When he couldn't afford his rent, he convinced the landlady to let him live in a goat shelter. Unaware of his ordeal, his family put the money he sent home into a savings scheme. Three daughters were married in their father's absence. The fourth graduated from a commerce college in Kanyakumari. Rajamarian says a lot has changed in his village, the houses are bigger, the road less bumpy. "I still have a daughter to marry so I will continue working," he said. "But this time at a construction site closer home." — Reuters

JIHAD

Continued from Page 1

To do so is to love ourselves, because it will result in comfort and happiness in this life and the next.

We can meet this responsibility by striving to gain self-discipline, knowledge, truthfulness, sobriety, reason, courage, moderation, and chastity. Continual work is needed in these and other areas including charity, humility, patience, faith, compassion, forgiveness, purity and gentleness. The responsibilities to ourselves overlap with our responsibilities to others, because virtue can never exist in isolation.

For example, you can't be called forgiving if you've never been hurt by someone, and you can't be considered generous unless you have shared with others what is valuable to you. Striving to meet our responsibilities to others means working for social perfection by promoting justice, security, education, health care, civil rights, economic stability, environment protection, self-determination and world peace.

Most of us are engaged in some sort of employment, so if we elevate our intention and work conscientiously, knowing that God is watching us, we can be engaged in jihad at our workplace. When we go home after work, we can continue our jihad if it fulfills our duties toward family members, neighbors, and strangers. Meanwhile, we can work on developing virtue and eliminating our vices, and we can set some time aside to gain both religious and secular knowledge that will make the task easier. All the while, we can strive to be God-conscious, and to express our reverence, gratitude and reliance on our Creator. In these ways, we can engage in continuous striving, and with it gain God's protection and help.

Courtesy of the TIES Center, whose mission is to empower Kuwait's expats through social and educational services that promote a positive and productive role in society, and to facilitate opportunities for intra- and interfaith interactions that promote social solidarity. For more information, please call 25231015/6 or e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.



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Focus

LE PEN IS ELECTED FRENCH MP BUT FAR-RIGHT SAPPED

By Gina Doggett

France's far-right leader Marine Le Pen won a seat in parliament for the first time on Sunday, but it was a bittersweet victory that masked an electoral debacle for her National Front (FN) party. The feisty 48-year-old, who lost by a 20-point margin to Emmanuel Macron in May's presidential run-off, won handily in her northern fiefdom of Henin-Beaumont, a depressed former mining town, with 58 percent of the vote, she announced. But her anti-EU, anti-immigration FN failed to capitalize on the populist wave that helped propel Donald Trump to the US presidency and spurred Britain's vote to leave the European Union. Le Pen's party won 8 seats in the 577-seat National Assembly, dashing her one-time hopes of emerging as the main opposition to Macron's centrist Republic on the Move (REM) party. Le Pen said nevertheless that the FN, "against a bloc that represents the interests of the oligarchy, are the only force of resistance". REM and its centrist ally MoDem swept to a large majority with 351 seats.

Low turnout

Le Pen, like radical left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon, said record low turnout at around 44 percent cast doubt on REM's legitimacy. In late April, after Le Pen qualified to face off with Macron, Bruno Jeanbart of the OpinionWay polling institute said the FN could hope to win between 20 and 50 seats. But by falling short of 15 seats in the end, the FN will be too small to form a parliamentary group which would have given it a role in setting the parliamentary agenda as well as influential committee positions.

In the presidential election, Le Pen won more than 50 percent of votes in her head-to-head with Macron in 45 voting districts and drew a total of 10.7 million votes, a historic high for the far-right party. The FN has two lawmakers in the outgoing parliament, one of whom will not return. Le Pen's 27-year-old niece Marion Marechal-Le Pen, a darling of the FN and the face of its traditional Catholic base, shocked grassroots supporters by announcing her decision not to seek re-election.

Marechal-Le Pen announced the decision just two days after her aunt lost to Macron. The other incumbent, Gillard Collard, won by just 123 votes over a former bullfighter, Marie Sara, one of dozens of new MPs in the REM party with no prior political experience. Senior FN figure Florian Philippot, the architect of the FN's policies to scrap the euro common currency, lost in the former industrial area of Moselle in eastern France. Le Pen was seen as a shoo-in for the Henin-Beaumont seat after scoring 46 percent in the first round a week ago against 11 rivals, and she defeated a political novice from Macron's party, Anne Roquet.

'Scandalous'

Le Pen fought for the same seat in 2012, losing by 118 votes to the Socialist Philippe Kemel, who was eliminated this year in the first round of the parliamentary election last Sunday. Le Pen complained last weekend that the record low first-round turnout raised questions over France's two-round first-past-the-post system that favors larger parties.

On Sunday she said it was "scandalous" that the FN could not have a group in parliament. In 1986, under a proportional representation system, the FN, then led by her father Jean-Marie Le Pen, won 35 seats. The FN leader will now have to abandon her seat in the European Parliament, where her party is under several investigations in alleged funding scandals. Le Pen and the FN were seen as likely to benefit this year from a confluence of factors including the 2015 migrant crisis and the string of jihadist attacks that have hit France.

The party has a particular populist appeal in France's northern rustbelt, which is dotted with shutdown factories and mines. Le Pen was roundly criticized for a poor performance in a brutal TV debate with Macron days before the presidential runoff that probably cost her votes. Le Pen has spent the past six years since taking charge of the FN trying to expunge the xenophobic, anti-Semitic ethos engendered by her father, who co-founded the party in 1972. Under Marine Le Pen, the FN has consistently improved its electoral scores, notching up records in past regional, European Parliament and presidential elections. —AFP

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BIG QUESTIONS IN US WARSHIP'S COLLISION WITH CONTAINER SHIP

By Mari Yamaguchi

Days after a fatal collision between a US Navy destroyer and a merchant container ship, little information has emerged to explain how it could have happened. As the families of seven American sailors mourn their losses, here's a look at what we know, and what we don't:

What happened?

Experts generally agree that the Philippine-flagged ACX Crystal, coming from behind, tried to pass the USS Fitzgerald on the right side. Extensive damage to the destroyer's starboard side and that to the container ship on its port side suggest that, but they say it is too early to determine responsibility. The container ship might have failed to spot the destroyer and rammed into it, or the destroyer somehow might have made a sudden move to the right. There is also a possibility the container ship might have tried to cut in front or in back of the destroyer and accidentally slammed into its side. "There is almost no mistake the container was behind the destroyer, though it is still premature to decide which ship bumped into the other," said Tetsuo Kotani, a maritime security expert at the Japan Institute of International Affairs. "The damage to the destroyer's side suggests the container's bow slammed into it at a significant speed."

When did it happen?

Japan's coast guard initially said the collision occurred at 2:20 am Saturday; the container ship reported the crash at 2:25 a.m. But after interviewing the container ship's crewmembers, the coast guard now says the collision occurred around 1:30 am. The US Navy continues to say the collision happened at 2:20 am. Knowing the timing is essential to make sense of navigation tracking records that show movements of the commercial ship, but not those of the military vessel. The ACX Crystal made a sharp turn at 1:30 am, quickly resumed its previous heading and made a U-turn about half an hour later. Those movements are easier to understand if they occurred immediately after the collision than if they occurred before it. Some experts say the container ship, which is nearly four times the weight of the destroyer, might have continued on without clear understanding of the collision, noticed some irregularity and returned to the collision site, reporting the collision when its crew noticed the destroyer for the first time.

What is the damage?

The 8,315-ton destroyer's starboard side was badly

damaged, with a mechanical room and two sleeping compartments destroyed and flooded. Navy officials say the ship also has a big gash on the bottom. Damage to the container ship is concentrated on its bow area, including a sharp horizontal cut across it, scratches and dents on the port side fence and hull. Coast guard officials said the container ship has a speed-increasing bulbous bow that sticks out in front of the ship below the waterline, suggesting that part stabbed the destroyer's bottom, allowing the seawater to gush in.

Why did it come so close?

Two possible causes are a radar failure or negligence by a night watchman - on either ship or both - that might have caused a delay or failure to spot the other ship. Every ship is equipped with radar or other electronic ship tracking device to alert against close encounters, and crewmembers on watch duty provide visual observation.

US Navy Vice Adm Joseph Aucoin said an unspecified number of sailors were on watch duty the night of the collision. The gray paint of the destroyer blends into the darkness and makes it harder to spot at night.

What went wrong?

Experts say it could have been a lack of communication between the two ships, or a misunderstanding of the situation as to who should have the right of way. Coast guard officials said they are looking for a recording device on the container ship that could help them determine whether it communicated with the destroyer before the collision. Unlike cars on highways, ships encounter each other from all directions, and confusion can lead to a wrong decision on which side is "give-way" or "stand-on." Under maritime traffic rules, the ship on the right - in this case, the container ship - gets to proceed, and one to the left is the "give-way" ship. — AP



YOKOSUKA: Damage to the guided missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald is seen as the vessel is berthed at its mother port in Yokosuka, southwest of Tokyo. — AFP

FIGHTERS FROM SYRIA'S RAQA BATTLE TO OUST IS

By Delil Souleiman

Khalil Al-Hussein fled the Islamic State group's Syrian stronghold Raqa 18 months ago, but now he is back and fighting to help oust the jihadists from his hometown. The 25-year-old is one of several members of a Kurdish-Arab alliance fighting IS who are originally from the northern city. The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces began an operation to capture Raqa last year, and finally entered the city earlier this month. It was the first time Hussein had been inside his hometown since he fled, following years under terrifying IS rule.

"I fled Raqa because the crimes of Daesh became too much to bear: the punishments, the decapitations, prison, insults," he told AFP, using an Arabic acronym for IS. "I want to find my house again whatever the price - even if I have to die," said Hussein, who lived in the city's eastern district of Al-Rumeilah. When the SDF broke into Raqa city for the first time on June 6, Hussein was among their ranks. "I want to liberate my city from Daesh," he said passionately, standing on the city outskirts, his head wrapped in a green scarf. "I'm not just here for my house, I'm here to liberate my city's people."

'Beautiful memories'

Located in a remote desert region and bordered to the south by the Euphrates riv-

er, Raqa was little known internationally before the country's conflict erupted in March 2011. It was the first provincial capital to fall to rebels, but IS jihadists seized it from opposition fighters in 2014, and transformed it into their de facto Syrian capital. Since then, it has become synonymous with the group's worst atrocities, a place of public executions and prison sentences for such "crimes" as smoking or wearing jeans.



TABQA: Fighters from the SDF look toward the northern town of Tabqa, Syria. — AP

But the city still holds a special place in the hearts of its natives, including Hussein, who smiles when he talks about it. "There is nothing more beautiful than Raqa," he said, his eyes shining. "I have beautiful memories of the pretty streets, the generous residents and the coexistence between communities." Raqa had some 300,000 residents before the war, most of them Sunni Arabs. But the population was also about 20 percent

'We will free Raqa'

Kurdish and included thousands of Syrian and Armenian Christians. Hussein signed up with the SDF after fleeing Raqa, joining the ranks of its Kurdish and Arab fighters, many of them like him from Raqa city. At his side, on the outskirts of the city, his fellow fighters discuss the unfolding battle, in which the SDF has so far captured four neighborhoods, two in the east and two in the west. Hussein's Al-Rumeilah neighborhood, however, remains under IS control. Some of the fighters smoke, while others take photos of the city. A group join hands, some with weapons slung over their shoulders, and dance the traditional Middle Eastern "dabke" to celebrate their advances. "We feel great joy," said Abu Saleh al-Hindawi, a fighter who commands Arab members of the SDF. He is also from Raqa, and participated in the uprising against President Bashar Al-Assad's government when it began in 2011, before later joining the SDF. Walid Al-Khalaf, perched on a pick-up truck and bearing an automatic weapon, is also originally from the Al-Rumeilah district, and left last year. "I haven't seen my house for eight months. I can't describe how I feel," the 28-year-old said. "I left my house with nothing but a blanket and mattress." Now, he has a single thing on his mind. "We will free Raqa, and God willing the battle won't last long," he said. "And wherever the jihadists go, we will pursue them." — AFP

MARADONA PREFERS MESSI, DUBS RONALDO 'INCREDIBLE'

BUENOS AIRES: Argentinian footballing legend Maradona said Monday that he preferred compatriot Lionel Messi to Cristiano Ronaldo all the while dubbing the Portugal captain an "incredible" player. "I can't remember having seen Lionel Messi play badly," Maradona told TyCSports. "I prefer Messi to Cristiano Ronaldo but I acknowledge that the latter is an animal. He's incredible," said the 1986 World Cup winner. Speaking from Dubai, where he now lives, Maradona added that he'd wished Ronaldo, who is Portuguese, was Argentinian. "He makes me think of Gabriel Batistuta," the Argentina striker who starred at three World Cup finals. "As soon as he touched the ball, it was a goal." Turning back to Messi, Maradona said the Barcelona player was still the world's best despite not having won a World Cup. "Alone, he will not be able to win the World Cup. You need a solid team for that. "Football history will remember Messi," said Maradona.—AFP



SINGAPORE WON'T BE RUSHED INTO FORMULA ONE CONTRACT

SINGAPORE: Singapore will not be rushed into extending its contract with Formula One, the trade ministry said yesterday as negotiations for the night race to continue in the city-state are underway. "Negotiations for the term renewal for F1 is ongoing and a decision has not been reached," a ministry spokesperson told AFP in an emailed reply. "The process has to be a deliberate one to carefully consider the terms and benefits." Race organizer Singapore GP said it could not comment because negotiations are underway. In a 2018 event calendar released Monday by motorsport's governing body FIA, there was an asterix next to the Shanghai and Singapore dates with a note that said "subject to commercial rights holder confirmation". Singapore's Formula One future hangs in the balance as the city-state looks to renegotiate its contract to host the sport's only night race. The then-Formula One supremo Bernie Ecclestone said last year the promoter was trying to strike a "long-term" deal with Singapore, and played down comments that the Lion City was looking to drop the race. Singapore's 23-turn, Marina Bay street circuit is seen as one of the most challenging on the calendar and has proved popular with fans.—AFP

LEICESTER'S THAI OWNER BUYS ASCOT QUINTET

ASCOT: Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha, the Thai owner of 2016 Premier League champions Leicester City, is hoping for a similar winning feeling at Royal Ascot after purchasing five runners. The 59-year-old billionaire spent just over £2million (2.2m euros, \$2.5m) in buying the quintet and also a broodmare at Irish auctioneers Goffs Bloodstock Sales in London on the eve of the sport's most prestigious week on Monday. Three of the five will run at the Royal meeting on Friday including the most expensive horse, Straight Right. The £450,000 purchase-trained by Frenchman Christophe Ferland-will line up in the Group One sprint Commonwealth Cup. "He's (Vichai) looking to build up his stable, and was attracted by the Royal Ascot element of the sale," Alastair Donald, the bloodstock agent who acted for Vichai, told European Bloodstock News. "He likes horses in general, is very keen on polo, and spends a lot of time in Britain—he's enjoyed being at this sale and getting involved.—AFP



CAVALIERS PART WAYS WITH GM GRIFFIN AS DEAL TIME HITS

WASHINGTON: Cleveland Cavaliers owner Dan Gilbert announced Monday that general manager David Griffin is out as general manager of the NBA club when his contract expires at the end of June.

The move came exactly one year after LeBron James led the Cavaliers to an NBA crown, the first by any major Cleveland sports team since 1964, and one week after the Cavaliers were dethroned by the Golden State Warriors in this year's NBA Finals. Gilbert said the decision for Griffin not to return was mutual. "On behalf of the entire organization, I would like to thank Griff for his leadership and many contributions during his time here, including most recently, his role in the franchise's first NBA championship," Gilbert said in a statement.

"We have no announcement at this time related to new leadership of the Cavaliers basketball operations group, but we are confident our current front office will continue to aggressively explore and pursue



David Griffin

opportunities to improve our team in the weeks ahead."

Team executives will need to work hard as the NBA Draft is Thursday and a week from Saturday marks the start of free agency for next season.

Cleveland's ouster in five games in the best-of-seven final showed just how far the Cavaliers must improve to match the Warriors, who added free agent star forward Kevin Durant after losing last year's final. Griffin and Gilbert reportedly did not agree on a future direction for the Cavs' roster, which could be in major flux in the next few days based on several reports.

Indiana's Paul George, who has told the Pacers he plans to leave when his contract

expires after next season, reportedly has drawn interest from the Cavaliers.

And Chicago's Jimmy Butler, who like George could serve in a forward or back-court role depending on needs, is also being eyed by the Cavaliers, according to ESPN, which says both clubs are looking for a third team to facilitate a deal. George, a four-time All-Star, averaged 23.7 points, 6.6 rebounds and 3.3 assists and 1.6 steals for the Pacers last season, with Cleveland eliminating Indiana in the first round of the playoffs. Butler, 27, is coming off a career-best campaign for Chicago that saw him average 23.9 points, 6.2 rebounds, 5.5 assists and 1.9 steals a game.

In either case, the Cavaliers would likely be looking at trading forward Kevin Love, who together with James and guard Kyrie Irving have sparked Cleveland the past three seasons. James, who has played in the past seven NBA Finals, can become a free agent after next season, making it imperative the Cavaliers make moves now to answer the Warriors' signing of Durant a year ago and subsequent epic title run, their 16-1 playoff record this season including a record 15-0 start.

BILLUPS A POSSIBLE NEW GM?

Griffin became the Cavaliers' general manager in February 2014 after Chris Grant was fired, a deal made permanent three months later. His first major move was the signing of David Blatt as coach and then drafting Andrew Wiggins with the top pick.

But all plans were thrown asunder next following month when James announced he was leaving Miami after four seasons and returning to Cleveland.

In moves to support a roster suddenly sparked by James, Griffin traded Wiggins to the Minnesota Timberwolves in a deal for Love and in January 2015 obtained J.R. Smith and Iman Shumpert from the New York Knicks. He also fired Blatt in 2016 and replaced him with current coach Tyronn Lue. Yahoo Sports reported that former Detroit Pistons star Chauncey Billups, the 2004 NBA Finals Most Valuable Player, is a candidate to replace Griffin based on strong relationships with Lue and Gilbert. The new general manager will be the fifth since Gilbert bought the club in 2005.—AFP



OAKLAND: File photo shows Kevin Durant #35 of the Golden State Warriors talks to the fans while they celebrate the Warriors 2017 NBA Championship at the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center during their Victory Parade and Rally on June 15, 2017 in Oakland, California.—AFP

BASKETBALL

DURANT TO STAY WITH WARRIORS

SAN FRANCISCO: Kevin Durant is set to make a new contract deal and stay with the Golden State Warriors, but the new NBA champions did lose a legendary player on Monday.

Multiple reports said Durant, the Most Valuable Player of this month's NBA Finals triumph over Cleveland, will opt out of his contract but re-sign with Golden State in a money-saving move under NBA salary cap rules.

But the Warriors lost Jerry West, a member of the team's executive board who on Monday was named a consultant to the Los Angeles Clippers.

The 79-year-old Hall of Fame guard was an iconic star for the Los Angeles Lakers and the NBA's logo is designed around his silhouette.

ette. Durant, who joined the Warriors last July after finishing his contract with Oklahoma City, plans to decline his player option for the 2017-18 campaign and become an unrestricted free agent on July 1, according to reports.

The 10-year NBA veteran would then re-sign with the Warriors, the move enabling the team to have more money for contracts with forward Andre Iguodala and other players. Durant was to be paid about \$28 million in salary next season, but he will take about \$4 million less than the maximum deal he could have been paid.

That will better enable the Warriors to keep together the championship roster that includes Iguodala, Shaun Livingston,

Georgian center Zaza Pachulia and reserves.

Durant won his first NBA crown and helped Golden State claim a second in three seasons by averaging 35.2 points, 8.4 rebounds and 5.4 assists in the best-of-seven NBA Finals, which the Warriors won over Cleveland in five games.

Warriors guard Stephen Curry becomes a free agent, but has taken less than maximum money in recent years to set up an expected five-year deal worth \$205 million. Curry made \$12.1 million last season.

West said his two-year deal to return to Los Angeles came down to being wooed by Clippers owner Steve Ballmer, coach Doc Rivers and executive vice president Lawrence Frank.—AFP



LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles Clippers president of basketball operations and head coach Doc Rivers, center, speaks as Jerry West, right, listens along with Clippers executive vice president of basketball operations Lawrence Frank during a news conference to introduce West as an advisor to the Los Angeles Clippers, Monday, in Los Angeles.—AP

HALL OF FAMER JERRY WEST JOINS LA CLIPPERS AS CONSULTANT

LOS ANGELES: Hall of Famer Jerry West, fresh off helping the Golden State Warriors win another NBA championship, is now officially a consultant with the Los Angeles Clippers.

West was introduced at a news conference Monday with Doc Rivers, the Clippers' coach and president of basketball operations, and Executive Vice President Lawrence Frank. He had been an executive board member with the Warriors and is expected to have a similar role with LA.

The former Lakers great and front office executive credited Rivers, Frank and owner Steve Ballmer with convincing him the other team in LA was the right fit.

"Here I am on the last adventure of my life, and I like to call it an adventure," West said. "I believe in ownership a lot. After I talked to Steve and Doc and what's-your-name, Frank Lawrence, I was even more convinced. I've known these guys and respected them."

"I like people flying under the radar. I don't like gigantic egos. ... I've had the privilege of watching their games. I watch every game no matter who is playing. For them to want me to come here and maybe think I can help, I'm really flattered."

The 79-year-old West is coming in just ahead of the draft and the free agency period, when the Clippers will be focused on retaining key players, including Chris Paul. West didn't specifically address what he would advise the team to do with Paul and Blake Griffin.

"I haven't talked much about that," West said. "I think they know what they need to do. I'm going to spend the rest of this week and next week trying to find where they're going to go. I think very definitely, they want to try to protect their assets."

Rivers had floated the idea of West joining the organization before, so it wasn't as jarring to West as it might have been for Lakers fans. "I wanted to bring him in, more than this year without going much further than that," Rivers said. "Without going much further than that, I kept bringing it up. Steve got involved and (part owner) Dennis (Wong). I left somewhere that was safe, too."

So instead of taking a vacation to celebrate another NBA championship, West will get to work with the Clippers. "I'll miss Jerry," Warriors general manager Bob Myers said Monday. "... I think for him it's a great new challenge, and it's in Los Angeles.—AP

ABK SPONSORS KUWAIT'S YOUTH BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

KUWAIT: As part of its activities for the Holy month of Ramadan, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) was the platinum sponsor of the 2017 Kuwait Youth Basketball tournament, which was organized specifically to increase sport activity during the Holy month of Ramadan. The tournament was held from 3- 14 June, 2017 at the American

International School of Kuwait (AIS).

The tournament was organized in response to the poor activity levels of youth and the unhealthy lifestyle followed by the majority during the Holy month. It was also based on recent alarming studies that indicate that 40% of Kuwait's population are obese.

The tournament was open to young students from ages 15 - 19 years, and was addressed to all private schools in Kuwait. A total of 8 teams competed for the winning trophy. The winning team was P2P who took 50 points in the final. ABK's sponsorship is one of a series of activities the Bank took on during the Holy month.



INJURED JOCKEY DETTORI OUT OF ROYAL ASCOT

LONDON: Leading jockey Frankie Dettori said yesterday he had been ruled out of this week's Royal Ascot meeting with an arm injury. "I've been trying so hard to get fit for today but had to accept this morning it wasn't going to happen," Dettori said in a statement to Ascot racecourse.

"I've got to have physio and get it properly looked after so won't be at Ascot this week. "For me that's soul-destroying as it's the most important

week of the year. I'll be counting the days until next year," the 46-year-old added.

The British-based Italian rider sustained the injury in a paddock fall at Yarmouth, eastern England, last Tuesday but was passed fit to ride Shutter Speed in the French Oaks on Sunday.

But Dettori said the injury was still troubling him, meaning he will miss all five days of the Royal meeting, one of

the highlights of the English racing calendar, which starts today.

He had four rides on the opening day alone, including favourite American speedster Lady Aurelia in the King's Stand Stakes. The ride on Lady Aurelia—who stormed home by seven lengths in the Queen Mary Stakes under Dettori last year—is taken by American legend John Velazquez.

The 45-year-old has also been given the nod by Lady Aurelia's trainer Wesley

Ward for the prized mount of Nootka Sound in the final race on the card the Windsor Castle Stakes.

Velazquez, who has won the Kentucky Derby twice as well as the Belmont Stakes among other big race successes, originally had just the one ride another of Ward's runners in the Windsor Castle Elizabeth Darcy.

Elizabeth Darcy will now be ridden for 49-year-old Ward—the first American to have trained a winner at Royal Ascot

back in 2009 — by Edgar Prado.

Dettori's ride on another American challenger American Patriot in the opening Group One Queen Anne Stakes has also been snapped up by Velazquez. Three-times the champion jockey in Great Britain, Dettori's best-known achievement came at Ascot on September 28, 1996, when he won all seven races on that day's card at the Berkshire course, southwest of London. —AFP

CHEIKA CALLS WALLABIES FAN OVER FACEBOOK RANT

SYDNEY: Australia rugby coach Michael Cheika made a surprise call to an irate fan whose long rant about the misfiring team went viral on Facebook.

