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TRUMP, AMIR HOLD TALKS

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US, KUWAIT LEADERS HOLD TALKS

US-KUWAIT ECONOMIC FORUM BENEFICIAL FOR BOTH COUNTRIES



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump held a lunch banquet yesterday in honor of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his official delegation. Earlier, His Highness the Amir held talks with the US President at the Oval Office in the White House. The Kuwaiti-US talks tackled issues of common interest and the latest developments on the regional and international spectrums, particularly the Gulf and the Middle East. — KUNA photos

WASHINGTON: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by National Guard Deputy Chief Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, met US President Donald Trump at the White House yesterday. Their talks at the Oval Office dealt with the long-standing historical relations between the two countries and the two friendly peoples, and means to develop ties and strengthen cooperation in all fields. They also discussed issues of common interest and the latest developments on the regional and international spectrums, particularly the Gulf and the Middle East. Both senior officials exchanged views on these topics and stressed the

need for the countries involved in the Gulf feud to discard their differences, unite and support international efforts to combat terrorism.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday reiterated Kuwait's solid and distinctive relationship with the United States. He recalled Washington's honorable stand and memorable role in liberating Kuwait from Iraq's 1990 invasion of the country. His Highness also expressed hope for positive outcomes from his bilateral talks US President Donald Trump.

Meanwhile, a number of Kuwaiti business personnel and top officials yesterday affirmed



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is received at his residence in Washington DC by a delegation of Kuwaiti business personnel.

the importance of the US-Kuwait Economic Forum, stressing that the event will be highly beneficial for both countries.

The forum, held at the US Chamber of Commerce, resulted in the signing of several agreements between the Kuwaiti and American sides. Speaking to KUNA, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh said that both sides were eager to further develop ties on numerous levels and especially within the economic, financial, and commercial domains.

He stressed that the forum saw a huge turnout, which is reflective of the strong relations linking the two countries. The event also came in line with the Kuwaiti leadership's efforts to transform Kuwait into a regional and international business and financial center, said Al-Saleh. On his part, Director General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said that the forum focused on the roles of investments and economy in developing US-Kuwaiti relations within the private sector domain.

Business personnel who flocked to the event

are well aware of the vitality of the forum, said Sheikh Meshal who indicated that Kuwait was eager to diversify its income through mutual investments with American companies and business personnel. Top officials at Zain Group, Kuwait Industrial Union (KIU), and the Commercial Real Estate company-Bader Al-Kharafi, Hussein Al-Kharafi, and Abdulfattah Marafi respectively-stressed the importance of attracting foreign investments to Kuwait, saying that it will immensely contribute to the country's future development plans.

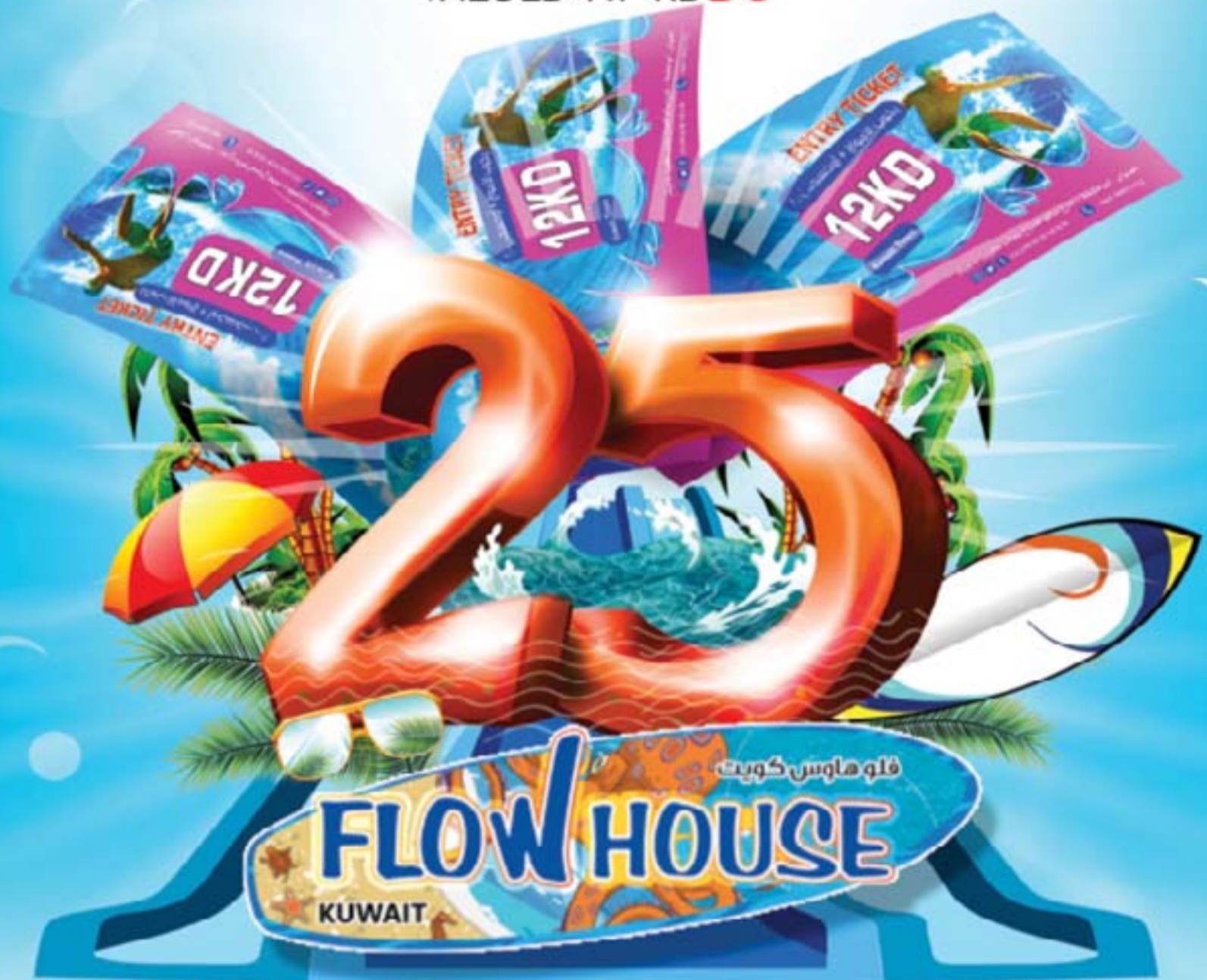
His Highness the Amir's visit to the US displayed both nations eagerness to pursue more venues of cooperation, affirmed the officials. They added that Kuwait's 2035 vision launched by His Highness the Amir provided a perfect opportunity for foreign investors, namely from the US, to seek business ventures in Kuwait which will benefit both nations' economies. Kuwaiti business personnel also felt welcomed by their US peers to invest in America, the officials affirmed. — Agencies



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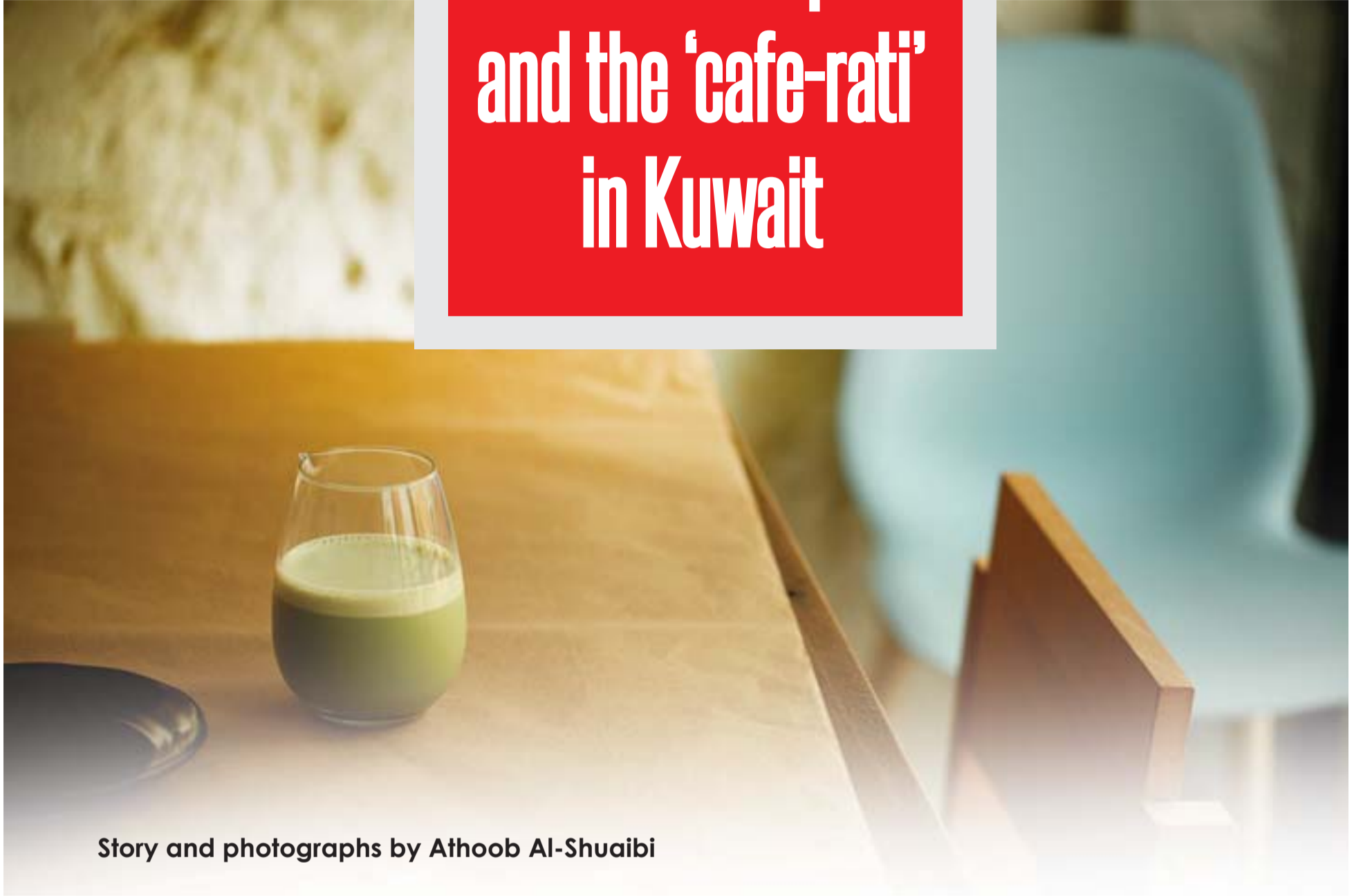


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Coffee shops and the 'cafe-rati' in Kuwait



Story and photographs by **Athoob Al-Shuaibi**

A small coffee shop in the heart of downtown Kuwait City has a wall-mounted sign saying 'Free Wi-Fi'. A few steps away, another cafe has a blackboard sign in front of its door reading 'No Internet, talk to each other'. At the end of the street, another cafe has a large seating area for people who have no interest in communicating with anyone, and want complete isolation. Each table here has only one chair, and is separated by a divider.



Kuwait has witness an explosion of local coffee shops opening. From cozy tea house decor to industrial lighting, you can find pretty much any type of cafe to suit your personal taste and style. Young Kuwaitis in droves now hang out at these hip hotspots, with new ones opening up each month.

Most offer some hipster-esque menu options - artisanal cold brew or French press, designer cookies, hand drawn cakes. And each appeals to a segment of the caferati through decor and location.

Ali Akbar, an engineer and a businessman, wanted to try his luck in the coffee business. He wanted to open a coffee shop for readers, because he personally loves to read and has a rich library at home. After finding the right place, his engineering colleague wanted to gift him an interior design scheme in collaboration with one of the best designers. "I treasure that gift very much. Cafe owners usually spend thousands to get the perfect interior design. But another friend turned my thinking upside down after alerting me that people no longer read as much as before. He asked me that when did I take a book with me to a cafe? He said most people nowadays prefer reading from their mobile phones or tablets," Akbar recalled.

After scrapping the reading cafe idea, he decided to design the place himself. "Before I hammered a nail in the walls, I showed my plan to three teenage cousins. They were bold enough to tell me that my taste was very old-fashioned and outdated! The girls

were eager to assist. The following day, they arrived with lots of pictures, notes and suggestions. They said the sole reason they go to cafes is to take selfies, so every corner should be different in design from the other," he said. Akbar used the targeted client group to design the perfect environment for them.





One college student encouraged me to visit a coffee shop called Mood. I asked him what made him go there. He replied, "Their great atmosphere and the beautiful decor." Then he remembered at the end to mention that they have good coffee too. Coffee was his least concern, an afterthought.

Not all coffee shops are designed to hang around - like coffee bars, where the main concept is to finish your drink quickly and leave to give room to other customers. Additionally, a new type of coffee shop is emerging in Kuwait - pop-up coffee booths. They change their locations every once in a while in harmony with the spirit of youths who seek new discoveries.

A period in the mid-2000s brought the idea of coffee shops that mimicked the heritage of Kuwait, evoking nostalgia. Soon, their popularity ebbed, faced with the urban style typhoon. The social culture of cafes has become the sum of dating scenes, happy moments between friends and graceful coincidences of Western movies and sitcoms that represent life in urban centers like London, Paris or New York. There are social cafes where you can spend long hours to chat. Also, art cafes are on the rise to support local artists who can't afford to display their works at distinguished platforms.

In the same fashion, literary cafes are available for those who want to organize cultural forums and workshops. More significant, but not widespread, are music cafes. Music is their mainstay for drawing customers. And through a personal experience, I can aver that they have succeeded in creating a social environment that encourages strangers to exchange conversations as human beings. This is rare at a time when eyes are pinched to phone screens.

The majority of patrons at these urban coffee shops are Kuwaitis. Conversely, music coffee shops were able to breach this barrier between expats and Kuwaitis.

Riding the global wave of the flourishing cafe culture in Kuwait may negatively impact the popularity of the diwaniya, which has been dominating the society for more than 200 years as the nucleus of social communication, cohesion and solidarity between its spectrums. Who knows, perhaps one day the diwaniya could become something of the past!



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Local Spotlight

THE MAID DILEMMA



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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We have now reached critical mass. Kuwait has more than 650,000 domestic servants and will likely see that figure grow to a million by end of next year. Mothers of all nationalities can be seen striding through local malls and shopping complexes, with one or two children in tow and a uniformed maid bringing up the rear.

Does every single child need their own nanny? Is this culture of maids a way of showing off or a means for parents of shirking their responsibilities?

Having a domestic helper is no simple matter. It involves important legal, financial and humanitarian issues. Thankfully the Kuwait government issued a new set of labor laws providing clear guidelines for domestic helpers. But too many people continue to break the law which absolutely guarantees at the minimum:

- Weekly day off of at least 24 hours (taking her to the mall to watch your kids on Friday is NOT a day off!)
- 30 days paid leave per year
- No more than 12 hours work per day
- End of service indemnity of one monthly salary for EACH year worked
- Flight tickets home

These laws, enacted in 2015, continue to be ignored by many in society. Yet at the same time, more and more domestic helpers are being brought in to work. Enforcement of the domestic labor law remains limited and many sponsors withhold maids' passports, don't provide a day off or fail to pay indemnity at the end of the contract.

There is also the gross act of 'selling' a maid - essentially asking for a transfer fee even after the helper has worked the contract period for the sponsor. This is illegal and considered human trafficking and it must stop. The government must outlaw the practice and put measures in place to prevent it.

The practice of selling maids is tied directly to the high costs of recruitment, with some agencies charging upwards of KD 1,600 for a helper.

That may change in coming days with the advent of a new government-owned maid agency and an expected influx of more domestic labor. The Indian embassy has also dropped a required security deposit, opening the door for more helpers from India.

The result may be a reduction in recruiting fees. This can be a good thing for families in need of help. But it can also be abused and I ask that the government consider limiting the number of maids per family to one or two at the most.

The government should also make people aware of their obligations toward their help and also provide assistance to domestic servants who have been abused, mistreated or otherwise exploited. Embassies can also help by making sure their citizens are aware of their rights and obligations when coming to work in Kuwait.

Everyone deserves the dignity of honest work and honest pay and of being treated fairly.

IN MY VIEW

KUWAIT'S LANDMARKS OF CHILDHOOD DISAPPEAR



By Nawara Fattahova

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It's a sad feeling not being able to go to places we used to enjoy visiting when we were kids. Change is a part of life, but when the change removes most or all of your favorite entertainment places and stores, it hurts. The trend started by demolishing Showbiz, the most popular entertainment park in Kuwait during the 1970s and 1980s, before Entertainment City was built in Doha. The place also housed a mini-zoo, pony rides and other attractions. Green Hill opposite Showbiz disappeared much earlier.

Then came the demolition of one of the two complexes of the old Salmiya Souq on Salem Al-Mubarak Street. This complex had many of my favorite shops including Waleed Toys, Family Bookshop, Baskin Robbins ice cream parlor, Hardees fast food and many others. Ten years after it was razed, a new building is being built and the entire street will change in the future to become a promenade where cars will be banned. At least the complex on the opposite side is still standing, so some childhood memories are alive, although the popular toy store disappeared after the liberation in 1991.

The drive-in cinemas, which were not available anywhere else in the region, were also demolished. The main one on the Sixth Ring Road was replaced with 360

Mall. The other smaller one was in Ahmadi. Many other cinemas disappeared too, including Salmiya Cinema next to the post office and Abdulhussein Abduredha Theatre, Al-Hamra Cinema that used to be in the place of the Al-Hamra Tower, and Garnata Cinema in Khaitan, which has been replaced by a mall. Last year, Entertainment City, which was the first and largest of its kind in the GCC when it was built in 1984, was closed for maintenance. Rumors swirled that it would reopen after a few months, but this didn't happen. Some unofficial reports said that it will be demolished completely and rebuilt, and may reopen in 2021.

The other popular entertainment park was Shaab Park on Gulf Road. This park suddenly shut down last month due to a dispute over its license and some other legal issues. It seems it will surely be gone, and visitors of this park have lost the many rides, ice skating rink, rollerblading, pony riding and the only bungee jumping place in Kuwait.

Children now can only play in small entertainment areas in some malls that are not attractive to teenagers and young people. Or they can go to public parks, which many find boring and unsuitable to visit in this hot weather. Where will their childhood memories of Kuwait be created?

IN MY VIEW

GETTING TO KNOW FOREIGNERS IN YOUR CLASS



By Salman Al-Mutawa

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"When I go to the US, I am going to make non-Kuwaiti friends, I'm too used to Kuwaitis," is a statement 60 percent of all students who study abroad, including myself, make before landing in their new home. (I made up the 60 percent figure by the way). It is a fact, however, that many Kuwaitis decide to befriend non-Kuwaitis when they leave Kuwait. Most however end up befriending a majority of Kuwaitis and Saudis, with the occasional Khaleeji here and there. This isn't because of prejudice, nor is it outright racism.

As you begin your semester, you will notice that most people generally gravitate towards the people they have the most in common with. As a result, chances are you will find a higher number of Latin Americans and Arabs as friends than you will, for example, see African Americans and Arabs. This isn't racism, but every society has a comfort zone that most people don't generally step out of. Why would you go out of your way to speak to someone you barely have anything in common with?

I realize this information comes off as a little negative, but this is the reality of the matter. Speaking from experience however, there is a large diversification movement happening in most universities in the West. Which is great, so how can you take advantage of this and make friends from all over the world?

It's simple. Just say hi. For Kuwaitis, this is a little weird, as we are accustomed to assuming that if a stranger walks up to us and says hello, he or she is going to ask for something from us. This is not the case in

many other countries. Therefore, the best approach is to always assume that the stranger talking to you is being nice. But what if you are the stranger?

Go up to the person and talk to them. Practice small talk - talk about homework, or the weather, where the person is from, what languages they speak. Always smile first, and people will smile back 90 percent of the time. (This statistic is also made up - I am not a statistical data authority nor do I claim to be one!) So go ahead! Try it! Walk up to Kuwaitis and foreigners and just say hi. They'll either think that you're really nice, or a little weird, but this is how you build a relationship with a stranger.

This being said, there are a few topics that are of bad taste when getting to know a person. Here are the main ones: - never speak about religion or politics, never ask another person to do you a favor, and do not judge any opinions the other person expresses. Stick with these rules for at least one month, and you will notice that your silence on these topics breeds an unconscious illusion of trust and depth between you and the person you'd like to befriend. Once this bond solidifies, then you can speak about those topics without giving the other person the wrong idea about yourself.

Finally, as clichéd as it may sound, just be yourself. And if by the end of the semester you realize that you have not made any new friends, don't waste time wondering why - it's probably your fault. So take a step back, reassess your actions and try again!

Crime

Report

BLOGGER JAILED

KUWAIT: The Criminal Court yesterday sentenced a blogger known on social media networks as 'Chabreet Seyassi' to three months with labor for slandering the Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem on his Twitter account.

Hit & run driver

A search is on for an unidentified hit and run driver who had been involved in a tripartite collision with other vehicles carrying Canadian military personnel in one and a Saudi in the other, said security sources noting that the suspect fled the scene.

2 in critical condition

Two citizens were recently rushed to Jahra hospital's ICU in a critical condition after sustaining serious injuries in a collision along the Sixth Ring Road, said security sources.

Three-month misery

A citizen put an end to an Indian's three-month misery after he had been arrested at the airport, said security sources. The airport computer showed that the suspect was wanted in a criminal case and was later reported dead in January 2016. Working on the case, the citizen found out that the suspect bears the same name with another Indian who had entered Kuwait on the same date and worked in the same company before he absconded and became wanted for criminal charges. He was later found dead with alcohol intoxication. The suspect was later freed and allowed to go home.

Suspects nabbed

A Nepalese, accused of violating residency laws was recently arrested in Ahmadi with the possession of 12 home-made and 7 imported liquor bottles. Security sources said that the suspect confessed to selling the liquor. In another development, a Syrian who was recently arrested in Salmiya with the possession of drugs and some MoH stamps.

Bank employee 'insulted'

A local banks female call-in service operator recently filed a case against a female citizen accusing her of insulting her using abusive and slanderous words. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Parrot stolen

A pet dealer reported that a young man speaking Kuwaiti dialect made away with a rare parrot. He said the suspect claimed he forgot his wallet in the vehicle and drove away with the parrot. The salesman provided the police with the store's surveillance camera videos with clear images of the suspect. A search is in progress.

Indian maid shot

An Indian housemaid was recently rushed to hospital with a gunshot to the left side of her back. Security sources said that the woman's sponsor denied seeing the shooter. The sponsor claimed that she heard the shot and found her bleeding at her house. A case was filed.

— Al-Rai/Al-Anbaa



MIRQAB - A STRATEGIC AREA PROTECTING OLD KUWAIT CITY

KUWAIT: Mirqab, an area in old Kuwait City, was considered as one of the most important locations in the country due to its strategic position which enabled dwellers to spot any incoming threats. It is a large area located in southern Kuwait City above sea level between Al-Safat Square and Naif Palace and it was named (Mirqab) after the famous Arab word (Marqab) which means the high hill or land, said history researcher Abdullah Bin Nasser.

The area was useful to monitor incoming convoys entering the old city and it was also surrounded by walls and fences which fended off invaders, Bin Nasser added. Due to its fortified status, residents were able to build their city and settle down by constructing homes, streets, mosques, schools, and diwans, said the researcher. Mirgab is one of four main areas in old Kuwait City and was established after Sharqa, Jebba, and Al-Wasat areas. It was later divided into several small areas named mostly after people who lived in it. — KUNA



MUNICIPALITY INSPECTIONS



By Hanan Al-Saadoun, Mesh'al Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Hawalli Municipality inspection teams recently inspected a number of stores, restaurants and cafes. The team leader Riyadh Al-Rabee' said that the inspection teams filed 43 citations for hiring laborers without health certificates, using unlicensed ads, violating cleanliness conditions, dealing with expired food items and operating without a license. Meanwhile, Farwaniya Municipality Inspection team leader Nasser Al-Rasheedi said that his team also filed 26 citations including for unlicensed ads, expired licenses etc.



Outdoor work resumes

The Manpower Authority has announced the end of 11 am- 4 pm working period which started June 1st and ended on August 31. So, workers are now allowed to resume normal working hours as the summer ends. The laborers, especially those working at construction sites in open areas had been banned from working during the heat peak period. The Authority had assigned inspectors to ensure workers were not being forced to do work during the soaring heat at open locations. The Authority added that inspection teams had toured various working sites in all governorates during the period to make sure everybody adhered to regulations and explained that violators received warning notices.

Message to fishermen

Kuwait Fishermen Union Chairman Thaher Al-Sowayan told fishermen that the condition of having fishing boat captains sign a power of attorney if they wished to go fishing in international waters had been cancelled noting that this condition had forced many fishermen to refrain from fishing shrimps in international waters out of fear.

Anti-corruption agency

Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority is set to organize its third regional training course on preventing and combating corruption between December 9-14. The course will be held in cooperation with the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) - the authority, better known as NAZAHA. The event reflects Kuwait's international position, given that it plays host to the IACA's first training course in the Middle East region with a view to training nationals in anti-corruption methods. The Authority spares no effort to promote all measures and moves to fight corruption and establish the principle of transparency and integrity in economic and administrative deals, according to the statement.

TEMPERATURES TO DROP

KUWAIT: Temperatures are expected to become moderate in the upcoming days, affected by the decrease of the Indian seasonal low pressure, said Kuwait Meteorological Center. The low pressure will begin to decrease- an improvement in weather conditions. There will be a drop in humidity rate over the weekend also, Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi, official at the center said yesterday.

The highest temperature reached 43 Degrees Celsius yesterday morning, while humidity gradually decreased during the

night with southwestern winds turning into light to moderate northwestern at a speed of 12 to 30 kilometers per hours (kph). The lowest temperature was between 28-30 Degrees Celsius. Today, the weather will be hot with winds at 12-38 kph. The highest temperature will be between 44-46 Degrees Celsius with light to moderate sea waves between two to five feet.