Jack Quigley referred to himself as "a nobody" in his 800-word piece, which he posted after Australia's 24-19 defeat to Scotland on Saturday, but said he had one thing the team lacked: passion.

"Passion for the game of rugby. And for the Wallabies. And you can't deny me that, despite your best efforts," the amateur rugby player and coach wrote, in comments that were widely liked and shared.

"When I was a kid—hell, even now, I would've given my left nut just to pull on a Wallabies jumper, but when I see you guys run out, I feel like you don't care."

Cheika said Quigley's comments struck a chord, and he has reportedly pinned the rant on the dressing room wall in Brisbane where his team will try to make amends this Saturday against Italy. "I spoke to the gentleman and gave him a ring, because why not?" Cheika told reporters, after Quigley said he was willing to head to Brisbane and address the squad.

"I think that's important, that you talk to the fans. When we come out to press conferences and say we want to make

the fans proud, it's not lip service. We do. We're not perfect at it sometimes."

He added: "I think that he expressed how he was feeling after the Scotland game and I don't think it's too far away from how we were feeling as well." But Wallabies playmaker Quade Cooper took a different stance to Cheika when he hit out at "keyboard warriors".

"I'm not saying it (criticism) is unfair... and to see passion from fans is great," Cooper said, according to the Brisbane Courier Mail. "But it's easy for people to sit behind a keyboard and throw barbs and tell you that you're not doing your job. "You see it across all walks of life when people are giving everything and I've no respect for it."

Australia gave away two soft tries and trailed for nearly the whole game against Scotland, who registered their first win against the Wallabies in five years.

The loss will push Australia to sixth in the next edition of the world rankings—behind Ireland, Scotland and South Africa—their lowest position since early 2015.

It comes on the heels of a demoralising Super Rugby season for Australian teams, who haven't won a single game against New Zealand opposition this year. —AFP



HAMILTON: Chiefs captain Stephen Donald passes the ball as he is tackled by British & Irish Lions players at Waikato Stadium in Hamilton, New Zealand, yesterday. — AP

RUGBY

LIONS MAUL CHIEFS, FIRE WARNING TO ALL BLACKS

HAMILTON: The British and Irish Lions warned they're "not here for second place" as they set up this weekend's first Test against the All Blacks with a thumping 34-6 win over the Waikato Chiefs yesterday.

Jack Nowell's sparkling try double was the highlight as the Lions scored four tries and kept the Chiefs from crossing the line, further building momentum as the opening Test looms on Saturday. While the team to play the All Blacks in Auckland is probably already settled, plenty of the Lions' second-stringers put their hands up to feature later in the Test series.

"I think we've a good squad. So do the All Blacks but we feel we need to keep improving, that's what we've been doing over the last couple of weeks," said Lions captain Rory Best.

"We're not here for second place. It'll be a tough contest but we're looking forward to it."

The result followed Saturday's convincing win over the Maori All Blacks and ended a sequence of mid-week defeats for the Lions, who earlier lost to the Auckland Blues and Otago Highlanders. They starved the Chiefs of attacking opportunities and Nowell's second try showed they can also play with flair, as they took the ball the length of the field and through 10 pairs of hands before the Englishman swerved past two defenders to finish.

"I thought they were excellent, full credit to them—they suffocated us and then scored some great tries," said Chiefs skipper Stephen Donald.

"Disappointing in front of a great crowd, we just couldn't get going. But we've got no complaints, they were just too good."

HOME COMFORTS

It was a potential banana-skin for Lions coach Warren Gatland in his home town of Hamilton, which has proved a graveyard for international teams in the past. Gatland himself was a hooker for Waikato when they humbled the Lions 38-10 in 1993 and he even scored a try against the team he now coaches. He was on the other side of the scoreline last year when the Chiefs thrashed his Wales side 40-7 in a tour match.

After the Chiefs' haka in front of the sell-out 30,000 crowd, the Lions made a promising start in clear conditions, going on the attack after Courtney Lawes stole a Chiefs lineout ball.

But the failure to convert chances that has dogged the tour returned as they worked it through 20 phases, only to fail when Liam Williams knocked on. Poor discipline could have also cost them when Harlequins prop Joe Marler was sin-binned for a late tackle, but his replacement Alan Dell excelled. Winger Nowell dived a pile of bodies to score the first try of the match in the 25th minute after some eye-catching build-up play from Williams and Dan Biggar.

The tourists enjoyed 58 percent of possession and 63 percent of territory in the first half, although a penalty from Chiefs' skipper Donald narrowed their lead to 13-6 going into the break.

The Lions worked the ball through 16 phases after the restart but again failed to score and they were lucky not to concede as the Chiefs showed some quicksilver passing during their rare periods of possession.

But Lions' pressure paid off when they were awarded a penalty try after the Chiefs collapsed their maul for the third time.

Chiefs heads dropped after Nowell's slickly taken second try, and Jared Payne soon added another when Williams caught the defence napping with a quick restart to set him up and confirm the big win. —AFP



HAMILTON: British & Irish Lions hooker Rory Best makes a run during their game against the Chiefs at Waikato Stadium in Hamilton, New Zealand, yesterday. — AP

PREVIEW

THURSTON, SLATER RETURN LIFTS QUEENSLAND ORIGIN HOPES

SYDNEY: Queensland are banking on the return of Test greats Billy Slater and Johnathan Thurston to rekindle hopes of defending their State of Origin series crown against New South Wales in Sydney today.

Injured Thurston and overlooked Slater were missing when the NSW Blues decisively won the opening match of the series 28-4 over the Maroons in Brisbane last month.

Mal Meninga's Queenslanders must win Wednesday's crunch game to take the fiercely-fought interstate series to a decider in Brisbane on July 12.

Queensland have won 10 of the last 11 interstate series—including 22 match victories to 12 — and face a confident unchanged NSW line-up.

But the return of Origin warriors Thurston and Slater may tilt the balance as they reunite with influential Melbourne Storm pair, skipper Cameron Smith and Cooper Cronk to recharge the Maroons.

A shoulder injury kept Thurston out of game one, ending his record run of 36 straight Origins.

"He's one of the greatest players of all time. I am looking forward to seeing him play for Queensland again," Smith said.

Queensland have revamped their forward pack, dropping veterans Nate Myles and Sam Thaiday, along with Jacob Lillyman and Aidan Guerra. "Definitely it's a changing of the guard," Smith said. "It's just time for those

guys to move on and see some young guys come in." Coach Kevin Walters has gambled by moving Darius Boyd from fullback to left centre to accommodate the return of Slater with Boyd having never played in that position in Origin. "It's a bit of a risk as such, but not in my eyes," Walters said. "We have full confidence in Darius's ability."

Destructive prop Andrew Fifita was dynamic for the Blues in the first game and NSW captain Boyd Corder has warned Queensland that any attempt to target him is fraught with danger.

"If they want to just focus in on one player, we've got a lot of strike across the field where we can hurt them," Corder said.

Teams (1-17)

NSW: James Tedesco; Brett Morris, Josh Dugan, Jarryd Hayne, Blake Ferguson; James Maloney, Mitchell Pearce; Aaron Woods, Nathan Peats, Andrew Fifita; Boyd Corder (capt), Josh Jackson; Tyson Frizell. Interchange: David Klemmer, Wade Graham, Jake Trbojevic, Jack Bird.

Queensland: Billy Slater; Valentine Holmes, Will Chambers, Darius Boyd, Dane Gagai; Johnathan Thurston, Cooper Cronk; Dylan Napa, Cameron Smith (capt), Jarrod Wallace; Gavin Cooper, Matt Gillett; Josh McGuire. Interchange: Michael Morgan, Josh Papalii, Coen Hess, Tim Glasby. Referees: Matt Cecchin, Gerard Sutton. —AFP



SYDNEY: Australian Rugby Union chairman Cameron Clyne, right, arrives to discuss the outcome of an emergency general meeting which confirmed a commitment to cutting a Super Rugby franchise but went no further in deciding which one in Sydney, yesterday. —AP

MLB INTERNATIONAL SPENDING SOARS ABOVE \$200 MILLION

NEW YORK: A record \$203 million was spent on international amateur free agents in the just-ended signing period, nearly \$50 million more than the previous high and a figure that will plummet when a hard cap on spending starts July 2. Four Cubans were given contracts that included signing bonuses above \$5 million. Chicago White Sox outfielder Luis Robert led the way at \$26 million, followed by San Diego pitcher Adrian Morejon at \$11 million, and Cincinnati shortstop Alfredo Rodriguez and Padres outfielder Jorge Ona at \$7 million each.

Baseball's new labor contract imposes a cap on bonuses for international amateurs, with 16 teams limited in 2017-18 to \$4.75 million, six to \$5.25 million and eight to \$5.75 million - all not counting bonuses of up to \$10,000.

"The party's over for all big signing bonuses for international amateurs. It's no doubt," agent Andy Mota said Monday. "It's a reality that's setting in, especially with Cuban players."

And under the new rules, international amateurs were redefined as under 25 years old and with less than six years of

professional experience, up from 23 years old and less than five years of experience. That means less money will be chasing more players.

"That's going to really drive a lot of these players to Japanese and Korean baseball," agent Scott Boras predicted. Restraints were introduced in the 2012-16 labor contract on spending on draft picks, players who reside in the US, Canada and Puerto Rico. Bonuses for those players totaled \$234 million in 2011, dropped to \$223 million in the first year of the new rules and didn't reach their prior level until 2015's \$249 million, according to Major League Baseball. Draft spending rose to \$269 million for 2016 selections.

At the same time, spending on international amateurs increased from \$74 million in 2012-13 to \$156 million in 2015-16 before the latest hike. And that was despite a tax on teams who exceeded their assigned bonus pools.

San Diego spent \$40.8 million on international amateurs in the period that ended June 15, incurring a \$37.4 million tax. Other high rollers included the

White Sox (\$29 million in bonuses, \$25.2 million in tax), Cincinnati (\$17.7 million/\$12.4 million), Atlanta (\$17.3 million/\$12.8 million), Houston (\$10.8 million/\$8.6 million), St. Louis (\$11 million/\$9 million), Oakland (\$10 million/\$6.2 million), and Washington (\$8.3 million/\$6 million).

Robert agreed to the second-highest bonus for an international amateur, behind only the \$31.5 million deal in 2015 between Cuban infielder Yoan Moncada and Boston, which sent him to the White Sox in December as part of the trade that brought pitcher Chris Sale to the Red Sox.

Some American players were angry that international bonuses soared as their own were limited. Many Venezuelan and Cuban prospects sign around the time they turn 16. Cubans generally sign at an older age.

"I think the goal was to treat international players more comparable to domestic players with respect to the signing bonuses they receive upon signing their first contract," said Dan Halem, MLB's chief legal officer.

Each team receives a \$4.75 million spending pool in the 2017-18 international signing period that starts July 2, and the 14 teams with competitive-balance round draft picks also get extra international cap room.

For 2017-18, Cincinnati, Miami, Milwaukee, Minnesota, Oakland and Tampa Bay get an additional \$500,000 each, and Arizona, Baltimore, Cleveland, Colorado, Houston, Kansas City, Pittsburgh and San Diego \$1 million apiece. Clubs also can trade their cap allocation in increments of \$250,000 (and whatever portion of \$250,000 is left at the end) starting July 2, with the restriction a team can acquire only 75 percent more than it was originally assigned.

Some teams have incentive to trade their cap space because of penalties lingering from the old rules. Atlanta, Cincinnati, Houston, Oakland, St. Louis, San Diego and Washington are prohibited from signing international amateurs for bonuses of more than \$300,000 in the next two signing periods, while the Chicago Cubs, Kansas City, the Los

Angeles Dodgers and San Francisco are not allowed to in 2017-18.

Boras maintains young athletes will reject baseball because of a lower economic potential.

"The problem with all of this is other sports are benefiting dramatically," he said. "Soccer in particular is clapping its hands." Mota, who consulted on the negotiations that led to Dominican shortstop Luis Almanzar's \$4.05 million deal with San Diego last summer, said some teams that had not pursued international players until now may enter the market because the prices will be lower.

Mota said handlers of Latin American players, who often sign them young in exchange for a percentage of the bonuses, are not prepared for the new system. Like Boras, Mota says Japan could become an alternative for Cubans until they turn 25.

"I talk to people who own players, people who manage players, they've been used to asking for whatever they want or playing hardball with teams," Mota said, "and that's no longer going to be the case." Mota said.—AP



LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles Dodgers' Chase Utley, right, slides into home plate to score on a single by Justin Turner as New York Mets catcher Travis d'Arnaud fields the throw during the sixth inning of a baseball game, Monday, in Los Angeles.—AP

BASEBALL

KLUBER HAS 5TH CAREER SHUTOUT AS CLEVELAND WINS

BALTIMORE: Corey Kluber pitched a three-hitter for his fifth career shutout and Jason Kipnis and Carlos Santana homered as Cleveland overpowered the Baltimore Orioles 12-0 Monday night for its season-high sixth straight victory. Santana and Austin Jackson had three RBIs apiece for the AL Central leaders, whose recent surge has lifted them to a season-best six games over .500 (37-31). Cleveland batted around in the fourth and fifth innings and sent eight men to the plate in a three-run sixth that made it 11-0. Cleveland banged out a season-high 10 extra-base hits, including seven doubles. Kluber (6-2) struck out 11 and walked none in his 12th career complete game and second shutout this season. The right-hander scattered three singles and struck out the side in the ninth. Baltimore starter Dylan Bundy (7-6) allowed six runs in 4 1/3 innings. The Orioles have dropped nine of 12 and yielded at least five runs in 16 straight games.

MARLINS 8, NATIONALS 7
Marcell Ozuna singled home the winning run with two outs in the ninth inning as Miami overcame an early six-run deficit to

beat Washington. Marlins slugger Justin Bour tied the game at 6 in the third with a grand slam, his 18th homer. Giancarlo Stanton also hit his 18th of the season to make it 7-all in the seventh. Bryce Harper hit his 18th homer for the Nationals. Anthony Rendon also went deep before leaving in the fifth inning with a neck stinger he sustained diving for a grounder. He is day to day Washington starter Tanner Roark squandered a 6-0 lead by giving up six runs in the third. Enny Romero (2-3) took the loss. A.J. Ramos (2-3) worked a scoreless ninth and the Marlins won for the 11th time in their past 13 home games. Miami lost to Atlanta on walk-off hits by Brandon Phillips on Saturday and Sunday.

ROYALS 4, RED SOX 2
Whit Merrifield drove in the go-ahead run in the seventh inning. Eric Hosmer hit a two-run homer and Kansas City topped Boston for its eighth win in nine games. Jason Hammel (4-6) pitched seven sharp innings before turning it over to Mike Minor, who loaded the bases with two outs in the eighth. No. 9 hitter Christian Vazquez grounded out to end the threat. Kelvin Herrera worked the ninth for his 16th save. Red Sox reliever

Blaine Boyer (0-1) gave up Merrifield's bouncing RBI single in the seventh. Boyer was lifted after Lorenzo Cain added an insurance run with a single, the second straight night Boston's stingy bullpen has allowed a pair of runs. Red Sox relievers had thrown 26 straight scoreless innings before the slump. Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a two-run homer for Boston.

BLUE JAYS 7, RANGERS 6
Kendrys Morales hit a go-ahead single after a tying single by Josh Donaldson in the ninth inning, and Toronto edged Texas in a matchup of AL Division Series opponents the past two seasons. The Blue Jays won despite blowing a 5-1 lead in their first visit to Texas since last postseason, when they won the first two games in a best-of-five sweep that was their second straight ALDS victory over the two-time defending AL West champs. Donaldson's single off closer Matt Bush scored Ryan Goins, who just beat the throw to second for a leadoff double. Morales hit to the gap in left-center scored Donaldson from second after a stolen base and a walk. It was the third blown save in 11 chances for Bush (2-2). Jeff Beliveau (1-0) pitched a perfect eighth, and Roberto Osuna worked a 1-2-3 ninth for his 18th save in 22 chances. Toronto's Steve Pearce and Adrian Beltre of the Rangers traded three-run doubles in the fourth, with Beltre's liner to right-center capping a five-run inning for a 6-5 lead that held up until the ninth. Jose Bautista homered for the Blue Jays and Justin Smoak had three hits, including a career high-tying 20th homer.

CUBS 3, PADRES 2
Willson Contreras hit a tying homer, Javier Baez scored the go-ahead run on an error and Wade Davis worked out of a ninth-inning jam for Chicago against San Diego. Anthony Rizzo thrived in the leadoff spot again, extending his career-high hitting streak to 13 games by going 2 for 3 with an RBI as the Cubs won their second straight to improve to 35-34. Jose Pirela and Yangervis Solarte each had a solo homer for the Padres, although Pirela's error in left field allowed the decisive

run to score in the seventh. Hector Rondon (2-1) pitched a scoreless inning for the win, and Davis struck out Wil Myers and got Hunter Renfroe to ground out with runners on second and third for his 14th save in 14 chances. Kirby Yates (1-1) allowed an unearned run but took the loss.

PIRATES 8, BREWERS 1
Andrew McCutchen hit a two-run homer, Gerrit Cole pitched seven strong innings and Pittsburgh beat Milwaukee. Travis Shaw's leadoff homer in the second put the Brewers ahead 1-0 and set a franchise mark, with the Brewers scoring their 16th consecutive run via the long ball. The Pirates took the lead in the third on Adam Frazier's two-run single off starter Matt Garza (3-3). Cole (5-6) held the Brewers to one run and three hits.

BRAVES 9, GIANTS 0
R.A. Dickey threw seven scoreless innings, Matt Adams hit another homer and Atlanta sent San Francisco to its seventh straight loss. The 42-year-old Dickey (5-5) escaped a jam in the first to turn in his strongest outing of the season. He gave up just three hits and

retired 16 of the last 17 hitters he faced. The Giants' skid is the longest of a hugely disappointing season as they dropped to 26-46 and fell 20 games behind first-place Colorado in the NL West. Adams homered in the fourth off Johnny Cueto (5-7) and added an RBI single in the eighth to key a seven-run outburst that made it a rout. He has 10 homers and 27 RBIs since being acquired from St. Louis on May 20.

REDS 7, RAYS 3
Scott Schebler and Scooter Gennett homered and Joey Votto snapped an eighth-inning tie with an RBI single, helping Cincinnati end a season-high nine-game losing streak with a victory over Tampa Bay. Schebler led off the fifth with his 19th homer, tying Votto for the team lead. Gennett went deep for the second consecutive day, his first homers since hitting four in a game against St. Louis on June 6. Votto's RBI single off Jose Alvarado (0-2) put the Reds in front for good after the Rays rallied to tie it on Steven Souza Jr.'s solo homer off Scott Feldman and Daniel Robertson's two-run shot off reliever Michael Lorenzen (4-2). — AP



BALTIMORE: Cleveland Indians' Carlos Santana hits a sacrifice fly ball in the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Baltimore Orioles in Baltimore, Monday. Jose Ramirez scored on the play. Cleveland won 12-0.—AP

MLB results/standings														
Seattle 6, Detroit 2; LA Dodgers 10, NY Mets 6; Houston 4, Oakland 1; Kansas City 4, Boston 2; Chicago Cubs 3, San Diego 2; Toronto 7, Texas 6; Pittsburgh 8, Milwaukee 1; Atlanta 9, San Francisco 0; Cincinnati 7, Tampa Bay 3; Miami 8, Washington 7; Cleveland 12, Baltimore 0.														
American League					National League									
Eastern Division					Eastern Division									
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	42	28	.600	-	Atlanta	32	37	.464	9.5	
NY Yankees	38	29	.567	-	Miami	31	37	.456	10	NY Mets	31	38	.449	10.5
Boston	39	31	.557	0.5	Philadelphia	22	46	.324	19					
Tampa Bay	37	36	.507	4										
Toronto	34	35	.493	5	Central Division									
Baltimore	34	35	.493	5	Milwaukee	38	34	.528	-	Chicago Cubs	35	34	.507	1.5
					Pittsburgh	32	38	.457	5	St. Louis	31	37	.456	5
Western Division					Cincinnati	30	39	.435	6.5					
Houston	47	24	.662	-	Western Division									
LA Angels	36	37	.493	12	Colorado	46	26	.639	-	LA Dodgers	45	26	.634	0.5
Texas	34	35	.493	12	Arizona	44	26	.62	1	San Diego	28	43	.394	17.5
Seattle	35	37	.486	12.5	San Francisco	26	46	.361	20					
Oakland	31	39	.443	15.5										

INDIA ARRESTS VILLAGERS FOR CHEERING PAKISTAN CRICKETERS

NEW DELHI: Indian police said yesterday they have arrested 15 Muslim villagers and charged them with seditious punishment by life in prison for celebrating Pakistan's victory over India's cricketers in the Champions Trophy.

The villagers were arrested in the Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh

state on Monday after police received a complaint that they set off firecrackers and shouted slogans following Pakistan's dramatic win on Sunday.

"We received a complaint from a local Hindu man who accused them of celebrating after India lost the match," Burhanpur police chief Raja Ram Parihar

told AFP. The accused have also been charged with criminal conspiracy, the officer said, adding the celebrations continued for hours in the sensitive locality.

The village has a large Muslim population and a history of communal clashes between the two communities. Passions run high over cricket in India-

particularly when it comes to arch-rival Pakistan. Cricket fans in both countries have been arrested in the past for supporting the rival teams or players.

Around 60 students from India were arrested on sedition charges after they were accused of celebrating Pakistan's victory over India in 2014.

Last year a Pakistani man was arrested for waving an Indian flag after his idol Indian batsman Virat Kohli made a match-winning century. The nuclear-armed have a history of animosity dating back to independence from Britain in 1947 and partition of the subcontinent. They have fought three wars. — AFP

ICC COULD AXE CHAMPIONS TROPHY FOR MORE TWENTY20 WORLD CUPS

LONDON: The Champions Trophy could be scrapped in favour of staging the World Twenty20 every two years, according to International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executive David Richardson.

Pakistan thrashed India by 180 runs to win this year's edition of the Champions Trophy at The Oval on Sunday, with a worldwide television audience of millions watching the stunning final.

But some officials believe the eight-team event is now too similar to the World Cup which the ICC, controversially, has decided should be contested by just 10 teams from the 2019 event in England.

India are due to stage the next Champions Trophy in 2021 but Richardson warned Monday it was by no means certain the event would go ahead, with the former South Africa wicketkeeper saying future World Twenty20s could feature up to 20 teams. "What we want to do is differentiate our global events from each other so that they can be standalone and create maximum interest every time the event happens," Richardson told reporters via telephone on the eve of the ICC's annual conference in London.

"At this stage, the next Champions Trophy is still scheduled for India in 2021. Whether that gets changed, the considera-

tion has been given to changing to two T20s in a four-year cycle which would mean swapping the Champions Trophy for a World T20." He added: "The fact is that World T20s do attract a lot of interest, they generate significant revenue for the television companies, but most importantly from our point of view they provide us with an opportunity to give more opportunities to more teams.

"A 16-team World T20 — even a 20-team World T20 — down the line is something that we would like to look at. "With a 10-team World Cup we're hoping to increase the competitiveness of matches and the standard of the tournament as a whole.

"It might not be necessary to continue with two 50-over tournaments going forward." This week's ICC gathering at The Oval is also set to decide whether to grant Test status to Ireland and Afghanistan, with an announcement expected on Thursday.

"It's never wise to try and make a call too early, but certainly the applications of both are very well founded," said Richardson.

"They both, on the face of it, meet the majority, if not all, of the full member criteria that has been set.

"I'm optimistic that they'll be given serious consideration to have every chance of succeeding." — AFP

PIETERSEN HAS NO REGRETS OVER T20 PIONEER ROLE

LONDON: Kevin Pietersen has insisted he was happy to have paved the way for current England stars to play in Twenty20 franchise cricket even if it helped curtail his own international career and saw him labelled the 'bad guy'.

Pietersen, one of the outstanding batsmen of his generation, has not played for England since being frozen out following the team's return from a 5-0 Ashes thrashing in Australia in 2014.

Having once held out some hope of a return to England duty, Pietersen has spent most of the intervening period playing in the growing number of Twenty20 franchises around the world, having been an early overseas star in the Indian Premier League.

Monday saw Pietersen announced as one of eight international marquee players for South Africa's T20 Global League that is due to start later this year.

The England and Wales Cricket Board once had little time for events such as the IPL but has recently softened its stance, with the likes of all-rounder Ben Stokes named player of the tournament at this year's edition. Officials are now even prepared to let players miss England games to take part in the IPL, something once unthinkable, with Pietersen's desire to play in the lucrative event leading to a major falling out with then England coach Andy Flower. Pietersen said he was proud of his pioneering role, for all the criticism that came his way at the time.

"I'm lucky to have these T20 tournaments where I can still produce on the big stage," Pietersen told reporters at the Global League launch in London on Monday. "This is the environment I have been in since 2008. "It is the environment that got me in trouble with all the big bosses, this is the environment where it is now being applauded and they are willing to risk injuries for players to participate for the experience. "I came back from that first IPL, that second IPL and I was promoting it, and saying 'we've got to get more English guys into these set-ups.' "I was painted as the

bad guy and I'm totally cool with it because the public can see the picture that is now being rolled out," the 36-year-old Pietersen added.

"It is nice to see the youngsters, (Chris) Woakes going out there, Stokes going out there. It was absolutely fantastic."

'WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE'

Former England team-mate Stephen Harmison said in his recently published autobiography that Pietersen had been "hung out to dry" by the ECB. Pietersen, a former England captain, was grateful for the support of the one-time fast bowler.

"I spoke to him after and said 'that is really kind, thank you' and he said it was just a pity no one else has come out and said it. "But it is water under the bridge, it was a long time ago," said Pietersen, who reckoned he was now "fitter than I ever was when I played for England". South African-born Pietersen, asked if England had missed out on a few years of international cricket from him replied: "I don't want to go over old stories and old stuff because it's gone, it's done and dusted. "But I've enjoyed some of my best batting days in Australia at the Big Bash, playing in the PSL (Pakistan Super League), playing for Surrey. I got that triple-hundred for Surrey, I've had some of my real good days of batting. But it is what it is."

Pietersen revealed this could be his last season in the English game as he looks to life away from cricket.

"Next year I'm building a house in the Kruger national park so all of next summer I will be at my house in South Africa—so I won't be playing in England. I think this will be my last stint in England." Meanwhile Pietersen backed Joe Root to succeed as England's new Test captain ahead of the upcoming home series with South Africa. "He is the only man to take England forward," he said. "I don't see anyone else doing it. Everything Joe has done so far in his career has been A-grade, absolutely A-grade." — AFP



KARACHI: Pakistani cricket team's skipper Sarfraz Ahmed raises Champions Trophy for a crowd gathered to welcome him outside his residence in Karachi, Pakistan, yesterday. Thousands of fans stayed up late to welcome home members of new Champions Trophy winner Pakistan in various cities across the country yesterday. — AP

PAKISTAN CRICKETERS WARMLY WELCOMED HOME

ISLAMABAD: Even after the special convoy escorting Sarfraz Ahmed from the airport got within sight of his Karachi home in the early hours of the morning, it took the Pakistan captain nearly a half-hour to get from the vehicle to his house as a throng of adoring cricket fans clamored for photographs.

Fans decorated the street and waited through the night to welcome their hero, with some carrying children on their shoulders to get a glimpse of the man who led Pakistan to an unlikely win in the Champions Trophy in London. Supporters unfurled a 70-foot (21-meter) long national flag and carried it in the street as Ahmed drove in, as police tried to clear a path. Ahmed waved the trophy from the balcony of his house as he was showered with rose petals as the crowd chanted "Pakistan Zindabad," meaning long live Pakistan.

"This is your trophy and we won it just because of you," Ahmed said. Thousands of fans stayed up late across the country to welcome home members of the Pakistan squad.

Ahmed and fast bowler Ruman Raees arrived in Karachi at 4:45 a.m. with the trophy that Pakistan had won for the first time.

Both cricketers were presented with traditional Sindhi shawls and caps at the lounge as fans, and airport officials, didn't miss an oppor-

tunity to take selfies with their heroes.

Pakistan stunned the cricketing world on Sunday when it beat archrival and hot favorite India by 180 runs in the final.

Ahmed's squad overcame a terrible start in the event - beaten by 124 runs in the first group match by India - to beat South Africa, Sri Lanka and England on the way to the championship match. "Players came under pressure in the first match, but credit goes to the team management the way they motivated the players," Ahmed said. "It was a very big victory... it will be remembered for a long time and we are enjoying every moment of it."

Raees said he didn't sleep for two days because of all the excitement following Pakistan's first win in a major cricket tournament since the 1992 World Cup. "I dedicate the win to the whole nation and we enjoyed the victory a lot, congratulations to the whole country," Raees said. Provincial governor Mohammad Zubair said he was proud of "son of Sindh" Ahmed and hoped the victory will ignite more energy into youngsters playing the sport.

"He is the son of Sindh province and we are here to accord him warm welcome," Zubair said.

"We have not hosted any international team for the last 8 or 9 years, Pakistani players are barred from playing in the IPL (Indian Premier

League), but I'm sure with this victory our players will get more opportunities." Messages such as "Champion of champions. Team Pakistan! Welcome back after such a tremendous victory" were emblazoned on banners erected at Allama Iqbal International Airport in Lahore when the team landed. Television footage showed supporters chanting "Pakistan Zindabad" when four of the players entered the public area at 2:30 a.m. Player-of-the-tournament Hasan Ali, Faheem Ashraf, Babar Azam, and Ahmed Shehzad were presented with bouquets by Punjab provincial ministers. Punjab chief minister Shahbaz Sharif was due to receive the cricketers, but Geo Television reported he couldn't travel to the airport at the last minute because of security reasons. Ali took three wickets in the final and finished as the tournament's leading bowler with 13 wickets in five matches.

Fans surrounded Ali's car and showered it with rose petals, while the fast bowler smiled and waved from inside the vehicle.

A similar reception was accorded to man-of-the-match in the final, Fakhr Zaman, who smashed 114 off 106 balls, when he landed in Peshawar. Imad Wasim, Shadab Khan and Junaid Khan arrived in Islamabad where a fleet of policemen a gave guard of honor to the three players at the airport. — AP



Kevin Pietersen

DU PLESSIS HOPES GLOBAL LEAGUE CAN HALT S AFRICA TALENT EXODUS

LONDON: Faf du Plessis is optimistic the creation of a new Twenty20 Global League in South Africa will help prevent the country's top cricketers leaving in search of greater financial opportunities.

The combination of a relatively weak economy and the lure of the English county game has seen a number of Proteas cricketers all call time on their international careers.

South Africa has a trade agreement with the European Union which means players in England are regarded as 'home' selections under the Kolpak rule. The likes of Kyle Abbott, Rilee Rossouw, Dane Vilas, David Wiese, Simon Harmer, Hardus Viljoen and Stiaan van Zyl have all opted to play county cricket rather than continue to represent South Africa, sparking fears of a mass exodus.

While financial security has been the often cited reason, there have been concerns transformation targets designed to correct the legacy of apartheid, when non-white players were effectively barred from representing South Africa, could have played a part too.

But Test and Twenty20 captain du Plessis, who played for Lancashire under the Kolpak rule and has appeared in Twenty20 leagues around the world, said he hoped the new tournament would help provide opportunities currently only available outside of South Africa.

"I spoke about it when the Kolpak thing started happening in South Africa it was probably important that South Africa looked at different ways to try and keep players in the country," explained du Plessis at the eight-team Global League's launch in London on Monday. "I think this is a huge step towards that," the 32-year-old batsman added.

"Players don't have to look outside anymore, from an opportunity point of view and from a financial point of view—they don't need to go

overseas and look for other stuff. "This is going to be really important to keeping most of the players in the country." The November-December time frame for the new event will also mean South Africa's leading players are available for the whole of a domestic Twenty20 competition. "We've always come back from long tours and there was a lot of important cricket coming up so we haven't always been around to play as much domestic cricket as was needed," said du Plessis, a veteran of 40 Tests.

"For the whole South African team to be available to play in this tournament is the most important thing." Each one of the teams, six of whom have overseas owners, has been assigned a 'marquee' South Africa player, based on a connection with the city concerned.

Hashim Amla (Durban), Quinton de Kock (Benoni), AB de Villiers (Pretoria), du Plessis (Stellenbosch), JP Duminy (Cape Town), David Miller (Bloemfontein), Kagiso Rabada

(Johannesburg) and Imran Tahir (Port Elizabeth) are the players who fall into this category.

Meanwhile there will also be eight international marquee players, with England (Eoin Morgan, Kevin Pietersen and Jason Roy) and the West Indies (Dwayne Bravo, Chris Gayle and Kieron Pollard) providing three apiece in a list that also includes Sri Lanka paceman Lasith Malinga and former New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum.

Their teams have yet to be assigned. "You are starting to see different T20 leagues taking up different gaps during the year and current international players can't participate in all of them—it's just not possible," said du Plessis.

"What that does is bring in your ex-players, as Brendon (McCullum) talked about, your 'mercenaries'. "South Africa is no different to any other place. The fans would love to see Brendon McCullum, Dwayne Bravo, Kieron Pollard and all those players." —AFP



SOUTHAMPTON: The South African cricket team work out during a nets session at The Ageas Bowl, Southampton England, yesterday. South Africa will play against England in a Twenty20 cricket match at the ground today. — AP

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LONDON: Australia's Thanasi Kokkinakis returns against Canada's Milos Raonic during their men's singles first round tennis match at the ATP Aegon Championships tennis tournament at Queen's Club in west London yesterday. — AFP

WAWRINKA, RAONIC STUNNED AT QUEEN'S

LONDON: Milos Raonic's Wimbledon preparations suffered a major setback yesterday as the world number six crashed to a shock Queen's Club first-round defeat against Australian wildcard Thanasi Kokkinakis.

Raonic came agonisingly close to a golden summer on grass last year when he reached the Queen's and Wimbledon finals, only to lose to Andy Murray on both occasions. But the Canadian's hopes of warming up for Wimbledon with another strong showing at Queen's were wrecked by Kokkinakis's stunning 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (10/8) triumph.

Raonic wasn't the only leading seed embarrassed on a baking hot afternoon in west London as world number three Stan Wawrinka was beaten 7-6 (7/4) 7-5 by Spain's Feliciano Lopez in the Swiss star's first match since being thrashed by Rafael Nadal in the French Open final.

Kokkinakis needed a wild card from the tournament organisers to make the Queen's main draw after his ranking plunged to 698 following an abdominal strain that sidelined him for 18 weeks.

Finally fit again, the 21-year-old secured his first Tour level match win for 21 months at 's-Hertogenbosch last week, but even so he surely wouldn't have expected to

clinch the best win of his promising career just days later. "You don't want to know about the extensive list of injuries I've had. That was 22 months out of the game," Kokkinakis said.

"I can't wait to play in the next round," Kokkinakis faces Nicolas Mahut or Daniil Medvedev in the last 16. Raonic only reached the last 16 at the recent French Open, but clay doesn't

suit his big-serving game as well as the manicured lawns of London.

Having recently hired former Grand Slam doubles champion Mark Knowles as his coach, Raonic was looking to make a statement of intent at Queen's.

Instead, it was Kokkinakis who announced his own credentials as a future grass-court force in memorable fashion. "I was just a little too passive. I was letting him dictate too much," Raonic said.

"Obviously the disappointment is high right now, but whatever the result was this week, I don't think that's really going to change my chances at Wimbledon."

Back on court for the first time since his straight-sets defeat against Nadal in Paris, second seed Wawrinka was hoping to erase that painful memory with a rare good run at Queen's. — AFP

LOURINHO ACCUSED OF TAX FRAUD, RONALDO BEFORE JUDGE

MADRID: Jose Mourinho was yesterday accused by Spanish authorities of failing to pay 3.3 million euro (\$3.7 million) in taxes at Real Madrid as star player Cristiano Ronaldo was summoned to appear before a judge next month.

The 54-year-old Mourinho, who coached Real Madrid from 2010 to 2013, was accused of "two offences against the public treasury," the prosecutor's office said in a statement.

Prosecutors claim that the Portuguese manager who took over at Manchester United last year failed to declare income of 1.6 million euros in 2011 and 1.7 million euros in 2012.

Real Madrid star Ronaldo was last week accused of evading 14.7 million euros through offshore companies and will appear before a judge on July 31, judicial sources told AFP.

The 32-year-old Portuguese star is facing four charges of fraud through offshore companies between 2011 and 2014. The hearing will take place at 09:00 GMT on July 31 in a court at Pozuelo de Alarcón, in the suburbs of Madrid, according to Spanish press reports.

Prosecutors accuse the Portugal international of evading tax via a shell company based in the British Virgin Islands and another in Ireland, known for its low corporate tax rate.

In addition, they say he 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.

The four-time world player of the year, who said last week his "conscience is clear", is threatening to leave Real Madrid over the affair. Ronaldo is currently on duty for Portugal at the Confederations Cup in Russia which ends on July 2. Both Ronaldo and Mourinho are clients of football super-agent Jorge Mendes, who has been summoned to appear before the court at Pozuelo de Alarcón on June 27.

In three years with Real Madrid, Mourinho won La Liga (2012) and the Spanish Cup (2011). He also won the Champions League twice with Porto (2004) and Inter Milan (2010).



Jose Mourinho

The football world in Spain has been rocked by charges of tax evasion or corruption pressed against some of its top stars.

Barcelona star Lionel Messi was sentenced to a 21-month jail sentence and 2.09-million-euro fine last year for tax fraud. The prison term will be suspended as is common in Spain for first offences for non-violent crimes carrying a sentence of less than two years.

The 29-year-old and his father Jorge Horacio Messi were found guilty of using companies in Belize, Britain, Switzerland and Uruguay to avoid paying taxes on 4.16 million euros of Messi's income earned from his image rights from 2007-09.

Former Barca defender Javier Mascherano also agreed a one-year suspended sentence with authorities for tax fraud last year.

Meanwhile Brazil star and Barcelona forward Neymar and his parents are due to stand trial for alleged corruption over his transfer from Santos in 2013. — AFP

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LONDON: The headquarters of the British bank Barclays (R) is seen at the Canary Wharf district of east London. — AFP

EX-BARCLAYS CEO CHARGED WITH FRAUD

CHARGES LINKED TO EMERGENCY QATAR FUNDING

LONDON: Britain's Serious Fraud Office said yesterday it had charged Barclays, a former chief executive of the banking giant and three other ex-managers, with "conspiracy to commit fraud" linked to emergency fundraising from Qatar during the financial crisis. The SFO added in a statement that former chief executive John Varley was one of those to face court following a five-year investigation. "The Serious Fraud Office has today charged Barclays Plc and four individuals with conspiracy to commit fraud and the provision of unlawful financial assistance" linked to capital raising from Qatar in 2008 worth billions of pounds (euros/dollars).

"The charges relate to Barclays Plc's capital raising arrangements with Qatar Holding LLC and Challenger Universal Ltd, which took place in June and October 2008," the SFO said. It added that they relate also to a \$3-billion loan facility made available to the State of Qatar acting

through the country's Ministry of Economy and Finance in November 2008. The other three charged are Barclays' former executive chairman of investment banking Roger Jenkins, the former chief executive of Barclays wealth and investment management Thomas Kalaris and former European head of financial institutions group Richard Boath. The defendants will appear before London's Westminster Magistrates' Court on July 3, the statement added. In a separate statement, Barclays said it "is considering its position in relation to these developments" as it "awaits further details of the charges from the SFO".

Bailout avoided

UK watchdog the Financial Conduct Authority already fined Barclays £50 million in 2013 after the bank failed to disclose fees it paid to the Qatari investors. Barclays contested the fine however, which has been on hold awaiting

the SFO outcome. In addition, US authorities are probing the payments. In a statement yesterday, the FCA said: "We welcome a fair and transparent hearing on the basis of the charges set out today by the SFO." SFO Investigations had focused on advisory services worth £322 million, which Barclays agreed to pay the Qatar Investment Authority. By raising money from Qatar, Barclays avoided a UK government bailout at a time when rivals Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds had no choice but to be pumped with billions of pounds of British taxpayers' money. Speaking to BBC radio yesterday, former treasury minister Paul Myners said Barclays bosses were "vehement" that they did not want a government bailout in 2008.

"I think firstly there was a real fear on their part that this was nationalization, it was political, they didn't want anything to do with a Labour government," Myners said. "Secondly, they realized that the terms we were imposing

meant that pay for their senior bankers and bonuses and options were going to be substantially reduced. So they managed to find capital from elsewhere. "That surprised a lot of people, and that is the background to the investigation that the SFO has now been conducting for the last five years," he added.

Yesterday's announcement meanwhile comes as current Barclays chief executive Jes Staley is facing a probe by regulators after he tried to uncover the identity of a whistleblower. Around 1000 GMT, shares in Barclays were down 0.3 percent at 206 pence on London's benchmark FTSE 100 index, which was flat overall. "The muted reaction in the share price highlights the fact that the SFO action was largely priced in," said Laith Khalaf, senior analyst at stockbroker Hargreaves Lansdown. "Litigation, fines and compensation payments have sadly become part and parcel of the banking world." — AFP



DOHA: In this Friday, June 16, 2017 photo, Qatari and other nationals queue at the check in counters of the Hamad International Airport. — AP

TRAVEL HUB QATAR CUT OFF FROM LOCAL ROUTES

By Malak Harb, AP

FLYING OVER THE PERSIAN GULF: Sitting on an airplane from Qatar trying to get home to Dubai, I could only watch frustrated as a scrolling map showed my flight pass overhead of my skyscraper-studded city and continue further east. It's typically an hour flight between Dubai in the United Arab Emirates and Doha, the capital of Qatar, cities that are home to two of the world's biggest long-haul airlines. My trip would end up taking five and a half hours.

The reason? It was the same one that got me on one of the last direct flights leaving Dubai on June 5. The UAE, along with Bahrain, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, had cut diplomatic ties to Qatar and would soon shut down transportation links between them and the small, energy-rich nation. Suddenly, the air route between the two cities that typically saw dozens of daily flights had none. And as I finished up my reporting on the crisis, I suddenly had a new chal-

lenge in trying to figure out how to get home.

I ended up deciding to try to fly first to Muscat, Oman, and then catch a connecting flight to Dubai. To my surprise, most flights were fully booked. Agents offered me a sole remaining one-way business class ticket at 4,000 dirhams (\$1,090). That shocked me. Flights between Doha and Dubai used to be under \$100 and direct.

Options on other airlines had me traveling over 10 hours. That was too much. But I got lucky when a last-minute cancellation got me on an Oman Air flight to Muscat, the capital of the sultanate. That flight and another to Dubai cost 1,805 dirhams (\$490). It still was a lot, but I was happy to get a ticket. The airline has since increased the frequency of its flights to Doha.

Doha's brand-new Hamad International Airport, which cost over \$15 billion to build, was quiet on Friday afternoon when I set out to return home. But the line at the Oman Air counters moved slowly. Staff there said most catching flights were those trying to

go to Dubai. Typically, business travelers and those working in the region routinely shuttle between cities with relative ease.

My flight to Muscat, No WY664 on a Boeing 737, was full as we passed far above the world's tallest building and the other wonders of Dubai. When we landed in Muscat, I was surprised to find my connecting flight to Dubai had over half its seats empty. I was among the 33 people taking the ride on flight No. WY611, another Boeing 737. I had no issues with passport control in Doha and Muscat, but I had worried about possible problems arriving in Dubai. Qatari citizens were given 14 days to leave the UAE. Anyone carrying a Qatari residency visa in their passport also is no longer allowed to get a visa on arrival in Dubai. But I had no problems and I was glad to be home.

Malak Harb is an Associated Press videojournalist based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. She has worked as a journalist in the region for nearly 10 years.

FORD TO IMPORT FOCUS SMALL CAR FROM CHINA

DETROIT: Ford Motor Co will export vehicles from China to the US for the first time starting in 2019. Ford said yesterday it plans to move production of its Ford Focus small car from the US to China, where it already makes the Focus for Chinese buyers. Sales of small cars have dropped sharply in the US and companies are seeking to cut costs making them. Ford's president of global operations Joe Hinrichs said the move to China will save the company \$1 billion, including \$500 million for canceling plans to build the Focus in Mexico.

Wary of the response from President Donald Trump, who has criticized Ford for making vehicles outside the US; Ford said the move won't cost US jobs. The suburban Detroit plant that currently makes the Focus will be converted late next year to produce the Ford Ranger pickup and Ford Bronco SUV. Hinrichs said Ford's research shows that customers - who are used to phones and other gadgets from China - care more about product quality than where their vehicles are made.

Ford also said yesterday that it plans to invest \$900 million in its Kentucky Truck Plant in Louisville to make the new, aluminum-sided Ford Expedition and Lincoln Navigator SUVs. Those vehicles will go on sale this fall and will be exported to more than 55 markets globally, the company said. The investment will secure 1,000 jobs at the Kentucky plant.

The Focus has been bounced around over the last few months as Ford tried to squeeze some profits from the ailing small car segment. US Focus sales were down 20 percent through May, hurt by low gas prices and consumer preference for SUVs. In January, the

company announced it would cancel a new plant in Mexico and instead use capacity at another plant in Mexico to build the Focus. But over the last few months, Hinrichs said, Ford decided it could save another \$500 million in tooling and other manufacturing costs if it moved production to China.



Hinrichs said last month's departure of former CEO Mark Fields had no bearing on the decision, which was in the works for some time. Hinrichs said Chinese wages are lower than wages in Mexico, although the cost to ship the vehicles erases some of that advantage. It's still cheaper to make cars for the US in Mexico, he said, but Ford has extra capacity in China and the move frees up capital for the company immediately. Ford isn't the first car company to export vehicles to the US from China. Volvo Cars made the move in 2015. General Motors Co. started importing the low-volume Buick Envision midsize SUV from China in 2016. GM also imports small numbers of a plug-in hybrid-electric Cadillac CT6 sedans from China. — AP

APPLE SEEKING TO VOID PATENT CLAIMS IN QUALCOMM DISPUTE

NEW YORK: Apple is seeking to void some of Qualcomm's patent claims and licensing agreements, intensifying its legal battle with the chip maker over the technology in iPhones and iPads. In a federal court filing yesterday, Apple cited a Supreme Court ruling last month that a printer-cartridge maker's patent rights end with the initial sale of the cartridges. Apple says that ruling strengthens its argument that Qualcomm cannot continue to demand royalties for the patents after selling its cellular chips.

The new court documents expand on a \$1 billion lawsuit Apple filed in January in US District Court in San Diego. Qualcomm has disputed Apple's claims that it is overcharging for patent-related license fees. The San Diego company didn't immediately return a message seeking comment, made before regular business hours. Apple is also seeking to narrow the list of Qualcomm patents covered by its products. In addition, it argues that licensing fees based on a percentage of iPhone and iPad prices are

unfair because Qualcomm's technologies cover a small portion of what goes into those devices. One argument working in Qualcomm's favor, however: Apple and its contractors signed agreements to pay licensing fees this way. Apple says it was coerced to do so because Qualcomm chips were essential to Apple's products. Apple is now less dependent on Qualcomm because Intel makes similar chips. The US Federal Trade Commission has also accused Qualcomm of imposing unfair licensing

terms on manufacturers. Regulators in other countries also have been investigating, and South Korea's antitrust regulators have issued an \$865 million fine against Qualcomm. If Apple prevails and doesn't have to pay as much in licensing fees, it's not likely that those savings will be passed on directly to its customers, as Apple tends to keep retail prices consistent from year to year. But it could allow Apple to squeeze in more features while maintaining the same profit. — AP

MERKEL READY TO CONSIDER MACRON EUROZONE IDEAS

BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel said yesterday she was prepared to consider proposals by new French President Emmanuel Macron for a shake-up of the eurozone. Speaking to business leaders in Berlin, Merkel acknowledged that the "economic cohesion of the eurozone member states leaves something to be desired".

Merkel, who is running for a fourth term in a September general election, said Germany would be open to an "economic government" to pool "best practices" for promoting jobs and growth among the 19 eurozone members. "We could of course consider a common finance minister, if the circumstances are right" with the proper balance among risk, liability for debt and the power to dictate policy, Merkel said.

"We could also consider a euro-budget if it is clear that we are really strengthening the structure of the economy and doing sensible things," she added, backing another suggestion by the French leader. Merkel, who also holds the rotating presidency of the G20 club of big economies, said she would fight to achieve the "broadest accord possible" on a free-trade pact at a summit in Hamburg next month. But she admitted this would "not be easy given the new American administration" of Donald Trump, which is championing an "America

First" trade policy.

During his campaign, Macron had put forward ideas for reforming the eurozone, noting that the currency bloc cannot go on as it is if it wanted to avoid falling prey to protest and populism. Among reforms he wants to see are setting up a separate budget for the group, as well as giving it its own parliament and finance minister. Macron has forged the beginnings of a strong working relationship with the German leader since his election last month and chose Berlin for his first trip abroad as president.

At a joint press conference, Merkel threw her support behind Macron's call for a "historic reconstruction" of the European Union, even expressing openness to a possible change to key treaties governing the bloc despite some skepticism in Berlin. Germany and France, traditionally the twin engines of European integration, agreed last month to launch a bilateral panel to kickstart the eurozone reform process. The new working group will look at how the currency bloc can better coordinate economic policies, harmonize its tax regime and find potential Franco-German investment projects. The bilateral panel will report to a joint ministerial meeting of the eurozone's two biggest players in July. — AFP



HONG KONG: In this June 16, 2017 photo, a reporter takes photo of a 161 square feet show room of a new residential building AVA 61 during a media preview. — AP photos

HONG KONG'S MINI APARTMENTS BOOM AS PROPERTY PRICES SOAR

'I KIND OF FEEL LIKE A CAT SQUEEZED INTO A BOX'

HONG KONG: With its marble-clad lobby, sweeping balcony views and sleek, modern decor, Donny Chan's apartment building would seem the kind of upscale tower most young Hong Kong professionals aspire to live in. But not for Chan, 39, who avoids spending time in his 19th-floor apartment because it measures just 193 square feet (about 14 feet by 14 feet or 18 square meters). His parking space-sized studio is part of a growing trend for so-called micro apartments that are diminutive even by the standards of space-starved and densely built Hong Kong.

"Every time that I step back into this (apartment) I kind of feel like a cat squeezed into a box," said Chan, an art director at a medical equipment maker. To avoid returning to his cramped and claustrophobic apartment before bedtime he plays basketball or badminton, goes to the movies or karaoke bars, and gets together with friends and family. "I go walking in shopping malls until the last minute when they close," he said.

Eye-popping price tags

Hong Kong's property developers are scaling down, way down, for younger, middle-class buyers, offering micro-sized upscale apartments with eye-popping price tags. The apartments, dubbed "mosquito-size units" or "gnat flats" in Chinese, are drawing online ridicule and underscore worries over the Asian financial hub's overheated real estate market and widening inequality. Hong Kong is often ranked the world's costliest housing market.

Its micro-flat boom parallels tiny house and minimalist living trends seen in the US and other developed countries. The difference is that in Hong Kong, few make the choice willingly. Chan moved in last year after splitting up with his wife. He viewed 20 other apartments over three weeks but they were all more expensive, in worse condition or farther from his job.

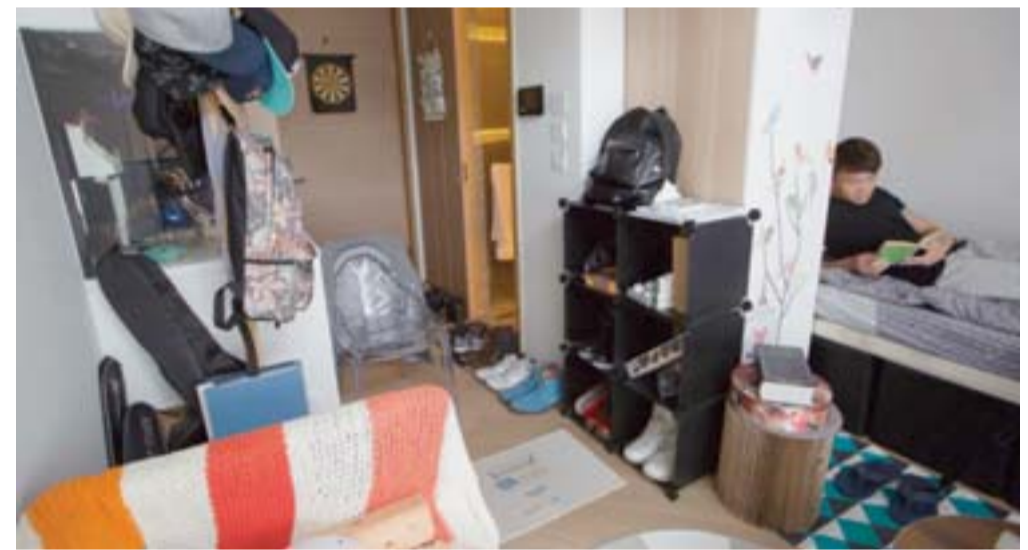
When they first appeared, micro-flats were mostly snapped up by investors renting them for above-average returns. The government has moved to cool such speculation, and most demand now comes from people needing a place to live, said Ingrid Cheh, research manager at Jones Lang Lasalle. Even so, their extravagant prices mean the young buyers who can afford the prison cell or parking lot sized units already are privileged by Hong Kong standards, said Edward Yiu, a lawyer representing architects and surveyors.

Transaction records show Chan's landlord bought the unit from developer Henderson Land for about \$500,000 in 2015. Chan's rent is \$1,300 a month, or a third of his monthly salary. He said he'd never consider buying such a small place to live. The down payment on a bigger apartment, if he were to buy, would mean "I'll be saving until the day I die."

Last year, developer MT Sisters' AVA 55 project sold units as small as 166 square feet (15.4 square meters) for as much as \$500,000. Blueprints showed the builder was eliminating separate shower stalls, including them in the toilets, to save space, an arrangement usually only found in older buildings. It took decades for the government to provide housing for the city's hundreds of thousands of refugees from mainland China, and personal living space has always been at a premium. But apartments are indeed shrinking.

Life in a micro apartment

Last year, developers built 206 apartments smaller than 20 square meters (215 square feet), up from 79 in 2015 and none in 2012. This year, 30 percent of the 17,122 apartments set to be completed will be smaller than 40 square meters (430 square feet). That ratio will rise to 43 percent in 2018. Most Hong Kongers have a fraction of the space seen in other advanced economies, where average living space ranges from 40 to 50 square



HONG KONG: In this June 10, 2017 photo, Donny Chan reads on bed at his apartment, one of a growing number of tiny, upscale units known as "microflats".



HONG KONG: In this June 10, 2017 photo, Donny Chan stands on the balcony of his apartment.

meters per person, or in mainland Chinese cities, where it measures 30 square meters. Residents of Hong Kong's numerous public housing estates, meanwhile, get less than 13 square meters.

Life in a micro apartment has forced Chan to downsize across the board. When he moved in, he estimates he sold off or threw out 40 percent

of his possessions - suits, basketball shoes, comic books, model cars and planes - because they wouldn't fit. He stores the rest of his stuff at his parents' place or in boxes supporting his single mattress. There's a narrow wardrobe, a pint-sized loveseat and an undersized coffee table, but no space for a TV. — AP



BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the President of the Federation of German Industry (BDI) Dieter Kempf (R) arrive for a two-day meeting of the Federation of German Industry (BDI). — AFP

TOKYO'S GOVERNOR TO KEEP FAMOUS TSUKIJI FISH MARKET

TOKYO: Tokyo's giant Tsukiji fish market, popular with tourists, won't be destroyed, although it will be closed for up to five years while it is modernized and turned into a "food theme park," the capital's governor said yesterday. The market will move to a state-of-the-art 600 billion yen (\$6 billion) facility in Toyosu on the eastern outskirts of Tokyo while Tsukiji is rebuilt. After that, Tokyo will have two wholesale fish markets, Gov Yuriko Koike said.

Koike had halted the planned move to Toyosu last August, just months before the new market's scheduled opening, after food safety concerns were raised. Toxins have been found in soil and groundwater at Toyosu, which was previously the site of a gas plant. The initial plan was to sell the bayside Tsukiji property after the move, possibly for a shopping mall or casino. But Koike said she is opposed to such a one-time cash gain for the capital. Tsukiji is a valuable brand and landmark, she said at a news conference.

"Our country has always valued tradition," she said. Koike declined to give an exact timeline, stressing she was just announcing a basic plan that still requires approval by the city legislature. Toyosu will also need to be cleaned up to ensure its

water systems and soil meet safety standards. The city faces a challenge in calming public fears about the toxins at Toyosu, which have drawn widespread media coverage. The massive new complex, loaded with huge refrigeration units, requires large amounts of money just to maintain.

Meanwhile, Tsukiji, famous the world over for its tuna auctions and quaint sushi joints, has hobbled along and is still busy with tourists. Koike said she wants to turn Tsukiji into a "food theme park," rebuilding its antiquated buildings and adding the latest earthquake-resistant technology. Japan is among the most quake-prone nations in the world.

She believes Toyosu's high-tech distribution systems and its proximity to airports will help make it a bustling market that can co-exist with Tsukiji. Some were skeptical. Hiroyuki Doko, proprietor of Doko Shoten, a wholesale seafood store in Tsukiji, questioned whether businesses will be able to make the same profit in Koike's theme-park plan. But Yu Takahashi, manager of a sushi restaurant in Tsukiji, said he welcomes the decision to keep Tsukiji. "This is where all the fish from Japan, the best fish, come together in one place. The decision will be a good thing for Japan and Tokyo," he said. — AP



TOKYO: In this May 3, 2016, file photo, people visit a festival held at Tsukiji fish market. — AP

JUDGE MULLING NEVADA BID FOR RECREATIONAL POT SALES

CARSON CITY: Nevada's marijuana regulators are working furiously to launch recreational sales on July 1, a fast-approaching deadline that could hinge on a judge expected to decide Tuesday whether the liquor industry should be guaranteed a piece of the pot pie before tourists and residents can light up. Lawyers for the liquor industry and the Nevada Department of Taxation are arguing whether the state has the authority to issue marijuana distribution licenses to anyone besides alcohol distributors.

Carson City District Judge James Wilson said he had hoped to issue a decision following a daylong hearing on Monday. The state says it has the power to temporarily license some existing medical marijuana cultivators and retailers to serve as their own middlemen. It wants to get a head-start on collecting millions of dollars in tax revenue devoted to education before permanent rules are required by Jan. 1, 2018.

The liquor lobby sued, saying the state has failed to give it the first shot at distribution

licenses as called for in the ballot measure approved by voters in November, the only legal pot state with that arrangement. Wilson has blocked all licensing until the matter is resolved. He refused the state's request last week to dismiss the lawsuit, a move that could jeopardize the July 1 startup. It has been legal for adults to possess up to an ounce of marijuana in Nevada and consume it in private residences since the beginning of this year, but currently only medical dispensaries can sell it.

Further delay is "not going to stop the sale or use of (recreational) marijuana in Nevada," Chief Deputy Attorney General William McKean said Monday. "As I walk down the street, there are a lot of people who are using it right now and they're being supplied by the black market. The difference is the state is not going to get the taxes," he said. Kevin Benson, a lawyer for the Independent Alcohol Distributors of Nevada who filed the lawsuit, said keeping the temporary injunction in place won't necessarily scuttle the July 1 recreational sales — AP

EU STOCKS CLIMB ON COAT-TAILS OF WALL STREET

LONDON: European stock markets rose yesterday, gaining traction from a particularly strong rebound on Wall Street and in Tokyo. London equities also advanced as the pound dipped after Bank of England governor Mark Carney poured cold water on raising interest rates any time soon.

President Emmanuel Macron's centrist party in parliamentary elections. "Markets in the UK and Europe have totted up a few more gains this morning, after an impressive session yesterday," said IG analyst Chris Beauchamp.

Large tech shares reversed a spate of weakness and some ugly losses over the last two weeks to push sharply higher. The technology sector sent Tokyo stocks spiking higher yesterday, buoyed also as the dollar extended gains against the yen on fresh indications the Federal Reserve will lift interest rates again this year.

despite tepid price rises, he was confident that "if the labour market continues to tighten, wages will gradually pick up". "Hitting the right chords and sounding dismissive about the recent slowdown in inflation, an unrepentantly hawkish Dudley provided the USD bulls with enough fodder," Stephen Innes, senior trader at trading firm Oanda.

"Hitting the right chords and sounding dismissive about the recent slowdown in inflation, an unrepentantly hawkish Dudley provided the USD bulls with enough fodder," Stephen Innes, senior trader at OANDA, said in a note. The remarks came after Fed boss Janet Yellen set out a more hawkish tone than usual, while the central bank set out plans to wind down its asset holdings to suck cash out of the financial system.

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Tuesday 20 June 2017. Table with columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing. Includes sub-sections for Trades, Basic Materials, Industrials, Consumer Goods, Health Care, and Banks.

Most Asia markets struggle. Meanwhile, Tokyo's Nikkei rallied yesterday as the dollar extended gains against the yen on fresh indications the Federal Reserve will lift interest rates again this year.

One of the key drivers of Monday's US rally were comments from influential New York Federal Reserve Bank President William Dudley, who reaffirmed the bank's plan to press on with its rate hikes and forecast of higher inflation.

Shanghai also slipped 0.2 percent as investors await a decision by MSCI on whether to include it in its list of benchmark indexes. The bourse has been denied for the previous three years over concerns about certain restrictions, despite Beijing providing greater access to its domestic, renminbi-based capital markets.

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report. At 02:00 PM Previous Day. Includes sections for Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, and Global Bond Yields.



LOTUS CARS: PERFORMANCE, DESIGN FOR A NICHE TASTE

KUWAIT: With four luxury models that provide an outstanding performance to satisfy a niche taste, the Lotus cars stand alone as a brand dedicated to delivering a pure driving experience. Over the last seven decades, Lotus has remained true to the ethos of its founder Colin Chapman by applying his approach to precision engineering and automotive innovation, and using the latest technologies and advanced materials to ensure that every Lotus car is strong yet light and simply amazing to drive.

A key to its success is the use of advanced, quality materials. Traditionally, building a faster and more powerful sports car means weight gain in many areas, including the greater power train mass from bigger engines and heavier superchargers. That is not the case with Lotus. The Lotus team has pioneered the monocoque chassis, carbon fiber, aerofoil wings and ground effects, altering Formula One forever and changing the fast driving experience to racing fans around the world. 20 years ago, Lotus famously adopted the multi-material concept and was a pioneer in using special adhesives to glue cars together - now common practice for car manufacturing - when other car-makers were still making vehicles from steel.

Today, the Lotus Lightweight Laboratory provides a

framework for evaluating every component allowing each to be assessed, optimized and re-engineered, to use the most appropriate materials for the right parts, such as carbon fiber for spoilers and wings, aluminum for the chassis and engine, sheet molded compound (SMC) and resin transfer molded (RTM) composites for body panels and parts, and even titanium for the exhaust. The unique bonded aluminum chassis that defines a modern Lotus, provides extreme strength and rigidity - an essential part of the Lotus ethos. No welding is involved, meaning there is no distortion from heat and that great structural strength and incredibly precise tolerances can be maintained.

Materials used are light weight, making the Lotus car drive faster everywhere. The lighter car also means it needs less energy to propel it, stops sooner, corners harder, accelerates faster and uses less fuel. It is also more efficient, not just in fuel consumption, but in tire and brake wear as well. Of course, it produces less by way of emissions too.

In the words of Jean-Marc Gales, Group Lotus Chief Executive Officer: "To perfect a pure sports car, you must consider weight your enemy. Lose weight and you will make significant gains - harder and faster cornering, better braking, greater agility and responsiveness, along with faster acceleration."

The overall reduction of weight also allows for optimized weight distribution, greatly contributing to the poise and balance of a sports car during high-speed cornering.

Hands-on perfection

The approach of using the ideal materials to optimize performance is complemented with a hands-on process to perfect each car. In stark contrast to mass-market manufacturing processes, the Lotus production line uses only one robot for cutting composite components such as carbon fiber crash structures and one computer-controlled jig for accurately bonding sills to bodywork. All other parts of the process are carried out as they always have been: by hand, using a small but exceptionally talented and dedicated team.

Every stage of the production process is accompanied by a stringent set of checks and quality controls to ensure the hand-built production methods, which are so important to Lotus owners, are seamlessly integrated with levels of quality control matching any mass-produced rivals. Once completed, Lotus' handling process has been regarded as being the benchmark. A Lotus gives the driver a stable and balanced yet agile and dynamic driving experience, with the ability to

change direction and speed both predictably and as required. This means that the driver knows exactly how the car will respond to a particular action on the steering, throttle or brakes.

From a meticulous use of quality materials, unprecedented investment in engineering and a design personalized to the smallest detail, the Lotus has earned its reputation of purity in driving, during which each owner of a Lotus knows they've made the right investment. Experience the purity of speed and unique experience of a Lotus in one of the three models introduced by Alghanim Lotus in Kuwait. The Exige S Coupe and Evora 400 are now available at the Alghanim Lotus showroom located in Shuwaikh and open Saturday through Friday from 10am to 2pm and again from 9pm to 12am during the Holy Month of Ramadan.

With new models on the way to Kuwait, Alghanim Motors invites sports cars enthusiasts to its showroom that is located at Shuwaikh Industrial 1, block 1, street 11 opposite of the Historical Vintage and Classic Cars Museum on Saturday to Thursday starting from 9 AM until 12:30 PM and 4:30 PM until 8:30 PM. You can also be the first to know what is new by following Alghanim Motors on Instagram at @AlghanimLotusKW.



NEW YORK: In this Tuesday, May 30, 2017, file photo, the Amazon logo is displayed at the Nasdaq MarketSite, in New York's Times Square. — AP

AMAZON STRIKES AGAIN: A NEW DRESSING ROOM IN YOUR HOUSE

NEW YORK: Amazon is increasingly claiming territory once held exclusively by department stores and it's doing so again, essentially placing a dressing room in your house. Amazon is testing a new service for Prime members that allows them to try on the latest styles before they buy at no upfront charge. Customers have seven days to decide what they like and only pay for what they keep. Shipments arrive in a re-sealable box with a pre-paid label for returns.

Amazon said yesterday that more than a million pieces of clothing and accessories are eligible and include brands like of Calvin Klein, Hugo Boss, Theory and Levi's. Shoppers receive discounts depending on how much they keep. The Prime Wardrobe service is the latest move by Amazon into fashion and could be another big blow to department stores. It's also attacking Walmart, which has been snapping up clothing brands including ModCloth and the latest Bonobos as tries to snare millennials from Amazon and others.

Amazon has made a big push to expand its offerings under private labels like Lark & Ro designed to be as stylish as recognizable national brands. Prime Wardrobe could keep Prime members from straying. Amazon is poised to surpass Macy's this year as the largest US clothing seller, according to Cowen & Co. analysts. The industry observer expects Amazon's share of the US clothing market will increase from 6.6 percent last year to 16.2 percent by 2021. Prime Wardrobe works this way: Shoppers pick three or more items and then have a try-on period to find the best styles. For items they want to discard, customers can drop off at a UPS location or schedule a free pick up. Shoppers will receive 10 percent off if they keep three or four items or 20 percent off for five items or more.

'Whirlwind courtship'

Whole Foods CEO John Mackey says the deal to be acquired by Amazon was

the result of a "whirlwind courtship." Mackey made the remarks during a town hall with Whole Foods employees after the \$13.7 billion deal was announced late last week, according to a transcript of the talk filed Monday with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Mackey said mutual friends set the companies up on a "blind date" in Seattle a little over six weeks ago, and that executives immediately hit it off and ended up speaking for more than two hours.

"It was truly love at first sight," said Mackey. "We just had these big grins on our faces, like, 'These guys are amazing.' They're so smart. They're so authentic. They say what's on their mind. They're not playin' a bunch of BS games," Mackey said. A representative for Whole Foods confirmed that Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos was at the meeting. Mackey compared the relationship to an "old traditional marriage, where there are all kinds of rules and chaperones." He said they could not "consummate" the relationship until the deal was official, and that it was "not a Tinder relationship."

Beyond the romantic metaphor, Mackey also said the companies discussed what they could do together, though he could not share those plans until the transaction closed. But he said he thought Amazon would be able to help Whole Foods more quickly realize the changes it has already been pursuing, such as a loyalty program and its cost-cutting efforts. He noted that Amazon was known for its innovation.

"I think we're going to get a lot of those innovations in our stores," he said. "I think we're gonna see a lotta technology. I think you're gonna see Whole Foods Market evolve in leaps and bounds." The deal comes after Whole Foods has been pressured as a key sales figure has declined. The Austin, Texas-based company has blamed the struggles on the wider availability of organic and natural food at traditional retailers, and said it is working on offering lower prices. — Agencies

AFGHAN DE-MINERS CLING TO HARD BUT MUCH-NEEDED JOBS

HARSH TERRAIN, EXPLOSIONS AND THE THREAT OF KIDNAPPING

KABUL: Afghans who scratch out a living by removing some of the country's countless land mines have long had to contend with rugged terrain, accidental explosions and the threat of kidnapping - but these days they face the added risk of being laid off. A financial crisis in recent years has forced the country to cut back on efforts to remove explosives left over from decades of conflict - buried bombs that kill and maim dozens of people every month and render precious farming and grazing land unusable.

Wali Mohammad, a 32-year-old de-miner, spends long hours roaming the mountains south of Kabul, looking for mines left over from the Soviet occupation in the 1980s. Like other de-miners, he wears a protective helmet and visor as well as gloves to protect his hands from snakes and scorpions. The painstaking work pays \$300 a month, barely enough to support his wife and eight children, who live as refugees in neighboring Pakistan. "Whenever I go home I ask for (my family's) forgiveness, because it is a dangerous job and anything can happen at any time," he said.

At least 90 de-miners have been killed and more than 120 wounded since 2010, according to government figures. Another 720 have been kidnapped, though all but seven were later freed through military operations or tribal negotiations. A far bigger threat, for many, is another round of layoffs. Some 5,000 de-miners have been let go since 2014, when the US and NATO formally concluded their combat mission and switched to a support and counterterrorism role.

'Huge impact'

The HALO Trust Organization, which has been carrying out mine-clearing efforts since 1988, has had to lay off 1,000 de-miners, and now employs just 2,400 Afghans. Over the same three years, the Taleban have widened their reach and an Islamic State affiliate has risen in the east. Aid agencies have been forced to scale back operations, and funding has dried up as they scramble to address crises in other parts of the world.

The government has set the ambitious goal of clearing all the country's known minefields by 2023, but that looks increasingly unattainable, especially since armed groups are actively planting new roadside bombs. The shortage of funding and manpower will have a "huge impact" on the government's ability to reach its target, said Wais Ahmad Barmak, the state minister for disaster management and humanitarian affairs, which oversees mine removal.

Afghanistan remains one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, with millions of people living within 500 meters (yards) of a minefield, according to Farid Ahmad Homayoun, HALO's Afghanistan country director. Around 140 people, mostly women and children, are killed or wounded by land mines or roadside bombs every month, according to the government.

Gul Hassan, a 25-year-old de-miner, says he had to accept the difficult job to support his four children. He is still haunted by an accident a year ago, when a blast tore off his co-worker's hands. But he takes pride in his work, which allows impoverished communities to reclaim much-needed land. "When any of my countrymen can live freely and without fear it makes me proud," he said. — AP



KABUL: In this Saturday, June 17, 2017, photo, a land mine victim learns how to walk with their new prosthetic leg at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) physical rehabilitation center. — AP

TAKATA BANKRUPTCY MEANS AIR BAG VICTIMS GET LESS

DETROIT: A bankruptcy filing by Japanese air bag maker Takata will leave little money for dozens of people who sued the company over deaths and injuries caused by its exploding air bag inflators, according to outside legal experts and lawyers suing the company.

Takata Corp. and its US operations are likely to seek bankruptcy protection by the end of June in a deal that would sell its assets to competitor Key Safety Systems Inc, a person briefed on the talks said. The person didn't want to be identified because discussions are in progress. The price Key will pay is unknown, but much of it likely will go toward paying a \$1 billion US criminal settlement. Most of the settlement money will go to automakers as restitution for recall costs.

Key is expected to buy Takata's assets "free and clear" of past liabilities, and lawyers say there won't be enough money to give victims what they would have received if they were suing a healthy company. So far the faulty inflators have killed 11 people in the U.S. and 16 worldwide. Over 180 people have been injured. The problem touched off the biggest recall in U.S. automotive history, involving 19 automakers, 42 million vehicles and up to 69 million inflators. About 100 million inflators have been recalled worldwide.

Some victims have serious facial injuries from metal shrapnel and would win large verdicts if Takata were financially strong, lawyers say. Kevin Dean, a South Carolina lawyer who has 25 cases pending against Takata, said one of his clients, a 26-year-old man, will never be able to smile due to nerve damage.

"It destroys people's faces. It's just a horrible injury," said Kent Emison, a Missouri, lawyer whose firm is considering a lawsuit against Takata and others on behalf of a woman whose trachea was punctured by shrapnel. Takata's troubles stem from use of the explosive chemical

ammonium nitrate in the inflators to deploy air bags in a crash. The chemical can deteriorate when exposed to hot and humid air and burn too fast, blowing apart a metal canister and spewing out metal fragments.

In February, Takata pleaded guilty to fraud and agreed to the \$1 billion settlement. Lawyers acknowledged in court that the company would have to be sold to fund the settlement. Automakers would get \$850 million in restitution for recall costs and a \$25 million fine would be paid to the government. Takata already has paid \$125 million into a fund for victims. "Takata intends to try to use our bankruptcy laws to escape responsibility for the injured and the families of the dead," said Bradford Child, a Los Angeles lawyer who represents the family of a woman killed by a ruptured inflator.

Lawyers are unhappy

In a statement last week, Takata maintained the possibility of keeping the company in operation. A committee set up to explore restructuring has made a recommendation with Key as a suitor, but Takata's board hasn't decided on it.

Douglas Baird, a bankruptcy law professor at the University of Chicago, said he expects Key will get Takata's assets without liability for past claims. Without this provision, no suitor would buy the company. "It's in the interests of all these victims that you have this free and clear sale," he said. "The alternative is to liquidate the assets and sell them for kindling wood."

Lawyers are unhappy that automakers will get \$850 million while relatively little goes to victims. Emison and others say \$125 million will go quickly, estimating that victims will get 5 to 10 cents on the dollar of what they would have received from a financially strong company. A court-appointed special master will come up with an allocation formula. — AP



QATAR AIRWAYS SHOWCASES AWARD WINNING QSUITE AT PARIS AIR SHOW

PARIS: Qatar Airways captured the spotlight on the first day of the Paris Air Show, where it showcased the first of its aircraft fitted with its spectacular state-of-the-art and award-winning Business Class seat, Qsuite. A senior Qatari delegation led by Qatar's Minister of Transport and Communications, His Excellency Jassim Saif Al Sulaiti, joined Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Akbar Al Baker, to reveal the first Boeing 777 equipped with the airline's new and unique seat design in a ribbon cutting ceremony, close to its luxurious chalet at Le Bourget Airport. The airline also hosted other notable dignitaries, officials and guests of honor at the ceremony, including the Qatari Ambassador to France, His Excellency Mr. Khalid Bin Rashid Al Mansouri, Managing Director and CEO of Qatar Rail, Eng Abdulla T Al Subaie and Vice Chairman of the Boeing Company, Ray Conner.