The weather will be hot today's night with the lowest temperature of about 27-29 Degrees Celsius. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir is pictured with Cultural Attache at the Embassy in Washington DC Dr Aseel Al-Awadi.



AMIR RECEIVES KUWAITI STUDENTS IN US

KUWAITI STUDENTS PROUD OF LEADERSHIP'S SUPPORT

WASHINGTON: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday received a batch of Kuwaiti students pursuing their education in the US at his residence in Washington DC. During the meeting, in the presence of Deputy Chief of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Amir gave the students his fatherly advice regarding the importance of education and academic achievements, affirming that Kuwaiti will hugely benefit from the students' knowledge once they return to the country.

The meeting was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh, and members of the delegation accompanying His Highness the Amir.

His Highness the Amir's endless support to the development of education in Kuwait invokes a sense of pride amongst Kuwaiti students locally and abroad, said a number of students pursuing education in the US. In statements to KUNA, the Kuwaiti students said that they were honored to have met His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah during his visit to US.

On her part, Lina Najem, a student at Yale University, said that seeking education in the US was a great opportunity for her to develop her academic skills. Najem affirmed that once she returns to Kuwait she would use her experience in the US to help in the country's

development. Kuwaiti students at the University of Southern California Abdulmohsen Al-Zebn, Hussein Al-Sahhaf, Nour Al-Qadi, and Ali Al-Ghanim thanked His Highness the Amir for showing his commitment to the development of Kuwaiti education, stressing that attending the reception held by Kuwait's highest authority figure was reflective the Amiri care for Kuwait and its people.

Echoing similar statements, Kuwaiti students from the Universities of Pennsylvania, Boston, and California-Abdulaziz Shamsah, Al-Ghalia Al-Gabandi, and Khaled Al-Omar respectively-expressed their strong desires to contribute to Kuwait's welfare once they return home. They said that this resolve came after they met with His Highness the Amir who provided them with words of wisdom and encouragement regarding the vitality of

their academic careers.

Displaying the Kuwaiti diplomatic mission's gratitude for His Highness the Amir's visit, Cultural Attache at the Embassy in Washington DC, Dr Aseel Al-Awadi affirmed that the reception of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah of 25 Kuwaiti students was a gesture that would ignite feelings of pride and determination. The students paid attention to His Highness the Amir's directives regarding the importance of education in the development of Kuwait, indicating that they will surely heed the calls by Kuwait's leadership to turn the country into an important regional and international player. On his part, Kuwaiti Cultural Attache in Los Angeles Dr Mohammad Al-Rashidi said that the reception of the students reflected the country's keenness on education whether it was locally or abroad. —Agencies

EMBASSY LAUNCHES KUWAIT CULTURAL DAYS IN CANADA

KUWAIT: Kuwait Embassy in Canada and the country's National Council for Culture, Art and Letters (NCCAL) have launched Kuwait Cultural Days in Ottawa - marking the 150th anniversary of the Canadian Confederation with the aim of promoting cultural exchange. The cultural days aim at fostering "friendship between the Kuwaiti and Canadian people, because we believe that culture is the bridge that brings nations closer and a mean of interaction among different cultures," Abdulhameed Al-Failakawi, Kuwait's Ambassador in Ottawa said in a statement during the opening of the event.

"We strongly believe that culture has a great impact in the mind and heart of every person," said Al-Failakawi, whose remarks were sent to KUNA in Kuwait. The opening ceremony was attended by Mohammad Al-Asousi, NCCAL's Assistant Undersecretary for Culture, Arab and Western Ambassadors, Canadian businessmen and university professors. Al-Failakawi said Kuwait was proud to see that relations with Canada were established more than 50 years ago.

Al-Asousi said Kuwait Cultural Days were one of the fruits of cooperation between Kuwait and Canada. He said the cultural days, who were due until September 8, highlighted aspects of Kuwait Culture and its development in the Gulf country. Al-Asousi described relations with Ottawa as special, as Canada contributed to the liberation of Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion in 1991 and the consequent rebuilding of the nation. The opening ceremony included workshops, a photo exhibition, an illustration of wooden-ship building and an exhibition of the Arabic calligraphy Fonts. — KUNA

KUWAIT MINISTER LURES CHINESE INVESTORS

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan yesterday discussed with Chinese officials ways to encourage Chinese firms to open their headquarters in Kuwait through the Direct Investment Promotion Authority. His discussions with Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce Qian Keiming focused on alleviating obstacles to the development of bilateral trade relations, read a Ministry statement.

The Kuwaiti minister, on the fringes of the China-Arab States Expo in the northwestern Chinese city of Yinchuan, also met with the representatives of several Chinese companies specialized in financial services, investment and transportation, like Sany, JD and China North Industries Corp. These companies are currently involved in many projects in Kuwait, he was quoted as saying. The minister went on to underline the importance of learning from China's practices in the fields of small and micro enterprises and developing a similar approach in Kuwait. China is Kuwait's largest non-oil trade partner with deals worth around \$9.5 billion struck between the two in 2016.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry arrived in Beijing yesterday for talks focused on attracting Chinese investments in

Kuwait. Al-Roudhan, who doubles as State Youth Minister is expected to meet CEOs of China's biggest state-owned and private firms on his second stop in China having attended the China-Arab States Expo in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. Both countries are keen to boost bilateral relations, as China seeks to carry out giant projects in Kuwait in the wake of His Highness the Amir's strategic 2035 vision and President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road project, Kuwaiti Ambassador to China Jawhar Hayat said.

Kuwait's plans to transform itself into

a financial hub and to build an international port, mirroring its trade history as a transit stop for goods, go hand in hand with China's plans to revive the ancient Silk Route. Kuwait was also the first Arab country to sign an agreement linking it to the Belt and Road project. These plans aim to diversify Kuwait's dependence on oil as a sole financial resource, he explained.

In May, Amiri Diwan Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah took part in the Silk Summit held in Beijing where he met President Xi Jinping and Vice President Li Yuanhao. — Agencies



Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan with Chinese officials.

Friday Times

International

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2017

UN claims more than 250,000 Rohingya have fled Myanmar



California vows to fight for migrant 'Dreamers'



No help as Mumbai flood victims are on their own



An aerial photography taken and released by the Dutch department of Defense on September 6, 2017 shows the damage of Hurricane Irma in Philipsburg, on the Dutch Caribbean island of Sint Maarten. — AFP

DEADLY IRMA RIPS THROUGH CARIBBEAN

POINTE PITRE: Powerful Hurricane Irma cut a swathe of deadly destruction as it roared through the Caribbean, claiming at least nine lives and turning the tropical islands of St Martin and Barbuda into mountains of rubble. One of the most powerful Atlantic storms on record, the rare Category 5 hurricane churned westward off the northern coast of Puerto Rico early yesterday on a potential collision course with south Florida, where at-risk areas were evacuated.

St Martin, a pristine island resort which is divided between France and the Netherlands, suffered the full fury of the storm, with rescuers on the French side saying eight people had died and 21 were injured. Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the hurricane had caused "huge damage" to the airport and harbour, leaving the Dutch part of the island unreachable, but there were no immediate reports of deaths.

"The priority now is to bring emergency aid to the people... consisting of sending food and water to 40,000 people over the coming five days," Dutch Interior Minister Ronald Plasterk said. French Interior Minister Gerard

Collomb spoke of "massive destruction" and said more than 100,000 packages of combat rations were en route. And Britain is sending a military vessel to assist victims which should reach the affected areas later yesterday, while earmarking £12 million (\$15.7 million, 13 million euros) in aid. "The British Virgin Islands were also not spared the hurricane's full force," Alan Duncan, a junior foreign minister, told parliament. "We expect that the islands will need extensive humanitarian assistance."

Tossed aside like matchsticks

As the storm raged westwards, it left scenes of widespread devastation on the islands with the roofs wrenched off many buildings, dozens of huge shipping containers tossed aside like matchsticks and debris flung far and wide, aerial footage from a Dutch naval helicopter showed. Speaking to Dutch broadcaster RTL, Koen, a 20-year-old who lives in the town of Voorhout, said he was shocked by what he saw after the storm passed. "There is huge damage. Sand has been blown over everything. Everything is destroyed." With Irma raging for more than 33

hours, packing winds of up to 295 kilometers per hour, French weather experts said it was longest-lasting superstorm on record.

"Such an intensity, for such a long period, has never been observed in the satellite era," which began in the early 1970s, said Etienne Kapikian of Meteo France, indicating it would probably remain a Category 5 storm until it hits the Bahamas.

With around 80,000 people living on St Martin, French and Dutch officials were racing to activate a rescue plan to help their citizens. On the French side, the storm destroyed 95 percent of homes, officials said, as a 200-member delegation flew in to Guadeloupe to coordinate rescue efforts, headed by France's Overseas Territories Minister Annick Girardin.

Telephone networks were still down on both sides of the island and French officials warned the death toll could rise as rescue teams scour far-flung parts of St Martin as well as the nearby French island of St Barthelemy, also known as St Barts. Home to around 9,500 people, St Barts is known as a playground for the rich and famous, among them Beyonce, Steven Spielberg and Gwyneth Paltrow.

'Barbuda now rubble'

As it raged through the region, Irma also laid waste to Barbuda, part of the twin island nation of Antigua and Barbuda, which suffered "absolute devastation" with up to 30 percent of properties demolished, Prime Minister Gaston Browne said. "Barbuda now is literally rubble," he said. One person is known to have died on the small island of 1,600 inhabitants, apparently a child whose family was trying to get to safer ground.

And on the island of Barbados, a 16-year-old professional surfer named Zander Venezia died while trying to ride a monster wave generated by the storm, the World Surf League said. Irma was expected to hit the northern edges of the Dominican Republic and Haiti later yesterday, continuing past eastern Cuba before veering north towards Florida.

More than half of Puerto Rico's population of three million is without power, with rivers breaking their banks in the center and north of the island where Governor Ricardo Rossello activated the National Guard and opened storm shelters sufficient for up to 62,000 people.—AFP

KURD REBELS SHRUG OFF TURKEY-IRAN THREATS

KOYSINJAQ: Plans for an independence referendum in Iraqi Kurdistan have angered Ankara and Tehran, but little has changed for Iranian Kurdish rebels at rear bases in the mountains of northern Iraq. A spokesman for the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) said reports of a joint Turkish-Iranian military operation against Kurdish rebels in Iraq were mainly intended to unsettle Iraqi Kurds.

Speaking in Koysinjaq, 60 kilometers east of the autonomous region's capital Arbil, Aso Hassan Zada said Iran and Turkey had only one shared interest—their opposition to the September 25 referendum. Both countries fear it could stir separatist aspirations among their own sizeable Kurdish minorities. “Neither country will help the other without something in return,” he said as armed, uniformed men and women trained outside in a courtyard plastered with portraits of their rebel movement's founders.

The central government in Baghdad has said the non-binding referendum violates Iraq's constitution. Coming as Iraqi forces backed by an international coalition battle Islamic State group jihadists in Iraq and Syria, it has also stoked opposition from Washington and Western countries. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said last month that a joint Turkish-Iranian operation against Iraq-based Kurdish rebels from the two countries was “always on the agenda”.

Turkey has battled the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) for decades, while Iranian security forces have fought the PDKI and a PKK affiliate, the Party of Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK). Iran, while equally opposed to the referendum, swiftly denied Erdogan's claim of any planned operation inside Iraqi Kurdistan. But its elite Revolutionary Guards warned: “As always we will strongly confront any group, team or person who wants to penetrate into Iran's territory for anti-security or terrorist operations.”

'Impossible' co-operation

From another mountain base, Zelan Vejin, a leader of the PJAK whose fighters also operate along the border with Iran, shrugged off the threat of any joint operation. “It's impossible that Iran and Turkey operate together” because of their divergent political aims, she said. Besides, she added, “Iran always undertakes military actions in secret, never disclosing its intentions, whereas Turkey pre-announces its campaigns.”

The PDKI's Zada said Ankara prioritizes fighting the PKK inside Turkey and on Iraqi and Syrian territory, while Tehran's goal is to clear its Iraqi border of PDKI and PJAK militants. Ankara and Tehran have carried out a string of separate military operations against Kurdish rebel bases in the mountains of northern Iraq. “Our fighters have observed repeated incursions into Iraqi territory by Iranian forces,” Zada said, adding that Iran had deployed artillery units right along the border. If Iran and Turkey do launch operations, “we will step up our fight inside Iranian territory,” Vejin said. “Iran has forever occupied our land but it has never managed to defeat us through military means. War does not frighten us,” she said. — AFP

IRAN PREPARES AID FOR MYANMAR ROHINGYAS

TEHRAN: Iran's Red Crescent said yesterday it has prepared an aid package for Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims as they flee a crackdown by security forces, local media reported. “An emergency, food, life support and hygiene package has been prepared by the Red Crescent to be sent to Myanmar,” said head of the organization Morteza Salimi, according to the ISNA news agency.

The package would be “immediately sent to the oppressed people of this country if we receive authorization from Myanmar,” he said, adding it had been ordered by President Hassan Rouhani. It comprised of a plane-load of aid weighing 40 tons and worth around four billion rials (just over \$100,000), Salimi later told AFP.

Iranian officials have repeatedly condemned the massive security operations by the Myanmar army that followed a series of deadly ambushes by Rohingya militants on August 25. The United Nations says 164,000 refugees have so far fled to neighboring Bangladesh. Iran's ambassador to the UN, Gholam Ali Khoshrou, yesterday said he was working to bring together ministers and diplomats from several Islamic countries to discuss the issue.—AFP



Israeli soldiers maneuver a tank during a military exercise in the northern part of the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights yesterday. — AFP

ISRAEL HITS SYRIA SITE ALLEGEDLY USED FOR CHEMICAL WEAPONS

SYRIA'S ARMY WARNS OF SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS

DAMASCUS: Syria's army accused Israeli warplanes of hitting one of its positions yesterday killing two people in an attack that a monitor said targeted a site where the regime allegedly produces chemical weapons. The site near the Syrian town of Masyaf, between the central city of Hama and a port used by the Russian navy, is reportedly used by forces from Syria's allies Iran and the Lebanese Shiite militia Hezbollah. Israel has previously carried out strikes believed to be targeting the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah, which fought a deadly war with the Jewish state in 2006.

Yesterday's strike hit a training camp and a branch of the Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC), an institution that Washington and former Israeli officials accuse of helping develop the sarin gas used in a deadly attack on the Syrian town of Khan Sheikhun in April. President Bashar Al-Assad's government has blasted such accusations as “fabrications,” and Syria's army yesterday did not mention the SSRC in its statement on the Israeli strikes.

“Israeli warplanes at 2:42 am today fired a number of missiles from Lebanese air space, targeting one of our military positions near Masyaf, which led to material damage and the deaths of two members of the site,” the statement said. “Syria's army warns of the serious repercussions of such acts of aggression on the security and stability of the region,” it added.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group confirmed that the strikes hit the SSRC, though it could not confirm what weaponry is produced there. It said

Hezbollah fighters and Iranian military personnel were known to use the site at Masyaf. “There are Iranian experts using the research centre there. Hezbollah also uses the facility,” said Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman. “The research centre was definitely damaged in the strikes. There is a huge fire emanating from a weapons warehouse where missiles were being stored,” he added.

'Produces chemical weapons'

Israel has long warned it would not allow the transfer of sophisticated weaponry to Hezbollah and has accused the group's sponsor Iran of building sites to produce “precision-guided missiles” in both Syria and Lebanon. “Iran is busy turning Syria into a base of military entrenchment,” Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said last month. Israeli officials declined to comment on the raids yesterday.

Former military intelligence head Amos Yadlin said the site “produces the chemical weapons and barrel bombs that have killed thousands of Syrian civilians.” He stopped short of saying Israel had carried out the raids, but said that if it did, they would show “Israel intends to enforce its redlines despite the fact that the great powers are ignoring them.” And Israel's former national security advisor Yaakov Amidror described the facility as a key centre for the research and development of arms including chemical weapons.

“It is the first time that the target which was attacked is a formal Syrian facility, not just a warehouse but a centre of R&D and... responsible for producing the chemical weapons in the

past and many other weapons systems,” he told journalists. “We will not allow Iran and Hezbollah to build the capabilities which allow them to attack Israel from Syria,” he added. “And we will not allow them to build the capabilities of Hezbollah under the chaotic umbrella of Syria.”

He said there should be an “assumption” that Syria would respond militarily. Earlier this week, Israel's military began a massive exercise simulating conflict with Hezbollah, the largest drill in nearly two decades. On Wednesday, United Nations war crimes investigators announced they had an “extensive body of information” indicating Syrian warplanes were behind the deadly April 4 attack on Khan Sheikhun. A fact-finding mission by the UN's chemical watchdog, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), concluded earlier this year that sarin gas was used in the attack but did not assign blame.

The attack killed at least 87 people and prompted the United States to launch a cruise missile strike on a Syrian military airport where it said the attack had originated. Weeks later, the US sanctioned 271 Syrian chemists and other officials affiliated with the SSRC, which it said was behind the Syrian government's efforts to develop chemical weapons. Syria's government claims it no longer possesses chemical weapons after a 2013 agreement under which it pledged to surrender its chemical arsenal. But in 2016, a UN-led investigative body said the Syrian government was behind at least three chemical attacks in northern Syria in the previous two years.—AFP

SUU KYI IS STILL THE STAR IN MYANMAR

BANGKOK: Aung San Suu Kyi's global image is in tatters over her stubborn refusal to protect the Rohingya-but her stance has been widely applauded inside Myanmar where hatred abounds for the Muslim minority. Desperate Rohingya have fled Rakhine state since August 25 in droves, trudging through mud-slaked hills and paddy fields in a human tide that has shocked the international community.

Nearly 164,000 Rohingya have so far made it to Bangladesh, fleeing burning villages and alleged atrocities by Myanmar security forces and Buddhist mobs. It is the latest violent turn in the torrid history of the stateless minority, who are denied citizenship in Buddhist-majority Myanmar and given the caustic label of illegal 'Bengali' immigrants. Suu Kyi, feted for her years of peaceful opposition to Myanmar's junta rulers, has been urged to speak up for the Rohingya, with Muslim nations and the UN leading condemnation of her government. But the 72-year-old has not bent to pressure, in a country where the Rohingya question has overshadowed Myanmar's emergence from full military rule.

Rights groups who once held Suu Kyi aloft as a beacon of freedom now accuse her of being at best unmoved by their plight, and at worst, complicit in them being driven out of Myanmar. "By not speaking out against these abuses, she is increasingly losing her moral and political credibility," said James Gomez, of Amnesty International, which campaigned tirelessly for her release from house arrest.

It is a far cry from 2012 when then US president Barack Obama lionised the Nobel Peace Prize winner, known as The Lady, from the garden of her Yangon villa as "an icon of democracy who has inspired so many people". This week Malala Yousafzai aimed a tweet at her fellow Nobel laureate for staying silent on the "tragic and shameful treatment" of the Rohingya, while 365,000 people have signed a petition calling for Suu Kyi's Nobel to be rescinded. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan went even further, accusing her government of presiding over a "genocide".— AFP

BANGLADESH BURIES THE ROHINGYA SHOT DEAD

COX'S BAZAR: Five Rohingya villagers whose distraught relatives say they were shot dead by the Myanmar military were buried yesterday in Bangladesh at a mass funeral attended by hundreds of people after their bodies were carried across the border. The relatives said the victims had been killed by the Myanmar military on Wednesday, a claim that could not be independently confirmed but tallies with multiple accounts of killings in Rohingya villages.

Their bodies were brought across the Naf river on a boat, landing on a remote stretch where thousands of Rohingya refugees have been streaming into Bangladesh over the last fortnight. Sufia Begum, an elderly Rohingya woman aboard, said she had relatives among the dead. "They were all killed," she wept, pointing to a lifeless man covered in plastic sheeting and another corpse wrapped in cloth.

They were buried on Thursday in a Muslim graveyard along with a sixth man who died of unknown causes. One victim, identified by survivors as the imam of their village mosque in Myanmar, had sustained a gunshot wound to the head. "Five of them had bullet wounds," Chailau Marma, deputy police chief of Cox's Bazar, which borders Myanmar, told AFP. "Relatives of the deceased carried the bodies into Bangladesh after they failed to bury them in Myanmar. They all died yesterday."

Myanmar's more than one million Rohingya are denied citizenship and face severe restrictions in the majority Buddhist country, which has come under increased criticism over its apartheid-like treatment of the Muslim minority. UN investigators have said a military crackdown that followed ambushes by Rohingya militants in October last year has unleashed "devastating cruelty" on civilians which may amount to ethnic cleansing.

Yesterday the UN said 164,000 refugees have now crossed into Bangladesh in the last fortnight to escape fighting between militants and Myanmar's military. The fighting is the fiercest Myanmar's western Rakhine state has witnessed in years. Columns of Rohingya civilians arrived steadily throughout Wednesday from the jungles along the border, carrying infants, chickens and their belongings bundled in sacks.—AFP



TEKNAF: A Rohingya Muslim refugee carries a child as they arrive from Myanmar through Lomba Beel after crossing the Naf river, in the Bangladeshi town of Teknaf. —AFP

UN CLAIMS MORE THAN 250,000 ROHINGYA HAVE FLED MYANMAR

REFUGEE CAMPS ARE BURSTING AT THE SEAMS

COX'S BAZAR: More than a quarter of a million mostly Rohingya refugees have entered Bangladesh since fresh violence erupted in Myanmar last October, the United Nations said yesterday, as more bodies washed up a day after boats sank attempting to cross the river that divides the two countries. In the last two weeks alone 164,000 mostly Rohingya civilians have fled to Bangladesh, overwhelming refugee camps that were already bursting at the seams triggering warnings of a humanitarian crisis.

Scores more have died trying to flee the fighting in Myanmar's Rakhine state, where witnesses say entire villages have been burned to the ground since Rohingya militants launched a series of coordinated attacks on August 25, prompting a military-led crackdown. Police in Bangladesh say they have recovered the bodies of 17 people, many of them children, who drowned when at least three boats packed with Rohingya refugees sank at the mouth of the Naf river that runs along the border. Bangladesh border guards say desperate Rohingya are attempting to cross the river using small fishing trawlers that are dangerously overcrowded.

At least five have capsized leaving more than 60 people dead, police and border guards say. Rohingya refugee Tayeba Khatun said she and her family had waited four days for a place on a boat to take them to Bangladesh after fleeing her township in Rakhine. "People were squeezing into whatever space they could find on the rickety boats. I saw two of those boats sink," she told AFP. "Most managed to swim ashore but the children were missing."

'Starving to death'

Those flocking into Bangladesh have

brought with them harrowing testimony of murder, rape and widespread arson by Myanmar's army. Most have walked for days to reach Bangladesh and the United Nations says many are sick, exhausted and in desperate need of shelter, food and water. Existing camps which hosted around 400,000 refugees before the latest influx are now completely overwhelmed, leaving tens of thousands of new arrivals with nowhere to shelter from the monsoon rains.

Mazor Mustafa, a Bangladeshi businessman handing out food and rehydration fluids, said the situation was getting worse as more people arrived. "It is not at all enough food," he told AFP of the ration kits being distributed. "These people are hungry, starving to death together." The latest figures mean that nearly a quarter of Myanmar's 1.1 million Rohingya Muslims have fled since fighting first broke out last October. Impoverished Bangladesh initially tried to block them from entering, but has now given up attempting to stem the tide.

On Wednesday its foreign ministry summoned the Myanmar ambassador to demand immediate measures to curb the violence. The Rohingya are denied citizenship in mainly Buddhist Myanmar, which is under growing international pressure over its apartheid-like treatment of the stateless minority. UN investigators have said a military crackdown that followed ambushes by Rohingya militants in October last year may amount to ethnic cleansing.

Bullet wounds

The recent fighting is the fiercest in Rakhine, Myanmar's poorest state, in years. Cattle rancher Mohammad Shaker, 27, crossed into Bangladesh yes-

terday suffering a gunshot wound to his chest that he said was inflicted by Myanmar soldiers. "I tried to flee with our stock near the river when the military started shooting at us," he told AFP, nursing his untreated wound. "I fell on the ground and later my relatives found me. We hid in the hills for days, and this morning managed to come here."

Scores of refugees have arrived in Bangladesh needing treatment for serious bullet wounds, while others have lost limbs after apparently setting off landmines along the border. Yesterday a mass funeral was held at a mosque near the border for five men whose relatives said they had been shot dead by the Myanmar military. The relatives carried their bodies over the border so they could be buried in Bangladesh.

Myanmar says some 27,000 mainly ethnic Buddhist Rakhine have also fled in the opposite direction since August 25, accusing Rohingya militants of targeting their communities. Myanmar's government, led by Nobel peace prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, has rejected allegations of atrocities, accusing the international media, NGOs and the UN of fabrications.

It has placed the blame for the violence squarely on the militants, saying they are setting fire to their own homes. Myanmar said Thursday that 6,600 Rohingya homes and 201 non-Muslim homes had been burned to the ground since August 25. They added some 30 civilians had been killed—seven Rohingyas, seven Hindus and 16 Rakhine Buddhists—in the fighting. Myanmar's army has previously said around 430 people had been killed in the fighting, including militants and soldiers. — AFP

KENYA SHOWS PITFALLS OF DIGITAL ELECTIONS

DISCUSSION IS NO LONGER THEORETICAL IN AFRICA

NAIROBI: Allegations of computer hacking in Kenya's August 8 election have reignited a debate around the use of digital technology in national votes, with experts wondering whether sticking to paper may be best. The discussion is no longer theoretical in Africa where an increasing number of countries are turning to electronic voting or including a digital component in the voting process, such as the biometric voter recognition kits and electronic results transmission system deployed in Kenya.

For example, the last two elections in Ghana, in 2012 and 2016, had a strong digital component while Namibia held the continent's first ever completely digital election, or "e-vote" in 2014. Zimbabwe is mulling the use of biometric voter recognition in 2018 while Botswana and Nigeria are considering conducting fully digital elections in 2019. But the Kenyan experience could prompt a rethink.