Qatar's Minister of Transport and Communications, His Excellency Jassim Saif Al Sulaiti said: "I am very proud to see the national carrier of the State of Qatar showcasing the unique Qsuite to the whole world as it continues to expand and innovate in every single way. I am also very pleased to see the national carrier of the State of Qatar proceed with its expansion plans more than expected, with endless ambition."

Innovative offering

HE Al Baker said: "We are tremendously excited to

showcase the first aircraft fitted with our revolutionary new Qsuite here in Paris. This product will transform premium travel by bringing a First Class experience to the Business Class cabin. With this innovative offering - which features the first-ever double bed in Business Class - we have set a new standard for the industry, one which demonstrates our continued commitment to providing the finest possible experience for our passengers. We look forward to the debut of Qsuite on our Doha - London Heathrow route this weekend."

Vice Chairman of the Boeing Company, Mr. Ray Conner said, "All of us at Boeing are proud that the Boeing 777 has been selected to debut Qatar Airways' new and innovative Business Class interior. With Qsuite, Qatar Airways is introducing a new level of innovation that will make flying a truly remarkable experience."

Qsuite, patented by Qatar Airways, features the industry's first-ever double bed available in Business Class, with privacy panels that stow away, allowing passengers in adjoining seats to create their own private room. Adjustable panels and movable TV monitors on the centre four seats allow colleagues, friends or families travelling together to transform their space into a private suite, allowing them to work, dine and socialise together. These new features provide the ultimate customisable travel experience that enables passengers to create an environment that suits their own unique needs.



Immediately after the Paris Air Show the first destination to feature the Qsuite will be London from 24 June, followed by service to Paris and New York, with the airline's fleet retrofitted at the rate of one plane per month.

Advances in the industry

The Paris Air Show, taking place this week at Le Bourget Airport, is one of the world's most anticipated aerospace events, providing the global aviation community the opportunity to demonstrate the very best and latest advances in the industry. Commencing 4 July, Qatar Airways will operate a five-times weekly service to Nice, France, served by the airline's state-of-the-art Boeing 787 Dreamliner, complementing the airline's triple daily offering to the French capital, Paris.

Earlier this year, Qatar Airways officially opened its new and luxurious Premium Lounge at the Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport. The Premium Lounge features a brasserie and deli, two terraces with spectacular views of Paris and the Eiffel Tower, shower facilities, Mac computers, Wi-Fi and seating for more than 200 guests, all of which contribute to a warm and relaxing atmosphere.

One of the world's fastest growing airlines, Qatar Airways recently added Dublin, Republic of Ireland, to its global route network, soon to be followed by Nice, France. The airline operates a modern fleet of 200 aircraft to a network of key business and leisure destinations across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific, North America and South America. The airline was awarded the World's Best Business Class by Skytrax in 2016, and its home hub, Hamad International Airport, was also recently honored with five stars at the Skytrax World Airport Awards.

ETIHAD AIRWAYS AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS RATED THE CLEANEST AND QUIETEST BY HEATHROW

ABU DHABI: Etihad Airways has been given atop rating by London's Heathrow Airport for its emissions and night-time noise performance during the first three months of 2017. The "Fly Quiet and Clean" League Table, the first of its kind to be produced by the airport, placed the

UAE's national airline among the top carriers for operating the cleanest and quietest fleets.

The top rating recognition is the result of a program of disciplined flying by Etihad Airways' Operations which strictly manages airport approaches and departures, as well as adhering

to air traffic control instructions and procedures. Rick Allen, Senior Vice President Operations at Etihad Airways, said: "In addition to safety, our pilots are trained to focus on efficient flying, especially into busy airports like Heathrow. So it is very pleasing to be placed at the top of the first Fly Quiet and Clean table.

"This attention to detail brings great benefits in terms of lowering fuel usage and reducing noise. We will continue to work closely with the airport authorities and aim to stay at the top of the league of airlines operating into Heathrow." The new airline league table is part of Heathrow's plans to be a world-leader in reducing emissions from all sources of activity, both on and off airport. The 50 busiest airlines at the airport are publicly ranked on their work to reduce emissions and noise in their operations.

The new league table is an expanded version of the successful Heathrow Fly Quiet program, which has tracked airlines' noise performance since 2013 and incentivized airlines to use their quieter aircraft types and operating procedures at the airport. In March this year Etihad Airways revealed that its drive to improve fuel efficiency and cut carbon dioxide emissions across the business had saved more than 60,000 tons of fuel in 2016. This 2.5 per cent improvement over the year amounts to a cut of nearly 190,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions - the equivalent of 1,200 flights between Abu Dhabi and London. Etihad Airways operates an Airbus A380 three times a day between Abu Dhabi and Heathrow.



MALABAR RAFFLE DRAW WINNER

Mr Shareef Vadakkan, the raffle draw winner of "Win up to 75 Gold Bars and BE A GOLD BULLIONAIRE" campaign at Malabar Gold & Diamonds, received the prize 100gm gold bar from Mr Afsal Khan, Zonal Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of Mr Lukman, Branch Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds and other management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

AL TIJARI UNVEILS SUMMER OFFER AT ATLANTIS THE PALM, DUBAI

DUBAI: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced its partnership with MasterCard International for their promotion with Atlantis the Palm, Dubai where customers can enjoy up to 40% off this summer by using their MasterCard credit card.

The offer includes 25% - 40% off rooms and suites plus 25% off at all Atlantis The Palm restaurants, Dolphin Bay experiences and ShuiQi spa treatments. Additionally, CBK MasterCard holders can enjoy free unlimited access to The Lost Chambers Aquarium and Aquaventure Waterpark. Customers can take advantage of this special exclusive offer that is valid for stays until

15 October 2017. For more information, customers can check the Promotions section on the bank's website on www.cbk.com. Booking can be made directly on the link in the website where customers can avail the offer by using their CBK MasterCard credit card.

MasterCard has always collaborated with Commercial Bank of Kuwait by creating the most innovative and dynamic campaigns to ensure their customers are always satisfied. CBK recommends its customers to take advantage of this special summer offer and enjoy the wonderful world of Atlantis The Palm resort in Dubai.



GULF BANK NAMES WINNERS OF AL DANAH DAILY DRAWS



KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al Danah daily draws on 18 June 2017 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 11 June - 15 June 2017. The Al Danah daily draws include draws every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

The winners were:

(Sunday 11/6): Abraham Issac Abraham, Hesham Mohammad Yaseen Ebrahim

(Monday 12/6): Ghezlan Adel Housan Al Mutairi Minor, Rasha Abdullah Mohammed Al Bahar

(Tuesday 13/6): Abdulla Sabieh Abdullah Buftain, Mohammad Husain Ali Alajmi

(Wednesday 14/6): Fahed Abdulrahman Fahed Abdulrahman, Ahlam Taher Shawe Al Qallaf

(Thursday 15/6): Kathem Sayed Shobbar Sayed Abd Alhussain Abbas, Sabriya Hajy Ghloom Hussain

Gulf Bank's Al Danah 2017 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working day and each receive KD1,000). Al Danah's 2nd Quarterly draw for the prize of KD 250,000 will be held on 13 July and the 3rd Quarterly Draw for the prize of KD500,000 will be held on 28 September. The final Al Danah draw for 1 Million Kuwaiti Dinars will be held on 11 January, 2018 whereby the Al Danah Millionaire will be announced. Gulf Bank encourages you to increase your chances by depositing more into your Al Danah account, immediately from any local bank, using the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's Online and Mobile Banking.

CHEVRON PREVAILS IN POLLUTION BATTLE

WASHINGTON: Oil giant Chevron prevailed Monday in a long-running legal battle over pollution in Ecuador, with the US Supreme Court blocking villagers from collecting a \$8.65-billion foreign judgment against the company. The court declined to hear an appeal against lower-court decisions which had refused to enforce the Ecuadorian damages award over pollution in the rainforest, finding that the foreign judgment resulted from corruption and other illegal acts.

Chevron did not deny that the pollution had occurred but argued that it was not liable and that the plaintiffs' attorney had bribed an Ecuadorian judge to win the award in 2011. "The facts of the

Ecuadorian judicial extortion scheme and the illegality of the plaintiffs' lawyer misconduct have been finally and conclusively affirmed by the legal system of the United States," R Hewitt Pate, Chevron's general counsel, said in a statement.

Steven Donziger, the attorney for the plaintiffs, vowed to pursue the case elsewhere, calling the Supreme Court decision "a grave mistake" that reflected poorly on the US legal system. "Chevron will be held accountable in Canada where courts have agreed to consider the overwhelming evidence Chevron bribed a witness and manufactured evidence to evade paying the Ecuador pollution judgment," Donziger said in a statement. — AFP



ZAIN, IBM LAUNCH CLOUD DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICE

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, and IBM, today announced their collaboration to launch the Zain Cloud Disaster Recovery (Cloud DR) service in Kuwait. The new service will provide Zain's enterprise customers with cloud-based business continuity capabilities and faster disaster recovery of their critical IT systems. Through the new service, customers will benefit from the added flexibility of keeping their data on the IBM cloud locally within the country.

Zain Cloud DR will enable Zain's corporate customers to benefit from IBM's cloud-based disaster recovery as a service (DRaaS). This will help protect customers against data loss from their own servers or from other cloud services

and can maintain readiness, without the need to invest in physical space or stand-by hardware. The Cloud DR service will provide replication of their critical applications, infrastructure, data and systems to the IBM cloud so that it can recover within minutes from an IT outage.

Commenting on the partnership, Zain Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer Eaman Al-Roudhan said: "Today's announcement comes as part of our vision to transform into the digital lifestyle provider. The business needs of our corporate customers are continuously changing, and offering them with innovative solutions to help maintain resiliency is a top priority for us."

Al-Roudhan continued: "Together

with IBM, and through our new Zain Cloud DR service, we aim to provide our customers with a solid and reliable solution to implement their resiliency and continuity strategies as well as address their changing and unique needs. We continuously offer the latest innovations and services that are tailored to match the needs and expectations of our corporate customers, as well as to reinforce our commitment towards enhancing the portfolio of services we offer to the corporate segment."

Amr Refaat, General Manager, IBM Middle East and Pakistan, commented: "Unplanned downtime or data loss is a risk any business can face. Not only can this lead to business loss but present a

threat to a company's reputation amongst its customers, stakeholders, and the wider public. Having a resiliency plan in place should play an integral part in every business. Through the new Cloud DR service, Zain customers can run their operations at ease, while we provide around-the-clock monitoring of the recovery environments."

The new service underscores IBM's expanding business continuity and resiliency services portfolio. In today's "always-on" world, IBM offerings like Disaster Recovery as a Service and Cloud Resiliency Orchestration are built to simplify and automate the disaster recovery process, increase workflow efficiency, and reduce risk, cost, and system testing time for clients around

the world. With more than 50 years of business continuity and disaster recovery experience, today IBM has over 300 resiliency centers across 68 countries.

Zain's strategy of being a sustainable digital communications company has long focused on the customer experience and using technology to create more value for the customer. The launch of this service is one of the major steps in the company's strategic plan to introduce more distinctive digital services dedicated to corporate and enterprise customers. Zain believes that corporations are unique by nature and require unique services that recognize and satisfy their needs promptly and efficiently, and today's announcement is a testament of that belief.

CHINA SHAMES JAYWALKERS THROUGH FACIAL RECOGNITION

BEIJING: Chinese cities are cracking down on jaywalkers by installing facial recognition kits at intersections to identify and shame them by posting their photo on public screens, state media said yesterday. It is the latest use of the technology in China, where it has been used by fast-food chain KFC to predict orders and in public restrooms to foil toilet paper thefts. This time, cities in four provinces are using the hardware to keep pedestrians from crossing at red lights, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

The technology has detected more than 6,000 instances of people crossing red lights since it was installed in early May in Jinan, capital of eastern Shandong province. The facial recognition equipment takes photos and a 15-second video of jaywalkers, whose images instantly appear on a screen, showing them that they've been caught, Xinhua said. The photos are matched with images in a provincial police database. "Within 20 minutes, the offend-

er's photograph and personal information such as their ID number and home address are displayed on the screen at the crossroad," Xinhua said.

Traffic police give the offenders the choice between paying a \$3 fine, taking a half-hour course on traffic rules or spending 20 minutes helping a traffic officer. Jinan traffic police department may also publish the offender's information on its Weibo social media account. "Since the new technology has been adopted, the cases of jaywalking have been reduced from 200 to 20 each day at the major intersection of Jingshi and Shungeng roads," Jinan police officer Li Yong was quoted as saying by Xinhua. The Xinhua report comes after a video appeared on social media earlier this month showing a woman being hit by a taxi on a crosswalk and then run over by a car. She later died. The footage sparked outrage at the indifference of other pedestrians and drivers who did not stop to help her.—AFP



KUWAIT'S IBN EL-AMEED SECONDARY SCHOOL RECEIVES MICROSOFT SHOWCASE SCHOOL RECOGNITION

KUWAIT: Microsoft announced that Ibn El-Ameed Secondary School, an academic institution under Kuwait's Ministry of Education; has joined the Microsoft Showcase School community, a program dedicated to excellence in education sectors around the globe. The Microsoft Showcase School program is designed to identify innovative leadership and teaching in classrooms around the world. Showcase School leadership teams are part of a global professional community that embraces technology as a key enabler of institution-wide transformation.

"It is inspiring to see Ibn El-Ameed Secondary School receive much-deserved recognition for the part its leaders and educators have played in bringing 21st-century methodologies into our classrooms. This is the kind of progress we have in mind - bold, progressive changes to learning that will cement the future of our youth and allow them to enter the workforce as innovators," said Khalid Al-Rushaid, Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education,

Ministry of Education, Kuwait. "Technology is a central component in our vision for the development of our young people, and Microsoft has been an invaluable partner in the pursuit of that goal."

Microsoft's work with Kuwait's Ministry of Education includes implementation of Windows devices, Office 365 and OneNote, to support the ministry in its own digital-transformation journey. "We have a long history of collaborations with Kuwait's Ministry of Education, through our many programs designed to enhance teaching and learning," said Charles Nahas, General Manager, Microsoft Kuwait. "Ibn El-Ameed Secondary's inclusion in the Showcase School program is indicative of how far Kuwait's education sector has come in embracing digital transformation. We believe technology has an integral part to play in making lessons come alive. We at Microsoft are not teachers, but we have always been proud to play a supporting role, as enabler, in transforming classrooms around the world."

Microsoft Gulf's Education Team visited Ibn El-Ameed Secondary School, to present the Showcase School Banner to School Principle Fahed El-Mudahka and Microsoft Innovative Educator Fellow, Ahmed Ashour. The school's newly appointed principle; Dr. Ali Salem Edreis now takes over the reins from Fahed El-Mudahka in carrying forward its vision of implementing digital methodologies to improve teaching and learning experiences. Microsoft's Showcase Schools must satisfy several rigorous best-practice criteria before they can join the community. A board of education specialist at Microsoft examines each school's approach to digital transformation through the lens of leadership, classroom capacity, technical capacity, teaching and learning. Clear improvement plans, professional-development programs, personal-learning initiatives and a sharp focus on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), are just some of the elements Microsoft's Showcase Schools panel looks for in identifying stand-out educators.

ARABIA CSR NETWORK TO HOST GRI-CERTIFIED SUSTAINABILITY TRAINING COURSES IN DUBAI

Arabia CSR Network, the Middle East region's leading training service provider and think tank, has announced that it will host the second three-day training course on the 'GRI Standards for Sustainability Reporting' from July 25 to 27, 2017. In addition, it will also conduct a one-day Certified Training on 'GRI Standards Transition Module' both in English and Arabic. The course in English will be held on July 17, 2017, while the Arabic will take place on July 24, 2017.

To be held in Dubai, all the accredited content for the courses will be delivered through lectures, discussions, exercises, and case studies. The certified training programs will help participants align their business practices in line with environmental and social expectations and achieve their long-term sustainability goals. It will give delegates a deeper understanding of how a strategic corporate social responsibility (CSR) program backed by reporting and disclosure can contribute to organization's comprehensive performance as well as learn more about its lucrative opportunities and benefits.

Habiba Al-Marashi, President and CEO, Arabia CSR Network, said: "We are looking forward to host the certified trainings for 'GRI Standards for Sustainability Reporting' and 'GRI Standards Transitional Module' which will be of immense value to organizations that follow the GRI guidelines to report non-financial performance. We are upbeat that the courses will present valuable opportunities to participants in preparing sustainability reports. At Arabia CSR Network, it is our



endeavor to bring the latest in knowledge and skill enhancement in the field of CSR and sustainability through reputed global collaborations and partnerships."

The training course on the GRI Standards for Sustainability Reporting will be composed of individual sessions including Introduction and Background, Overview of the GRI Standards, GRI Standards in Detail, Start Your Reporting Process Using the GRI Standards, and Additional Resources. The session on GRI Standards Transitional Module will cover GRI Standards Introduction, Overview of GRI Standards, Universal Standards, Topic-Specific Standards, Key Content Clarification, and Additional Resources. The Arabia CSR Network is the first certified training center in the region for the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), a leading international organization in the field of sustainability.

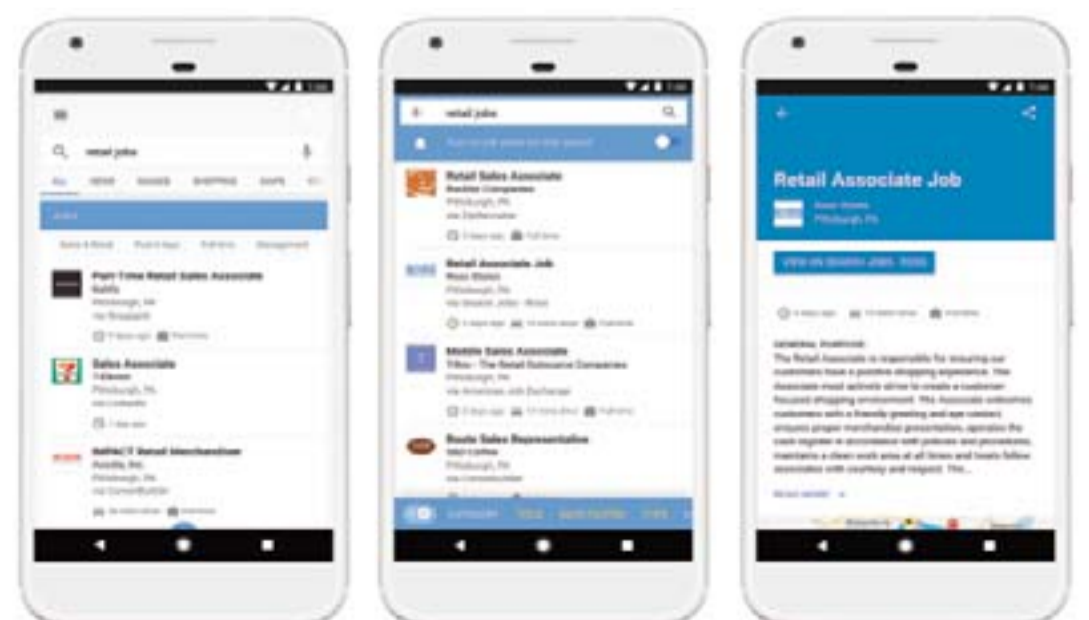


PARIS: A picture taken during the Viva Technology event dedicated to start-up development, innovation and digital technology in Paris shows the 'Marty the robot' game.—AFP

GOOGLE'S SEARCH ENGINE AIMS TO BECOME EMPLOYMENT ENGINE

SAN FRANCISCO: Google is trying to turn its search engine into an employment engine. Beginning yesterday, job hunters will be able to go to Google and see help-wanted listings that its search engine collects across the internet. The results will aim to streamline such listings by eliminating duplicate jobs posted on different sites. Google will also show employer ratings from current and former workers, as well as typical commute times to job locations.

This detailed jobs information is a departure from the way Google's main search engine has traditionally shown only bare-bones links to various help-wanted sites. Google is teaming up with a variety of help-wanted and employer-rating services, including LinkedIn, Monster, WayUp, DirectEmployers, CareerBuilder, Glassdoor, and Facebook.—AP



SAN FRANCISCO: This image provided by Google shows examples of help-wanted listings displayed on a smartphone.—AP

GLOBAL CORAL BLEACHING MAY BE ENDING, US AGENCY SAYS

WASHINGTON: Coral reef bleaching may be easing after three years of high ocean temperatures, the longest such period since the 1980s, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Monday. Its experts said satellite data and other analysis showed widespread bleaching was no longer occurring in all three ocean basins—Atlantic, Pacific and Indian—“indicating a likely end to the global bleaching event.” Scientists from the NOAA,

an agency of the US Department of Commerce, said they will closely monitor sea surface temperatures and bleaching “over the next six months to confirm the event’s end.”

Since 2015, all tropical coral reefs have seen above-normal temperatures, and more than 70 percent experienced prolonged high temperatures that can cause bleaching. US coral reefs were hit hardest, with two years of severe bleaching in

Florida and Hawaii, three in the Mariana Islands, and four in Guam, according to the NOAA. “This global coral bleaching event has been the most widespread, longest and perhaps the most damaging on record,” said Mark Eakin, the NOAA’s Coral Reef Watch coordinator.

Healthy coral reefs protect shores from storms and offer habitats for fish and other marine life, including ecologically and economically important

species. However, after corals die, reefs quickly degrade and the structures that corals build erode. While corals can recover from mild bleaching, severe or long-term bleaching is often lethal, experts say. Early in 2017, the rise in water temperature caused significant bleaching in the Great Barrier Reef in Australia for the second consecutive year and also in American Samoa, which was severely affected in 2015.—AFP

INDIA’S NO-MEAT, NO-LUST ADVICE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN RIDICULED

GOVERNMENT DOLES OUT UNSCIENTIFIC, IRRATIONAL ADVICE

NEW DELHI: India’s government is advising pregnant women to avoid all meat, eggs and lusty thoughts. Doctors say the advice is preposterous, and even dangerous, considering India’s already-poor record with maternal health. Women are often the last to eat or receive health care in traditionally patriarchal Indian households. Malnutrition and anemia, or iron deficiency, are key factors behind India’s having one of the world’s highest rates of maternal mortality, with 174 of every 100,000 pregnancies resulting in the mother’s death in 2015.

That’s better than five years earlier, when the maternal mortality rate was 205 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, but still far worse than

said gynecologist Arun Gadre, who is based in the western Indian city of Pune but works in rural areas.

The government booklet, titled “Mother and Child Care,” smacks of religious dogma and ignores widely accepted medical evidence that pregnant women benefit from eating protein-rich meats and can safely engage in sex, doctors said. It says pregnant women should also shun “impure thoughts” and look at pictures of beautiful babies to benefit the fetus. “Pregnant women should detach themselves from desire, anger, attachment, hatred and lust,” reads the booklet, released last week by the Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy, a

specifically against sex, only against all thoughts of desire or lust. “The booklet puts together relevant facts culled out from clinical practice in the fields of yoga and naturopathy,” Minister Shripad Naik said. The advice is unlikely to be followed at the many government-run health centers across India. They are operated by the Health Ministry, which has had past conflicts with the traditional medicine ministry and follows more scientific practices.

Backward thinking

The booklet is the latest push for vegetarianism by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Hindu-nationalist government, which already advocates avoiding beef and strictly limits the transportation and slaughter of cows, which are considered sacred by Hindus. But the latest homily to pregnant women has outraged the medical community. “This is a national shame. If the calories of expectant mothers are further reduced by asking them to shun meat and eggs, this situation will only worsen,” Gadre said. “This is absurd advice to be giving to pregnant women in a country like India.” About a third of India’s 1.3 billion people struggle to live on less than \$2 a day.

Many are lucky to eat more than one full meal a day, and women often give their portions up to their hungry children or husbands. Malnourished women are more likely to give birth to underweight babies, who then are in danger of being “stunted” or not growing to their full height and weight. A full 48 percent of all Indian children under the age of 5 are considered stunted, according to a 2015 report by UNICEF.

“Undernourished girls grow into undernourished women. Married by their families while still in their teens, these girls become pregnant by the time they are 17 or 18, when their bodies have not matured enough to safely deliver a child,” said Amit Sengupta, a physician and health care activist with the Delhi Science Forum, a public advocacy organization. He said the government’s advice to pregnant women betrayed “backward thinking” and hostility toward evidence-based science. “This kind of advice is detrimental to women’s health,” he said.—AP



ALLAHABAD, India: In this file photo, a doctor examines a pregnant woman at the district women’s hospital, in Allahabad, most populous state of Uttar Pradesh.—AP

China’s 27 per 100,000 or the United States’ 14 per 100,000, according to UNICEF. “The government is doling out unscientific and irrational advice, instead of ensuring that poor pregnant women get to eat a nutritious, high-protein diet,”

part of the government’s ministry that promotes traditional and alternative medicine.

The traditional medicine minister defended the booklet as containing “wisdom accumulated over many centuries,” and said it did not advise



ARIZONA: A woman walks along a row of misters in Tempe, Arizona.—AP

HEAT WAVES CREATE HEALTH HAZARD IN SOUTHWESTERN US

PHOENIX: A punishing heat wave has arrived in the Southwestern US and brought temperatures that will approach 120 degrees in Arizona - a number not seen in the desert city in more than 20 years. Arizona is seeing the most stifling temperatures, but the wrath of the heat wave is being felt across Nevada and California as well. Las Vegas was forecast to hit 117 yesterday on the first day of summer, and excessive heat warnings cover almost all of California. Airlines canceled flights in Phoenix because the extreme heat makes it too difficult to take off.

The major burn center in Arizona urged people to be careful around concrete, playground equipment and vehicle interiors. The National Park Service warned visitors to not to hike into the Grand Canyon because of excessive heat. Despite the dangers, the heat may not be as bad as originally expected. The weather service had been forecasting Tuesday highs at 120 or 121 degrees in Phoenix for the past several days, but it now predicts 119. “That’s deadly heat no matter how you slice it,” National Weather Service meteorologist Chris Breckenridge said. Here are a few things to know about the heat wave:

Hitting 120 is rare

Phoenix and Las Vegas are used to 110-degree heat, but temperatures above 115 are rare. Phoenix has hit 118 degrees 11 times, most recently last summer. The last time it reached 120 was in 1995. A notorious heat wave in 1990 brought consecutive days at 120 degrees, including the record of 122. Las Vegas is forecast to hit 114 on Monday and tie a record high of 117 degrees yesterday last recorded in 2013. The heat is spread across California. The Central Valley has been baking in unusually bad heat, and the Northern California city of Redding hit a June 18 record of 110 degrees on Sunday - 19 degrees above the normal. It could be worse: Death Valley could see 124 degrees on Tuesday.

Airlines watching the heat

When the temperature soars, it’s harder for airplanes to take off. As a result, airlines are taking the heat seriously. American Airlines cancelled nearly 40 flights on Tuesday in Phoenix operated by regional jets because of the heat. The airline also said it will allow Phoenix passengers flying during the peak heat Monday through Wednesday to change flights without a fee. American Airlines spokesman Ross Feinstein said the smaller regional jets flown by its partners can’t operate once the temperature hits 118 degrees.

That maximum is set by Bombardier, the manufacturer. Larger airliners made by

Boeing and Airbus have higher maximum operating temperatures, but airlines still need to closely monitor the weight of the jets during the heat. Feinstein said the carrier began limiting sales on some flights to prevent the planes from exceeding maximum weight for safe takeoff in the hot conditions. Airlines can use other strategies for dealing with limitation on the planes during hot weather, such as not fueling completely to make the plane lighter for take-off, then making a refueling stop.

Sweltering Vegas

Las Vegas visitors should be aware of a little-known fact about the temperatures in the gambling Mecca: The Strip is often hotter than the rest of the city. Meteorologist Ashley Allen with the National Weather Service in Las Vegas says the city’s airport is forecast to hit 114 on Monday, but temperatures on the Strip could reach somewhere between 115 and 120 degrees. Allen says the Las Vegas Strip’s tall, close buildings and long stretches of concrete cause the area to heat quickly and cool slowly. She says it’s hard to predict exactly how hot the Strip will get because the Weather Service does not get official readings there.

Burn risks

It gets so hot in Phoenix that stores put coverings over door handles so people don’t burn their hands. Steering wheels and car shifters can be too hot to touch when getting into a car. And the pavement can burn the paws of pets. The director of the Arizona Burn Center said second- and third-degree burns from touching hot items are common in the extreme heat. Dr. Kevin Foster warned people to be extra careful around concrete, car interiors and playground equipment, especially young children who have sensitive skin. Pavement and concrete can be dangerous for pets, Foster said.

Health hazards

The heat is a serious public health hazard in places such as Phoenix and Las Vegas. The county that is home to Phoenix had 130 heat-related deaths in 2016, the highest number in more than a decade. The Arizona Department of Health Services says nearly 2,000 people visit Arizona emergency rooms every year because of heat-related illnesses. Homeless people comprised one-third of heat-related deaths in 2016, according to county records. Most of the others involved people with non-functioning air conditioners. Kurt Dickson, an emergency room doctor at Banner Health in Phoenix, said people have a range of heat illnesses during the summer months, including fatigue, heatstroke and severe sun burns.—AP

FOREVER GREEN: CEMETERIES MAKE MORE ROOM FOR NATURAL BURIALS

RHINEBECK: Last goodbyes are said in these woods with wildflowers placed on a shrouded body, or with the beloved wrapped in a favorite childhood blanket. Dirt shoveled back into the graves leaves behind slowly sinking mounds of earth on the forest floor, marked with stones. “Green burials” like these at Rhinebeck Cemetery in New York’s Hudson Valley shun coffins, embalming fluid and concrete “vaults” so everything in the ground decomposes. It’s a movement that goes back more than a decade, but advocates say public attention has increased in recent years, with more cemeteries tweaking practices to accommodate people who want to tread lightly, even in death.

“I love the thing about just being wrapped up and going back to the ground,” said 59-year-old Gina Walker Fox, who purchased a plot right by a tulip tree and wild berries she imagines her children picking on graveside visits. “And that seems to be a very easy way on the environment, and an easy way on the human body.” Green burials turn back the clock to the days before the Civil War, when embalming caught on as a way to preserve soldiers who died far from home. Burial vaults, which keep graves from collapsing and lawns level for mowing, became more widespread after World War II.

Advocates argue it’s best to avoid introducing concrete vaults and potentially toxic embalming fluids into the ground. And unlike cremation, no fossil fuels are required to break down the body. Of the thousands of cemeteries nationwide, there are maybe around 125 that now offer options for green burial, said Suzanne Kelly, Rhinebeck Cemetery committee chairwoman and author of “Greening Death.” Many, like Rhinebeck 80 miles north of New York City, create natural burial grounds near the neatly ordered markers of their traditional plots.

“Unto dust shalt thou return” In Vermont, a new law taking effect July 1 changes the minimum depth for burying bodies from 5 feet to 1 meter - a depth advocates say is conducive to decomposition and safe from animals. Figuring out the best way to prepare shallower graves is just one question cemetery operators have as they seek to accommodate green burials. “If they’re in a shroud, are people going



Massachusetts: In this photo, Mary Lauren Fraser stands beside a casket she hand-wove from willow, in Montague, Massachusetts.—AP

to understand that, first of all, that body could have an odor to it? There could be body fluid stains on the shroud. I don’t know,” said Patrick Healy, president of the Vermont Cemetery Association.

“Right now, we’re protected from that situation because they’re always in a casket.” Alabama last year changed a law that restricted casket sales to licensed funeral directors after a lawsuit from a woman who wanted to sell biodegradable caskets for her eco-friendly burial ground. Green burials can save people thousands of dollars in costs for a vault, a plush casket and a granite marker. But they also have nurtured a market for ecologically friendly products such as biodegradable cornstarch urns and wicker caskets.

Mary Lauren Fraser weaves her \$200 urns and \$2,800 caskets in her apartment in western Massachusetts. Costs for the handmade products are in line with what consumers could pay for traditional urns and caskets, though they draw interesting looks when she puts them on display at local farmers’ markets. “I get all kinds

of reactions,” she said. “Way more people coming in and saying, ‘Is that a coffin? Did you make that? Is green burial legal?’”

While state laws vary on the treatment of bodies, green burial practices are legal across the nation, said Kate Kalanick of the Ojai, California-based Green Burial Council. The council, which certifies green practitioners, says unembalmed bodies are safe for a viewing before burial and do not pollute the soil. For some customers, it’s not about cost or the environment. It’s about what feels right during a difficult time. After losing a stillborn daughter this year, Becky and Chris Mancuso looked to Vale Cemetery in Schenectady, where five generations of her family are buried.

Chris Mancuso couldn’t imagine chemically embalming his daughter, and the cemetery’s new natural burial section fit in with his Christian faith that “unto dust shalt thou return.” He built a wooden burial box for Anna himself. Their 6-year-old daughter picked wood that was golden, like heaven.—AFP

CHOLESTEROL-LOWERING VACCINE SEEMS TO WORK IN MICE: STUDY

PARIS: A cholesterol-lowering vaccine has shown promise in mice, said researchers yesterday who announced they had started early-phase trials to see if it also works in humans. Such a treatment could offer a welcome alternative to statins, the main pharmaceutical choice today for lowering cholesterol in people at high risk of heart attack or stroke. The vaccine, dubbed AT04A, reduced cholesterol levels in trial mice by half, and reversed damage done to blood vessels due to plaque buildup by more than 60 percent, researchers said in a statement.

The mice were given the vaccine after they were fed a fatty diet to resemble the high-cholesterol intake of a human Western-style diet. “Levels of cholesterol were reduced in a consistent and long-lasting way,” said study co-author Guenther Staffler of the AFFIRis biotech company developing the treatment. This, in turn, resulted in “a reduction of fatty deposits in the arteries and atherosclerotic damage, as well as reduced arterial wall inflammation.”

Atherosclerosis occurs when a waxy compound lines the walls of blood vessels, limiting blood flow and potentially triggering dangerous blood clots. Statins have been used for about 30 years to bring down “bad” LDL cholesterol blamed

for such deposits. But conflicting reports on statins’ benefits and harms have made headlines in recent years, prompting some people prescribed the drugs to stop taking them. There is also uncertainty about the link between dietary fat and cholesterol, and even whether cholesterol in food is really unhealthy.

AT04A contains a molecule that causes the body to produce antibodies against an enzyme called PCSK9, which prevents the clearance of so-called “bad” cholesterol from the blood, according to a study published in the European Heart Journal. The cholesterol-zapping antibodies persisted for months after vaccination, it said. “If these findings translate successfully into humans, this could mean that... we could develop a long-lasting therapy that, after the first vaccination, just needs an annual booster,” said Staffler.

“This would result in an effective and more convenient treatment for patients, as well as higher patient compliance.” A Phase I trial—the first step in a long, typically three-phase process to vet a drug for safety and effectiveness—has begun, its developers said. In a comment on the study, cardiologist Tim Chico of the University of Sheffield, said “many questions remain about whether this approach could work in man.”—AFP

MEDICAL MARIJUANA WOOS FOUR-LEGGED FANS

NEW CUSTOMER BASE BLOSSOMS IN US

LOS ANGELES: It's early morning, just after breakfast, and six-year-old Cayley is wide awake, eagerly anticipating her daily dose of cannabis. The black Labrador, tail wagging, laps up the liquid tincture owner Brett Hartmann squirts into her mouth, a remedy he uses morning and evening to help alleviate Cayley's anxiety. "Ever since I started her on CBD (cannabidiol-a marijuana extract), her separation anxiety has disappeared," says Hartmann, 30, of his pet, a service dog he acquired while in college because he had epilepsy.

Hartmann, who lives near Los Angeles, said he turned to medical marijuana for Cayley after he no longer needed her to accompany him everywhere, having himself overcome his epilepsy with the help of the drug. "I just allowed her to retire and... I don't think she handled the transition too well," Hartmann, who also has his ageing dachshund on cannabis, said.

"But CBD has really helped." With the multi-billion dollar medical and recreational marijuana industry for humans blossoming in the United States, so is a new customer base-animals. "We are seeing about 20 percent growth every single month," said Alison Ettel, founder of Treat Well, a company in California that specializes in non-psychoactive



LOS ANGELES: Brett Hartman gives his dog Cayley, a six-year-old-Labrador Retriever drops of a cannabis based medicinal tincture to treat hip pain and anxiety at his home in Los Angeles, California.—AFP photos

medical cannabis products for animals and humans.

Treating thousands of animals

She said owners of animals-from dogs, cats, lizards, turtles, apacans, horses to farm animals-are increasingly turning to cannabis to help treat ailments ranging

from cancer and heart murmurs to arthritis and ear infections. And the feedback, Ettel says, is more than encouraging.

"We probably get at least one to five cancer patients a day and the results we're seeing are just blowing my mind," she said, claiming the drug can help improve life expectancy. When she start-



LOS ANGELES: Bottles of Treat Well cannabis tinctures for pets, a liquid form of cannabis extraction that can be placed directly in an animal's mouth or on their food, are seen in Los Angeles, California.

ed in the business about a decade ago, Ettel said she would treat about 20 animals a year, mostly dogs.

Today, with medical marijuana legalized in 29 states-plus the District of Columbia-the number of four-legged patients has skyrocketed.

"Now we are treating thousands of animals," she said. But despite the rush to cash in on the booming industry,

cannabis remains illegal on the federal level and marijuana laws on the state level don't apply to pets. That has translated into pet owners having to get a marijuana card for themselves in order to purchase cannabis for their pups, as veterinarians are barred from prescribing marijuana.

The legal grey area and the lack of substantial studies on the effect of cannabis for pets also means that owners and dispensaries have had to tread carefully on dosages. "We start very very low and very very slow to try and find the appropriate dose," said Melinda Hayes, founder of Sweet Leaf Shoppe, a medical cannabis delivery service. "The last thing you want to do is for your dog or pet to be uncomfortable."

Does it really work?

Proponents say the advantage of cannabis for ailing pets as opposed to painkillers or other traditional drugs is that when properly used, it has no known serious side effects. "Other medicines can take a toll on an animal's kidney, liver and other organs," Hayes said. Another advantage, she added, was the lower cost of medical cannabis compared to some medication. Veterinarians are cautioning against viewing cannabis as a miracle drug.—AFP

FATAL MAULING OF TEEN SHOWS DANGER ALASKA ATHLETES FACE

ANCHORAGE, Alaska: Patrick Cooper had already turned around after reaching the halfway point in a popular mountain race in Alaska when he somehow veered off the trail and became lost. That's when the 16-year-old Anchorage boy encountered the black bear that would take his life in a rare predatory attack. Cooper began running, and at one point he reportedly placed a frantic call to his brother, saying he was being chased by a bear Sunday in the Robert Spurr Memorial Hill Climb race south of Anchorage.

The brother notified race director Brad Precosky, who alerted race crews to begin searching for Cooper, known as Jack. It took a couple hours for responders to locate the teen, whose body was found about a mile up the path, at about 1,500 vertical feet. The bear was found at the site, guarding the body, Precosky said.

A Chugach State Park ranger shot the 250-pound bear in the face, but the animal ran away. Alaska State Troopers said the boy's remains were airlifted from the scene on Sunday.

State park staffers were scouring the area Monday looking for the bear, state Fish and Game spokesman Ken Marsh said. Sunday's attack was believed to have been a rare predatory move, not a defensive action such as when a female bear will protect her cubs, he said. "It's very unusual," Marsh said of the mauling. "It's sort of like someone being struck by lightning." Later Monday, a second fatal mauling at the hands of a black bear was reported nearly 300 miles northeast of Anchorage.

Predatory behavior

Officials with an underground gold mine reported a contract employee



ANCHORAGE: A sign warns people that the trail head is closed after a fatal bear mauling at Bird Ridge Trail in Anchorage, Alaska.—AP

hired to take geological samples was killed and another injured in a black bear attack. No names have been released. Alaska State Troopers and federal mine officials are investigating the mauling at Pogo Mine. Matt Wedeking, division operations manager with Alaska State Parks, said the predatory behavior of the bear in the attack on the teen was not normal.

Asked if there were cubs around this black bear, he said, "We don't know. There could have been. But right now I don't have any information about the bear." The last fatal mauling in the state occurred near Delta Junction in Alaska's interior in 2013, when a man was killed by a male black bear, Marsh said. The last fatal bear attack in the greater Anchorage area was in 1995, when two people were killed in the Turnagain Arm area by a brown bear protecting a moose carcass, he said. Last week, a juvenile

and two young adults sustained minor injuries when a female brown bear with two cubs attacked them. Authorities shot at that bear, but it ran off. Athletes who run wilderness races in Alaska know bear encounters are always an inherent possibility. Much of the vast state is bear country, after all, and even the competitions themselves can come with warnings, or liability waivers for participants to sign. But competitors often train alone in such areas and are fully aware of the dangers.

Races actually can be said to cut down on the risk of a bear encounter because so many people are there, making noise and making their presence known, Precosky said. "There's no safer time to be on a mountain than on a race," he said. Competitors note that races involve large noisy crowds, which can spook the animals away from the action.—AP

DNA SHOWS EARLY SPREAD OF CATS IN HUMAN WORLD

NEW YORK: Long before cats became the darlings of Facebook and YouTube, they spread through the ancient human world. A DNA study reached back thousands of years to track that conquest and found evidence of two major dispersals from the Middle East, in which people evidently took cats with them. Genetic signatures the felines had on those journeys are still seen in most modern-day breeds. Researchers analyzed DNA from 209 ancient cats as old as 9,000 years from Europe, Africa and Asia, including some ancient Egyptian cat mummies.

"They are direct witnesses of the situation in the past," said Eva-Maria Geigl of the Jacques Monod Institute in Paris. She and colleagues also looked at 28 modern feral cats from Bulgaria and east Africa. It's the latest glimpse into the complicated story of domesticated cats. They are descendants of wild ancestors that learned to live with people and became relatively tame - though some cat owners would say that nowadays, they don't always seem enthusiastic about our company.

The domestication process may have begun around 10,000 years ago when people settled in the Fertile Crescent, the arch-shaped region that includes the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and land around the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. They stored grain, which drew rodents, which in turn attracted wild cats. Animal remains in trash heaps might have attracted them too. Over time, these wild felines adapted to this man-made environment and got used to hanging around people.

Previous study had found a cat buried alongside a human some 9,500 years ago in Cyprus, an island without any native population of felines. That indicates the cat was brought by boat and it had some special relationship to that person, researchers say. Cats were clearly tame by about 3,500 years ago in Egypt, where paintings often placed them beneath chairs. That shows by that time, "the cat makes its way to the household," said Geigl. But the overall domestication process has been hard for scientists to track, in part because fossils skeletons don't reveal whether a cat was wild or domesticated.

Dispersal of cats

It's easier to distinguish dogs, our first domesticated animal, from their wolf ancestors. Dogs evolved from wolves that had begun to associate with people even before farming began, perhaps drawn by the food the



DENVER: In a file photo, Elsa, a kitten, recovers at the Denver Dumb Friends League animal shelter, in Denver.—AP

humans left behind. The new study tracked the spread of specific cat DNA markers over long distances through time, a sign that people had taken cats with them. Results were released Monday by the journal Nature Ecology and Evolution.

The study "strengthens and refines previous work," said Carlos Driscoll of the Wildlife Institute of India. The extensive sampling of cat DNA going back so far in time is unprecedented, he said. Researchers also looked for a genetic variant that produces the blotchy coat pattern typical of modern-day domestic cats, rather than the tiger-like stripes seen in their wild cousins. It showed up more often in samples from after the year 1300 than earlier ones, which fits with other evidence that the tabby cat markings became common by the 1700s and that people started breeding cats for their appearance in the 1800s.

That's late in the domestication of cats, in contrast to horses, which were bred for their appearance early on, Geigl said. Most of the study focused on the ancient dispersals of cats. In the DNA samples analyzed, one genetic signature found first in the Asian portion of Turkey - and perhaps once carried by some Fertile Crescent cats - showed up more than 6,000 years ago in Bulgaria. That indicates cats had been taken there by boat with the first farmers colonizing Europe, Geigl said.— AP

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ACK STUDENTS RECEIVE WILLIAM GLASSER'S INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION

The Australian College of Kuwait's (ACK) School of Business students attended the "Choice Theory" Course from the William Glasser Institute (WGI), USA. The course, founded by Dr. William Glasser in 1967, helps people understand themselves and better manage the events and people in their lives, providing a strong foundation for Leadership Management. A group of ACK students participated in the course as an extracurricular activity to provide them with skills and competitive edge in the field of Management, proudly receiving certifications from WGI.

After completing the 25-hour course, they continued to the Basic Practicum Course in preparation for the Advanced Level. Commenting on this achievement, Dr. Sam Toglaw, Associate Dean - School of Business at ACK, commented, "The training offered to our students based on the choice theory is significant for our teaching model that focuses on 3Hs, Head, Heart and Hand. Controlling behavior is an important reflection of a positive attitude and internal motivation. We encourage building such attitudinal skills which enable our students make prudent and logical decisions."

"The students study Choice Theory as part of their Internship unit where it helps understand what motivates

human behavior and make better choices. Our students were required to present their Internship experience based on Choice Theory Learnt. We have invited members of board of directors of William Glasser International - Kuwait and it was a great pleasure to have them attend our student's presentations and give very valuable feedback to our students."

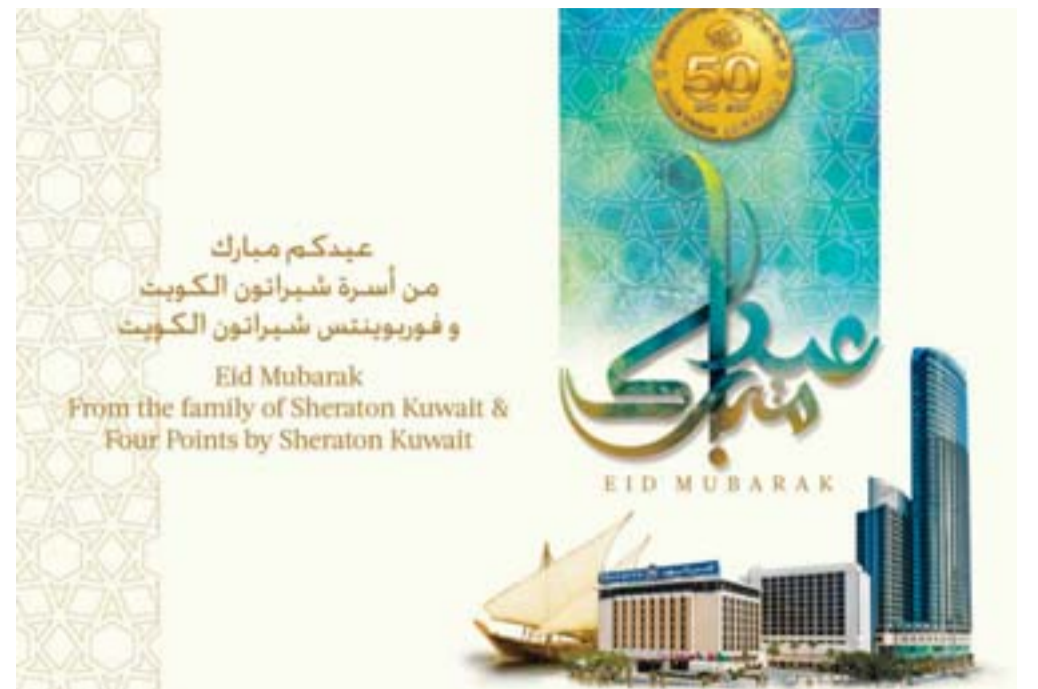
Board of Directors of William Glasser International - Kuwait, Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti said, "William Glasser International - Kuwait chapter was pleased to attend an educational event held and managed by reputable educational institution the Australian College of Kuwait. The experience shows how much ACK cares to equip students with the right skills and capabilities to be ready for the workplace by introducing the Choice Theory. Whereby students will be psychologically fit to deal with all changes in their life that's WGI-Kuwait mission." ACK will continue to support its students by offering certified courses from international institutes for higher learning and adding to their skills set, while providing them with the ultimate knowledge and experience for their upcoming professional careers.

EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE ON EID AL-FITR AT SHERATON AND FOUR POINTS HOTELS

The Sheraton Kuwait and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait hotels express sincere congratulations and blessings for the approach of Eid Al-Fitr, and invite you to indulge in a luxurious Eid spirit through its prestigious restaurants, which extends from the Sheraton Kuwait to the Avenues, the largest mall in Kuwait, where they can choose from a wide selection of menus around the world in accordance with high level of hospitality standards and outstanding services.

Sheraton Kuwait restaurants at the Avenues-Grand Avenue is welcoming you to try an exceptional dining experience filled with the authentic flavors by enjoying lavish dining at Al-Hambra restaurant with its new concept and savoring a selection of Oriental and Mediterranean set menu dishes. For more variety, Le Tarbouche restaurant, Bukhara restaurant and Shahrayar restaurant provide delicious traditional dishes with various cuisines in a special ambience and our visitors could relax in the elegance of the English Tea Lounge located in the 2nd Avenue.

For the pioneers of the Sheraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel, our restaurants are waiting you to spend unforgettable times with family



and friends with unique cultural experiences of hospitality and dining venues where you can experience the exemplary fine dining of the genuine Italian cuisine at Riccardo restaurant, a lavish dining experience at Al-Hambra restaurant where you can savor a variety of international buffets specially prepared for this occasion.

Lebanese delicacies in a distinctive traditional ambience at Le Tarbouche restaurant with the best cold and hot mesas; Also, Bukhara restaurant offers a rich treasure of Indian dishes prepared with the finest types of authentic spices, as well as Shahrayar restaurant, the Iranian cuisine where you relish the most vibrant cuisine and taste the best barbecue with hot tannur bread.

Enjoy traditional English tea in a luxurious and

classic ambience with original flavors at the English Tea Lounge with a variety of delectable scones and snacks. Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait is welcoming you at La Mamma Pizzeria to celebrate a unique Eid where you can enjoy an assortment of appetizing antipasti, freshly prepared pasta and pizza baked on the wood to meet your culinary desire. Special summer offers on rooms and suites are also available to enjoy your holidays and suit your expected desires.

On this occasion Mr. Fahed Abushaar - General Manager of Sheraton Kuwait and Mr. Mounir Amer - General Manager of Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait, the Executive Committee and all the associates wish the people of Kuwait and all residents a happy Eid.