In 2013, the computer system set up to verify voters and remit results to the national tally centre in Nairobi failed, forcing the election commission (the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, IEBC) to revert to a manual count. The opposition claimed sabotage in the collapse of the digital system.

Four years later, the tablets used for the voter identification and results transmission worked well, but the opposition claimed computer servers were hacked and an algorithm inserted to artificially inflate the number of votes for incumbent President Uhuru Kenyatta while deducting them from his challenger, Raila Odinga. The Supreme Court on September 1 invalidated the presidential elec-



NAIROBI: In this Monday, Aug 7, 2017 file photo, a Kenyan election volunteer walks past ballot boxes and electoral material to be distributed to various polling stations. — AP

tion and Kenyatta's victory, singling out "irregularities and illegalities in the transmission of results".

Questions over transparency

The judges' full ruling, due by September 22, is expected to reveal whether electronic failures, or fiddling, were detected. As Steve Kremer, a researcher at Inria (France's National Institute for Computer Science and Applied Mathematics), pointed out, one pillar of electoral democracy—alongside secrecy of the ballot and integrity of the result—is transparency of the process, meaning the ability of voters "to

understand the underlying system".

"Germany prohibits electronic voting on the grounds that it lacks transparency and so is unconstitutional," he said. That also appeared to be the problem in Kenya where Supreme Court judges, newspaper editors, lawyers and voters found themselves confronted with arcane terminology—"servers", "logs", "algorithms"—and technicalities that are harder to make sense of than traditional, manual methods of rigging an election such as stuffing ballot boxes or falsifying votes.

Election observation missions, tasked with monitoring the vote, also struggled with their

lack of expertise when it came to allegations of computer hacking. "I think it is a crucial point and we should all think about how observers can deal with this, because there is now a black box that very few people can look into," said Marietje Schaake, the European Union's chief observer for the Kenya vote. She also raised concerns over the key role of "private companies" that provide services or equipment but "may be more concerned about their reputation than about serving the public interest." Most observers found biometric voter recognition worked well on election day, a view shared by Kenyan voters AFP spoke to at the time.

Hacking and verification

But the transmission of results is more difficult to observe and aroused suspicions among the opposition which claimed French company OT Morpho had "participated in rigging the election," an allegation the company rejected. "The system has not been hacked and there was no attempt at intrusion," it said.

As a result Kenyan voters were trapped between opposing experts claiming fraud and hacking on the one hand, and blanket denials on the other. The task of authenticating every paper tally sheet from all 40,883 polling stations, in order to determine the legitimacy of the outcome of the vote, irrespective of any breakdown in the electronic system, fell to the IEBC. It claimed to have done this, but the opposition challenged the assertion arguing many of the paper tally sheets are in fact forgeries, lacking the right signatures and security water marks. — AFP

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POSSIBLE SYRIA TERROR LINK TO PARIS ARRESTS

PARIS: French police investigating a suspected bomb factory near Paris believe three arrested men were preparing attacks and had made calls to Syria, a minister said yesterday. Ingredients to make an explosive known as TATP, commonly used by the Islamic State group (IS), were discovered in an unoccupied apartment in the Parisian suburb of Villejuif on Wednesday, as well as gas canisters and electrical wiring.

More potential TATP ingredients were found Thursday during a search of an enclosed parking space belonging to the main suspect, the flat's owner, a source close to the case said. Anti-terror police launched raids following a tip-off from a worker at the building who has been praised for his "citizen's reflex" for reporting suspicious activity. The Paris daily *Le Parisien* reported that the workman was a plumber

working to fix a recurrent leak. He was outside the building when he spotted chemicals on a balcony of the flat, then saw a soldering iron and a hot plate through the window, the paper reported, quoting a source close to the probe.

Links to Spain cell?

Interior Minister Gerard Collomb said the men in custody-two were arrested on Wednesday and a third overnight-"were involved in terrorism". "We've seen that there were calls exchanged" with someone in the war zone in Syria, Collomb said on Franceinfo radio.

The men have denied they were preparing attacks, claiming they were planning a string of robberies in which the explosives would be used to blow up bank cash machines, Collomb said.

The arrests raised questions about whether the suspects might be linked to a jihadist cell in Spain which carried out two vehicle attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils last month. Some of the extremists behind the violence in Spain-mostly Moroccan nationals who were also preparing bombs made with TATP-visited Paris on August 11 and 12, about a week before their deadly rampage. "It is possible there were links but honestly I don't know," Collomb said.

The Spain attackers stayed in a hotel in the Parisian suburb of Malakoff a short drive from where the suspected bomb factory was discovered on Wednesday in Villejuif. After buying a camera and leaving their hotel, Collomb said the Spain jihadists "spent a long time in front of the Eiffel Tower... We have it all from their phone data". — AFP



JOHANNESBURG: South African chef Nthabiseng Mabuza (pseudonym), 35 years old, shows pictures of her injuries, at home on July 7, 2017, in Vosloorus, a middle-class township east of Johannesburg, after telling about her rape by the driver of a public mini-bus taxi, while she was on her way to work, two years ago. — AFP

SOUTH AFRICAN RAPE VICTIMS STRUGGLE AGAINST POLICING

VICTIMS LIVE IN FEAR, RAPISTS RUN FREE

VOSLOORUS: South African chef Nthabiseng Mabuza, 35, was on her way to work and the only passenger in a public mini-bus taxi when she was raped by the driver. Her alleged attacker was arrested at the scene after she shouted for help to a passerby who flagged down a police patrol car. Although the suspect was held in custody for several months, he was later freed on bail.

Two years on, the case has not yet come to court and the accused has vanished. Mabuza, a pseudonym as she did not want to be identified by her real name, is dumbfounded and angry at the police for releasing the alleged rapist and says she lives in fear that he is roaming the streets. Her case is one example of the struggles that rape victims face and how they are treated by the police in South Africa, where tens of thousands of people are sexually assaulted each year.

"The day when I was supposed to testify, he (the alleged rapist) was nowhere to be found," Mabuza told AFP, recounting the day last year when she went to court hoping the trial would finally start after being repeatedly postponed. "Since then, nothing has happened," she said, flanked by her husband, 45, at their home in Vosloorus, a middle-class township east of Johannesburg.

Her efforts to find out what was going on from the investigating officer proved futile, despite what she believes is overwhelming evidence of the brutal pre-dawn attack not far from Vosloorus. Police Minister Fikile Mbalula has vowed to over-

haul the system after admitting there is something "wrong in the administration of justice at our police stations."

"We need to respond to the outcries of millions of our people that our police force does not respond adequately (to rape cases)," the minister told AFP in an interview. He said his department would now do "what we are supposed to do so our police stations are functional and they do everything at their disposal to assist victims of abuse".

Blaming the victim

Mabuza's husband flips through photographs showing images of his wife, the bloodied mini-bus in which she was raped, her earring ripped off during the assault and a piece of synthetic hair extension lying in the grass. "This happened in 2015, now it is 2017, the guy was apprehended on the same day," he said, letting out an exasperated sigh. The couple is bewildered at how an alleged rapist could have been freed on bail. South African police are accused by NGOs, women's and human rights groups, academics, the media and some lawmakers of being insensitive to victims and slow in their investigations. Conviction rates from the reported cases are low at under 10 percent, according to several independent studies. A soon-to-be-published report, of which AFP was given an advance copy, entitled Rape Justice in South Africa, studied data from 2012 and found only 8.6 percent of cases that went to trial ended in a guilty verdict. — AFP

PM MAY'S BREXIT BATTLE RETURNS TO PARLIAMENT

LONDON: British lawmakers began debating yesterday a landmark bill to end Britain's membership of the European Union, with Prime Minister Theresa May gearing up for a major battle. The bill provides for the repeal on Brexit day of the 1972 European Communities Act that conferred Britain's membership, and also converts estimated 12,000 existing European regulations into British law.

Ministers say it is the first step in implementing last year's referendum vote for Brexit, and will provide legal continuity to ensure no "cliff-edge" when Britain leaves the bloc in March 2019. But critics warn it represents an unprecedented "power-grab" by giving the government broad powers to amend the EU laws as they are transferred without proper parliamentary scrutiny. A House of Lords committee said it "weaves a tapestry of delegated powers that are breath-taking in terms of both their scope and potency", and the opposition Labour party has vowed to vote against it.

May's Conservative party lost its majority in the House of Commons in a snap election in June, but her alliance with Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party means the first stage of the bill should pass. However, she is vulnerable to rebellions on her own side as the legislation comes under detailed scrutiny in the coming weeks, while at least seven more Brexit-related bills are expected before Britain leaves the EU.

Cabinet divisions over one of the most contentious issues of Brexit, immigration, emerged this week following the publication of a leaked report proposing restrictions on EU workers once Britain ends free movement of labor. Interior minister Amber Rudd was said by several newspapers to be unhappy with the plans, which have been condemned by several business groups as too tough. Meanwhile in Brussels, negotiations with the EU on the terms of the divorce are progressing slowly, threatening Britain's hopes to move on to talks on a future trade relationship within weeks.

'Power-grab'

May said yesterday that the Repeal bill was "the single most important step we can take to prevent a cliff-edge for people and businesses, because it provides legal certainty" after Brexit. Officials estimate that around 800 to 1,000 amendments will be needed to the EU laws being transferred—a task too large to involve full parliamentary scrutiny in each case, which is why they want to use the special powers.

The powers would expire two years after Brexit and cannot be used to raise taxes or amend human rights law—but they could be used to implement parts of the final Brexit deal agreed with Brussels. Labour has said it would seek to defeat the bill when, after two days of debate, it goes to its first vote in the House of Commons on Monday. "If this is passed in its current form, MPs are effectively relegating themselves to spectators as the baton is passed to the government to do as it likes with Brexit," Brexit spokesman Keir Starmer told BBC radio. The Scottish National Party (SNP) and the smaller Liberal Democrats party, which are both pro-European, are also likely to vote against the bill. With the DUP's support, the government has a working majority of 13 MPs in the House of Commons and the first stage of the Repeal Bill should pass. But Conservative MPs are likely to join opposition parties in trying to amend the legislation when it moves to the next stage of debate later this autumn. The devolved institutions in Scotland and Wales could also seek to hinder the progress of the bill. — AFP

DEAD TREES FORCE FIRE CREWS TO SHIFT TACTICS

ALBANY: Vast stands of dead timber in the Western US have forced firefighters to shift tactics, trying to stay out of the shadow of lifeless, unstable trees that could come crashing down with deadly force. About 6.3 billion dead trees are still standing in 11 Western states, up from 5.8 billion five years ago, according to US Forest Service statistics compiled for The Associated Press.

Since 2010, a massive infestation of beetles has been the leading cause of tree mortality in the West and now accounts for about 20 percent of the standing dead trees, the Forest Service said. The rest were killed by drought, disease, fire or other causes. Researchers have long disagreed on whether beetle infestations have made wildfires worse, and this year's ferocious fire season has renewed the debate, with multiple fires burning in forests with beetle-killed trees.

But no one disputes that dead trees - snags, in firefighter parlance - present an unpredictable threat, prone to blowing over onto people or getting knocked down by other falling trees. Amid the noise and distraction of a fire, firefighters sometimes get little warning. "That's the scary thing about snags," said Ben Brack, a firefighter and public information officer on the Keystone Fire, which burned across a forest full of beetle-killed trees around the tiny communities of Albany and Keystone in southern Wyoming in July and August. "You don't always see them coming."

To avoid broad stands of beetle-killed trees, firefighters sometimes have to cut containment lines farther from the flames. That allows the fires to gobble up more forest before they're brought under control. "When we do that, fires get bigger, and often they burn longer," said Bill Hahnenberg, a veteran Forest Service incident commander who helped corral last year's Beaver Creek Fire in beetle-killed trees in northern Colorado and southern Wyoming. "So that's one of the trade-offs fire managers have had to go to."

Safer approach

Firefighters used that tactic on both the Beaver Creek and Keystone fires. They're also using it on two big fires currently burning in beetle-killed trees in western Montana. "I'm very much in favor of it," said Mark Gunnerson, whose family owns three cabins in Keystone, one dating to 1870. "I would rather start over than one person get hurt." This summer's fire edged to within 40 feet of one of his family's cabins, but none was damaged.

Other factors, such as rugged terrain or drought-baked forests, can prompt fire managers to take a safer, less aggressive approach to minimize the danger. They say it's impossible to know how much bigger fires grow because of that. The Beaver Creek Fire scorched nearly 60 square miles and burned for about four months. The Keystone Fire was discovered July 3 and contained in mid-August, after blackening 4 square miles.

No deaths or injuries were reported in either fire. But since 1987, at least 13 US firefighters have been killed and five injured by falling dead trees, according to reports gathered by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, a coalition of federal, tribal, state and professional firefighting organizations. Massive forest die-offs have occurred before, researchers say, and even healthy forests have standing dead trees. John Shaw, a Forest Service analyst, said the percentage of dead trees can vary widely over decades. About 17 percent of all standing trees in 11 Western states are dead, roughly double the proportion in the 1990s but that was a time of above-normal precipitation, Shaw said. Since 2000, two dozen species of beetles have killed trees on nearly 85,000 square miles in the Western US. That's an area about the size of Utah. Beetles have killed nearly 80,000 square miles of forest in Western Canada.

Aging forests

The outbreak stems from a combination of factors, including crowded, aging forests, drought-stressed trees and warmer temperatures that allow the pests to survive the winters, researchers say. The bugs bore under a tree's bark, where they lay their eggs and release a blue fungus. The newly hatched larvae eat away a thin layer below the bark that the tree needs to transport nutrients, and the fungus cuts off the flow of water. — AP



TECATE: View of an artwork by French artist JR on the US-Mexico border in Tecate, California. — AFP

CALIFORNIA VOWS TO FIGHT FOR MIGRANT 'DREAMERS'

STATE PROTESTING MAJOR SETBACK TO THEIR ECONOMY

LOS ANGELES: Donald Trump's move to scrap an amnesty for hundreds of thousands of young immigrants risks costing the US economy dearly, experts warn, and nowhere is this truer than in California which has promised a fierce fight to protect its "Dreamers." The Golden State is home to more than a quarter of the 800,000 recipients of the Obama-era program that shielded from deportation migrants brought illegally to the US as children, many of whom know no other home.

Gabriel Chin, a law professor at the UC Davis School of Law, says the program's phase-out, announced on Tuesday, promises to be "devastating" for the country's most populous state. "The uncertainty of their status, and the possibility of their removal, will put a pall over many parts of the state, and threaten serious economic and human consequences," he warned.

According to a January study by the Center for American Progress, California alone would lose \$11.3 billion per year with the ending of the program known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA—more than any other US state. Officials in the state made their position clearly known, as Trump's repeal of the program implemented by president Barack Obama threw the future of its recipients into serious doubt.

"California will sue the Trump Administration over its termination of the DACA program for one simple reason," Xavier Becerra, the state's attorney general who is himself of Mexican descent, said in a statement. "Our state has become the world's 6th largest economy due in part to the success of over 200,000 Dreamers whose livelihoods have been put at risk by President Trump's wrong-headed decision on DACA."

The so-called "Dreamers"—many Hispanic, now in their twenties and having known no other country but the United States—will have somewhere between six and 24 months before they lose their protected status and become subject to potential deportation. In scrapping DACA, Trump urged Congress to settle the Dreamers' legal status—but the chances of divided lawmakers reaching a long-elusive agreement within months appear dim. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti

likewise vowed his city would defend DACA recipients from a "cruel" decision. "They belong here. And we'll fight for them to stay."

'Considerable investment'

In California—the US state with the largest immigrant population and where Hispanics outnumber whites—tens of thousands of young Dreamers live and work in the agricultural Central Valley, but an even greater number live in Los Angeles. One-third are students, and could find themselves forced back into the shadows, abandoning their education and career plans.

"Dreamers have earned diplomas, been able to open a bank account, get a mortgage, bought cars," said California's state Senate leader Kevin de Leon, who is of Guatemalan descent. "They represent a bright future for our state." Louis Desipio, professor of political science at UC Irvine, notes that the state of California has made a "considerable investment" in educating many of these young people. "If they can't work up to the levels that their skills dictate, this investment is not going to pay off as well as it has in the past," he argued.

Thousands of DACA supporters have marched in Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego in recent days, while California schools and universities pledged to protect students from the threat of deportation, offering legal advice and counseling. Silicon Valley titans including Apple, Facebook and Google have loudly condemned the dismantling of the amnesty program.

What can be done?

Major Californian cities San Francisco, Los Angeles and Berkeley have already clashed with the Trump administration by declaring themselves "sanctuaries" for undocumented migrants, and refusing to fully cooperate with immigration authorities. Experts note however that state authorities have limited room for maneuver, considering that US immigration policy is set at the federal level. So what can be done? — AFP

TWO SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR MUMBAI BOMB ATTACKS

MUMBAI: An Indian court yesterday sentenced two men to death over bomb blasts in Mumbai two decades ago that killed more than 250 people. Firoz Abdul Rashid Khan and Tahir Merchant were convicted of conspiracy in the 1993 blasts and sentenced to death. "So far as the two death sentences are concerned, I am satisfied," said special prosecutor Deepak Salve after the closed hearing.

A key figure in the attacks, Abu Salem, was sentenced to life imprisonment. India had to agree that Salem would not receive the death penalty when Salem was extradited from Portugal. Public prosecutor Ujwal Nikam announced life terms against Salem and Karimullah Khan, and a 10-year term against a fifth defendant. The sentences come after a special court in Mumbai convicted six men in June on a range of offences in the attacks. One accused, Mustafa Dossa, died of a heart attack shortly after the conviction.

The court acquitted a seventh man, Abdul Quayyum, for lack of evidence. The six were found guilty of involvement in coordinated bomb attacks on the Mumbai stock exchange, the headquarters of Air India and a shopping centre in March 1993 that killed 257 people and injured hundreds more. The attacks were believed to have been staged by Mumbai's Muslim-dominated underworld in retaliation for anti-Muslim violence that had killed more than 1,000 people a few months earlier.

Salem went on the run after the 1993 attacks and was only extradited from Portugal in 2005 after India agreed he would not face the death penalty. Salem is a former associate of Dawood Ibrahim, India's most wanted criminal, who allegedly masterminded the 1993 blasts. These are the final convictions in the long-running case that at its outset involved 189 defendants. One person has already been executed in the case.

Mumbai building fire kills 6

Meanwhile, six people died when a fire swept through a building in Mumbai, officials said yesterday, the latest housing tragedy to strike India's bustling financial capital. An exploding gas cylinder sparked the blaze at the unfinished building used by laborers and their families. Eighteen people were hurt in the blast, local government official Tanaji Kamble said, twelve of them critically.

Mumbai police said they were investigating the incident, which came a week after a building collapse in the city killed 33 people. Building disasters are common in Mumbai, especially during the monsoon season from late June to September, when heavy rains lash the city, weakening poorly-built structures. Millions are forced to live in cramped, dilapidated properties because of spiraling real estate prices and a lack of housing for the poor. Activists say housing societies, private owners and builders often cut corners to save on costs. —AFP



NEW DELHI: This file photo taken on May 21, 2007 shows accused Mumbai bombing mastermind Abu Salem (C-red shirt) being escorted by police at a railway station. — AFP



MUMBAI: This file photo taken on August 29, 2017 shows Indian people wading through a flooded street during heavy rain showers.—AFP

NO HELP AS MUMBAI FLOOD VICTIMS ARE ON THEIR OWN

'NO ONE FROM THE GOVERNMENT COMES TO CHECK'

MUMBAI: When Surekha Chiplunkar's home started to flood during recent heavy rains in Mumbai she knew exactly what to do—she had to; catastrophe comes every year and no one else was going to help. Her family's tiny ground floor apartment in central Mumbai is one of hundreds of thousands of homes in India's financial capital that regularly flood during the monsoon months of June to September. "We grab all of our possessions and move to one of our neighbors on a higher floor until the water subsides," explains the 60-year-old.

Last week, as floods wreaked unaccustomed havoc across parts of Texas, global news coverage was dominated by scenes of Americans being winched to safety. People in Houston, America's fourth biggest city, told reporters of their anguish at being forced from their homes by the unusually fierce Hurricane Harvey, as a sophisticated rescue and recovery operation revved into high gear.

President Donald Trump visited the affected area twice, while his vice president, Mike Pence, also went to assure Texans that the might of the US government was behind them, and would help them pick up the pieces in the wake of a storm that caused tens of billions of dollars' damage and killed around 60 people. At the same time, half a world away, monsoon rains were dumping millions of gallons of water on India.

Mumbai, a city of around 20 million inhabitants where at least ten people died, was brought to a virtual

standstill for two days. But there were no prime ministerial visits; no pledges of national unity; no promises to help the slum dwellers rebuild their washed-away homes. India largely shrugged and carried on, almost inured to a near-annual tragedy. "No one from the government comes to check to see if we have managed to survive the floods or not," said Chiplunkar. "People from top floors provide us with food during flooding as we cannot cook for ourselves." The help provided by members of the community during a disaster is often referred to, usually by local newspapers and leaders, as the "spirit of Mumbai".

'Financial loss'

Many of the homes that flood in Mumbai are shanties packed tightly into narrow dark alleyways lining the city's sprawling slums. The slums, where over 50 percent of Mumbai's population live, become covered in a sea of blue tarpaulin every monsoon as residents try to keep out whatever rain they can. But sturdily-built houses flood as well. Chiplunkar, her three sons, one daughter-in-law and two grandchildren, live in a basic flat built in an old chawl, or tenement, which used to house Mumbai's mill workers.

"We prepare for every monsoon by packing our belongings in plastic covers and keeping buckets ready," Aditya Jadhav, who lives in the one-room apartment opposite, tells AFP. The speed with which the rain fell—more than 315 millimeters in just a few hours—caught both families by surprise this year though. "We were

shocked. A lot of our valuables were damaged this time including a refrigerator and washing machine, causing us a lot of financial loss," says Chiplunkar.

British-era drains

Activists claim Mumbai's susceptibility to floods has worsened in recent years due to a rapid construction boom that is trying to keep up with the city's swelling population. They blame many in power as well as property developers for an insatiable desire to make money from luxury residential tower developments built on reclaimed land.

An estimated 40 percent of Mumbai's mangrove cover, which is extremely effective in helping to drain water, has been destroyed over the past decade to make way for glitzy high-rises. "Mumbai's estuaries have been tampered with and there is no space for water to flow out," Stalin D, a director of the environmental non-profit organisation Vanashakti, told AFP.

Mumbai's drainage system was built by the British in the 1860s when the population was a tenth of what it is now. Many drains are full of rubbish and desilting operations are often inadequate, activists say. While Chiplunkar and her neighbours are used to fleeing the floods at short notice, there's one aspect they can never get used to—cleaning up on their return. "All of us fall sick as the water is very dirty and sometimes we find dead rats in it. The children are particularly prone to getting diseases," she says. — AFP

INDIA'S ARMY CHIEF: CHINA 'TESTING LIMITS'

NEW DELHI: India's army chief has said his country must be prepared for war and accused China of "testing our limits", days after the nuclear-armed neighbors ended one of their worst border stand-offs in decades. General Bipin Rawat said India could not afford to be complacent and should be prepared for the possibility of an all-out war.

"As far as our northern adversary is con-

cerned, flexing of muscles has started," Rawat said late Wednesday at a Delhi-based think-tank, in reference to China. "The salami slicing, taking over territory in a very gradual manner... testing our limits of threshold is something we have to be wary about and remain prepared for situations which could gradually emerge into conflict." "Whether these conflicts will be confined or limited in

space and time or whether these can expand into an all-out war along the entire front (remains to be seen)," the Army chief said. India and China went to war in 1962 over the state of Arunachal Pradesh. Last month, the two nations withdrew their troops to resolve a tense deadlock over part of a Himalayan plateau claimed by both China and Bhutan, an ally of India. Rawat

also said India's arch rival Pakistan—an ally of China—was likely to take advantage of the tensions. "The western adversary taking advantage of the situation developing along the northern border is very much likely," he said. Pakistan and India have fought three wars since independence, two of them over the disputed region of Kashmir, which both claim in full. — AFP

STUDENT BACKLASH DURING HK INDEPENDENCE ROW

HONG KONG: Hong Kong students have accused their universities of suppressing freedom of speech after banners and signs calling for the city's independence from China were taken down from campuses. The move has fuelled fears that freedoms are being squeezed in the semi-autonomous city and that Beijing is tightening its grip in a range of areas, from politics to media and education.

Since the failure of mass Umbrella Movement rallies to win democratic reform in 2014, some young campaigners say they want to see Hong Kong split completely from the mainland, a concept that infuriates Beijing. The latest row began on Monday when a large black banner reading "HK Independence" appeared at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. It is not clear who put it up. The student union there said it was taken down the same day.

A letter from the university's office of student affairs Tuesday, which was posted on the student union's Facebook page, warned pro-independence views violated Hong Kong law and said any more "improper" items would be removed. "The related opinions have violated relevant Hong Kong legislation, and violate the school's consistent and absolute opposition of Hong Kong independence," the letter said.

The student union questioned how putting a political opinion went against Hong Kong's mini-constitution, the Basic Law, which guarantees freedom of speech. In a statement it said it felt "deep regret" at the move. "The union will do its utmost to safeguard students' autonomy and freedom of speech," the statement added. Another large black banner and over 200 small posters calling for independence were still up at the university's campus.

'Democracy walls'

Multiple university unions said pro-independence signs had been taken down from their "Democracy Walls"—areas managed by students and used to express political opinions. A statement from the student union at the Education University of Hong Kong strongly condemned the school for "intervening in students' autonomy and suppressing freedom of speech". The Open University student union said the removal of signs showed institutions had "overstepped their authority" in a statement. But mainland Chinese students at CUHK said they agreed with the move.

"These comments make me feel uncomfortable and isolated from Hong Kong," one 22-year-old who gave his name as Horan told AFP. Another mainland Chinese student who did not want to be identified put up anti-independence signs at the university yesterday. "Hong Kong cannot be taken away from China, it's a part of China," he said.