KUWAIT MARRIOTT HOTELS OFFER EXCITING DEALS FOR EID AL-FITR

Marriott Hotels in Kuwait are offering their guests exclusive deals on rooms during Eid Al-Fitr. The exciting array of promotions includes discounted rates on rooms and suites at JW Marriott Kuwait City, Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait City and Residence Inn by Marriott Kuwait City. In addition, the special offer also includes complimentary buffet breakfast, free WiFi, and free meals for children under 6 years old.

To add to the exclusive benefits, guests can enjoy free access to the swimming pool and health club. Free valet parking and shared airport transfers will also be available along with early check-in and late check-out, subject to availability. It is also worthy to note that JW Marriott Hotel Kuwait and Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait have direct exclusive entrances to "Salhia" and "Arraya" Shopping Malls, where guests can shop between an array of world-class retail brands.

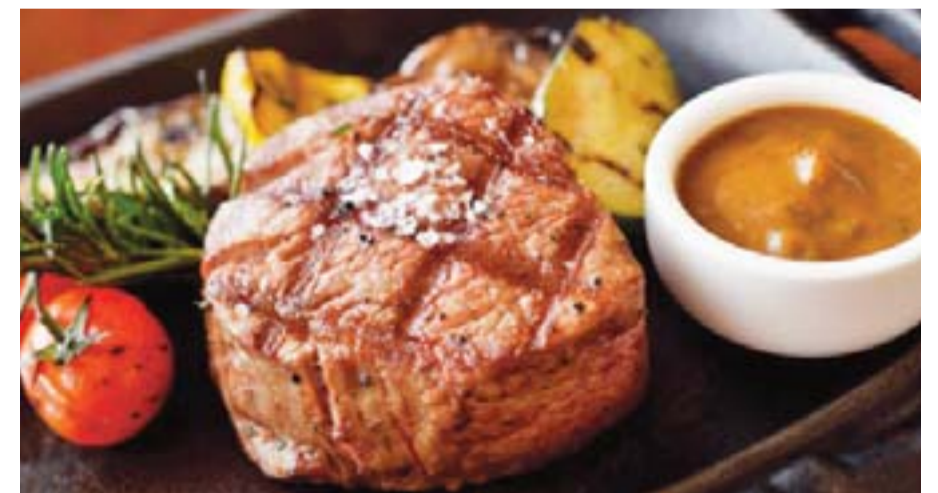
A superb dining experience can be enjoyed at Terrace Grill restaurant at the JW Marriott Kuwait. The restaurant offers an extensive menu of the finest meat cuts and seafood. Other interesting cuisines can be tried at the Japanese Kei restaurant offering sushi and Teppanyaki. In addition to a wide range of buffets from different cuisines at Crossroads restaurant, including Italian, Chinese, Indian and Mediterranean.

The much-celebrated Indian restaurant Soul and Spice in Courtyard by Marriott is well known for serving flavorful Indian dishes, in

addition to Sushi restaurant which offers a wide array of mouth-watering Japanese delicacies. Moreover, Blendz restaurant, located at the lobby of Residence Inn by Marriott Kuwait City, offers its guests a unique flavor of modern recipes in a very relaxed ambience making it a perfect place to spend time with family and friends.

"During this special time, friends and fami-

lies unite over good food and entertainment to celebrate Eid. We spare no efforts in ensuring that all our guests are well served and satisfied with our diversified offerings. On behalf of Kuwait Marriott team, I would like to wish everyone a wonderful and blessed Eid," said George Aoun, Cluster General Manager of Kuwait Marriott Hotels.





Fetouh Al-Dalali



LOYAC OPENS BRANCH IN JAHRA

LOYAC recently announced opening a branch in Jahra in collaboration with Qiarowan area's community development department. Supported by Al-Mezzan Holding Company (A subsidiary of Al-Wazan Group), the new branch started its Ramadan activities by distributing Ramadan supplies to 250 families. On her part, LOYAC's board member and the branch manager, Fetouh Al-Dalali stressed the need to create a new culture of peace and love in community services to face and counter the spread of violence and extremism.



ENJOY YOUR EID HOLIDAY AT JUMEIRAH MESSILAH BEACH HOTEL & SPA

Eid Al-Fitr is on the horizon and there are plenty of reasons to celebrate this holiday with your friends and family. Kuwait's idyllic resort welcomes guests of all ages to its luxurious accommodation and facilities which are filled with relaxation and exceptional culinary fair. For guests that like to beat the heat, there is plenty of fun on the private beach of the resort.

Take to the Gulf on a jet ski, open the throttle and enjoy the thrill, or go for a friendly contest and see who can stay upright the longest on a giant inflatable banana as it blasts through the waters. There's also the option for guests to lift their Eid stay to the next level by taking to the water then to the air with a parasailing session. Younger guests are important to the team at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa.

The dedicated staff at Sinbad Kids' Club will keep the little ones entertained with a range of activities including arts and crafts and extensive play area. Teen's need their own space too while on holiday and the Scene Club caters especially for them with their own dedicated space featuring the latest gaming consoles and a private movie theater. When it comes to dining, the culinary team created a very special Eid brunch with a twist at Garden Cafe.

The brunch features an array of international cuisines and, for the first time, includes a unique Chocolate and Candy Room, offering 55 different chocolate treats, including signature treats such as fashion designed eclairs, an edible chocolate frame, chocolate Um Ali and a wide range of candies - enough to satisfy even the sweetest tooth.

There's also a live, interactive chocolate show, a



chocolate river and the very popular chocolate shawarma station. For relaxation and rejuvenation time, the award-winning Talise Spahas a special Eid offer with new Detox treatments from Anne Semonin, Paris. Shock your body into action with the Cryolipolysis Body Treatment or try the Cryo Time Freeze Facial.



SAFIR HOTEL & RESIDENCES WELCOMES LOYAC INTERNS

Safir Hotel & Residences Kuwait - Fintas continued its annual internship program in collaboration with LOYAC, aimed at developing promising young local talents. The interns joined the hotel's team for the second time this year from the May 28 until June 22, 2017. During their time at the hotel, the interns provided valuable support to Safir Hotel & Residences' professional team and worked on various client assignments.

Team members had an opportunity to gain valuable work experience, improve their presentation and communication skills and grow professionally. Shereen Moawad, the hotel's Assistant Human Resources

Manager said, "Each year, we look forward to welcoming LOYAC interns into our practice. It is fulfilling to provide Kuwaiti youth with practical hospitality experience while helping our own professionals enhance their mentoring and leadership skills."

Saif Eddin Mohammed, General Manager of the hotel, also noted, "Our ongoing partnership with LOYAC aims at creating a difference across young interns' lives, develop opportunities and help them build a sustainable career. Safir Hotel & Residences Kuwait recognizes the importance of this project and is keen to play a significant role in making it a success. We look forward to seeing this project progresses further."

CROSSWORD 1642



ACROSS

1. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
4. (printing) Written or printed immediately following another character and aligned with it.
12. Narrow wood or metal or plastic runners used for gliding over snow.
15. A rapid escape (as by criminals).
16. An instrument for measuring the distance between two points.
17. Someone who is morally reprehensible.
18. A dark-skinned member of a race of people living in Australia when Europeans arrived.
19. A city in western Lithuania on the Baltic Sea.
20. Fermented alcoholic beverage similar to but heavier than beer.
21. Leather with a napped surface.
23. Type genus of the Ciconiidae.
25. A coffin along with its stand.
29. The sixth month of the civil year.
31. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
32. A software system that facilitates the creation and maintenance and use of an electronic database.
36. Large tropical butterfly with degenerate forelegs and an unpleasant taste.
38. A public promotion of some product or service.
39. Concerning those not members of the clergy.
40. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
41. Go with, fall together.
44. (trademark) A thin polyester film.
45. A statement that deviates from or perverts the truth.
47. A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
49. The compass point midway between south and southeast.
50. A republic in the Asian subcontinent in southern Asia.
52. Affect with wonder.
54. Highly excited.
57. A state in northwestern North America.
58. (in Scotland or Ireland) A mountain or tall hill.
59. Greek mythology.
62. Any of several sorghums cultivated as a source of syrup.
68. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
69. An inclined surface or roadway that moves traffic from one level to another.
72. A United Nations agency created by a multinational treaty to promote trade by the reduction of tariffs and import quotas.
73. An anticipated outcome that is intended or that guides your planned actions.
77. (British) Your grandmother.
78. A long thin fluffy scarf of feathers or fur.
79. Conspicuously and outrageously bad or reprehensible.
80. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.

DOWN

1. By bad luck.
2. Used as a Hindi courtesy title.
3. Pertaining to or resembling amoebae.
4. Red pear-shaped tropical fruit with poisonous seeds.
5. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
6. The scum formed by oxidation at the surface of molten metals.
7. A user interface in which you type commands instead of choosing them from a menu or selecting an icon.
8. A dissolute man in fashionable society.
9. A medicinal drug used to evoke vomiting (especially in cases of drug overdose or poisoning).
10. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
11. A just detectable amount.
12. The act of scanning.
13. Bushy plant of Old World salt marshes and sea beaches having prickly leaves.
14. The content of cognition.
22. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
24. In a manner differing from the usual or expected.
26. Make anew.
27. A person trained to travel in a spacecraft.
28. A town in western Kentucky on the Ohio River.
30. Disposed to venture or take risks.
33. Strong lightweight wood of the balsa tree used especially for floats.
34. An unwholesome atmosphere.
35. Make a high-pitched, screeching noise, as of a door.
37. A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
42. Have a craving, appetite, or great desire for.
43. The event of a structure being completely demolished and leveled.
46. The capital and largest city of Japan.
48. The 17th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
51. Any of a group of heavenly spirits under the god Anu.
53. Austrian writer (1881-1942).
55. (anatomy) Opposite to or away from the mouth.
56. (music) The pace of music measured by the number of beats occurring in 60 seconds.
60. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
61. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
63. A midwestern state in north central United States in the Great Lakes region.
64. Avatar of Vishnu.
65. Someone who copies the words or behavior of another.
66. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
67. An inactive volcano in Sicily.
70. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
71. One millionth of a gram.
74. 30 to 300 kilohertz.
75. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
76. (astronomy) A measure of time defined by Earth's orbital motion.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You are concerned with performing your job well and are stable in your ways of moving forward. You resist change and may have trouble getting started with initiating changes, but once on the move you can be unyielding. You may mistrust that which is new or untried. Given time, you will become more confident and trusting as well as understanding. You are a good employee and eventually you will be given more and more responsibility—just be a little more patient with yourself. Listen to your intuition—it is strong and can guide you accurately in making decisions. You know and understand more than you realize; others may experience growth quickly but will forget the basics; you are a strong worker and will teach the basics. You are an important asset.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Decisions made now may have to be rethought later; take your time with how you think you want to proceed on some project. You are a heavy-duty thinker and serious student, always ready to work an idea through, reducing it to what is essential. You enjoy mental efforts and discipline and will often work long and hard toward any project's end result. Teaching opportunities give you a way to coach others and see the positive results. You enjoy working with other people and may pour a lot of energy into helping those around you. Your home and surroundings reflect this as well. When it comes to educating young people, you are a natural and may be asked to motivate and inspire. Tonight could be a socially active evening.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are able to act quickly and get things accomplished fast. You may find people coming to you for those odd jobs that nobody wants and that need to be completed and out of the way. You may like to be depended on in this way but it could cause some stressful moments in getting your own work accomplished. So that others will respect your time, you must learn to politely say no, occasionally. Your organizational abilities and sense of responsibility will be what guides you and proves successful. Your career could assume a much more determined and solid form. You naturally are a giving person, sacrificing your own interests for the sake of what you feel is right. A born psychologist, you may find yourself counseling a friend this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may find yourself very appreciative of your own career and practical skills. You might enjoy solving puzzles and technical problems—finding solutions. There is a renewed appreciation for your work that may be apparent to your superiors and to everybody. Put your back into whatever needs accomplishing today. You will be pleased at the outcome of your efforts. Circumstances may stimulate and encourage an appreciation and enjoyment of your life situation. Your system of values may deepen, providing you with a better sense of discrimination and good taste. Purchasing, selecting colors, etc., are easy for you. Plans to redecorate or perhaps, add a room or new entry to your existing home are looking like a done deal.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

It may be hard to organize or persevere today. Everything may seem to be falling apart and coming unglued. Do not force things. A little note-taking can bring the plans for the day back into focus. Be patient and let the chaos of others dissolve. It is time to dive into your work now—you seem to shine when it comes to practical matters or those involving work and career. You have an easy way with superiors or those in authority and can always manage to get the most out of any skill or ability you have. You may tend to fear that others find you too sense-oriented from time to time. You radiate energy and have to just accept the fact that people like to feel your warmth. Enjoy the attention you receive from your loved ones this evening.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You enjoy working hard and being organized and you exercise skill and discipline in anything that affects your career and reputation. Today you will enjoy working in the environment where higher-ups show off their independence and originality. You could find yourself engaged in nonconformist causes, always ready to promote what is independent and innovative. You like radical approaches and may find yourself in support of whatever new-wave product or breakthrough advance is next in line. Communication, computers, electronics and everything new excite you and these are the areas in which you excel now. You may discover new ways of working with traditional materials. This is a great time to reflect. Enjoy a walk this evening.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Someone could challenge you on a very sensitive issue this day. This could result in a very intense discussion. You may find yourself analyzing a situation. Too much time spent in serious thought could undermine your progress. Lighten up! Tell some jokes and enjoy the company of others. Soon, you will find the most sensitive issues can be put to rest. You may become very interested in research surrounding life survival, scientific research or what have you. There is a passion for searching, finding out and communicating your discoveries. This may turn out to be a very interesting day with perhaps a renewed appreciation for all that is beautiful and fine. There is a time of meditation when that first sip of wine or a little evening refreshment is quite relaxing.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Things are happening, and your career or path depends upon your own ambition and drive, which can be quite strong now. There could be some discussions over business affairs but a compromise can be reached. Learn better time management by briefly monitoring your use of time. Schedule tasks so that they serve your larger goals and are achievable in time and circumstances. Build some time for breaks and rewards into your schedule. Leave some space for regular and periodic review. Last, but not least, provide time for exercise and relaxation as well as sleep and nourishment. Strength, perseverance and an attitude that emphasizes common sense will also enable you to help make proper decisions in family matters.



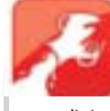
Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Your ability to work more efficiently with others eventually enables you to achieve even bigger and more encompassing goals. As a good detective or research person, you will find yourself having a passion for answers. Questioning and searching finds you in pursuit of some piece of useful information. It could only be that an accounting problem is solved. You enjoy a game of team sports this afternoon. When you are not involved in sports, create for yourself a regular period of vigorous exercise and then use exercise to drain off tension. This evening you may want to dive into some interesting philosophical ideas with a love partner. Cultivate methods that enable you to get enough good sleep—wind down first, perhaps with a bit of relaxing music.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You have a relentless drive to get at the heart of things this Wednesday, whatever is under the surface or behind the scenes. Your relentless pursuit of anything hidden or secret makes you a researcher or investigator bar none. Emotionally, you are also hot stuff, rushing into areas and handling subject matters that others would never come near. You may not like displays of emotion and pushy people, or at least find them challenging and thought-provoking. There is not much to slow your progress, however, and by this afternoon you are moving forward with your professional activities at full speed ahead. This evening is a good time to have a long talk with your partner about your future plans. You may decide on a new budget at this time.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

The word for today is accomplishment. If there is a job, you can do it. As a prodigious worker, you pour yourself into any task with absolute determination. You are responsible to the extreme and take on obligations as though you just cannot get enough. You enjoy discipline and limitations are seen as opportunities rather than handicaps. Home and family matters can play a big part in your life. Relatives take on greater importance than ever before. You are pleased with the results of your efforts and may busy yourself making new plans with family. This may mean a game of golf, a tennis match, camping, or some other activity. Music plays an important role and you enjoy photography, especially to capture the moments of family time.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Take a little trip, or get outside. You may want to break that routine and take a little walking exercise around the area where you work. Sometime today you may discover insights into day-to-day problems that will be of great value later. The encircling networks of friends and co-workers are crucial to your success. You are nourished in great measure by the atmosphere and conditions you are able to set up for yourself. You are happiest this afternoon as you accomplish your chores and improve your surroundings. All that is fine and luxurious may be what you enjoy most. You are very much the creature of habit and habitat as you go about making your own way and finding solutions to whatever problems may come about. Tonight is for romance.

WORD SEARCH

Fourth Of July

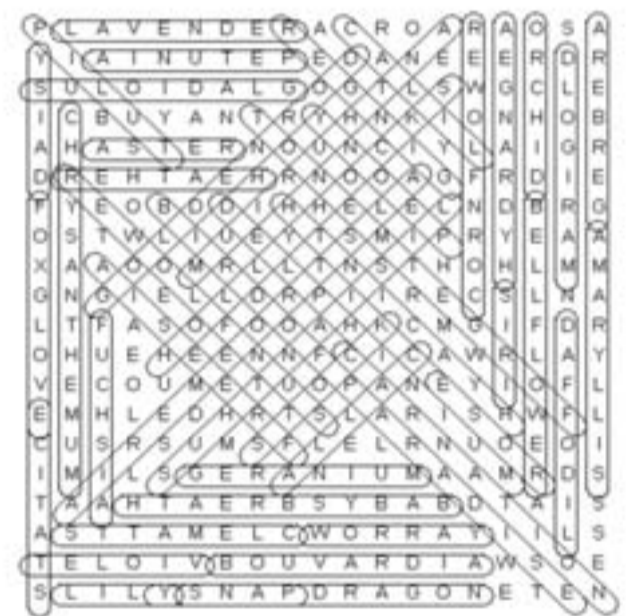
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an Abraham Lincoln quotation.



- | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| BALD EAGLE | CONCERTS | HOLIDAY | PATRIOTIC |
| BALLOONS | DECORATIONS | HOT DOGS | PHILADELPHIA |
| BARBECUE | DEMOCRACY | INDEPENDENCE | PICNIC |
| BASEBALL | FIREWORKS | JOHN ADAMS | RED WHITE BLUE |
| BEN FRANKLIN | FLAG | LIBERTY | STARS AND STRIPES |
| BETSY ROSS | FLOATS | NATIONAL ANTHEM | STREAMERS |
| CAKE | FREEDOM | NATIONHOOD | THOMAS JEFFERSON |
| CARNIVAL | GREAT BRITAIN | PARADE | USA |
| CELEBRATION | HAMBURGERS | PARTY | WHITE HOUSE |
| COLONIES | HISTORY | | |

Yesterday's Solution

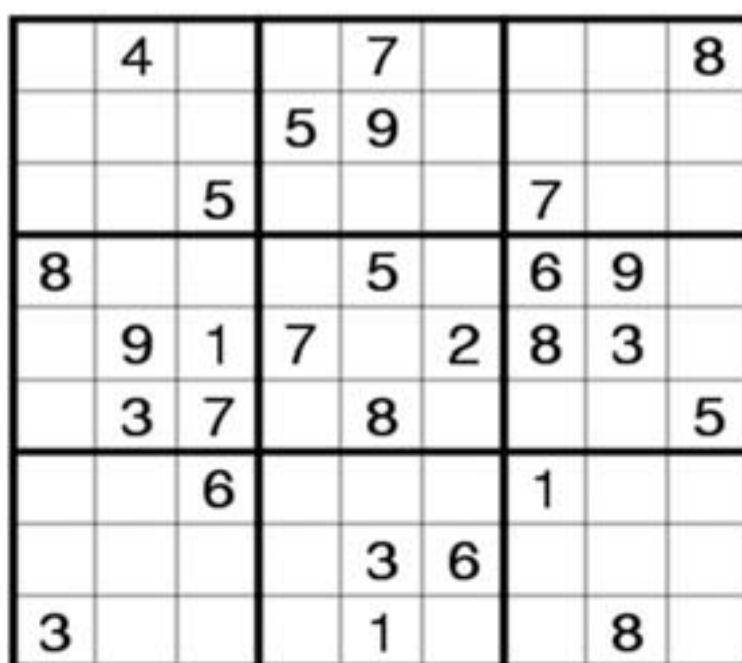
Flowers



- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| ALSTROEMERIA | CORNFLOWER | GOLDEN ROO | PANSY |
| AMARYLLIS | DAFFOIL | HEATHER | PEONY |
| ANTHURUM | DAISY | HOLLYHOOKS | PETUNIA |
| ASTER | DELPHINIUM | HYACINTH | ROSE |
| BABY'S BREATH | FORGET-ME-NOT | HYDRANGEA | SNAPDRAGON |
| BELL FLOWER | FOXGLOVE | IRIS | STATICE |
| BIRD OF PARADISE | FREESIA | LAVENDER | STOCK |
| BOUVARDIA | FUCHSIA | LIAC | SUNFLOWER |
| CALLA | GERANIUM | LILY | TULIP |
| CARNATION | GERBERA | LISIANTHUS | VIOLET |
| CHRYSANTHEMUM | GINGER | MARGOLD | YARROW |
| CLEMATIS | GLADIOLUS | ORCHID | |

The hidden sentence is: A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME WOULD SMELL AS SWEET

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





Afghan staff of Zan TV have their lunch at the Zan TV (Women's TV) station in Kabul.



Afghan staff of Zan TV (Women's TV) work in an editing room in Kabul.— AFP photos



NEW MAGAZINE AND TV CHANNEL GIVE AFGHAN WOMEN A CAUTIOUS VOICE

Afghan women are redrawing the media landscape in the deeply conservative country with the launch of a new magazine and a television channel, risking the anger of extremists by giving their gender a glamorous voice. The teams behind the two privately-run projects have bold ambitions to use their mass media platforms to change attitudes and inform Afghans of their rights. But they know full well the dangers of such trailblazing ventures in a war-torn nation where many still believe that a woman does not belong outside the home.

"(The) lack of participation of women in life has made this country very violent," said Sandjar Sohail, head of the Hasht press group behind the launch of "Gelara" magazine. "I am sure we'll get some reaction, some complaints. We are expecting that," he conceded. The glossy monthly run by a team of women in their 20s proclaims itself proudly as "Afghanistan's first fashion magazine". It is also a 100 percent Afghan project. Gelara—"the apple of the eyes" in Farsi, a colloquialism for something beautiful and precious—contains culture and celebrities, but aims for pedagogy.

Beauty, cooking, health, literature: the magazine succumbs to feminine tropes, but also dives into issues such as family law reform, which has stalled in the Afghan parliament since 2008. "This family law is so unfair for women... once they get married they have no rights. You have to push for women's rights," insists the editor-in-chief, 24-year-old Fatana Hassanazada, who heads a team of 14 young women.

'It's always risky'

Gelara's first cover featured singer Mozhdah Jamalzadah, who posed bareheaded, her bold gaze staring directly into the camera. In an interview, the artist discusses criticism she has received for wearing costumes judged too tight. Afghan pop star and women's rights activist Aryana Saeed underwent a similar deluge after a recent concert in Paris. "Yes it's risky. It's



Krishma Naz, 22, presenter of a music show, takes part in a recording at the Zan TV (Women's TV) station in Kabul.

always risky" in Afghanistan to fight conservatism and extremism, said Sohail, who also runs the country's most popular newspaper, 8-Subh (8-Hours). "This is a life and death conflict," he explained, adding they have no choice but to fight. "If not, the conservatives will bring us back, to a primitive life." Gelara, which sells for 100 afghanis (\$1.30) in the street, is provocative but only to a point. Though some heads remain unveiled, women's bare legs and arms are rarely pictured.



An Afghan presenter records her morning programme at the Zan TV (Women's TV) station in Kabul.

Zan TV, or "Women's TV", will also aim to challenge traditional expectations of the female role in Afghanistan, when it begins broadcasting in the near future. AFP visited its studios in a vast house in Kabul last month: there is a candy pink one for news; another is blue, the traditional interior for talk shows; while political broadcasts are conducted from a red sofa against a green background—echoing the Afghan flag.

Women are already on the air in Afghanistan and regularly

present the news. But at Zan TV they will have power. Mehria Afzal, 25, the head of the political service, expects to be "the voice of Afghan women". "In the provinces, girls are exchanged like animals. It is forbidden, but they do not know their rights," she asserts.

Giving women the (remote) control

"This is the first time that we have launched a television project dealing with the issues of Afghan women, covering all subjects, allowing women to express themselves whether it is politics or religion," says Malalai Zikria, the channel's editorial advisor. "Every woman or girl who has something to say will be welcome," she promises. Rape, harassment, contraception—all will be discussed, even the very sensitive question of virginity, she says. But the presenters will wear their headscarves, she says, underscoring the caution with which they are attempting to move forward. "We are in an Islamic country, we must respect the laws. We can be veiled and fight for his rights."

"We need to be cautious and calculating (in) the steps we take not to hurt or confront the culture or tradition of Afghanistan," said Hamid Samar, founder and director of Zan TV, who focuses on the urban audience. Digital technology provides coverage throughout the country for the channel, which employs 70 people—an all-woman editorial staff, aged between 22 and 30, and a camera woman. The technical staff of 16 people is all male, said Samar, explaining that there is a lack of women trained in such areas. But he hopes that will change, adding that the company policy is still that "all the staff should be women". He also wants to reach a male audience, but to make a difference as they do so. "Hopefully husbands and wives will watch us together, but the women will actually (have) control of the remote control." — AFP



This image released by Focus Features shows Colin Farrell, left, and Kirsten Dunst in a scene from 'The Beguiled'.