A video posted on Facebook by citizen journalist platform Socrec Tuesday showed a woman speaking English and Mandarin Chinese—the dominant language in mainland China—angrily ripping down posters at CUHK depicting Hong Kong's skyline on fire with the words: "Fight for our homeland, fight for Hong Kong independence". The city was handed back to China by Britain in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" deal that allows it rights unseen on the mainland, but there are growing fears those liberties are disappearing. — AFP



HELMAND: In this photograph taken on August 27, 2017 Afghan Commandos transport a colleague feigning an injury on a stretcher as they participate in a combat training exercise at the Shorab Military Camp in Lashkar Gah. — AFP

TRUMP WINS SUPPORT FOR AFGHAN STRATEGY IN VOLATILE HELMAND

TALEBAN CONTINUES TO INFLICT STINGING BLOWS

CAMP SHORAB: Marines in Afghanistan's Helmand say Donald Trump's decision to keep boots on the ground indefinitely gives them "all the time in the world" to retake the province, once the symbol of US intervention but now a Taliban stronghold. They may need it. At the hot, dusty Camp Shorab, where many of the recently deployed Marines train their Afghan counterparts in flat, desert terrain, the Afghans admit their army still cannot fight alone.

The Taliban control or contest 12 out of Helmand's 14 districts and continue to inflict stinging blows on Afghan forces, who have been struggling to beat back the insurgents across the country since taking the lead on security from NATO forces at the end of 2014. Sixteen years since the American-led invasion, and after decades of near-constant war in the country, the Islamist extremists show few signs of flagging, despite being heavily outgunned by the might of the US military.

With no need to pay attention to four-year election cycles, the Taliban's fight against their technologically-superior foes is often summed up in the proverb: "You may have the watches, but we have the time". But Trump's announcement that the US commitment to Afghanistan is open-ended might just be enough to reverse the tide. "We have all the time in the world... to accomplish the mission the

right way," said Staff Sergeant George Caldwell, one of the Marines based at Camp Shorab.

Around 300 Marines returned to Helmand in April, a fraction of the more than 20,000 stationed in the poppy-growing province when it was the centerpiece of the US invasion. Previously, they were on the frontline against the Taliban. Now they are part of NATO's "train, advise and assist" mission, focused on making Afghan security forces strong enough to beat back the insurgents on their own.

Progress

Afghan troops are drilled in clearing insurgents from mud-brick compounds, evacuating wounded soldiers by helicopter and locating improvised explosive devices hidden in the ground. It is part of the "operational readiness cycle" launched by the Marines that takes war-weary Afghan soldiers off the battlefield for 12 weeks of training and rest. US trainers say the Afghans are making progress, retaking Nawa district in July after nine months in Taliban hands. But the insurgents are still on the offensive, carrying out a number of suicide attacks in Helmand in recent weeks.

In the province—as in the rest of the country—shockingly high casualties, along with desertions, corruption and exhaustion have eroded the morale of Afghan

forces. Major General Wali Mohammad Ahmadzai, who was appointed to lead the Afghan army's 215th Corps in Helmand last year, said the continued US support outlined by Trump was crucial. "Our army is not mature enough to fight alone," said Ahmadzai.

'Breathing space'

In his speech last month Trump refused to offer specifics, but officials have said the additional US troops could number some 4,000, on top of the 11,000-strong force already on the ground. US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said last week he had "signed orders" for the fresh deployment of troops "to enable the Afghan force to fight more effectively". But critics have questioned what a few thousand fresh US troops can do that previous forces—who numbered some 100,000 at the height of the fighting—have not.

Despite the lack of details—including any indication of how many more troops would be sent to Helmand, and when—the Marines at Camp Shorab said the fresh forces would make a difference. "What additional troops (would) give us is the capability to move faster—if you add more resources and advisers we would be able to achieve effects faster," said Brigadier General Roger Turner, commander of the Helmand mission. — AFP

AUSTRALIA TO VOTE ON GAY MARRIAGE REFORM

SYDNEY: Australians are set to vote on legalising same-sex marriage, potentially ending years of political stalemate, after the nation's highest court yesterday threw out two challenges to a voluntary postal ballot. There is popular support for changes to the marriage laws, but the issue has dragged on for more than a decade amid political wrangling.

In the latest effort to resolve the issue, the conservative government opted for a postal survey after an election pledge to hold a national referendum was twice rejected by the upper house Senate. But it was challenged by two gay marriage advocacy groups, who said the government had exceeded its powers in funding the ballot without parliamentary approval. On Tuesday, their challenges were thrown out by the High Court, paving the way for ballot papers to be sent out as scheduled next week, with results known in November. "We encourage every Australian to vote in this survey, to have their say," Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, a supporter of same-sex rights, told parliament in Canberra after the court ruling. "As I have said in this House and in many other places, Lucy (wife) and I will be voting 'yes' and I will be encouraging others to vote 'yes.'" If the majority of Australians vote "yes", the government will hold a free vote in parliament on the issue, with MPs not bound by party policy or the postal ballot's result.

If there is a "no" outcome, there will be no parliamentary vote. "We are disappointed with the outcome," said Jonathon Hunyor, the head of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, one of the groups that mounted the challenge. "But we now need to focus on ending discrimination against same-sex couples and making marriage equality a reality."

Courtesy and respect

The voluntary postal vote was strongly opposed by many gay marriage supporters, who said it would be expensive and divisive, subjecting gay people and their families to hate speech. Ahead of the court's decision, there were early signs the debate could turn toxic, with a poster emblazoned "stop the fags" put up in central Melbourne. There were also flyers describing homosexuality as "a curse of death" distributed in suburban Sydney, sparking calls by the government for a respectful debate.

The government said safeguards would now be introduced via legislation to "support the fair and proper conduct" of the survey, which could include tighter advertising restrictions. Australia's highest-profile gay politician, Labor opposition Senator Penny Wong, opposed the ballot along with her party but said it was time to make marriage equality a reality. "We didn't want to be here but now we are here, let's win it. Let's get it done," Wong told reporters. A leading group behind the "yes" vote, The Equality Campaign, said it would be "hitting the ground running with hundreds of thousands of supporters talking about why marriage equality matters". Meanwhile, a key voice backing the "no" vote, the Australian Christian Lobby (ACL), said it would continue its campaign to inform Australians about the "consequences of changing the Marriage Act for them and their family".

This would include what ACL's managing director Lyle Shelton said would be the impact of the reforms on religious freedom and the rights of parents on whether their children would be taught "radical" gay programs in schools. Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher said in a post on his archdiocese's website that the push for marriage reforms raised key questions for Australian Catholics. — AFP



VLADIVOSTOK: South Korea's President Moon Jae-in, left, smiles as Russian President Vladimir Putin answers questions during a plenary session titled "The Russian Far East: Creating a New Reality" at the Eastern Economic Forum. — AP

JAPAN, S KOREA PUSH PUTIN OVER PYONGYANG SANCTIONS

NATIONS LOOK TO GRIND DOWN RESISTANCE FROM RUSSIA

VLADIVOSTOK: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe yesterday echoed South Korea's demand for more pressure on Pyongyang after its nuclear tests as the leaders of the two countries looked to grind down resistance from Russia's Vladimir Putin.

"The international community must unite in applying the greatest possible pressure on North Korea," Abe said in a speech alongside Putin and South Korea's Moon Jae-in at an economic forum in Vladivostok. "We must make North Korea immediately and fully comply with all relevant UN Security Council resolutions and abandon all its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner," Abe insisted.

The call came just four days after Pyongyang staged its sixth and most powerful nuclear test to date, claiming a "perfect success" in testing a hydrogen bomb. The United States on Wednesday demanded the United Nations slap an oil embargo on Pyongyang and a freeze on the foreign assets of its leader Kim Jong-Un in a dramatic bid to force an end to the perilous nuclear stand-off. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said yesterday that China would support the United Nations taking further measures against North Korea following its recent test.

"Given the new developments on the Korean peninsula, China agrees that the UN Security Council should respond further by taking necessary measures," he told a press conference in Beijing. "We believe that sanctions and pressure are only half of the key to resolving the issue. The other half is dialogue and negotiation," Wang added.

Putin meanwhile has repeatedly insisted that further economic pressure on Pyongyang will not work and insisted that the only route is diplomacy. "It is impossible to intimidate them," Putin

said in Vladivostok. "I am convinced that we can avoid a large-scale conflict including weapons of mass destruction in the region and that we can solve this problem through diplomacy." US Ambassador Nikki Haley said the United States would be seeking a vote at the council on new sanctions on September 11.

Meanwhile the EU said it is preparing to increase its own sanctions against North Korea, as part of international efforts to punish the rogue state. "I will put forward to ministers to work in the coming days to increase EU autonomous sanctions," Federica Mogherini said as she arrived for a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Tallinn.

Celebrations in Pyongyang

Despite the mounting pressure on leader Kim Jong-Un, the message from Pyongyang remains one of fierce defiance. North Korea held a mass celebration for the scientists involved in carrying out its largest nuclear blast to date, with fireworks and a mass rally in Pyongyang. Citizens of the capital lined the streets Wednesday to wave pink and purple pom-poms and cheer a convoy of buses carrying the specialists into the city, and toss confetti over them as they walked into Kim Il-Sung Square.

In a sign of the international stakes over Pyongyang's latest test, China said yesterday that it had lodged a diplomatic protest with South Korea following its announcement that it would increase deployments of a US anti-missile system. In a phone call with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, US President Donald Trump on Wednesday insisted that military action against North Korea was not his "first choice" and pushed for a diplomatic option. — AFP

DUTERTE'S SON DENIES DRUG SMUGGLING CLAIMS

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's son and son-in-law denied allegations yesterday that they belonged to a drug trafficking gang, with the explosive claims raising questions about the government's bloody anti-narcotics crackdown. Duterte came to power last year promising to wage a brutal and unprecedented war on drugs. Since then, police have killed around 3,800 suspects in anti-narcotics operations, while thousands of other people have been murdered in unexplained circumstances.

His son Paolo Duterte and son-in-law Manases Carpio appeared at a Senate inquiry

yesterday to answer accusations that they helped facilitate the shipment of crystal methamphetamine worth 6.4 billion pesos (\$125.4 million) into the Philippines from China in exchange for payment. The allegations emerged last month when a customs broker told the Senate panel that he had heard the names of Duterte's son and son-in-law mentioned while seeking to expedite the shipment.

The broker later issued a statement clearing the two men of involvement. But opposition senator Antonio Trillanes at the inquiry accused Duterte's son of belonging to a drug trafficking

gang, saying the 42-year-old had a tattoo on his back, resembling a dragon, that was "proof... of his membership" in the gang. Paolo Duterte, vice-mayor of the southern city of Davao, told the panel that he had a tattoo but said he could not answer allegations based on hearsay.

"The law of karma will operate especially to those with evil intent," he added in a apparent swipe at Trillanes, an arch-critic of the president. Carpio, who is married to Davao city mayor Sara Duterte, also rejected allegations against their family. "Me and my brother-in-law have been publicly crucified based on rumours and gossip,"

said Carpio, a lawyer. "I have no knowledge of or involvement in the illegal drugs shipment."

The sensational allegations have captured the attention of Filipinos, many of whom back the president's vow to pursue an unrelenting war against drug traffickers.

Duterte, 72, has said he would be "happy to slaughter" three million Filipino drug addicts, even as critics warn the deaths of thousands of people killed in the crackdown may amount to a crime against humanity. Duterte has denied ever inciting police or vigilantes to commit mass murder. — AP

Lifestyle

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2017



Kendall Jenner walks the runway at the Tom Ford Spring 2018 fashion show during New York Fashion Week, Wednesday. — AP

Tom Ford kicks off NY fashion week with 90s sequins

TOM FORD KICKS OFF NY FASHION WEEK WITH 90S SEQUINS



Tom Ford on Wednesday opened New York Fashion Week in throwback '90s sequin glory, kicking off the spring/summer 2018 season and looking to silence criticism that the bi-annual style fest is losing its mojo. More than 230,000 people flood America's cultural capital to attend the September and February editions, where hundreds of shows, deals and parties contribute nearly \$900 million a year to the city. Ford, the 56-year-old, Texan-born, movie-making designer transformed Manhattan's Park Avenue Armory into an intimate, pink runway that hosted A-list guests such as Kim Kardashian, actress Julianne Moore, and 1990s supermodels Cindy Crawford and Helena Christensen.

"I hope it brings in a younger customer," Ford confided to The Business of Fashion website. "It's a bit more modern." "I thought it was really important to have a proper show." Ford sent down the runway models in blush sequin tops, cropped micro hemlines, sharply tailored jackets and body suits with plunging necklines and hip-high cut outs. Colors were neutrals and hot pink. The show segued immediately into pumping after party to launch his new fragrance "Fucking Fabulous" with buff, shirtless waiters in sports shorts handing out drinks and burgers.

Ford told The Business of Fashion it was "a throwback in a

way to the spirit" of his collections for Gucci in the 1990s—the gig that made him famous. His eponymous eyewear, beauty and fashion empire is now reportedly on track to hit retail revenue of nearly \$2 billion in 2017. It was a bold start to a fashion week that officially begins Thursday, under a cloud of stellar designers fleeing to Europe, debate about its relevancy and confusion even about what time of year it is. Raf Simons, the Belgian ex-Christian Dior designer giving Calvin Klein a face lift to rave reviews, is the most hot anticipated show with a second collection for the iconic New York house on Thursday. Otherwise here quick highlights in the offering:

Fall back, spring forward?

Officially it's spring/summer 2018, but Ralph Lauren and a clutch of other labels have switched to "see-now, buy-now" which basically means fall/winter and clothes instantly available for purchase. The drive for reform is the desperation to give the millennial market what they want: instant gratification in a social media world where planning wardrobes six months in advance is an anthem. But to what extent its working is up for debate. Tom Ford, who opted for instant fashion for fall 2017, says it's not and has switched back.





The Tom Ford Spring 2018 collection is modeled during New York Fashion Week, Wednesday.

Shrinking violets

No matter how you dress it up, there's a dearth of household names this season. Proenza Schouler, Rodarte, Altuzarra and Thom Browne have fled to Paris, and instant fashion devotee Tommy Hilfiger to London. Some industry insiders herald a time of change, and a chance for younger labels such as Monse or Sies Marjan to shine. Others point to Europe's bolstered reputation for more avant-garde creativity.

Bigger is beautiful

New York leads the way when it comes to more plus-size models treading the runway, the most famous of whom is size 16 Ashley Graham. It comes after dozens of fashion labels in Paris, including Christian Dior and Saint Laurent, pledged on Wednesday to stop using size zero models following scandals about anorexia and mistreatment.

Celebs

Headline-grabber Rihanna will showcase her Fenty collection with Puma on Sunday. Rap superstar Kanye West is keeping close wraps on his still mysterious sixth installment for urban sportswear brand Yeezy.

In the sticks

US fashion royalty Ralph Lauren is inviting a paired down guest list to the garage housing his collection of rare automobiles in Bedford, New York, followed by a formal black-and-white dress code dinner. It will be quite a trek — 40 miles (64 kilometers) north of Manhattan-as the brand prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary next year.

Trump that

US designers have long been up in arms over the Trump presidency. Some refuse to dress his wife and politics peppered the runway in February. The Council of Fashion Designers of America is teaming up with the American Civil Liberties Union to campaign against racism after a deadly demonstration attended by neo-Nazis in Virginia last month. "We want to be on the front line, not the sidelines, to boldly fight to protect our precious rights and freedoms, which has taken on a renewed urgency," said CFDA president and CEO Steven Kolb. To that end a special blue lapel ribbon is being distributed. — AFP



Designer Tom Ford greets the audience after his Spring 2018 collection is shown during New York Fashion Week, Wednesday. — AP photos



Rachel Feinstein attends the Tom Ford Spring/Summer 2018 Runway Show.



Rande Gerber, Cindy Crawford and Ansel Elgort attend the Tom Ford Spring/Summer 2018 Runway Show After Party.



Kim Kardashian attends the Tom Ford show.



In this undated handout photo, actor Moayed al-Nefaei performs in the Saudi short film "Wasati," or "Moderate." — AP photos



Saudi filmmaker Ali Kalthami stands next to the poster for his film "Wasati" or "Moderate" and two other Saudi short films recently shown at Cinema Akil in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Saudi filmmakers build audiences without cinemas

With daring filmmakers, untold stories and entertainment-starved young people, Saudi Arabia has all the makings of a local movie industry - except for theaters. As the traditionally austere kingdom cautiously embraces more forms of entertainment, local filmmakers are exploring a new frontier in Saudi art, using the internet to screen films and pushing boundaries of expression - often with surprise backing from top royals. "Saudi Arabia is the future of filmmaking in the Gulf," said Butheina Kazim, co-founder of Dubai's independent cinema platform "Cinema Akil," pointing to a crop of Saudi films that have emerged in recent years.

Kazim screened three Saudi short films to audiences in Dubai last month, including one called "Wasati," or moderate in Arabic. The movie is based on a real-life event that took place in the mid-1990s when a group of ultraconservatives rushed the stage during a play in Saudi Arabia and shut it down. The incident dampened theater in Saudi Arabia for years. The film by Ali Kalthami was screened in Los Angeles last year, and was shown for one night in June at Riyadh's Al Yamamah University - in the same theater where the play was shut down two decades ago.

One of Saudi Arabia's most prominent film pioneers, Kalthami is co-founder of C3 Films and Telfaz11, a popular YouTube channel that has amassed more than 1 billion views since it was launched in 2011. His movie "Wasati" was one of several Saudi shorts produced last year with funding from the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture, an initiative named after the founder of the kingdom by Saudi Arabia's state-oil company Aramco. Kalthami said it was the first time he'd ever received funding for a film from a state-linked entity.

"I think because of the history we made online... they trusted we could tell wonderful stories, human stories in Saudi," he said. By using

the internet to show films, Telfaz11 and other Saudi production houses have managed to circumvent traditional distribution channels and make do without cinemas. Even so, Saudi filmmakers have to contend with how to tell their stories within the bounds of the kingdom's ultraconservative mores and its limits on free speech. It wasn't always like this. There used to be movie theaters across Saudi Arabia from the 1960s through the 1980s, until religious hard-liners were given greater sway over public life. In the years that followed, Saudis could rent movies from video stores, though scenes of lovemaking and cursing were edited out. Saudis also had access to movies on satellite channels.

Nowadays, Saudis can stream movies online - where Telfaz11 has partnered with YouTube. Some of the local films being produced are purely for entertainment, while others waded into the myriad everyday challenges people in Saudi Arabia face. The film "Wadja" made history in 2013 by becoming the first Academy Award entry for Saudi Arabia, though it wasn't nominated for the Oscars. The movie follows the story of a 10-year-old girl who dreams of having a bicycle just like the boys in her ultraconservative neighborhood, where men and women are strictly segregated and where boys and girls attend separate schools. The film was written and directed by Saudi female director Haifaa al-Mansour, who shot the film entirely in the kingdom.

Saudi Arabia is vying again this year for an Oscar in the foreign-language film category. The film "Barakah Meets Barakah", by director Mahmoud Sabbagh, made its premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival in February. The movie, which has been called the kingdom's first romantic comedy, tells the story of a civil servant who falls for a Saudi girl whose Instagram posts have made her a local celebrity. Though four years apart, the two films tackle the issue of gender seg-

regation in Saudi Arabia, which remains strictly enforced. The emergence of a Saudi film scene is happening as the kingdom begins to loosen the reins on fun and entertainment after nearly two decades without cinemas or concerts.

Saudi Arabia's 31-year-old heir to throne, Mohammed bin Salman, is set to inherit a nation where more than half of the population is under 25, and most are active on social media, where they can access the world beyond the reach of state censors. The crown prince is behind an ambitious blueprint to transform Saudi Arabia's economy and society. He wants to encourage Saudis to spend more of their money locally, including doubling what Saudi families spend on entertainment in the kingdom.

While Saudi Arabia's influential clerics and many citizens consider Western-style entertainment sinful, the prince's backing means there could soon be cinemas in the kingdom. Prince Mohammed's nonprofit, MiSK, sponsored a screening in August of an Arabic 3D action film in the capital, Riyadh. There have been other similar screenings in the coastal city of Jiddah. The government has also backed a Saudi film festival that's taken place for the past few years in the eastern city of Dhahran. This year, some 60 Saudi films were screened. After watching the Saudi shorts in Dubai's Cinema Akil and meeting the filmmakers, aspiring filmmaker Lamia Al-Shwwier, who's just graduated with a master's degree from the Los Angeles campus of the New York Film Academy, said she felt confident about the prospects of a Saudi film industry. "We have so many incredible stories to tell, whether they are stories of success or challenge. Our society is rich in stories and ideas," she said. — AP



This file shows singer Charice Pempengco (center) performing during the launch of her first album in Manila. — AFP

Glee star breaks Philippine walls as transgender icon

With a wisp of moustache and an increasingly confident tenor, Philippine singer Jake Zyus proudly talks about being a different person from his former self, global teenage music sensation Charice Pempengco. Before revealing his transgender identity in June, Zyus was the pride of the mainly Catholic nation, a diminutive girl belting out ballads on the US television series "Glee" and duetting with Celine Dion and Andrea Bocelli. But Zyus, now 25, said Charice's success never felt right prompting him to make a rare, courageous move in the conservative society by announcing he was a man.

"I felt like I had a wall. I could not express what I wanted to say, what I wanted to show. I could not show who I really was," Zyus told AFP in an interview ahead of his first concert slated for next month. "A lot of young people will kill for all those achievements. I was happy with the achievements but I was not happy with who I was. Now I feel so light." In a nation where same-sex marriage and divorce are outlawed, Zyus admits his journey from the pigtailed girl in a dress to a man was a long and painful one.

He has been in the public eye since rising from poverty to becoming a YouTube star whose covers of pop hits land-

ed him on the Ellen DeGeneres Show, the Oprah Winfrey Show, Barack Obama's pre-US presidential inauguration galas and Oscars parties. Zyus first came out as a lesbian in 2013, a statement he now calls a "lie". "I thought that would be enough. For us here, you were either lesbian or gay. I was afraid that if I explained who I really was, people would not understand," he said.

'Not illness'

The decision to announce his transgender name on social media drew praise but also ridicule. "(It) is a very empowering image especially for individuals who are 'closeted,'" Anastacio Marasigan, executive director of LGBT rights group TLF Share, told AFP. A popular Filipino television presenter laughingly compared the gender transition to "climate change", while the local edition of Esquire magazine was forced to issue a public apology after mocking Zyus' name. Before coming out, Zyus had his breasts removed and began taking testosterone shots. —AFP

'Oldest jazz band' a constant in fast-modernizing Shanghai

Li Minsheng is one of the junior members of the "Old Jazz Band" at Shanghai's ornate Fairmont Peace Hotel. He's 76. Frequently described as the oldest jazz band on the planet and once recognized as such by Guinness World Records, its six wizened members range from a relatively youthful 63 to a scarcely believable 97-year-old trumpeter. They are an institution in Shanghai and a rare constant in a city and country that are modernizing at breakneck speed.



Members of the "Old Jazz Band" perform at Shanghai's ornate Fairmont Peace Hotel in Shanghai. — AFP photos

"I have been performing jazz for at least 40 years," Li, an alto saxophonist with a soft face and gentle air, told AFP. "I got this saxophone in the 1960s and have played it ever since." Born during the tumult and war following Japan's late-1930s invasion, Li-like other Chinese his age-has witnessed remarkable change. "I started playing jazz and performing after the opening-up," said Li, referring to the economic reforms launched in the late 1970s by Deng Xiaoping that propelled China from a basket case to the world's second-largest economy today.

"We were not able to play before the opening-up due to the political situation then," Li said, moments before going on stage once more in a red bow tie, crisp white shirt, pristine white blazer and black trousers. That meant practicing at home in secret. "Back then I would play at home a little bit and enjoy it by myself. I



Music notes of a member of the "Old Jazz Band" are kept open during his performance at Shanghai's ornate Fairmont Peace Hotel in Shanghai.



Members of the "Old Jazz Band" perform at Shanghai's ornate Fairmont Peace Hotel in Shanghai.

didn't play outside." Jazz is more readily associated with New Orleans or New York than Shanghai, but the Chinese city has its own proud heritage in that regard that flickers on. And the Peace Hotel, completed in 1929 and a prime example of Art Deco architecture on Shanghai's historic riverside Bund area, is in many ways central to it.

The bar where the "Old Jazz Band" now plays 365 nights of the year was originally an English-style pub and it retains that flavour with its bar stools, dark-wooden fittings and slightly musty feel. During Shanghai's hard-partying 1930s heyday the bar became so well known for its jazz—which arrived in the city around that time with American musicians hired to play at nightclubs—that it became simply known as "The Jazz Bar". Then came war, the 1949 Communist takeover, and the political turmoil of

the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, when virulent campaigns against anything foreign made playing or even listening to jazz a dangerous hobby.

'Long way to go'

Emerging from all that, the "Old Jazz Band", which attempts to revive the bar's 1930s air, has been a fixture at the hotel since 1980. Former US presidents Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan are among the dignitaries who have dropped in for an evening of jazz—Clinton, who plays the sax, even joined in. The band, which has an average age of 82, plays what it calls "soft jazz" and with a Shanghaiese flavour.

"Jazz has come to China bit by bit," said Li, who has been in the band for more than 30 years and was put forward by his fellow members to speak for them. "After China's opening-up, the influx of Western jazz had a huge impact on the jazz scene here. By watching their performances, we were able to learn from them and improve our music. "But of course, compared to the top jazz scenes in the world, we still have a long way to go." And the million-dollar question: when does Li plan to close the lid on his saxophone case for the last time?

"Generally speaking, playing the sax has an age limit," he said, smiling. But as long as he remains enthusiastic and people keep filling the bar to listen, he plans to carry on. "Interacting with the audience is the greatest thing for me. Without anyone to listen, we'd have no reason to perform." — AFP



Members of the "Old Jazz Band" perform at Shanghai's ornate Fairmont Peace Hotel in Shanghai.



72-years-old Yao, a member of "Old Jazz Band" performs at Shanghai's ornate Fairmont Peace Hotel in Shanghai.



This image released by Open Road Films shows a scene from "Home Again." — AP

Witherspoon can't save bland, gooey 'Home Again'

It's a crime to waste Reese Witherspoon. You know what's worse? To waste Reese Witherspoon AND Candice Bergen. That lovely bit of casting alone - Witherspoon and Bergen as daughter and mom - should have been enough to lift "Home Again," a debut from writer-director Hallie Meyers-Shyer, into at least the ranks of fairly entertaining, harmless guilty-pleasure rom-coms. Instead, one is left marveling at how disappointingly inept it feels, from plot developments so obvious you see them coming 40 minutes ahead, to the gooey, lingering close-ups of characters laughing happily. What are they laughing about? Maybe there were lots of great private jokes flying around the set, because there aren't a lot of great ones in the script - save a few choice barbs from Bergen, and a very well-timed "Hamilton" joke.

Witherspoon is Alice, a recently separated mother of two who's returned to Los Angeles from New York, escaping a difficult marriage to a scruffily charming music mogul (Michael Sheen.) Luckily, she can move right into her childhood home - her huge, beautiful childhood home, with linens so soft they're a topic of conversation, and a sizable guest house. Which is where the three guys come in. That would be Harry (Pico Alexander), his brother Teddy (Nat Wolff) and friend George (Jon Rudnitsky). They're budding 20-something filmmakers trying to get their movie produced, and they're a bit down on their luck.

Of course, this movie's version of being down on one's luck is a little different than in the rest of the world. It's not just that these guys somehow waltz into high-level meetings with agents and producers. It's that everyone here looks like they've grown up in a Ralph Lauren catalog. Now, plenty of movies have been made about well-off people without real-world problems. It's not a crime. But takeout from Nobu? That may be pushing it. Anyway, we digress. Alice, we learn, is the daughter of a late, well-known filmmaker. Mom Lilian (Bergen) was an actress. Dad didn't always treat her well, but Lilian has a great explanation for why she's not fussed: "He's gone now, so I won."

'But I fixed your cabinet'

Would that Alice had her mother's sang-froid. We begin on her 40th birthday, and she's weeping into the mirror. Then she goes out and celebrates at a bar, where she and her tipsy friends meet Harry, Teddy and George. Drinking leads to dancing, to more drinks at Alice's home, to an aborted sexual encounter between Alice and Harry - aborted because Harry's throwing up. You'd think Alice would wake up, do the laundry (which she does), and realize Harry isn't much of a catch. But soon all three guys have moved into the guest bungalow - their own Ralph Lauren frat house. And Alice starts sleeping with Harry - once he fixes her kitchen cabinet. "We shouldn't do this," she says, as they kiss. "But I fixed your cabinet," he says. Guys at home: that line may not always work for you.

The problem isn't even the unlikeliness that Harry would even know his way around a toolbox. It's that Harry is just so boring. We all want Alice to have fun; it's not his age that grates. It's his emptiness. And then ex-husband Austen shows up. That's Austen-with-an-E, not Austin-with-an-I. And he says, "Let's fix this" (the marriage, not the cabinet). Alice has to make a decision. Meanwhile, there's a very important school play. And this is what we mean by obvious developments, because in any rom-com with a school play, you can bet that someone isn't going to make it in time, and there are going to be shots of empty seats and anxious young faces. And yes, this is what happens. We won't tell you how it turns out. We CAN divulge that there will be more lingering close-ups of people laughing. Again, what are they laughing about? If you can figure it out, let us know. "Home Again," an Open Road release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America "for some thematic and sexual material." Running time: 97 minutes. Two stars out of four. MPAA definition of PG-13: Parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. — AP

COOKING ON DEADLINE:

SPICY BRAISED RADICCHIO AND RED CABBAGE

By Katie Workman

We always had some sort of braised red cabbage during the Jewish holidays, especially Rosh Hashana, when I was little. I remember being very skeptical of the sweet and sour jumble, but then really falling for it. For this cabbage dish, I decided to fall headfirst for the notion of “red,” adding radicchio and red onions to the cabbage. The stovetop braising softens the bitterness of the lettuce and the sharpness of the onion, though those do contribute wonderful layers of flavor to the dish.

A little sweetness comes from the honey and the orange juice, a bit of tartness from the lemon, and a bit of both from the balsamic vinegar. Seriously, how gorgeous is this dish, and can't you picture it sitting next to a roast of any kind? This recipe makes a lot, so use a big pot or Dutch oven. I love the leftovers, but you can easily cut the recipe in half.

**Ingredients**

Start to finish: 1 hour 15 minutes (45 minutes largely hands off time)

Serves 12 to 16

2 medium heads radicchio

1 head red cabbage

1/2 cup fresh orange juice

1/4 cup fresh lemon juice

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter

2 red onions, halved and thinly sliced

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes, or more to taste

1 teaspoon ground coriander

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

1/4 cup Madeira

2 tablespoons honey

2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves

Preparation

Quarter and core the radicchio and cabbage, and very thinly slice both vegetables. Place the radicchio and cabbage in a large bowl. Sprinkle the orange juice, lemon juice and balsamic vinegar over them, give a very generous sprinkling of salt, and toss. (This will look like a large quantity of vegetables, which it is, but keep in mind it will reduce by almost half when cooked.) Set aside, and give the mixture a toss every once in a while, while you saute the onions; you can cover the bowl and refrigerate it overnight if you like.

Melt the butter in a large, heavy pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion, red pepper flakes, coriander, and salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, for about 12 minutes, until the onions are very soft and lightly browned. Stir in the Madeira, honey and thyme, and bring to a simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes, and then stir in the radicchio, cabbage and citrus juices. Simmer over medium-low heat for about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are wilted and very tender and the liquid has reduced and thickened a bit. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Serve hot or warm. — AP

Sorry, Grandma, I'm tweaking your spaghetti and meatballs

By Melissa D'Arabian

Spaghetti and meatballs was the classic dish I ate at Grandma's house growing up: She had her all-day recipe that filled her creaky house with heady aromas that built anticipation as meatballs simmered in sauce on the stove. The fact that she was 100 percent first-generation German - she emigrated at the age of 6 - never stopped me from making her recipe the benchmark by which every other meatball would be judged.

Tweaking her recipe to lighten it up a bit, and make it weekday-friendly by shortening the cook time, was a task I didn't take lightly. And truth to be told: There is a special place in this rush-to-eat food world for the leisurely simmer of small orbs of meat in thick, tangy tomato sauce covered in a fine slick of co-mingled pork and beef fat that has gently floated to the top. But life is busy, and we need to get a healthy dinner on the table and move on. I get it. These meatballs are for those nights.

First to change: The fatty mix of pork and beef became simply lean (93 percent) beef. Feel free to mix in turkey, but our family preferred the beef. The next tweak: I added a half pound of mushrooms for every pound of beef to stretch the meat out and add in nutrients. I pulsed the mushrooms in a food processor, and then cooked them with another healthy meat stretcher - onions. (Here, you could add other veggies too: shredded zucchini, carrot, and chopped spinach work great.)

I added the mushroom and onion mixture right in with the ground beef, and they added flavor, moisture and bulk, with nary an added calorie (nor a suspicious eye from any of my four kids). I used one egg white (no yolk), and used oats pulsed into a coarse flour instead of breadcrumbs. Simmer these meatballs directly in a pot of a high-quality jarred marinara sauce (check for no added sugar), and in 20 minutes, they will be succulent, tender, and juicy. Almost like Grandma's.

LIGHTENED ITALIAN MEATBALLS

Ingredients

Servings: 6

Start to finish: 40 minutes

- 8 ounces white mushrooms, sliced (about 2 cups)
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped, about 3/4 cup
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons dried Italian herb blend
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 1 pound 93 percent lean ground beef
- 2 tablespoons grated parmesan
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 1/3 cup oats, pulsed or blended into a coarse powder
- 1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 cups jarred marinara sauce, with no sugar added

Preparation

Place the sliced mushrooms in a food processor and pulse 4 or 5 times, until the mushrooms are the texture of coarse couscous. Do not over-process or it will become pasty. Heat a large nonstick saute pan over medium heat and add the olive oil, onion, and mushrooms to the pan. Cook, stirring often, until onion and mushrooms are softened, and most of the liquid has evaporated, about 12 minutes.

Add the garlic, Italian herb blend, salt and pepper, give it a quick stir, and then remove from heat and allow to cool a few minutes. In a large bowl, mix together the egg white and the cooled mushroom mixture. Add the ground beef and mix together, using hands if necessary. Add the parmesan cheese, fresh parsley, fresh basil and ground oats and mix together, just until blended.

Use a small ice cream scoop to portion out uniform meatballs, and roll them gently together in your hands. (You will have approximately 26 meatballs 1.5 inch in diameter.) Pour the marinara sauce into a heavy sauce pan or small Dutch oven. Gently place the meatballs in the sauce. Cover and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Reduce heat to low, and let simmer gently for 20 minutes, removing the cover about halfway through the cook time. Serve. — AP



French Onion Soup Burgers are perfect entree

By Sara Moulton

If you're a fan of traditional French onion soup - and who isn't? - you're going to love this burger. It's kitted out with all of the ingredients that make the soup such a treasure - tender, browned onions, beef broth, Gruyere cheese and French bread - and finally lathered up with mustard mayo. Rich and full of flavor, this burger is the perfect entree for a Labor Day bash.

Prepping it, however, does require a bit of care. The onions need to be cooked low and slow so that they'll soften and brown properly. (You can, however, cook them a full day ahead, then cover and chill them until the moment of truth.) Likewise, you want to keep a strict eye on the burgers as they cook. Overdo it and they'll end up dry.

You're welcome to buy whatever kind of burger strikes your fancy, but please resist the siren call of prepackaged quarter-pounders. They're too thin

for this recipe and will definitely end up overcooked. If you're up for a little extra work, you can "grind" your own meat by buying the beef of your choice - skirt steak, short ribs, sirloin, you name it - cutting it into 1-inch cubes, freezing it for 40 minutes and finally pulsing it (in two batches) in a food processor until you reach the ground beef texture you desire.

Classic French onion soup calls for Gruyere cheese, but you're free to swap in a different variety as long as it melts as well as Gruyere. Likewise, you can deglaze the burger pan with stock or water. In the classic recipe, a slice of French bread is floated on the soup's surface like a bowl-wide crouton. Here that bread provides the coziest of beds for a juicy burger. (In truth, though, that bread - lightly brushed with olive oil, browned in the oven and rubbed with garlic - is fairly amazing all by itself.)



Ingredients

Servings: 4
Start to finish: 1 hour (40 minutes active)
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for brushing on the bread
3 cups packed thinly sliced onion
1 teaspoon minced garlic plus 1 whole clove cut in half
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
1/3 cup beef or chicken broth or water
Black pepper
Four 4-inch pieces of French bread, cut in half
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 1/2 pounds ground beef, shaped into 4 burgers
3 ounces thinly sliced Gruyere

Preparation

In a large skillet heat 2 tablespoons of the oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion and a pinch of salt, reduce the heat

to medium-low and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until the onion is very tender, about 15 minutes. Remove the lid and continue to cook the onion, uncovered, stirring frequently, until the onion is golden brown, about 15 minutes. Add the minced garlic and the thyme and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add the beef broth and cook, stirring the onions constantly to scrape up the glaze at the bottom of the pan, until most of the liquid has been absorbed. Transfer the mixture to a bowl, add salt and pepper to taste and set it aside. Clean and dry the skillet and return it to the burner.

While the onions are cooking, preheat the broiler. Brush the cut sides of the French bread liberally with olive oil and on a sheet pan broil the bread cut side up, until it is golden. Remove from the oven and rub the cut sides with the cut sides of the garlic clove. Transfer the French bread halves to each of 4 plates. In a small bowl stir together the mayonnaise and the mustard and spread the mixture evenly on all the cut sides of the bread.

In the skillet, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil over

high. Season the burgers on both sides with salt and pepper and add them to the pan. Reduce the heat to medium-high and cook the burgers until they are nicely browned (but not cooked through), about 2 minutes a side. Remove the skillet from the heat, spoon off and discard all but 1 tablespoon of the fat in the pan and top each burger with one-fourth of the onion mixture and one-fourth of the cheese. Reduce the heat to medium, cover the skillet and cook the burgers just until the cheese is melted, about 1 minute. Transfer the burgers to one of the French bread halves on each of the plates. Simmer the liquid, scraping the bottom of the skillet until it is syrupy and spoon some of it over each burger. Top with the remaining French bread half and serve right away. — AP

Sever egg rolls from the restaurant by making these at home

By Sara Moulton

Who doesn't love an egg roll? For generations it's been Chinese cuisine's No. 1 hit in America. And why not? They're ubiquitous, they're fried, they're delicious, and you can eat them with your hands. Unfortunately, egg rolls are restaurant food. Making them at home can seem too daunting. First, there's a ton of prep. Second, you have to deep-fry them in a big pot of hot oil. Here's a solution in two easy steps; make the filling ahead of time and saute the rolls instead of deep-frying them.

Even if you weren't in a rush, you'd want to make the filling ahead of time. It needs to cool down before being added to the wrappers. Otherwise, it'll sog them up. So why not plan ahead and prepare this dish on a weekend? (With the new school year upon us, I'll note that filling and rolling the wrappers can be a fun task for the kids, almost as much fun as eating them.)

Here the egg rolls are filled with red pepper, carrots and Napa cabbage. But if you fill them with leftovers instead - shredded chicken, cooked broccoli, peas, etc. - you'll save yourself the trouble of having to slice and dice a mountain of raw ingredients. Do keep in mind, however, that all the ingredients need to be cooked before being stuffed into the wrappers. This step eliminates excess moisture and guarantees that everything is thoroughly cooked.

The great thing about a deep-fried egg roll is its crackly crisp shell. I'd never claim that sauteing them delivers the same crunch, but you'll get close. That said, you need to turn over each egg roll frequently as it cooks in the skillet to make sure that every part of its surface becomes nicely browned. Chinese restaurants classify egg rolls as appetizers, but I see no reason to confine them to a supporting role. These rolls are quite substantial and, with the addition of a simple side dish, they'll do a stellar job in the center of your dinner plate.



NOT FRIED EGG ROLLS WITH SOY SESAME DIPPING SAUCE

Ingredients

Servings: 4 to 6
Start to finish: 1 hour, 15 minutes
For the dipping sauce:
3 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
2 tablespoons rice vinegar (unseasoned)
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon sesame oil
For the egg rolls:
1/4 cup plus 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 tablespoons minced ginger
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1/3 cup thinly sliced scallions
1 cup finely chopped red pepper
1 cup coarsely grated carrot
2 cups finely shredded Napa cabbage
1/3 cup chicken broth

2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
14 egg roll wrappers

Preparation

Make the dipping sauce: In a small bowl combine all the ingredients. Set aside. Make the egg rolls: In a large nonstick skillet heat 2 tablespoons of the oil over medium heat. Add the ginger and garlic and cook, stirring 1 minute. Add the pork and a hefty pinch of salt, reduce the heat to medium and cook, stirring, until it turns white, about 2 minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon to a medium bowl.

Add another tablespoon of the oil, the scallions, red pepper and carrot to the skillet and cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly softened, about 2 minutes. Add the cabbage, stock and soy sauce, and simmer, stirring until all of the liquid has evaporated and the vegetables are tender but not mushy. Add the mixture to the pork bowl, stir well and set aside to cool to room tempera-

ture. Clean the skillet and set it aside.

Working with two egg roll wrappers at a time arrange them on the counter with one of the corners facing you. Place level 1/4 cup of the filling in the center of the wrapper and bring up the bottom corner that is facing you half way up to cover the filling. Fold in the left and right corners of the wrapper snugly over the filling. Moisten the top corner and bring it down to form a rectangular package, pressing firmly to make sure the top corner is well glued.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in the large nonstick skillet over medium high heat. Add half the rolls to the skillet, reduce the heat to medium and cook the rolls, turning them frequently until they are golden brown on all sides, about 6 to 8 minutes total. Transfer them to paper towels to drain and repeat the procedure with the remaining oil and remaining egg rolls. Transfer to plates and serve right away with the dipping sauce. — AP

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Indonesia

Island-hopping through

Nusa Tenggara



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Test your surfing skills
(or just watch someone
else testing theirs) on
Sumbawa

With 17,000-plus isles to choose from, planning an Indonesian island-hopping adventure can feel overwhelming. If you're beginning - but not wanting to end ñ your adventure on Bali, the Nusa Tenggara archipelago to the east is an excellent place to start. Bouncing between ferries and buses, you'll have an intimate window on a natural wonderland.

Hang out with Indonesians on the decks of boats, gazing at innumerable tiny islands which dot the seas around larger siblings such as Lombok, Sumbawa, Flores and West Timor. Catch buses across the major islands, stopping off for beaches, surf breaks, dive spots, eons-old villages, tourist towns, beautiful views and much more. The following itinerary takes you from Bali all the way to West Timor on a journey that can fill a 30-day visa. Travel as far east as you want and then fly back to Bali from various airports along the way.

LOMBOK

Just east of Bali, similarly sized Lombok makes a perfect transition to the exotic adventures of Nusa Tenggara. It has the tourist services of its famous neighbour but is much less crowded, and has a vibe that doesn't march to the beat of visiting hordes. Among the star attractions are the superb south coast beaches, starting with the wide, azure bay at Kuta.

Personality

Lombok is almost entirely Muslim, with many grand new mosques evidence of the island's growing prosperity. It's relaxed, pragmatic and tourist-friendly.

Getting there and around

From Bali, hourly public ferries make the four-to five-hour trip to Lembar on Lombok. Along the way, enjoy fine views of soaring Gunung Agung on Bali and southwestern Lombok, which includes the legendary surf break,



Tanjung Desert (Desert Point). There are also fast boats to Senggigi on Lombok or you can go via the Gili Islands. Public buses run frequently to the eastern port town of Labuhan Lombok. From the main city, Mataram, you can buy through tickets to islands further east. It's about four hours by bus across Lombok. Lombok's modern airport at Praya is close to the southern beaches and has frequent flights to Bali and the main cities in Nusa Tenggara.

SUMBAWA

Large, dry and thinly populated, Sumbawa makes a clear break from its busier neighbours to the west. The pace is slow and traditional attractions few, although it has two famous coasts for surfing: Maluk and Pantai Lakey, near Hu'u. Many travellers hurry across the island on their way to eastern Nusa Tenggara.

Personality

Sumbawa is a very conservative Muslim island; the city of Bima is a centre of fundamentalist beliefs. However, travellers are a common sight and the perceived standoffishness of locals is mostly due to shyness.

Getting there and around

There are airports at the main cities of Sumbawa Besar and Bima, and ferries frequently make the 90-minute run between Labuhan Lombok and Poto Tano. Public buses regularly cruise the main highway between Poto Tano and the eastern port town of Sape; it's about 13 hours across the island.

For jaw-dropping tropical sunsets, Lombok is hard to beat.



FLORES

On the ferry ride from Sumbawa, you'll sail through the islands of Komodo National Park, home to some of the region's best diving as well as the iconic, flesh-eating Komodo dragons. Flores itself is one of Indonesia's most appealing islands, with traditional cultures, smoking volcanoes, and a string of sublime beaches. Start in the west in the alluring tourist town of Labuanbajo, where you can wander among great restaurants and cafes while arranging trips to the national park. The trip east on the Trans-Flores Highway is one of Indonesia's highlights. Stone Age villages with unique cultures are found around Bajawa, spectacular volcanic scenery (including polychromatic lakes at Kelimutu National Park) make Moni unmissable, while you simply can't pass up Paga's perfect beaches. East of Maumere is more good diving before all hints of tourist buzz vanish as you reach remote and quiet Lanturuka.

Personality

The nearly two million inhabitants of Flores comprise five major linguistic and cultural groups and are predominantly Catholic, though animist beliefs are common. The Ngada people live in age-old villages near Bajawa and welcome visitors.

Getting there and around

Flores has several small airports. Two are important for island-hoppers: Maumere and newly expanded Labuanbajo, both of which have regular service to Bali and Kupang on West Timor. There is at least one public ferry a day from Sape on Sumbawa to Labuanbajo; these take up to seven hours. You can buy through bus tickets to Flores from major cities all the way west to Bali. You can also book passage on overnight tourist boats from Lombok to Labuanbajo which bypass Sumbawa, but be sure to vet operators for safety. Frequent buses run the length of Flores, linking all the towns on the Trans-Flores Highway, from Labuanbajo to Lanturuka. The minimum transit time on buses is more than 24 hours; most people stop off at least in Bajawa, Moni and Maumere.



Cloth making is still very literally part of the fabric of life for many West Timorese

WEST TIMOR

West Timor, the Indonesian portion of Timor island, is drawing increasing numbers of travellers. Many come for the exquisite traditional crafts such as fabrics, which are sold in tiny village markets.

But an equally good reason to venture this far east is to visit the ancient villages where time seems to have stopped several centuries ago. In isolated spots such as None (18km east of Soe), they only stopped hunting heads in 1945, while hilltop Temkessi, could be the mystic home of Yoda in Star Wars.

Personality

West Timor is one of Indonesia's friendliest places, where even former head-hunting villages are now open to visitors. At least 14 languages are spoken and there's a mix of religions.

Getting there and around

The main city of Kupang is a hub for eastern Nusa Tenggara; there are regular flights to Flores and Bali. Ferries from Lanturuka on Flores run twice a week and take about 15 hours. You can also venture on to Timor-Leste by bus (organise your visa in Kupang first).

— (www.lonelyplanet.com)



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Ideas, words, books and the like are pursued with great gusto this Thursday. There may be an opportunity to visit a library or bookstore during the noon break. You are driven to manage and control things. Ideas of group cooperation and communion could further your career. One of your joys in life is to find an opportunity to beautify the world. One way to increase the probabilities of your making a difference in this world may be to encourage recycling techniques. This may be where you find your energies focused. Your persistent encouragement will finally take hold in the workplace and in the community—do not give up the challenge. Volunteering in a nature reserve could be an interest for you. Young children will be helpful.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find yourself very appreciative of your career and practical skills. You might enjoy solving puzzles and problems—finding solutions, etc. There is a renewed appreciation for your work and this may be apparent to your superiors—in fact, to everybody. Pacing yourself and squelching the urge to react in certain negative situations have paid off for you. There is a feeling of being at peace and stable on the emotional level. Stability and permanence satisfy a deep emotional need. Music is likely to play a more important role for you than usual and a period of material acquisition can satisfy a deep yearning to be free from want. Perhaps this would include stamp collecting, art, etc. Sympathy and understanding are emotional qualities that matter now.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

This is a wonderful day; everything seems to be going your way. You will make the correct decisions—find the right path and move forward where career is concerned. Life's problems seem easy to solve this day. Your current appreciation for just about everything may lead you to overspend or indulge too much this afternoon; careful. You will make career gains by your ability to sense quality. You could be looking for a new suit . . . This is where your style and careful decision making will help you make career gains. Later this afternoon you may want to create a new music cd for your drive to work. You could be teaching someone your craft this evening . . . Perhaps some artistic process that a family member wants to learn.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Some delays today are a blessing—do not spend too much time puzzling over this. You will enjoy the company of others and working together. Situations and schedules line up so that you will be chosen for a particular job. Increasing inner confidence helps you emerge from a period of self-doubt. You find that someone close to you understands and is supportive of your ideas that are slightly apart from the usual. People like your fresh thinking. You could come up with new solutions or inventions. Being the center of attention takes hold in your life—there is a craving to give and to be appreciated for your gifts. This is one of your overall best days this month. It can be expansive, creative and even romantic.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may become aware of others updating their wardrobe and you may make plans to do the same. You might reserve some time later today to go through some of the clothes you have and take notes for updating a little at a time. In the workplace you are gradually learning what makes some people do the things that they do. You also instinctively want to get down to the root of any work-related problems and stop any difficulty. This may mean writing a new method of working and presenting it to higher-ups. You may decide to take risks and dare to be a little different. You will prosper through new insights and new inventions. This afternoon calls for a shopping time. Before you go . . . How about gathering some of your unwanted clothes for a charity?



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Powerful changes within you are demanding recognition. Help yourself by joining in to help others—perhaps in a group problem-solving situation. There is no better recognition for you than through some volunteer program. Some work process is outdated and with your help you could achieve some satisfaction when presenting a pros and cons sort of report for your supervisor. Steer clear of any negative communication. This can be an inspiring time, one where you will need to be creative and inventive. You discover different ways to sell a product or help a client. Artistic talent and appreciation are heightened beyond words. This is a time of nostalgia and domesticity as you visit with co-workers during the day. Family and home become enchanting.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Friends in need or something you believe in that will suffer from a lack of your support is an issue that comes to your attention at this time. You may be called upon to lend a helping hand. There are growth opportunities available for you in the workplace as well as the person or group you help. You may find new ways to make your own dreams come true. Making peace with the past and coming to terms with karmic debts are some of the issues that develop as a new phase begins in your life. To see beyond today into future possibilities will help you make plans and goals according to the needs of your family and yourself. This is one of your best days for love and for money. You and a loved one may want to share the experiences of this day.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Today is a day when you can expect a little boost, some sort of extra support or recognition from those around you. Important projects can be launched at this time. Determine where you want to go in terms of your own successes—it may be time for an employee review soon. You certainly feel that your communication skills have improved and there is a harmony in the workplace, even among the difficult. The support you need is there now for wherever you want to place your energies. Investments can be highly successful and you may have an opportunity that will require fast action. Do your homework during this time—it will benefit you when it comes time to pick and choose a particular stock or investment opportunity. Keep working on an exercise routine.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You have a lot of energy and come across as one in control of most any situation. You can schedule important meetings or presentations now and through the end of this month. You may decide to brush up on your skills. Things that may have been in suspended animation for many years will begin to take on structure and shape. The remainder of this year is a time to shape the ideas you have pored over in the past. Take courageous steps to get beyond some stubborn attitudes of the young this afternoon by providing them with a win-win situation. Follow through on the reward system and do not give in to those that don't follow through with their promises, or word; no free rides. You win some, you lose some—today.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your ability to persuade others works to your benefit. You may find yourself lecturing or teaching at this time. The situation is a natural for self-expression and lends itself to your particular ideas. You work well with others in a group situation and they may want you to lead; your management abilities are good. You have the mind of a lawyer, always able to size up a problem and find a solution. Using your mind to negotiate obstacles and handle dilemmas is a great talent. You have an innate ability to guide and lead others through the hurdles of life. You find it easy to solve problems and can make much progress. Dancing, swimming or other forward moving activity can be enjoyed this evening.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

A period of great mental activity has begun. You have a lot on your mind and feel a strong need to communicate and gather ideas. You have always been inventive and you know you can be resourceful. You could come up with new solutions and you have just the right amount of humor to grab the listener's attention. There is a yearning to widen horizons and reach for the ultimate. Law, politics, education, travel and religion are some of the areas in which you may have new experiences and they are all positive. You follow your inner guide and your ambitions serve to show the way. Plan some fun activities for the weekend. Think about scheduling a massage. Taking time for you is a most important direction.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Being needed in the workplace today just seems to heighten those feelings of importance. The work world seems to move along in a smooth manner and your progress is noticed. Community efforts and connecting to others in your field provide a good source of support for your career advancement. After such a full day, others may find you looking for release by working in a garden or cooking this afternoon. You have great insight into matters of personal freedom and you work very hard to achieve just that. You come up with brilliant ways to express, emote or act through situations. New methods of lovemaking, raising kids and caring for animals are yours. The activities you enjoy seem to unfold around you this evening.