This image released by Focus Features shows, from left, Elle Fanning, Nicole Kidman, Kirsten Dunst, Angourie Rice, Oona Laurence, Emma Howard and Addison Riecke in a scene from 'The Beguiled'. — AP photos

Review

Coppola's 'The Beguiled' disturbing and beautiful

"The Beguiled" is a strange and uncomfortable film in both of its iterations. Sofia Coppola's take is more nuanced than the 1971 original, with deeper insight into the ladies of Ms Farnsworth's Seminary and perhaps not enough into the wounded soldier who disrupts their lives. The writer-director brings her characteristic elegance to the film, which, like the original, is based on the 1966 novel by Thomas Cullinan. Coppola's Civil War South is all mossy woods, buttoned-up dresses and gated plantations, realized in immaculate detail. So many shots, including the eerie final image, could be framed and popped into a museum.

While Coppola broadens the story's female characters beyond the stereotypes shown in 1971, she leaves the soldier's motives less clear, which makes his life-altering transgression harder to understand. The story is set in Virginia in 1864. Despite the war raging right outside her property, Ms Farnsworth (Nicole Kidman) has continued to run her Seminary for Young Ladies, with a single teacher, Edwina (Kirsten Dunst), and five students. Everything changes for them when one of the youngest girls brings home a badly wounded Union soldier she discovered during a walk in the woods.

"You are a most unwelcome visitor," Ms Farnsworth tells the handsome Cpl John

McBurney (Colin Farrell), after stitching up his tattered leg and giving him a sponge bath. McBurney is locked in the music room, but his presence in the house causes a stir among its residents, distracting them from their daily routine of Bible studies, French lessons and etiquette practice. One girl fears they could face consequences for harboring an enemy. Another wants him to meet her pet turtle. One of the older students tries to seduce him. Edwina and Ms Farnsworth spend the most time with the soldier as they are tasked with his care, but all of the young ladies want his attention.

Meticulously authentic

One of the most charming and lighthearted scenes is when a healing McBurney is invited to dinner and each of the young women show up in their fanciest gowns. Those dresses, and the ladies' everyday attire, are meticulously authentic, with corsets underneath and seemingly hundreds of buttons holding the fitted garments closed tight. Their braided updos, also period-accurate, must have taken hours each day. As McBurney continues his recovery, he gets closer to Edwina and Ms Farnsworth, and even a few of the girls. But then he makes a move that alienates nearly all of them.

Clint Eastwood plays the handsome soldier in the 1971 film, and flashbacks show that he's a shifty guy from the start. Farrell's character,

though, is less developed. He's presented as decent and sincere, so his disruptive choices seem to come out of nowhere. Ms Farnsworth's ultimate response also seems excessive, given the way her character unfolds and her responsibility to her students. Nevertheless, Coppola creates a portrait of the repressed, isolated lives of women and girls during wartime - even if the only overt signs of battle here are faraway explosions and the occasional cavalry coming by. And unlike in the 1971 film, Coppola's characters have agency, even as they're affected by the presence of a man in their midst.

The performances are engrossing, particularly Kidman's: She disappears into the distant primness of Ms Farnsworth. The costumes are exquisite and the Southern setting atmospheric and beautiful. But without a clear understanding of what motivates her key characters, it's hard to know just what this feminist retelling is saying about men, women and the way they relate. "The Beguiled," a Focus Features release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "some sexuality." Running time: 94 minutes. Three stars out of four. MPAA definition of R: Restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian. — AP

Headbanging is no good, says X Japan drummer after surgery

The frenzied drummer who is the force behind rockers X Japan declared headbanging to be "no good" yesterday as he sported a neck brace at his first press conference since emergency surgery. Yoshiki, who is known for such intense drumming that he sometimes collapses on stage, shocked fans last month when he announced he would need an urgent operation to implant an artificial cervical disc.

Yesterday Yoshiki appeared at a Tokyo press conference in sunglasses, black leather outfit and the neck brace. "I've thought about it and I have to say that headbanging is no good," he said, drawing laughter from fans. "I may sound weird saying it at this point." But the career rocker immediately appeared to walk back his no-banging pledge. "I may end up headbanging again, unless there is a law banning it." The frail 51-year-old-whose group was one of the biggest acts in Japanese music history with fanatical fan followings in the 1980s and 1990s-cancelled all his immediate activities before and after the operation at a hospital in Los Angeles, where he lives.

A neurosurgeon in Japan had told the rocker he had such severe neck damage that it would have forced a professional rugby player to retire, his management said in May. "I'm not

well. It hurts a lot," he said yesterday. "I had an artificial cervical disc inserted but it isn't used to my body yet, maybe." The performer, whose full name is Yoshiki Hayashi, had suffered bone fractures since childhood but pursued such an aggressive brand of heavy metal drumming that he would often write in pain on the floor by the end of shows.

X Japan, combining the power of arena metal with the glam androgyny of David Bowie, won legions of devoted fans ranging from screaming teenage girls to Japan's former prime minister Junichiro Koizumi to US rockers Kiss. Yoshiki, who is also a classical pianist, said he plans to play the piano instead of drums at X Japan concerts next month. In January Yoshiki played the piano at New York's Carnegie Hall with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, but he had already lost feeling in his left hand. "It feels as if tens of thousands of volts of electricity are running through my hand," he said yesterday. But he kept performing since that show, including at an X Japan concert in March at Wembley Arena in London. "Many US artists have become legends after they died. But I want to be an artist who inspires people by keeping on going and staying alive," he said. — AFP



Yoshiki from the Japanese band 'X Japan' wears a neck brace while attending a press conference for his world tour concert in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

Box Office Top 20: 'Cars 3' takes first from 'Wonder Woman'

"Cars 3" finished in first place at the North American box office this weekend with \$53.7 million in earnings. It effectively stole the top spot from "Wonder Woman," which had held on to No. 1 for two weeks in a row. "Wonder Woman," in its third weekend in theaters, earned \$41.3 million, bringing its total to \$275.1 million. New opener "All Eyez On Me" exceeded expectations with a \$26.4 million debut in third place, burying "The Mummy," in weekend two, in fourth place with \$14.5 million.

The Mandy Moore shark thriller "47 Meters Down" rounded out the top five with \$11.2 million, while the R-rated comedy "Rough Night" got off to a rough seventh place start with only \$8 million. The top 20 movies at US and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and

number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by comScore:

- "Cars 3," Disney, \$53,688,680, 4,256 locations, \$12,615 average, \$53,688,680, 1 Week.
- "Wonder Woman," Warner Bros., \$41,268,850, 4,018 locations, \$10,271 average, \$275,095,580, 3 Weeks.
- "All Eyez On Me," Lionsgate, \$26,435,354, 2,471 locations, \$10,698 average, \$26,435,354, 1 Week.
- "Mummy, The," Universal, \$14,510,960, 4,034 locations, \$3,597 average, \$57,121,660, 2 Weeks.
- "47 Meters Down," Entertainment Studios Motion Pictures, \$11,205,562, 2,270 locations, \$4,936 average, \$11,205,562, 1 Week.
- "Pirates Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales," Disney, \$8,964,039, 2,759 locations, \$3,249 average, \$150,572,153, 4 Weeks.

- "Rough Night," Sony, \$8,004,283, 3,162 locations, \$2,531 average, \$8,004,283, 1 Week.
- "Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie," 20th Century Fox, \$7,181,541, 2,968 locations, \$2,420 average, \$57,795,201, 3 Weeks.
- "Guardians Of The Galaxy Vol. 2," Disney, \$5,071,732, 1,813 locations, \$2,797 average, \$374,942,747, 7 Weeks.
- "It Comes At Night," A24, \$2,601,467, 2,450 locations, \$1,062 average, \$11,124,631, 2 Weeks.
- "Megan Leavey," Bleecker Street, \$2,541,645, 1,832 locations, \$1,387 average, \$8,378,502, 2 Weeks.
- "Baywatch," Paramount, \$1,610,987, 1,307 locations, \$1,233 average, \$55,158,487, 4 Weeks.
- "Book Of Henry, The," Focus Features, \$1,424,540, 579 locations, \$2,460 average, \$1,424,540, 1 Week.

- "Paris Can Wait," Sony Pictures Classics, \$713,931, 447 locations, \$1,597 average, \$3,195,793, 6 Weeks.
- "Beatriz At Dinner," Roadside Attractions, \$702,073, 77 locations, \$9,118 average, \$906,101, 2 Weeks.
- "Alien: Covenant," 20th Century Fox, \$568,149, 400 locations, \$1,420 average, \$72,754,134, 5 Weeks.
- "My Cousin Rachel," Fox Searchlight, \$530,977, 531 locations, \$1,000 average, \$1,975,140, 2 Weeks.
- "Everything, Everything," Warner Bros, \$356,241, 403 locations, \$884 average, \$33,151,209, 5 Weeks.
- "Diary Of A Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul," 20th Century Fox, \$330,813, 255 locations, \$1,297 average, \$20,087,808, 5 Weeks.
- "Boss Baby, The," 20th Century Fox, \$323,442, 260 locations, \$1,244 average, \$172,492,985, 12 Weeks. — AP

FEATURE



People enjoying giant metal statues inspired by the Transformers franchise, by Ban Hun Lek metalwork, at Wat Tha Kien Buddhist temple in Nonthaburi.



A boy sitting under a giant metal statue inspired by the Transformers franchise, by Ban Hun Lek metalwork. — AFP photos



The legs of giant robots at Ban Hun Lek, a metalwork shop renowned for giant statues of Transformers.



People enjoying giant metal statues inspired by the Transformers franchise.



A family enjoying metal sculptures by Ban Hun Lek metalworks, at Wat Tha Kien Buddhist temple in Nonthaburi.

TEMPLES TRANSFORMED: SUPERHEROES BOLSTER BUDDHA'S RANKS

Superheroes are coming to the rescue of Thailand's temples, where monks have commissioned giant statues of comic book icons and toy robots to entertain children while parents donate to their coffers. Instead of the traditional tranquil Buddhas and mythical beasts that adorn most monasteries in the land, the shimmering Wat Ta Kien temple outside Bangkok is guarded by three towering Transformer robots.

The enormous and intricate sculptures, made from bits of scrap metal and painted bright orange, yellow and blue, "have no spiritual purpose," explained monk Pra Vichien. "It's for children so they won't get bored when they come to the temple with their parents," he said. Other temples are following suit in a country whose monasteries compete to draw visitors and keep donations flowing. At least four Buddhist temples across Thailand and a meditation center have bought superhero statues, according to Pairoj Thanomwong, the Thai artist who runs the workshop where the sci-fi monsters and comic book figures are manufactured.

Armed with blow torches, heaps of metal bolts and twisted car parts, the artists piece together the elaborate sculptures in a warehouse in central Thailand called "Ban Hun Lek", which translates to "House of Iron Robots". The largest sculptures—around seven to eight metres high—can be sold for thousands of dollars, he said. The factory also sells its wares to local restaurants and bars but its biggest customer base lies abroad, especially in Europe, with around 80 percent of sales made to overseas clients who have seen the statues on social media.

Pairoj started with comic book classics but has expanded production to include everything from steely desks and chairs to polished replicas of luxury cars and motorcycles. Nearly 90 percent of the materials are recycled metal,



Artist Pairoj Thanomwong operating a mechanical Transformer at Ban Hun Lek.

a cost-cutting measure that also means each piece is unique. Tastes have changed quickly since he went into business, he said. "In terms of the products that people like, it evolves over time," Pairoj explained. "Over the past 10 years, people used to like (characters from) Aliens and Predator, but now they like the Transformers." — AFP



A Buddha wrought from recycled metal at Ban Hun Lek.



A metalworker welding pieces at Ban Hun Lek.



A statue inspired by the Transformers franchise in front of Ban Hun Lek.



A metal statue inspired by the Hulk at Ban Hun Lek.



A giant road marker for Ban Hun Lek.

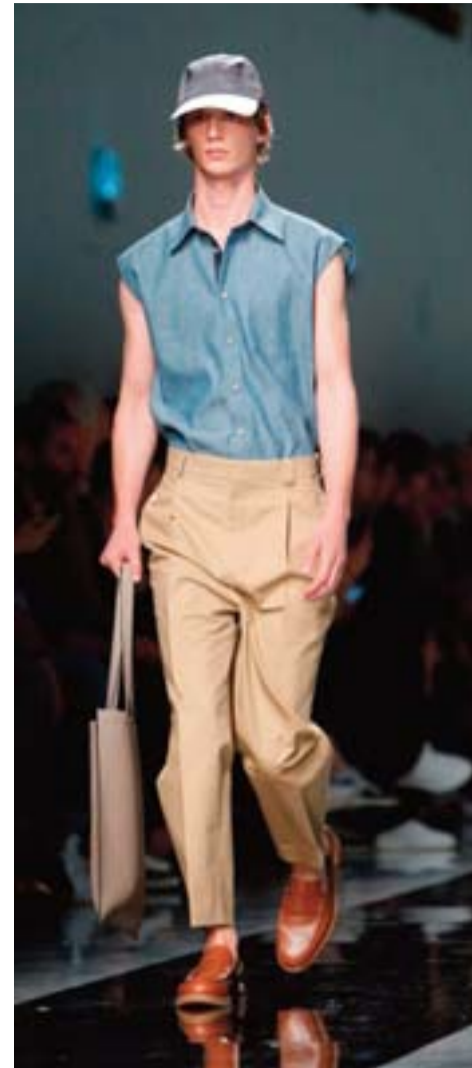


A metalworker welding a statue inspired by aliens from the Alien vs Predator franchise at Ban Hun Lek.



Artist Pairoj Thanomwong operating a mechanical Transformer at Ban Hun Lek.

FASHION



'13' star Tommy Dorfman embodies Fendi

Millennials were the real headliners in the week of previews for spring/summer 2018 menswear in Milan, as brands seek to connect with the next generation consumer. By 2025, these influencers so well-versed in social media and with a fashion sense all their own will control 45 percent of the market, according to a Bain & Co analysis, along with the younger Gen Z cohort, roughly speaking today's young teens and tweens. This is just the audience that has been gravitating toward conversation starting blockbusters like the Netflix series "13 Reasons Why."

Star Tommy Dorfman took the front row at Fendi's show on Monday, one of the last of the three-day-run, and kept his Instagram followers apprised of his movements in the Fendi universe throughout his Milan stay. Backstage, Dorfman described the collection as "clean, and breezy, and easy to wear." "The sandals, the oxford sandals are so beautiful with the elastic straps. I love the see-through suits. And the jackets with the little coffee cups. I thought it was lovely," he told The Associated Press.

For the show, he was wearing a salmon-colored track suit jacket with olive striped trousers and a Fendi satchel. But within hours, a picture appeared on his Instagram account of him in the transparent plaid shorts suit along with German fashion blogger Caroline Daur - part of his collaboration with the brand that garnered more than 37,000 likes by the next day. "I like how accepting they are of different types of people, how diverse it is," Dorfman said of Fendi. "From the casting of the shows, who they are involving in the brand and partnerships. They really just want you to be yourself. I feel like we all embody that." A look back at more highlights from Monday's closing day. While fashion week was crammed into three days, there was so much happening it takes four to tell the story, despite major absences:

Royalty zeitgeist

Fausto Puglisi says buyers have been telling him for many a season that men have been snapping up the oversized end of his women's collection for themselves. This season, the Sicilian-born but American-formed designer responded to that pent-up demand, creating a menswear capsule collection. He previewed it in the Gio Moretti store on Milan's famed via della Spiga, in homage to the designers she helped launch, including Gianni Versace and Walter Albini. The looks include boxy oversized orange tie-died sweatshirts and boxer shorts, with gladiator sandals. He kept the range basic: sweatshirts, T-shirts, jeans, bomber jackets and biker jackets, everyman's must-haves. Puglisi said he calls the looks "Caligula, the Roman emperor in La Jolla, embodying a notion of ancient royalty meeting surf culture, a new take on Italy meets America."

Plein hat trick

Philipp Plein completed a hat trick during Milan Fashion Week, showing three distinct brands: his eponymous contemporary luxury fashion brand, his Plein Sport performance athletic wear and finally, his latest, Billionaire, the brand that bills itself for "playboys, fortune-makers and empire-builders."

Billionaire anchored the ambitious undertaking, three shows in three days, with looks inspired by James Bond. Models walked through a tunnel of lights in shimmering silver tuxedos, a purple smoking jacket with red polka dots and flashy yellow leather biker jackets with matching turtlenecks, leather gloves and trousers with enough stretch to get out of any bind. Billionaire falls at the other end of the fashion demographic from the Millennial-seekers, rigorously featuring over-50 models.

"I see fashion brands that have the same clients as us at Billionaire putting young kids on the runway. It is so wrong. They will never wear this in their private lives," Plein said. "We wanted to turn that around. We want to appear in a way that the young generation says, 'When I get older, I want to look like these guys do over there.'"

Palm Angels

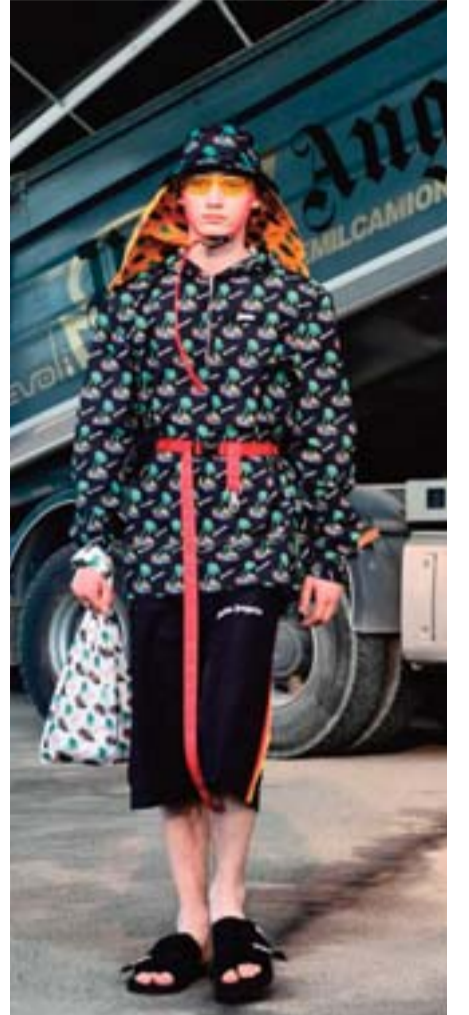
Francesco Ragazzi puts an Italian take on American street fashion in his latest collection for the Palm Angels brand that developed from his work photographing the Los Angeles skater culture. While the combined men's and women's collection was all about active fashion that both suggests and offers a level of freedom, Ragazzi imbued it with a dark side. Rigorously belted nylon jackets and track suits alike had hoods that tightly hugged the faces, an effect that created an unnerving eeriness even when the hoodies were paired with purple wide-legged trousers with rainbow detailing.

For women there were sheer nylon off the shoulder tops with matching trousers, or body hugging cropped tops with a turtleneck that zipped over the face, leaving only the eyes exposed, that was paired with matching leggings. Brimmed hats with a branded protective flap over the neck finished the looks. Still, Ragazzi finished the collection on an optimistic note: A rainbow of brightly colored tracksuits shoulder to shoulder against the industrial backdrop of the open-sided warehouse venue. Ragazzi launched Palm Angels in 2011 as a research project into the Los Angeles skating culture, developing the project into a book in 2013 and a clothing line in 2015. It currently has more than 160 sales points. — AP



Models present creations for fashion house Fendi during the Men's Spring/Summer 2018 fashion shows in Milan. — AFP photos

FASHION



CARLA FENDI, ONE OF FASHION LABEL'S FIVE SISTERS, DIES

Carla Fendi, who along with four sisters helped build her parents' leather and fur goods shop in Rome into a global fashion powerhouse, has died aged 80, Italian press reports said yesterday. Her death Monday was reported by members of her family, according to the reports. It was Carla and her sisters-Paola, Anna, Franca and Alda-who in 1965 brought in Karl Lagerfeld, then a young German designer, to create a women's ready-to-wear-line.

Honorary president of the Fendi group, now a part of the LVMH fashion conglomerate, Carla Fendi focused mainly on public relations and fostering the label's international growth. An enthusiastic fan of art and music, Carla Fendi created in 2007 a foundation for supporting Italy's cultural heritage, and was one of the main benefactors of the Festival dei Due Mondi ("Festival of Two Worlds"), an annual classical music festival in Spoleto, central Italy. — AFP

In this file photo Carla Fendi arrives at her company fashion show in Milan, Italy. — AP



Lifestyle

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New magazine and TV channel give Afghan women a cautious voice

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Indonesian Muslims gather in the Baiturrahman mosque in Banda Aceh, Aceh province. Muslims throughout the world are marking the month of Ramadan, the Holiest Month in the Islamic calendar during which Muslims fast from dawn until dusk. — AFP



Visitors rest next to a 1959 Cadillac Series 62 convertible at the Newport Car Museum in Portsmouth. — AFP photos



A 1930 Pierce-Arrow Model A is displayed.



Evan Hume Jr, left, of Washington, and Evan Hume Sr, of Tallahassee, Fla, look at a one-of-a-kind white and blue 2013 Bugatti Veyron 16.4L Grand Sport Vitesse "Le Ciel Californien".



Pedestrians walk by a display of a 1966 Shelby 427 AC Cobra.

Car lovers' Newport: Two museums highlight design on wheels

Car enthusiasts now have their pick of destinations to get their fix while visiting Newport, with two car museums featuring classic and rare cars, the newest having opened just this month. The Audrain Automobile Museum and the Newport Car Museum both place a strong emphasis on design and display the cars as works of art. "What we're really talking about is good design, and how car design really reflects art and social history," said David de Muzio, executive director of the Audrain Automobile Museum. "It's another way to understand what the cars are, why they look like they do."

The museums fit right in to the spirit of Newport, a resort destination known for its mansions, folk and jazz festivals and beaches. Wealthy families have summered here for generations - bringing with them their cars. "There is a car culture here, and it goes right back to the late 19th century when Willie K. Vanderbilt was acquiring and racing cars. Some of the very first car races in the United States happened right here in Newport," de Muzio, of the Audrain, said.

Cars became part of high society, as vacationers spending time at summer homes would parade their cars around town. Some of those car races were held on the beach here, or on Bellevue Avenue, the leafy boulevard lined by Gilded Age mansions, de Muzio said. Both museums are drawn from private collections, and they are different and complementary.

The Audrain, which opened in 2014, is located in a historic building on Bellevue, next to the International Tennis Hall of Fame. It rotates through four exhibits per year of around 20 cars, drawn from a collection of 225. It has what de Muzio calls an "encyclopedic" focus, with a wide range of different makers and years, from pre-war cars to the present day. An exhibit on view through June 25, "Drop Dead Drop Tops," focuses on convertibles and features a range of cars, from a 1930 Pierce-Arrow Model A to a one-of-a-kind white and blue 2013 Bugatti Veyron 16.4L Grand Sport Vitesse "Le Ciel Californien."

The exhibit even includes curiosities such as a 1957 Ferrari Bimbo racer, a 12-volt electric children's car, which was based on the open Ferrari Spider of the time. The Audrain's new exhibit, "Fast, Fun & Fabulous: Best of Show," featuring award-



A 2008 Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren, left, and 1963 Mercedes-Benz 300SL, right, are displayed.

winning automobiles that are a superlative example of design, or that have won races, opens July 1. There's still a new car smell at the Newport Car Museum, which opened June 1 and is actually in neighboring Portsmouth, a short drive from the attractions of Newport. The museum is housed in a 55,000-square-foot space in a building once used by defense contractor Raytheon to manufacture missiles. The displays here are drawn entirely from the private collection of Gunther and Maggie Buerman.

Gunther Buerman said he wanted the museum to appeal to all ages.

"The idea is to span that whole generation, so that the grandfather can come, the father and son have something to enjoy, the mother, the grandmother. The whole family can come and see something of interest," he said.

Anna and Doug Lash, of Monroe, Connecticut, said they have been to numerous car museums and shows, but never one quite like the Newport Car Museum. "The artistic layout is really unique, it makes the cars look like a piece of art. These cars were virtual pieces of art. The production cars today don't even come close to some of this," said Doug Lash, a self-described car enthusiast. "The classics that he's picked are incredible. The design is the thing that makes them stand out from anything that goes fast." — AP

Virtual pieces of art

Around 50 cars are displayed in five galleries, with classics including Ford Shelby racing cars, Corvettes, Mopars and a large collection of fin cars, as well as some European, British and Japanese cars. Every model of Corvette, from a C1 to C7, is here. There's a 1965 Ford Shelby 427 SC Cobra, designed by American automotive designer and race car driver Carroll Shelby, one of just 31 made, and valued by Gunther Buerman at \$3 million. From a 1954 Buick to a 2017 Dodge Viper ACR,



A 1965 Ford Shelby 427 SC Cobra is displayed.



Anna and Doug Lash of Monroe, Conn, look at a 1957 Ford Thunderbird D-Code Convertible.