COUNTRY CODES

Afghanistan	0093	Kuwait	00965
Albania	00355	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Algeria	00213	Laos	00856
Andorra	00376	Latvia	00371
Angola	00244	Lebanon	00961
Anguilla	001264	Liberia	00231
Antigua	001268	Libya	00218
Argentina	0054	Lithuania	00370
Armenia	00374	Luxembourg	00352
Australia	0061	Macau	00853
Austria	0043	Macedonia	00389
Bahamas	001242	Madagascar	00261
Bahrain	00973	Majorca	0034
Bangladesh	00880	Malawi	00265
Barbados	001246	Malaysia	0060
Belarus	00375	Maldives	00960
Belgium	0032	Mali	00223
Belize	00501	Malta	00356
Benin	00229	Marshall Islands	00692
Bermuda	001441	Martinique	00596
Bhutan	00975	Mauritania	00222
Bolivia	00591	Mauritius	00230
Bosnia	00387	Mayotte	00269
Botswana	00267	Mexico	0052
Brazil	0055	Micronesia	00691
Brunei	00673	Moldova	00373
Bulgaria	00359	Monaco	00377
Burkina	00226	Mongolia	00976
Burundi	00257	Montserrat	001664
Cambodia	00855	Morocco	00212
Cameroon	00237	Mozambique	00258
Canada	001	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Cape Verde	00238	Namibia	00264
Cayman Islands	001345	Nepal	00977
Central African Republic	00236	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Chad	00235	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Chile	0056	New Caledonia	00687
China	0086	New Zealand	0064
Colombia	0057	Nicaragua	00505
Comoros	00269	Niger	00227
Congo	00242	Nigeria	00234
Cook Islands	00682	Niue	00683
Costa Rica	00506	Norfolk Island	00672
Croatia	00385	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Cuba	0053	North Korea	00850
Cyprus	00357	Norway	0047
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Oman	00968
Czech Republic	00420	Pakistan	0092
Denmark	0045	Palau	00680
Diego Garcia	00246	Panama	00507
Djibouti	00253	Papua New Guinea	00675
Dominica	001767	Paraguay	00595
Dominican Republic	001809	Peru	0051
Ecuador	00593	Philippines	0063
Egypt	0020	Poland	0048
El Salvador	00503	Portugal	00351
England (UK)	0044	Puerto Rico	001787
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Qatar	00974
Eritrea	00291	Romania	0040
Estonia	00372	Russian Federation	007
Ethiopia	00251	Rwanda	00250
Falkland Islands	00500	Saint Helena	00290
Faroe Islands	00298	Saint Kitts	001869
Fiji	00679	Saint Lucia	001758
Finland	00358	Saint Pierre	00508
France	0033	Saint Vincent	001784
French Guiana	00594	Samoa US	00684
French Polynesia	00689	Samoa West	00685
Gabon	00241	San Marino	00378
Gambia	00220	Sao Tome	00239
Georgia	00995	Saudi Arabia	00966
Germany	0049	Scotland (UK)	0044
Ghana	00233	Senegal	00221
Gibraltar	00350	Seychelles	00284
Greece	0030	Sierra Leone	00232
Greenland	00299	Singapore	0065
Grenada	001473	Slovakia	00421
Guadeloupe	00590	Slovenia	00386
Guam	001671	Solomon Islands	00677
Guatemala	00502	Somalia	00252
Guinea	00224	South Africa	0027
Guyana	00592	South Korea	0082
Haiti	00509	Spain	0034
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Sri Lanka	0094
Honduras	00504	Sudan	00249
Hong Kong	00852	Suriname	00597
Hungary	0036	Swaziland	00268
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sweden	0046
Iceland	00354	Switzerland	0041
India	0091	Syria	00963
Indian Ocean	00873	Taiwan	00886
Indonesia	0062	Tanzania	00255
Iran	0098	Thailand	0066
Iraq	00964	Toga	00228
Ireland	00353	Tonga	00676
Italy	0039	Tokelau	00690
Ivory Coast	00225	Trinidad	001868
Jamaica	001876	Tunisia	00216
Japan	0081	Turkey	0090
Jordan	00962	Tuvalu	00688
Kazakhstan	007	Uganda	00256
Kenya	00254	Ukraine	00380
Kiribati	00686	United Arab Emirates	00976



00:45 Treehouse Masters
01:40 Biggest And Baddest
02:35 Snake Sheila
03:00 Snake Sheila
03:25 Whale Wars
04:15 Whale Wars
05:02 Wildest India
05:49 Untamed & Uncut
06:36 Swamp Brothers
07:00 Swamp Brothers
07:25 Snake Sheila
07:50 Snake Sheila
08:15 Treehouse Masters
09:10 Biggest And Baddest
10:05 Wildest India
11:00 Snake Sheila
11:28 Snake Sheila
11:55 Whale Wars
12:50 Whale Wars
13:45 Biggest And Baddest
14:40 Wildest India
15:35 Untamed & Uncut
16:30 Treehouse Masters
17:25 Wild Animal Rescue
18:20 The Vet Life
19:15 Bad Dog
20:10 Snake Sheila
20:38 Snake Sheila
21:05 Wild Animal Rescue
22:00 The Vet Life



00:50 Doctors
01:20 EastEnders
01:55 Holby City
02:50 Benidorm
03:40 Benidorm
04:30 Doctors
05:00 Doctors
05:30 EastEnders
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Doctors
07:00 EastEnders
07:30 Casualty
08:20 The Musketeers
11:10 Doctors
11:40 EastEnders
12:10 Holby City
13:10 The Moonstone
14:00 Doctors
14:30 EastEnders
15:00 The Musketeers
16:00 The Musketeers
17:00 The Musketeers
18:00 Doctors
18:25 Casualty
19:15 The Moonstone
20:00 Top Of The Lake
21:00 Paula
21:50 Benidorm
22:40 Uncle



00:00 The First 48
01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
02:00 Homicide Hunter
03:00 It Takes A Killer
03:30 It Takes A Killer
04:00 The First 48
05:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
06:00 Cold Case Files
07:00 Cold Case Files
08:00 It Takes A Killer
08:30 It Takes A Killer
09:00 Homicide Hunter
10:00 It Takes A Killer
10:30 It Takes A Killer
11:00 It Takes A Killer
11:30 It Takes A Killer
12:30 It Takes A Killer
15:00 Cold Case Files
16:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
17:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
18:00 Crime Stories
19:00 It Takes A Killer
19:30 It Takes A Killer
20:00 Homicide Hunter
21:00 Cold Case Files
22:00 Monster In My Family
23:00 50 Ways To Kill Your Lover



00:05 Destroyed In Seconds
00:30 Alaska Gold Diggers
01:20 Space Dealers
02:10 Mission Asteroid

03:00 Finding Bigfoot
03:50 Destroyed In Seconds
04:15 Destroyed In Seconds
04:40 How It's Made
05:05 How It's Made
05:30 Alaska Gold Diggers
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Kenny The Shark
07:25 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
07:50 K9 Cops
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Science Of The Movies
10:20 Mythbusters
11:10 K9 Cops
12:00 Finding Bigfoot
12:50 How It's Made
13:15 How It's Made
13:40 Alaska Gold Diggers
14:30 Kenny The Shark
14:55 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
15:20 Destroyed In Seconds
16:10 Nextworld
17:00 Dynamo: Magician Impossible
17:50 Superhuman Showdown
18:40 Mythbusters
19:30 How It's Made
19:55 How It's Made
20:20 Destroyed In Seconds
20:45 Destroyed In Seconds
21:10 Dynamo: Magician Impossible
22:00 Superhuman Showdown
22:50 Finding Bigfoot
23:40 Destroyed In Seconds



00:05 The Alternative Comedy Experience
00:30 The Half Hour
00:55 Ridiculousness Arabia
01:25 Idiotsitter
01:50 Lip Sync Battle
02:14 Show Me The Funny
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
04:15 Gym Rescue
05:05 Bondi Ink
05:55 Hungry Investors
06:50 Frankenfood
07:15 Frankenfood
07:40 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
08:30 Framework
09:20 Bondi Ink
10:10 Catch A Contractor
11:00 Ridiculousness
13:05 Disaster Date
13:30 Disaster Date
13:55 The It Crowd
14:20 The It Crowd
14:45 Impractical Jokers UK
15:10 Impractical Jokers UK
15:35 Lip Sync Battle
16:00 Lip Sync Battle
16:30 Impractical Jokers
16:55 Impractical Jokers
17:25 Impractical Jokers
17:50 Brotherhood
18:15 The It Crowd
18:39 The It Crowd
19:03 Key And Peele
19:27 Key And Peele
19:50 Kroll Show
20:13 Workaholics
20:37 Workaholics
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Kroll Show
22:00 Miranda Hart- My What I Call Live Show
22:50 Show Me The Funny



00:30 The Perfect Murder
01:20 I Am Homicide
02:10 Murder Comes To Town
03:00 Evil Online
03:48 Disappeared
04:36 Grave Secrets
05:24 Swamp Murders
06:12 Deadly Affairs
07:00 Disappeared
07:50 Grave Secrets
08:40 Swamp Murders
09:30 Deadly Affairs
10:20 Blood Relatives
11:10 Evil Online
12:00 Disappeared
12:50 Grave Secrets
13:40 Swamp Murders
14:30 Deadly Affairs
15:20 Blood Relatives
16:10 Murder Chose Me

17:00 Disappeared
17:50 Grave Secrets
18:40 Swamp Murders
19:30 Deadly Affairs
20:20 Blood Relatives
21:10 Grave Secrets
22:00 Forbidden: Dying For Love
22:50 Evil Lives Here
23:40 Sexual Assault In College: Tamron Hall...



00:00 Hank Zipzer
00:25 Alex & Co.
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Hank Zipzer
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:10 Alex & Co.
04:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

05:25 Binny And The Ghost
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks
06:00 Jessie
06:25 Liv And Maddie
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
06:55 Lolirock
07:20 Elena Of Avalor
07:45 Bunk'd
08:10 Stuck In The Middle
08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
09:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
09:25 Lolirock
09:50 Lolirock
10:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
10:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

11:05 Hank Zipzer
11:30 Alex & Co.
11:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:00 Rolling With The Ronks
12:15 Lolirock
12:40 Lolirock
13:05 Star Darlings
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
13:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
14:00 Jessie
14:25 Lolirock
14:50 The Zhuzhus
15:15 Elena Of Avalor
15:40 Stuck In The Middle
16:05 Liv And Maddie
16:30 Radio Rebel
17:55 K.C. Undercover
18:20 Bizaardvark
18:45 Best Friends Whenever
19:10 Tsum Tsum Shorts
19:15 Liv And Maddie
19:40 Elena Of Avalor
20:05 Jessie
20:30 Crackle
20:35 K.C. Undercover
21:00 Austin & Ally
21:25 Stuck In The Middle
21:50 Sunny Bunnies
21:55 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
22:45 Lolirock
23:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
23:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



00:00 Henry Hugglemonster
00:15 Calimero
00:30 Art Attack
00:55 Zou
01:05 Loopdidoo
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
01:50 Zou
02:05 Art Attack
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster
02:40 Loopdidoo
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:10 Art Attack
03:35 Loopdidoo

03:50 Calimero
04:05 Art Attack
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster
04:45 Zou
05:00 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Loopdidoo
06:00 Zou
06:15 Calimero
06:30 Loopdidoo
06:45 Henry Hugglemonster
07:00 Sofia The First
07:30 The Lion Guard
08:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers

08:30 Doc McStuffins
09:00 PJ Masks
09:30 Miles From Tomorrow
10:00 Little Mermaid
10:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
11:00 PJ Masks
11:30 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
12:00 Goldie & Bear
12:30 Sofia The First
13:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
13:30 PJ Masks
14:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
14:30 The Lion Guard
15:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
15:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers

16:00 Sofia The First
16:25 Miles From Tomorrow
16:50 Doc McStuffins
17:15 The Lion Guard
17:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
18:15 PJ Masks
18:45 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:15 Sofia The First
19:45 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
20:15 The Lion Guard
20:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
21:15 Goldie & Bear
21:45 Doc McStuffins
22:15 Little Mermaid
22:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
23:15 PJ Masks
23:45 Loopdidoo



00:20 Wheeler Dealers
01:05 What On Earth?
01:50 How Do They Do It?
02:12 How Do They Do It?
02:35 Impossible Engineering
03:20 Fast N' Loud
04:05 The Island With Bear Grylls
04:50 Gold Rush
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Last Chance Hospital
07:30 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
08:15 Deadliest Catch
09:00 How Do They Do It?
09:25 The Island With Bear Grylls
10:10 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
10:55 Last Chance Hospital
12:25 How Do They Do It?
12:47 Fast N' Loud
13:32 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre
14:17 Street Outlaws: New Orleans
15:02 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
15:47 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
16:35 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
17:25 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
18:20 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
20:10 How Do They Do It?
21:00 Fast N' Loud
21:50 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre
22:40 Street Outlaws: New Orleans
23:30 Deadliest Catch



06:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
06:25 Disney11
06:50 Gravity Falls
07:15 Right Now Kapow
07:40 Mech-X4
08:05 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
08:10 K.C. Undercover
08:35 Milo Murphy's Law
09:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
09:25 Supa Strikas
09:50 Supa Strikas

10:20 Kickin' It
10:45 Kickin' It
11:10 Mighty Med
11:35 Mighty Med
12:00 Lab Rats
12:30 Lab Rats
12:55 K.C. Undercover
13:20 Phineas And Ferb: Star Wars
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Last Day Of Summer
15:05 Bedtime Stories
16:35 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
16:50 Disney11
17:15 Mech-X4
17:40 Gravity Falls
18:05 Milo Murphy's Law
18:30 Marvel's Ant-Man
18:35 Lab Rats
19:00 Kirby Buckets
19:25 Walk The Prank
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
19:55 Right Now Kapow
20:20 Mech-X4
20:45 Disney11
21:10 K.C. Undercover
21:35 Marvel's Ant-Man
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Lab Rats
22:35 Phineas And Ferb



00:05 Famously Single
00:55 Famously Single
01:50 E! News
02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:20 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 Botched
04:40 Botched
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
06:55 E! News
07:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop
09:10 Second Wives Club
10:10 Second Wives Club
11:05 Second Wives Club
12:00 E! News
12:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
13:10 Life Of Kylie
13:35 Life Of Kylie
14:05 Life Of Kylie
14:30 Life Of Kylie
15:00 E! News
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 Botched
17:05 Botched
18:00 Botched
19:00 E! News
20:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
21:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
22:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
23:00 E! News
23:15 Botched



00:00 Siba's Table
00:30 Siba's Table
01:00 Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy
01:30 Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
06:25 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
06:50 Anna Olson: Fresh
07:15 The Kitchen
08:05 The Pioneer Woman
08:30 The Pioneer Woman
08:55 Siba's Table
09:25 Siba's Table
09:55 Cooking For Real
10:25 Cooking For Real
10:55 The Kitchen
11:45 Bake With Anna Olson
12:10 The Pioneer Woman
12:35 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 Siba's Table
13:30 Siba's Table
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Chopped
16:00 The Kitchen

17:00 Cooking For Real
17:30 Cooking For Real
18:00 Chopped
19:00 Iron Chef America
20:00 Ching's Amazing Asia
20:30 Ching's Amazing Asia
21:00 Jenny Morris Cooks Morocco
21:30 Jenny Morris Cooks Morocco
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped



00:10 Don't Tell The Bride
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 The Chase
03:25 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
04:20 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
05:15 Couples Come Dine With Me
06:10 Don't Tell The Bride
07:05 The Chase
08:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
09:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
10:00 Couples Come Dine With Me
10:55 Don't Tell The Bride
11:50 The Chase
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Emmerdale
13:45 Emmerdale
14:15 Don't Tell The Bride
15:10 The Chase
16:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
17:15 Tracey Ullman's Show
17:50 Couples Come Dine With Me
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Emmerdale
19:45 Emmerdale
20:10 The Chase
21:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
22:15 Tracey Ullman's Show
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Emmerdale
23:40 Emmerdale



00:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
01:00 Clash Of Warriors
02:00 America's Book Of Secrets
02:50 Ancient Aliens
03:40 Bible Secrets Revealed
04:30 Engineering Disasters
05:20 America: The Story Of The U.S.
06:10 The Universe
07:00 Clash Of Warriors
08:00 America's Book Of Secrets
09:00 Ancient Aliens
10:00 Bible Secrets Revealed
11:00 Engineering Disasters
12:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
13:00 Clash Of Warriors
14:00 America's Book Of Secrets
15:00 Ancient Aliens
16:00 Bible Secrets Revealed
17:00 The Universe
18:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
19:00 Clash Of Warriors
20:00 America's Book Of Secrets
21:00 Ancient Aliens
22:00 The Lost Evidence
23:00 Engineering Disasters



00:20 President Obama: In His Own Words
02:00 Ax Men
02:50 Storage Wars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Pawn Stars
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Mountain Men
06:00 Hunting Hitler
06:50 Time Team
07:40 101 People Who Made The 20th Century
08:30 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle
09:21 Swamp People
10:10 Ax Men
11:00 American Pickers

11:50 Mystery Pickers
12:40 American Restoration
13:30 Pawn Stars South Africa
14:20 Pawn Stars
14:45 Pawn Stars
15:10 Counting Cars
16:00 Alone: Lost And Found
16:50 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
17:40 Billion Dollar Wreck
18:30 Counting Cars
20:10 Mountain Men
21:00 American Pickers
21:50 Pawn Stars
22:40 Forged In Fire
23:30 101 People Who Made The 20th Century



00:45 Poh & Co.
01:10 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
01:40 Trekking Malaysia With Jason Scott Lee
02:35 Carnival Eats
03:30 One Man & His Campervan
03:55 Wineroads
04:25 Bangkok Airport
05:20 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
05:45 A Is For Apple
06:15 Dog Whisperer
07:10 Trekking Malaysia With Jason Scott Lee
08:05 Carnival Eats
09:00 One Man & His Campervan
09:25 Wineroads
09:55 Bangkok Airport
10:50 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
11:15 A Is For Apple
11:45 Dog Whisperer
12:40 City Chase Rome
13:35 Warrior Road Trip
14:30 Around The World In 80 Dishes
15:25 Bangkok Airport
16:20 Carnival Eats
16:45 The Food Files
17:15 Dog Whisperer
18:10 Cesar To The Rescue
19:05 Bangkok Airport
20:00 Carnival Eats
20:30 The Food Files
21:00 Dog Whisperer
22:00 Cesar To The Rescue



00:10 Supercar Megabuild
01:00 Big Fix Alaska
02:00 Locked Up Abroad
03:00 Living Free With Kimi Werner
04:00 Supercar Megabuild
05:00 Street Genius
05:30 Street Genius
06:00 No Man Left Behind
07:00 Airport Security: Colombia
08:00 Seconds From Disaster
08:30 Seconds From Disaster
09:00 Ultimate Airport Dubai
10:00 Locked Up Abroad
11:00 Counterterror Nyc: Special Forces
12:00 Trekking The Great Wall
13:00 No Man Left Behind
14:00 Seconds From Disaster
14:30 Seconds From Disaster
15:00 Airport Security: Colombia
16:00 Best Of Hard Time
17:00 Underworld, Inc.: Kings And Queens
18:00 Year Million
19:00 Rare
20:00 Best Of Hard Time
20:50 Underworld, Inc.: Kings And Queens
21:40 Year Million
22:30 Rare
23:20 Seconds From Disaster
23:45 Seconds From Disaster



00:20 Incredible Fangs
01:10 Secrets Of The Wild
02:00 Predator Battleground
02:50 World's Deadliest Animals
03:45 Wild Case Files
04:40 Animals Gone Wild
05:35 Predator Battleground
06:30 World's Deadliest Animals
07:25 Wild Case Files
08:20 Animals Gone Wild
09:15 Snakes In The City
10:10 Paradise Islands

11:05 Hollywood Bear Tragedy
12:00 The Kill Zone
12:55 Lion Warrior
13:50 World's Deadliest Animals
14:45 Wild Case Files
15:40 Animals Gone Wild
16:35 Snakes In The City
17:30 Paradise Islands
18:25 1000 Days For The Planet
19:20 Wild Case Files
20:10 Animals Gone Wild
21:00 Snakes In The City
21:50 Paradise Islands
22:40 1000 Days For The Planet
23:30 The Kill Zone



00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 The Loud House
07:24 Rabbids Invasion
07:48 Get Blake
08:12 Harvey Beaks
08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 Rank The Prank
09:24 Henry Danger
09:48 100 Things To Do Before High School
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 Regal Academy
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 Henry Danger Movie
12:12 Rufus
13:00 Rufus 2
13:48 100 Things To Do Before High School
14:12 School Of Rock
14:36 The Thundermans
15:00 Henry Danger
15:24 The Loud House
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
16:12 Hunter Street
16:36 Hunter Street
17:00 Hunter Street
17:24 Hunter Street
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
18:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
19:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 Game Shakers
20:12 Game Shakers
20:36 Game Shakers
21:00 Game Shakers
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
21:48 Rabbids Invasion
22:12 Breadwinners
22:36 Harvey Beaks
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants



00:01 Max & Ruby
00:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
00:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
00:47 The Day Henry Met
00:52 The Day Henry Met
00:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:41 Zack & Quack
02:03 Shimmer And Shine
02:25 Olive The Ostrich
02:35 Paw Patrol
02:58 Little Charmers
03:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
03:22 Dora The Explorer
03:44 Max & Ruby
04:06 The Day Henry Met
04:11 Nella The Princess Knight
04:35 Shimmer And Shine
04:59 Dora And Friends
05:21 Zack & Quack
05:32 The Day Henry Met
05:37 Blaze And The Monster Machines
06:00 Rusty Rivets
06:13 Paw Patrol
06:25 Paw Patrol
06:37 Dora The Explorer
07:00 Zack & Quack
07:21 Bubble Guppies

07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
08:07 Paw Patrol
08:18 Paw Patrol
08:30 Shimmer And Shine
08:53 Nella The Princess Knight
09:15 The Day Henry Met
09:22 Paw Patrol
09:45 Rusty Rivets
09:57 Bubble Guppies
10:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
10:42 Zack & Quack
10:52 Team Umizoomi
11:15 Shimmer And Shine
11:39 Shimmer And Shine
12:01 Max & Ruby
12:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:47 The Day Henry Met
12:52 The Day Henry Met
12:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:41 Zack & Quack
14:03 Shimmer And Shine
14:25 Olive The Ostrich
14:30 Olive The Ostrich
14:35 Paw Patrol
14:58 Little Charmers
15:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
15:22 Dora The Explorer
15:44 Max & Ruby
16:06 The Day Henry Met
16:11 Nella The Princess Knight
16:35 Shimmer And Shine
16:59 Dora And Friends
17:21 Zack & Quack
17:32 The Day Henry Met
17:37 Blaze And The Monster Machines
18:00 Rusty Rivets
18:13 Paw Patrol
18:25 Paw Patrol
18:37 Dora The Explorer
19:00 Zack & Quack
19:21 Bubble Guppies
19:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
20:07 Paw Patrol
20:30 Shimmer And Shine
20:53 Nella The Princess Knight
21:15 The Day Henry Met
21:22 Paw Patrol
21:45 Rusty Rivets
21:57 Bubble Guppies
22:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
22:42 Zack & Quack
22:52 Team Umizoomi
23:15 Shimmer And Shine



00:15 The New Adventures Of Old Christine
01:05 Kevin Can Wait
01:30 Kevin Can Wait
01:55 Man Seeking Woman
02:20 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers
04:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
04:50 George Lopez
05:15 Happy Endings
05:40 American Housewife
06:05 Less Than Perfect
06:30 Mom
06:55 Cougar Town
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
09:50 George Lopez
10:15 Happy Endings
10:40 Mom
11:05 Cougar Town
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:20 Seinfeld
12:45 Seinfeld
13:10 The New Adventures Of Old Christine
14:00 George Lopez
14:25 Happy Endings
14:50 Mom
15:15 American Housewife
15:40 Less Than Perfect
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 Seinfeld
17:30 Seinfeld
18:00 The New Adventures Of Old Christine
19:00 Powerless
19:30 Powerless
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Seinfeld
21:30 Seinfeld
22:00 Kevin Can Wait
22:30 Kevin Can Wait
23:00 Man Seeking Woman
23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:40 Better Call Saul
01:30 Claws
02:20 The Unit
03:20 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
04:10 Code Black
05:00 Good Morning America
07:00 The View
07:45 The Chew
08:30 Better Call Saul
09:20 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
10:10 Code Black
11:00 The Unit
11:45 The Night Shift
12:30 The View
13:15 The Chew
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 Code Black
17:00 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
18:00 The Unit
19:00 Time After Time
20:00 The Fosters



00:20 As Above, So Below
01:55 Echo Effect
03:23 Big Game
05:00 Insurgent
07:00 The 5th Wave
08:55 The Call Up
10:25 Fantastic Four
12:05 Insurgent
14:05 Survivor
15:45 The Call Up
17:15 Bad Company
19:15 The Huntsman: Winter's War
21:10 The Transporter: Refueled
22:50 The Covenant



00:45 The Lizzie McGuire Movie
02:20 Pan
04:10 Alone For Christmas
05:40 The Muppets
07:25 The Lizzie McGuire Movie
09:00 Chicken Little
10:25 Pan
12:15 Pirates Code: The Adventures Of Mickey Matson
13:50 Lilo & Stitch 2
15:00 Robots
16:35 The Amazing Wizard Of Paws
18:20 Secretariat
20:25 Underdog
21:50 Pirates Code: The Adventures Of Mickey Matson
23:25 Robots



00:00 Claws
01:50 Good Girls Revolt
02:40 Better Call Saul
03:30 Claws
04:20 The Unit
05:20 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
06:10 Code Black
07:00 Good Morning America
09:00 The View
09:45 The Chew
10:30 Better Call Saul
11:20 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
12:10 Code Black
13:00 The Unit
13:45 The Night Shift
14:30 The View
15:15 The Chew
16:00 Live Good Morning America
18:00 Code Black
19:00 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
20:00 The Unit
21:00 Time After Time
22:00 The Fosters



00:40 Puerto Ricans In Paris
02:05 Down To Earth
03:40 Holiday Joy
05:20 Life
07:10 Big Momma's House 2
08:50 Perfect Match
10:20 Life

12:10 Big Momma's House 2
13:50 Down To Earth
15:20 Once Upon A Crime
17:00 Joe Somebody
18:40 The Golden Child
20:15 Hector And The Search For Happiness
22:15 Middle Men



02:45 The Childhood Of A Leader
05:00 Experimenter
06:40 Oliver's Deal
08:20 The Joy Luck Club
10:40 Every Thing Will Be Fine
12:40 My Old Lady
14:30 Rushmore
16:05 Wildlife
17:50 The Apartment
19:55 The Homesman
22:00 Taxi Driver



01:00 Pooh's Heffalump Halloween Movie
02:15 The Happy Cricket
03:45 Bark Ranger
05:15 Ethel & Ernest
06:55 Zodiac: The Race Begins
08:30 Lego DC: Justice League Gotham City Breakout
09:55 Pacific Pirates
11:20 Marco Macaco
12:40 The Happy Cricket
14:10 Bark Ranger
15:40 Meet The Robinsons
17:25 Pacific Pirates
18:50 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
20:05 Song Of The Sea
21:45 Meet The Robinsons
23:30 Marco Macaco



00:25 Entourage
02:10 Ladder 49
04:10 The Lovely Bones
06:30 Raising Helen
08:30 Ladder 49
10:25 Last Action Hero
12:35 A.I. Artificial Intelligence
15:00 Kicking And Screaming
16:35 Dick Tracy
18:20 When A Man Loves A Woman
20:25 Runner Runner
22:00 Knock Knock
23:40 There's Something About Mary



00:30 How Do They Do It?
00:55 Food Factory
01:20 Food Factory USA
01:45 Food Factory USA
02:10 Uncovering Aliens
03:00 The Big Brain Theory
03:48 Mythbusters
04:36 How Do They Do It?
05:00 Food Factory
05:24 Food Factory USA
05:48 Food Factory USA
06:12 Uncovering Aliens
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:26 The Big Brain Theory
08:14 Mythbusters
09:02 Uncovering Aliens
09:50 How Do They Do It?
10:14 Food Factory
10:38 Food Factory USA
11:02 Food Factory USA
11:26 The Big Brain Theory
12:14 Mythbusters
13:02 How Do They Do It?
13:26 Food Factory
13:50 Uncovering Aliens
14:38 The Big Brain Theory
15:26 Food Factory USA
15:50 Food Factory USA
16:14 Mythbusters
17:02 Uncovering Aliens
17:50 The Big Brain Theory
18:40 Mythbusters
19:30 You Have Been Warned
20:20 How Do They Do It?
20:45 Food Factory
21:10 NASA's Unexplained Files
22:00 You Have Been Warned
22:50 The Big Brain Theory



00:20 Say Yes To The Dress: Canada
00:42 Say Yes To The Dress: Canada
01:05 Diana: Tragedy Or Treason?
01:50 Say Yes To The Dress UK
02:12 Say Yes To The Dress UK
02:35 Belief
03:20 Sister Wives
04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras
04:50 Ultimate Shopper
05:35 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
06:00 Sister Wives
06:45 Sister Wives
07:30 Sister Wives
08:15 Outdaughters: Busby Quints
09:00 Say Yes To The Dress
09:25 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
10:10 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
10:55 Love, Lust Or Run
11:17 Love, Lust Or Run
11:40 Love, Lust Or Run
12:02 Love, Lust Or Run
12:25 Love, Lust Or Run
12:47 Love, Lust Or Run
13:10 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
13:55 Belief
14:40 Cake Boss
15:02 Cake Boss
15:25 Cake Boss
15:47 Cake Boss
16:10 Cake Boss
16:35 Cake Boss
17:00 7 Little Johnstons
17:50 Katie Price's Pony Club
18:50 Outdaughters: Busby Quints
19:40 Cake Boss
20:10 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
20:35 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids



01:00 Formula-E Championship Highlights
02:00 Summer X Games Highlights
03:00 UCI BMX World Championship Highlights
04:00 Red Bull Cliff Diving
05:00 FIBA 3 X 3 Basketball World Tour Highlights
05:30 WWE Wal3ooaha
06:00 Formula-E Championship Highlights
07:00 UCI BMX World Championship Highlights
08:00 Red Bull Cliff Diving
09:00 This Week In WWE
09:30 World Of X Games
10:00 WWE Wal3ooaha
10:30 FIBA 3 X 3 Basketball World Tour Highlights
11:00 FIA World Rallycross Highlights
12:00 WWE Bottom Line
13:00 WWE Afterburn
14:00 ESL Pro League
17:30 Arena Esports
18:00 WWE Wal3ooaha
18:30 FIBA 3 X 3 Basketball World



00:00 The Ultimate Fighter: Alvarez v Gaethje
01:00 UFC Now
02:00 UFC 215 Countdown
03:00 The Ultimate Fighter: Alvarez v Gaethje
04:00 NCAA Football
06:30 UFC Ultimate Knockouts
07:00 UFC 215 Countdown
08:00 Glory Rewind
09:00 MotoGP Highlights
12:40 UFC Fight Replay
13:00 Mobil 1 The Grid
13:30 TCR International Series Highlights
14:00 UFC Fight Replay
14:10 Live MotoGP
17:00 The Ultimate Fighter: Alvarez v Gaethje
18:00 UFC 215 Countdown
19:00 UFC Now
20:00 One Weekly
20:30 Legends Football League
22:00 NCAA Football

WORD SEARCH

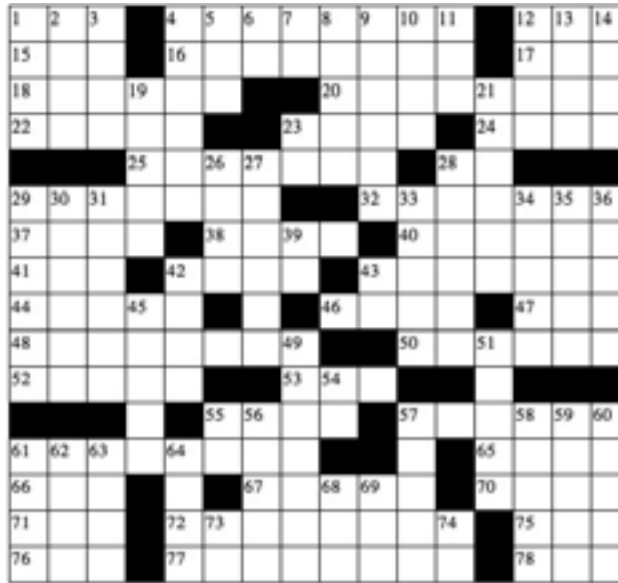
SCUBA Diving

Find and circle all of the SCUBA Diving words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the meaning of the letters of SCUBA.



- AIR PRESSURE
- ALTIITUDE DIVING
- ANDXIA
- ATMOSPHERE
- BALNOPLAURA
- BOOTIES
- BUNCE DEVE
- BUBBLES
- BUDY SYSTEM
- BUDYANCY
- C CARD
- COMPASS
- COMPRESSOR
- CORAL REEF
- CURRENT
- DECOMPRESSION
- DEPTH GAUGE
- DIVE COMPUTER
- DIVE FLAG
- DIVE MARSHAL
- DRYSUIT
- EDDY
- EMBOLISM
- GAS CYLINDER
- GAS MIXTURE
- GLANT EYEGLASS
- HELICO
- HOSE
- HYPOOTHERMIA
- LEEWARD
- LIARGE
- MASK
- MEASUR
- MOUTHPIECE
- NARCOSIS
- NEOPRENE
- NITROGEN
- NITROX
- OCEAN
- OXYGEN
- PANIC
- REBREATHER
- RECOMPRESSION
- REGULATOR
- SCOOTER
- SEA LEVEL
- SEARS
- SHOAL
- SILICONE
- SNORKEL
- SPEAR GUN
- STRIBE
- SWIM FINN
- SWIMMING
- TANK
- THE BEND
- TIDE
- TOXICITY
- TRIMIX
- UNDERSEA
- UNDERSLUT
- UNDERSTON
- VALVE
- VISION
- VOLUNE
- WATER
- WEIGHT BELT
- WEIGHTS
- WETSUIT
- WINDWARD

CROSSWORD 1705



ACROSS

- The compass point that is one point south of due west.
- An interpreter and guide in the Near East.
- A slight amount or degree of difference.
- Not in good physical or mental health.
- Author of satirical attacks on medieval scholasticism (1494-1553).
- Fiddler crabs.
- The upper house of the parliament of the Republic of Ireland.
- Taken off or taken away from a total.
- Relating or near the pubis.
- A sensation (as of a cold breeze or bright light) that precedes the onset of certain disorders such as a migraine attack or epileptic seizure.
- A genus of Paridae.
- Tropical American feather palm having a swollen spiny trunk and edible nuts.
- Minute freshwater crustacean having a round body enclosed in a transparent shell.
- A United Nations agency created to assist developing nations by loans guaranteed by member governments.
- A town in north central Oklahoma.
- German dramatist whose works concern people torn between reason and emotion (1777-1811).
- A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
- The capital and largest city of Yemen.
- A public act of violence by an unruly mob.
- A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
- A heap of dung or refuse.
- (comparative of 'near') Being the one of two that is less distant in space.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- 300 to 3000 megahertz.
- Dry brandy distilled in the Armagnac district of France.
- Dry brandy distilled in the Armagnac district of France.
- A recurring sleep state during which rapid eye movements do not occur and dreaming does not occur.
- The cry made by sheep.
- A representation of the Virgin Mary mourning over the dead body of Jesus.
- Conduit consisting of a long hollow object (usually cylindrical) used to hold and conduct liquids or gases.
- The rate at which heat is produced by an individual in a resting state.
- (Teutonic and Norse mythology) A Valkyrie or a queen in the Nibelungenlied who loved the hero Siegfried.
- A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.
- Take in solid food.
- The Palestinian uprising (beginning in 1987) against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

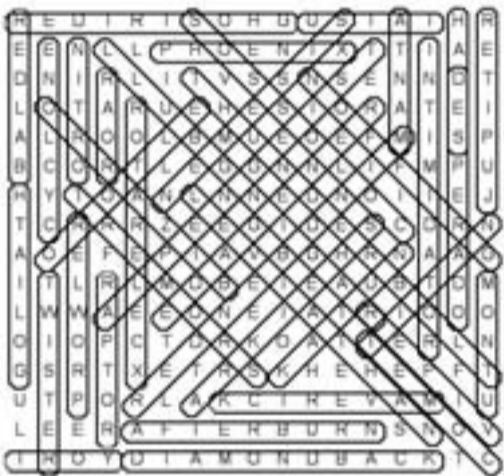
DOWN

- A small tuft or lock.
- Cheese containing a blue mold.
- Block consisting of a thick piece of something.
- A unit of apothecary weight equal to an eighth of an ounce or to 60 grains.

- A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- A brittle gray crystalline element that is a semiconducting metalloid (resembling silicon) used in transistors.
- A song that was formerly popular.
- An unnaturally frenzied or distraught woman.
- An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
- Inflammation of the urethra of unknown cause.
- South African prelate and leader of the antiapartheid struggle (born in 1931).
- Type genus of the Aceraceae.
- An informal term for a father.
- A rechargeable battery with a nickel cathode and a cadmium anode.
- For which money has been paid.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- In bed.
- A strong paper or thin cardboard with a smooth light brown finish made from e.g. Manila hemp.
- Light-colored and fine-grained granitic rock consisting chiefly of quartz and feldspars.
- A vowel whose quality or length is changed to indicate linguistic distinctions (such as sing sang sung song).
- Press or grind with a crunching noise.
- A city in northeastern Ohio.
- An African river.
- A river in southeastern France.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- Being nine more than ninety.
- Of a temperature scale that registers the freezing point of water as 32 degrees F and the boiling point as 212 degrees F at one atmosphere of pressure.
- A heavy brittle diamagnetic trivalent metallic element (resembles arsenic and antimony chemically).
- Jordan's port.
- Italian operatic composer noted for the dramatic realism of his operas (1858-1924).
- An active and efficient cause.
- A metric unit of length equal to 100 meters.
- Half the width of an em.
- A headlike protuberance on an organ or structure.
- A burn caused by hot liquid or steam.
- A Dravidian language closely related to Tamil that is spoken in a hilly section of southwestern India.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
- Avatar of Vishnu.
- An area in a town where a public mercantile establishment is set up.
- A desert in central Asia.
- 30 to 300 gigahertz.
- Brief episode in which the brain gets insufficient blood supply.
- A radioactive gaseous element formed by the disintegration of radium.
- An official prosecutor for a judicial district.

Yesterday's Solution

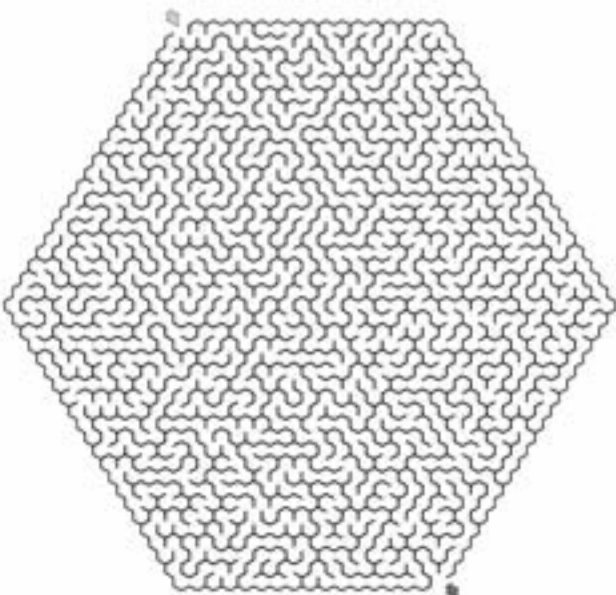
Roller Coasters



- AFTERBURN
- ALPENGEIST
- BALDER
- BIZARRO
- COLOSSOS
- COMET
- CYCLONE
- DESPERADO
- DIAMONDBACK
- EL TORO
- GHOSTRIDER
- GOLIATH
- GRIFFON
- HADES
- INTIMIDATOR
- JUPITER
- KATUN
- LEVIATHAN
- MANTA
- MAVERICK
- MIND BENDER
- MONTU
- NEMESIS
- NITRO
- PHOENIX
- PROWLER
- RAGING BULL
- RAPTOR
- RENEGAGE
- ROAR
- SHEKRA
- TATSU
- THUNDERBOLT
- TITAN
- TREMORS
- TROY
- TWISTER
- VIPER
- XCELERATOR

The hidden message is: LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST

CHALLENGING MAZE



Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

ITALY OPENS MANSLAUGHTER PROBE OVER 4-YEAR-OLD'S MALARIA DEATH

ROME: Italian prosecutors have opened a manslaughter inquiry into the death of a four-year-old girl who was killed by malaria in northern Italy in a medical mystery that has gripped the country. The girl, Sofia Zago, had not travelled to any at-risk countries but had spent her summer holiday with her family at the seaside in Italy's Veneto region, which like Europe as a whole is typically malaria-free. She had been admitted for diabetes treatment to the pediatric department of the Santa Chiara hospital, which was also treating a family that had contracted malaria during a trip to Burkina Faso.

Experts are exploring whether the disease was passed from the family to Sofia via a mosquito bite, while prosecutors in Trento are investigating whether the girl could have caught it from a re-used needle at the hospital. The hospital has said it uses only disposable, single-use needles. Both the family and Sofia were suffering from the same type of malaria-plasmodium falciparum-but experts were trying to determine whether they were affected by the same strain. Different strains would rule out contamination in the hospital. Sofia's autopsy was scheduled for yesterday. Only some types of mosquito, called anopheline, are able to transmit the disease from person to person.

'Suitcase' danger

"There are still anopheline mosquitoes in parts of Italy that can transmit malaria, but these would be unlikely to be found as far north as Trentino," Colin Sutherland, a professor of Parasitology at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, told AFP. "There are also recorded cases of mosquitoes from malaria-endemic countries making it to Europe and transmitting the disease during a hot summer. This could reach Europe in either in the body of an aircraft, or items of luggage," he said.

But Massimo Galli, vice-president of the Italian Society of Infectious Diseases, said a so-called suitcase mosquito was unlikely in this case as the family did not travel directly from Africa to the hospital with their luggage. He admitted that the case was a mystery, saying "we need to consider the improbable, the almost-impossible". —AFP

SCIENTISTS FIND THAILAND'S FIRST EVER TRUFFLE SPECIES

BANGKOK: Gastronomes of the world delight. Two new types of truffle have been unearthed in Thailand's far north, scientists announced yesterday in what they called a first for Southeast Asia. Researchers at Chiang Mai university said they had identified two brand new species and confirmed that tuber magnatum-the same species as Italy's much sought after white truffle-had been found in a national park surrounding Mount Suthep in northwestern Thailand.

"We confirmed that they are truffles both from their DNA and their physical look," Jaturong Khamla, one of the researchers, told AFP following the publication of their paper. The first species, a white-colored truffle, was discovered in 2014 and has been given the name tuber thailandicum. The second one, brown on the outside but with a white interior, was found in 2015 and has been named tuber lannaense. Then in 2017 the team found another type of white truffle which DNA tests confirmed is the already known species tuber magnatum.

While foodies may be salivating at the new discovery, Jaturong said his team were more preoccupied with confirming whether the truffles were new species than whether they tasted delicious. "The white truffle (thailandicum) is similar to the Italian white truffle but they have a mild smell and are smaller," he said. Jaturong said his team specialized in fungi and had discovered around 60 types of new mushroom species in the last 18 years. But this was the first



This undated handout from the Chiang Mai University in Thailand released on September 7, 2017 shows truffles identified as tuber lannaense. — AFP

time they had identified truffles.

"These are first truffles found in a tropical climate," a press release announcing the discovery said. Thailand's mountainous north often

experiences cooler and wetter weather than the kind of year-round tropical heat experienced in the rest of the country-conditions more suitable for growing truffles. — AFP

CLINIC
PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INTERNATIONAL NEWS IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فاهد علي المخيزيم
Consultant Pediatrician استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

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STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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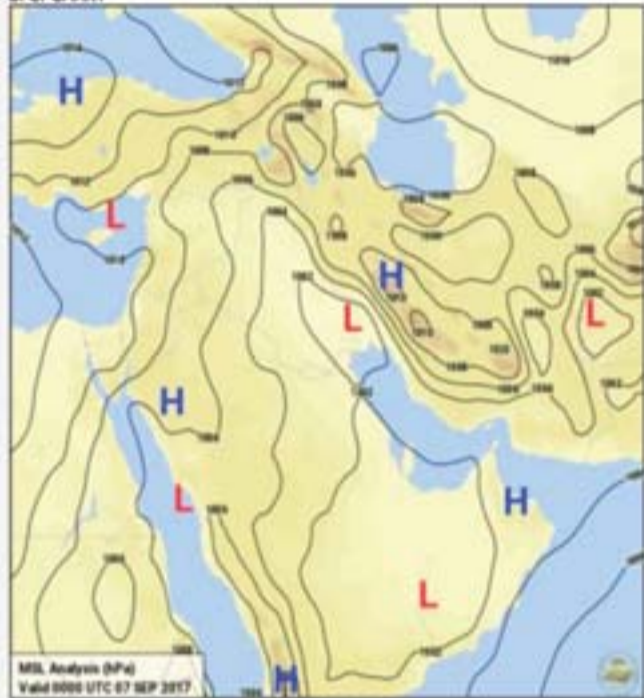
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 07/09/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 45 °C

By Day : Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas with light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 22 km/h and some high clouds will appear.
By Night : Relatively hot and Humid specially over coastal areas with light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h .

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Expected Weather		Dust		
Expected Weather	Hot	Hot and causing rising dust over open areas	Hot	Hot
Min Temp °C	30	28	27	28
Max Temp °C	46	45	45	46
Wind Direction	northerly westerly	northerly westerly	northerly westerly	northerly westerly to variable
Wind Speed km/h	12 - 32	15 - 40	10 - 32	08 - 28

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	34	40
KUWAIT AIRPORT	29	45
ABDALY	31	46
BUBYAN	32	37
JAHRA	31	45
FAILAKA ISLAND	32	40
SALMIYAH	34	36
AHMADI	32	36
JAL ALIYAH	31	45
QAROH ISLAND	33	36
UMM AL-MARADEM	33	37
NUWAISIB	27	39
WAFRA	26	44
SALMY	29	45
MUTRIBA	31	47

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	44
Min Temp (°C)	27
Max Rel Hum (%)	96
Min Rel Hum (%)	09
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	28 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	05:28
Sunset	18:05

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:07
Sunrise	05:28
Zuhr	11:46
Asr	15:19
Sunset	18:05
Isha	19:23

URGENTLY REQUIRED

- Automobile Mechanic
- Motorcycle Mechanic
- Mechanic helper
- Metal fabricator and welder

To work in well equipped workshop in Shuwaikh.

Contact: **66322222**

Email: poarsche@gmail.com

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sabira D/o Abbas Ali Hita, holder of Indian Passport No. L4906912 & Civil ID No.

283051602805, has changed my name to Sabira Ora hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5343)

I, Arif S/o Asger Ali Ora, holder of Indian Passport No. K4650108 & Civil ID No.

274082401497, has changed my name to Arif Ora hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5343)

I, Azima Arif D/o Arif Ora, holder of Indian Passport No. M9150401 & Civil ID No.

306100600523, has changed my name to Azima Ora, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C5343) 7-9-2017

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

AIRLINES



American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Air Slovakia	22434940
Olympic Airways	22420002/9
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
Reservation	22433388

British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Alitalia	22414427
Balkan Airlines	22416474
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Czech Airlines	22417901/2433141
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9

Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2017



Donald Trump strikes shock budget deal with Democrats

NORWAY'S WEALTH FUND, A JUMBO PIGGY BANK TO BE USED PRUDENTLY

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BEIJING: People sit in a detachable chair lift designed by Porsche studio at the China National Convention Centre during the World Winter Expo in Beijing yesterday. — AFP

AGEING POPULATIONS TO DRAG GROWTH IN ASIA

LAGARDE URGES GOVT TO BOOST PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN WORKFORCE

SEOUL: The chief of the International Monetary Fund warned yesterday that ageing populations in key Asian economies will drag on their growth, urging policymakers to step up their response to shifting demographics. Studies show that Asia's population is ageing faster than anywhere else in the world, with Japan forecast to become the first "ultra-aged" country, meaning 28 percent of the population is 65 or over, while a fifth of the people in South Korea are expected to be 65 by 2030.

Rapidly ageing countries including China, Japan, Korea and Thailand "will have smaller workforces in the future and potentially lower productivity growth", IMF managing director Christine Lagarde told a conference in Seoul. "We estimate that these countries could face lower annual GDP growth... by up to a percentage point," the IMF chief said. China and Japan are the world's second- and third-largest economies respectively, and slower growth in them risks having significant knock-on effects around the world.

Lagarde urged governments to "boost the proportion of women in the workforce" by better accommodating working mothers with more childcare benefits and incentives for part-time work. In emerging countries such as India—where populations are still growing—better education for girls and wider access to finance for women should be prioritized, she said. According to some estimates, she added, closing the gender gap in the employment market could raise Japanese GDP by 9 percent, South Korea's by 10 percent, and India's by 27 percent.

At yesterday's conference, Bank of Korea Governor Lee Ju-yeol also called for steps to tackle low birth rates and create more jobs for women and older people. "A failure in responding to population ageing will make the escape from possible structural low growth difficult," Lee said. An IMF report issued earlier this year projected population growth falling to zero in Asia by 2050 and the share of working-age people—now at its peak—declining over the coming decades. Urging policymakers to act early to respond to the ageing population, the report warned: "Parts of Asia risk becoming old before becoming rich." —AFP

HARVEY PUSHES US JOBLESS CLAIMS TO TWO-YEAR HIGH

WASHINGTON: Hurricane Harvey's devastation in Texas sent new claims for US jobless benefits skyrocketing last week to a two-year high, the Labor Department reported yesterday. And the increase from the prior week was the largest in nearly five years, with claims for unemployment insurance in Texas alone rising more than four fold. For the week ending September 2, new jobless claims surged by 62,000 to 298,000, seasonally adjusted, the highest level since April 2015 and far higher than forecast by economists, even though they predicted a jump.

It was the largest weekly increase since November 2012, when claims soared in the wake of Superstorm Sandy, which devastated the densely populated New York metropolitan area. The Labor Department provided no estimate for the precise extent to which Harvey affected the weekly numbers. But claims in Texas jumped more than 400 percent for the week, climbing to 63,742 in the week after the storm from 12,105 the week before, although these state figures were not seasonally adjusted.

Damage estimates from Harvey, which made landfall on August 26, range from around \$50 billion to well over \$100 billion, making it among the costliest-ever US storms. The Houston area is home to multinational corporations in the tech, energy and defense sectors. The storm also idled a large share of US oil and gas production and refining capacity. Analysts say economic activity in the Gulf Coast region is likely to drop sharply in the wake of

the storm before spiking during reconstruction efforts and then quickly reverting to prior trends.

Despite the jump in the latest week, initial jobless claims have held below 300,000 for two and a half years, the longest stretch since 1970. While claims can see big swings from week to week, the data can be used to gauge prevalence of layoffs and the health of labor markets. The less volatile four-week moving average rose only 5.7 percent to 250,250 claims, matching a level recorded in April. —AFP



TEXAS: In this file photo, a garage sale sign stands in a pile of debris damaged by floodwaters in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey in Spring, Texas. —AP

BOEING TIPS CHINA TO NEED \$1.1 TN PLANES OVER NEXT 20 YEARS

BEIJING: Boeing says China will need more than a trillion dollars-worth of new airplanes over the next two decades as the cash-rich middle class grows and infrastructure projects pick up. The US aircraft giant also outlined plans to open its first factory in the country as it looks to reinforce its position in the face of competition from European rival Airbus. In its annual forecast Wednesday, Boeing predicted China would need 7,240 new commercial jets by 2036 with a market value of nearly \$1.1 trillion, adding almost a fifth of all global orders would come from Chinese companies.

"China's strong economy, the growing middle class and the significant investment in infrastructure support our long-term outlook" with the proliferation of secondary airports expected to add to this growth, said Randy Tinseth, Boeing's vice-president of marketing. The firm last year predicted China would order 6,810 planes in the next two decades and cited an improving economy, expansion of local airlines and a recovering cargo market for its increased outlook.

Air traffic in China has increased as new low-cost carriers pop up and Boeing expects the middle class to double in ten years to reach 600 million people. This prosperous group, who want to travel to increasingly long-haul destinations, are predicted to fuel a rise in sales of high-capacity planes. But the single-aisle jets used for regional flights are forecast to stay at the heart of the China's demand for new planes, comprising an estimated 75 percent of orders. —AFP

PRIME REAL ESTATE: AMAZON LOOKS FOR 2ND HEADQUARTERS

NEW YORK: Amazon is on the hunt for a second home. The e-commerce giant said yesterday that it will spend more than \$5 billion to build another headquarters in North America. Amazon will stay put in its sprawling Seattle headquarters, and the new space will be "a full equal" with as many as 50,000 jobs, said founder and CEO Jeff Bezos. The announcement is certain to create a scramble among cities and states vying to make the short list.

Cities have until next month to apply through a special website, and the company said it will make a final decision next year. It gave few hints about where it would land, but did say it is looking at metropolitan areas with populations of more than a million that have the potential to attract top technical talent. Amazon is growing rapidly: In just the last month it announced plans to build three new warehouses in Oregon, New York and Ohio, to pack and ship packages.

And it recently paid close to \$14 billion to buy organic grocer Whole Foods and its more than 465 stores. The company plans to hire 100,000 people by the middle of next year. There are 24 restaurants and cafes within Amazon's Seattle campus alone, where more than 40,000 people are employed. The increase in personal income around the Seattle headquarters for people not employed by Amazon increased by about \$17 billion due to direct investments, according to the company. —AP



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



HONGKONG: A man uses his smartphone in front of an electronic stock board showing the Hang Seng Index at a bank in Hong Kong. —AP

EUROPEAN STOCK MARKETS, EURO HIGHER BEFORE ECB

LONDON: Europe's main stock markets climbed and the euro advanced versus the dollar yesterday awaiting the ECB's regular policy meeting. The European Central bank will drop hints and play for time at its meeting yesterday, analysts predict, saving a big announcement on ending its easy-money policy for October as it strives to balance conflicting pressures.

"The euro has been well bid... ahead of the ECB's interest rate decision and (European Central Bank head) Mario Draghi's press conference, with traders either anticipating taper talk or testing the central bank's resolve as it prepares to further wind down its quantitative easing program," said Oanda senior market analyst Craig Erlam. Earlier yesterday, Asian stock markets struggled to hold on to initial gains with the North Korea crisis continuing to play on investor confidence despite US President Donald Trump's deal to raise the US debt ceiling.

Markets rallied at the start of the day as the surprise deal between the president and Democrats to lift the US borrowing limit provided some much-needed good news at the end of a turbulent week. The news raised hopes again for the president's market-friendly economic agenda, including tax reform and infrastructure spending, which have been sidetracked in recent months. While tensions over Pyongyang's weekend nuclear test have abated there are fears the North is planning to launch another missile this weekend, riling an already furious United States.

Trump's insistence to Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping that military action was not his "first choice" and a call for a diplomatic solution provided some solace but fresh provocation could rattle

markets again. On currency markets the dollar lost some of Wednesday's gains against the haven yen, while traders took stock of the surprise resignation of Federal Reserve number two Stanley Fischer, who is considered one of the bank's less dovish members.

Analysts said the announcement could clear the way for boss Janet

Yellen's departure when her term ends next year and allow Trump to determine the focus of the Fed by selecting officials perhaps less likely to raise interest rates or favor stringent bank regulations. Oil prices extended Wednesday's gains on news that refineries shuttered by Hurricane Harvey in the US Gulf Coast were gradually reopening. —AFP

CHINA'S FIFTH-LARGEST BANK DOWNGRADED TO JUNK STATUS

BEIJING: China's fifth-largest state-owned bank has had its credit rating downgraded to junk status by Moody's, the latest sign of fragility in the country's financial system. The decision to downgrade Bank of Communications was based on the lender's lack of customer deposits and over-reliance on expensive and volatile alternative sources of funding, Moody's said yesterday. It follows a Chinese government crackdown on banks using excessive leveraging, including unregulated "shadow banking".

"Moody's review on BoCom was triggered by the bank's increasing reliance on wholesale funds in recent years and declining profitability," said the credit ratings agency in a statement yesterday. The downgrade was driven by BoCom's "weaker funding profile when compared to other state-owned Chinese banks", particularly weaker deposit holdings, it said. BoCom's baseline credit assessment was moved from baa3 to ba1 — crossing the "junk status" threshold.

Chinese officials fear domestic

banks' growing dependence on less stable funding sources such as the sale of financial products and inter-bank lending, rather than traditional deposits, could imperil economic growth and stability in the world's second-largest economy. In March, the newly appointed head of China's banking watchdog pledged to end regulatory "chaos" in the country's banking system and cracked down on these instruments, limiting the availability and increasing the cost of financing sources on which BoCom depends.

The increase in funding costs was expected to put pressure on BoCom's profits, Moody's said. Much of China's growth over the past decade has been underpinned by debt-fueled investment in infrastructure and real estate, but has slowed in recent years. BoCom is 41.26 percent owned by the Chinese central government. It is the country's fifth-largest lender by assets, although its holdings are considerably smaller than those of nation's famous "Big Four", which hold proportionately more deposits. —AFP

ECB STICKS TO EASY MONEY AS BOND-BUYING SQUEEZE NEARS

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: The European Central Bank left interest rates and its mass bond-buying program unchanged yesterday, confirming expectations it would play for time as it charts a way out of easy-money policy. Governors kept the bank's main refinancing rate at 0.0 percent, the marginal lending rate at 0.25 percent, and the deposit facility rate at -0.4 percent, meaning banks have to pay to park their cash with the ECB, a spokesman said. Neither did policymakers adjust the ECB's "quantitative easing" program of 60 billion euros (\$72 billion) per month of government and corporate bond purchases.

Along with low interest rates and cheap loans to banks, the ECB's bond purchases are designed to encourage growth in the 19-nation eurozone, pushing inflation towards its target of just below 2.0 percent. As a self-imposed deadline at the end of December approaches, two major factors are squeezing the ECB: a stronger euro and still-sluggish inflation could justify prolonging QE, but it is approaching the legal limits of the scheme and may be forced to wind it down. The euro rose to just shy of \$1.20 before the announcement, and has since pulled back slightly.

Central bank observers and currency and bond traders will all be watching President Mario Draghi's 2:30 pm press conference closely for clues about the bank's next steps, as well as the latest economic forecasts from ECB staff. While many analysts expect the growth outlook to be upgraded after strong performance in the first half of 2017, inflation expectations are likely to further undershoot the 2.0-percent target in the coming years. In June, central bank economists predicted 1.5 percent inflation this year and 1.3 percent in 2018 — both already lowered from March's forecasts.

One reason for weak inflation is that the euro has appreciated against other currencies as the recovery gathers pace, braking price growth as imports become cheaper. "The ECB's press statement seems to confirm that it will not unveil its plans for QE beyond December today," Capital Economics analyst Jennifer McKeown said. But "since the economy is growing at a fair clip and the bank is approaching limits on its asset holdings, we expect to hear further hints that a taper will come next year," she said. "Mr Draghi may even indicate that plans will be published in October."

Welcome to the limit

Following July's meeting of the governing council Draghi emphasized the need to be "persistent and patient" in the face of unresponsive inflation, suggesting that an end to QE will be drawn out. Policymakers still see slack in the eurozone economy, and have pointed to slow wage growth linked to still-high unemployment and underemployment in some member countries as the biggest factor holding back inflation. Prolonging the ECB's intervention could support growth and inflation for longer, making a smooth withdrawal more certain.

But the bank is running up against the limits set in its own rules and insisted on by European and German courts, which bar it from buying more than 33 percent of any one country's debt. Coveted German bonds have also become scarce on the market, making it difficult for the ECB to buy in proportion to the "capital key", or the share of its capital contributed by each eurozone nation. "It appears the lone viable option is to accept the legal limits and gradually scale back the purchases next year," Commerzbank chief economist Joerg Kraemer said. —AFP



FRANKFURT AM MAIN: The European Central Bank (ECB) is pictured in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. — AFP



OSLO: Norway's Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party, Erna Solberg, center, speaks on the phone after an election campaign event in Oslo, Norway. — AFP

NORWAY'S WEALTH FUND, A JUMBO PIGGY BANK TO BE USED PRUDENTLY

NORWEGIANS COULD REAP BENEFITS OF OIL THROUGH FINANCIAL GAINS

OSLO: Norway, which holds legislative elections on Monday, has the world's largest sovereign wealth fund, a piggy bank of nearly \$1 trillion to be saved for rainy days, but also to help finance today's election promises. How did a nation of 5.3 million people end up with the world's largest sovereign wealth fund?

Much can be learned from Aesop's fable, The Ant and the Grasshopper, about the benefits of planning for the future. The idea is that oil is a fortuitous natural resource that belongs to all Norwegians, benefitting both current and future generations by financing the expenses of the welfare state. When Norway's oil wells one day run dry, Norwegians will still be able to reap the benefits of the oil through the financial gains made by the Government Pension Fund Global (GPF), as it is officially known.

Set up in 1990, the Norwegian government made its first deposit into the fund in May 1996 with a modest cheque of less than two billion kroner (about \$305 million). Today, all of the state's oil revenues are placed in the fund: taxes, profits from the state's holdings in oil and gas fields, and dividends from Statoil, owned 67 percent by the state.

Is it 'open bar' for politicians?

Absolutely not. In 2001, Norway decided that governments could tap the fund to balance the budget, but within a strictly defined framework. The government is only allowed to use the fund's estimated returns, not the capital itself, to prevent the fund from being depleted. The fund's estimated return was originally set at four percent (after inflation and management costs), but was slashed this year to three percent by the outgoing right-wing government.

Norway's political parties have generally supported this figure and consider it more realistic for future financial investments. Last year, for the first time, the government began withdrawing more from the fund than it put in, as oil revenues slumped due to the tumbling price of crude. Even though this means Oslo has de facto stopped saving, the fund has continued to grow thanks to the yield on investments and the sometimes favorable exchange rate.

How do you manage so much money?

The Norwegian central bank manages the fund, which

mainly invests in stocks (accounting for 65.1 percent of the portfolio at the end of the second quarter). With stakes in nearly 9,000 companies, the fund owns 1.3 percent of the world's market capitalization, and 2.3 percent in Europe. It also invests in bonds (32.4 percent of its portfolio) and is gradually increasing its real estate holdings (2.5 percent). All investments are made outside Norway to avoid destabilizing the country's economy.

The fund follows strict ethical guidelines set by authorities. It is barred from investing in companies accused of serious violations of human rights, child labor or serious environmental damage, as well as manufacturers of "particularly inhumane" arms and tobacco firms, and companies which derive a large part of their activities from coal. More than 130 groups, including giants like Airbus, Boeing, British American Tobacco and Wal Mart, have therefore been black-listed by the fund, and a dozen others have been placed under observation. — AFP

NOKIA ANNOUNCES NEARLY 600 JOB CUTS IN FRANCE

PARIS: Finnish telecoms giant Nokia said yesterday it planned to cut around 600 jobs in France as it seeks to make cost-savings and refocus its loss-making businesses. The group said it planned to reduce its headcount in France by 597, a little over 10 percent of its total workforce in the country, with French trade unions calling the move "unacceptable." Nokia, which no longer makes handsets having sold that business to Microsoft, bought French-American telecoms equipment maker Alcatel-Lucent in 2015 in a deal that was expected to lead to savings.

The cuts in France will be focused on administrative and support services and will not effect research and development as it refocuses on high-speed 5G telecom networks, cybersecurity and internet-linked appliances, the group said. Nokia is aiming to make 1.2 billion euros in total cost savings by the end of 2018 following net losses of 766 million euros last year. —AFP



NORTH DAKOTA: US President Donald Trump greets supporters before speaking about tax reform at the Andeavor Mandan Refinery in Mandan, North Dakota. —AP

DONALD TRUMP STRIKES SHOCK BUDGET DEAL WITH DEMOCRATS

DEAL TO HELP WITH RECOVERY FROM HURRICANE HARVEY

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump infuriated Republicans on Wednesday by agreeing to ease US borrowing limits, forestalling a government shutdown and siding with opposition Democrats in a high-stakes Washington policy fight. Trump hailed a “very good” deal with Democratic lawmakers that will see the government funded and able to borrow all it needs until at least December 15, avoiding a disruptive shutdown.

The deal will also provide billions in dollars of funding to help with the recovery from Hurricane Harvey in Texas and

Louisiana. “We essentially came to a deal, and I think the deal will be very good,” said a buoyant Trump after meeting leaders from both parties in the Oval Office. During that sit down Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin was among the Republicans arguing for a long-term extension to the so-called “debt ceiling,” before Trump shocked the room by jumping in to support Democrats’ short-term fix.

Afterward the president—who based his political brand on being a consummate dealmaker—was notably warm toward Democrats Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi, who he repeatedly referred to as “Chuck and Nancy.” “We’re very glad the president accepted, it’s for the good of the country,” Schumer said with barely contained glee, describing the decision as “a really positive step forward.” Republicans however were livid, believing that come December, Democrats—a minority in both houses of Congress—will be able to demand concessions to keep the government open ahead of key 2018 mid-term elections.

That is likely to include extending protection against deportation to around 800,000 people brought to the United States illegally as children, without providing funding for Trump’s “border wall” with Mexico. Just hours earlier, House speaker Paul Ryan had described a deal linking the debt ceiling and hurricane funding as a “ridiculous idea.” “The Pelosi-Schumer-Trump deal is bad,” said Republican Senator Ben Sasse, in a terse and censorious response to news of the agreement.

Republican Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell distanced himself from the decision, referring to it as a deal between Trump and Democrats. “His feeling was that we needed to come together and not create a picture of divisiveness at a time of genuine national crisis,” McConnell said. Top Trump legislative advisor Marc Short said the move helped Congress and the White House “clear the decks” of thorny political problems and “enables us to focus on tax reform.”

Relations between Trump and Republican leaders have long been strained by policy disputes and the president’s jabs on Twitter. In August, Trump publicly berated McConnell who he said “screamed” to replace Obama-era health care reforms for seven years and “couldn’t get it done.” Another senior administration official denied that Trump had sided with Democrats. “He didn’t go with the Democrats, he went with the country’s needs,” the official said. “The country’s needs, as he sees them right now, are to get many big legislative items tackled in short order by the end of this year,” the official added. — AFP

GERMAN INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT SKIPS A BEAT

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: Industrial production in Germany failed to recover in July from a slide the previous month, official data showed yesterday, with a flat result disappointing analysts’ hopes for a return to growth. Overall, firms produced the same amount in July as the previous month, federal statistics authority Destatis said in preliminary figures adjusted for price, seasonal and calendar effects. June saw a 1.1-percent fall in production, Destatis also confirmed.

Analysts surveyed by data company Factset had expected an increase of 0.5 percent month-on-month in July. Looking to a breakdown of different types of goods, consumer goods and capital goods makers both saw output fall 0.3 percent compared with June. And energy firms generated 4.7 percent less. Meanwhile, producer goods firms’ output grew 1.4 percent and construction added 0.5 percent.

“Industrial production grew continuously in the first five months of the year. Some pause in this trend was bound to happen,” said analyst Carsten Brzeski of ING Diba bank, pointing also to an unexpected fall in industrial orders in July. “Looking ahead, the prospects for German industry remain rosy, at least for the short term,” he added. In its own comment, the economy ministry in Berlin highlighted that surveys of business, investor and consumer confidence point to healthy months ahead for Germany. — AFP

PACIFIC ISLANDS CAN’T TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE ALONE: WORLD BANK

APIA, Samoa: Climate change will hit the Pacific harder than anywhere else on Earth and the region’s tiny island nations need major international aid to deal with the challenge, the World Bank said yesterday. A World Bank report, “Pacific Possible”, draws on research from numerous sources to back the long-held view of regional leaders that they are on the frontline of global warming. “(It) could have more dire impacts on the Pacific islands than any other country in the world,” warned the report, released Thursday at the Pacific Islands Forum in Samoa.

The study said that even under a best-case scenario—with oceans rising 40 centimeters by 2100 — island nations would face huge costs building seawalls to protect their coastlines. The worst-case outcome—waters up 126 centimeters by 2100 — would swamp large areas of habitable land in low-lying nations such as Kiribati, the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu. “There is little prospect that the high costs of building sea walls could be financed by the countries themselves,” the report said.

“Accordingly, the international community will have to assess the trade-off between large initial expenditures on construction... versus emergency relief and recovery programs when disasters occur.” It said climate change’s impact was already being seen through coastal erosion, saltwater contamination of farmland and drinking water, as well as unpredictable rainfall causing more droughts and floods. The Pacific has always been lashed by cyclones but the report said the most destructive category five storms were set to become more frequent, straining the region’s already scarce economic resources.

It said Cyclone Pam, which hit Vanuatu in 2015, wiped out the equivalent of 64 percent of the country’s GDP. The report said Kiribati and Tuvalu, which are both only a few meters above sea level, may need to consider wholesale migration and that Australia and New Zealand, the region’s richest and most developed nations, could help by giving islanders open access to their labor markets. “It would allow for gradual migration from the atoll nations and be less costly and preferable to a last-minute abandonment, which would require significant emergency assistance and be difficult to manage,” it said.

While the World Bank acknowledged the problem climate change poses, it also said there were a number of economic opportunities Pacific nations could pursue to increase prosperity in coming decades. It said tourism, particularly from China, had the potential to deliver an extra one million visitors a year by 2040, generating additional income of US\$1.6 billion and 110,000 jobs. Improved internet access could also help counter the remoteness that has hindered economic growth in the islands, providing scope for employment opportunities such as call centers. — AFP



APIA: Pacific Island leaders attend the opening ceremony of the 48th Pacific Islands Forum in Apia, Samoa. — AFP

CHINESE ROBOTICS ENGINEER, ARTIST MAKES REAL-LIFE 'TRANSFORMERS'

BEIJING: In the suburbs of China's capital, a 32-year-old engineer creates the kind of larger-than-life, shapeshifting robots that most have only seen in "Transformers" movies. Sun Shiqian's roomy warehouse on the outskirts of Beijing houses a hulking menagerie, from a sleepy cow to a fiery metal dragon that stands 4.9 meters tall at the flip of a switch. A graduate of China's prestigious Central Academy of Fine Arts, Sun worked as an engineer before deciding to devote himself full-time to what he calls "robot arts".

"As a child, I loved watching cartoons with robots," Sun said. "But I noticed that they were all from either Japan or the United States. There were no Chinese robots." At the World Robot Conference in Beijing last month, the sculptor showcased an ox with the mechanical ability to transform into a robot "gladiator," equipped with steel abs and all. The android is part of his series based on the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac.

This June, Sun unveiled a 5-metre tall "Monkey King" inspired by the simian protagonist of China's famed "Journey to the West". Like his model, the 5-tonne robot holds a golden cudgel—except his is 6.3 meters long. The next model of "Monkey King" is slated to challenge an American giant robot to a duel next year.

Robots with Chinese characteristics

Sun grew up on an island off the coast of Dalian in northeast China. His family could not afford many toys, but his father, a former soldier, would often show him simple blueprints of weapons that were used in combat. Using these blueprints and sheets of cardboard, Sun fashioned miniature fighting dragons and other creatures. "I began to like art more and more, and I made increasingly complex robots in my spare time," he said. After leaving his engineering post in 2011, Sun focused his energy on designing robots—some costing upwards of one million yuan (\$150,000)—and making his visions a reality.

In 2014, he was commissioned by Paramount Movies to make robot sculptures to promote "Transformers: Age of Extinction", which broke box-office records in China. One model was exhibited at the historic Qianmen Gate, which formerly guarded the entrance to the Imperial City in Beijing. "People asked me, why are they putting foreign art in front of Qianmen?" Sun recalled. "This had a big impact on me, because they recognized that this robot did not have Chinese origins. From then on, my dream has been to create robot art that is distinctly Chinese."—AFP



BEIJING: This picture shows Sun Shiqian, a Chinese artist who makes transformer-like sculptures, showing a transformers' head at his studio in Beijing.—AFP



LIAONING PROVINCE: Trucks transport goods to North Korea through the Friendship Bridge linking China and North Korea, as seen from Dandong in northeastern China's Liaoning Province.—AP

US PROPOSES UN BAN ON OIL TO NORTH KOREA AND ASSET FREEZE

RESOLUTION TO PROHIBIT N KOREA FROM EXPORTING TEXTILES

UNITED NATIONS: The United States is seeking the toughest-ever UN sanctions on North Korea that would ban all oil and natural gas exports to the northeast Asian nation and freeze all foreign financial assets of the government and its leader, Kim Jong Un. The US-drafted resolution, circulated to council members Wednesday and obtained by The Associated Press, would also prohibit North Korea from exporting textiles and ban all countries from hiring and paying workers from the northeast Asian nation—two key sources of foreign currency.

The proposed resolution identifies nine cargo vessels that have carried out activities for North Korea prohibited by previous UN sanctions resolutions and would subject them to inspection by government warships, vessels or aircraft. It would authorize the 192 other UN member states to stop these ships on the high seas to inspect their cargo without their consent and to use "all necessary measures" - which in UN language includes force - to carry out an inspection and direct the vessel to a port. This would also apply to any other vessels designated by the Security Council committee monitoring sanctions against North Korea.

US Ambassador Nikki Haley said at an emergency council meeting earlier this week after North Korea's sixth and largest nuclear test that the Trump administration wants to put the resolution to a vote Monday. The resolution is likely to face opposition from North Korea's neighbors and allies, China and Russia, who say pre-

vious sanctions aren't working. South Korean President Moon Jae-in urged Russian President Vladimir Putin this week to back stronger sanctions on the North, including an oil cutoff. But Putin worried that such moves would hurt North Korea's people, said Yoon Youngchan, Moon's chief press secretary.

Flagrant violation

Russia and China are calling for a resolution that focuses on a political solution and have proposed a suspension-for-suspension that would halt North Korean nuclear and missile tests in exchange for the US and South Korea halting their joint military exercises. Putin said earlier Wednesday that "we should not give in to emotions and push Pyongyang into a corner." The Trump administration has rejected the proposal by China and Russia, saying military exercises are essential in the face of escalating North Korean tests and threats to launch an intercontinental ballistic missile near the US territory of Guam.

President Donald Trump has said all options are on the table and told British Prime Minister Theresa May on Tuesday that "now is not the time to talk to North Korea," according to a White House readout. The proposed resolution would condemn "in the strongest terms" the latest nuclear test, which Pyongyang said was of a hydrogen bomb, calling it a "flagrant" violation of previous council resolutions banning all nuclear tests. It would order all countries to freeze all funds, oth-

er financial assets and economic resources outside North Korea "that are owned or controlled, directly or indirectly" by Kim Jong Un, the ruling Worker's Party of Korea, the government, or by individuals or entities acting on their behalf or at their direction.

The draft would freeze the assets of North Korea's state-owned airline Air Koryo, the Korean People's Army, and five other powerful military and party entities. It would also freeze the assets and impose a travel ban on Kim Jong Un and four other top party officials, Hwang Pyong So, Kim Ki Nam, Kim Yo Jong, and Pak Yong Sik. The proposed resolution would add 42 items to a list of equipment, goods and technology that countries are banned from exporting to North Korea. It would also prohibit North Korea from being part of any joint ventures or cooperative agreements.

The draft calls for a resumption of long-stalled six-party talks between North Korea and the US, Russia, China, South Korea and Japan with the goal of denuclearizing the Korean peninsula. It reiterates the importance of maintaining peace and stability in northeast Asia and the council's commitment "to a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to the situation," and it welcomes efforts to resolve the situation through dialogue. The proposed resolution expresses the Security Council's "determination to take further significant measures" in the event of a new nuclear test or ballistic missile launch.—AP

CRONJE BACK AS SPRINGBOKS LOOK TO TOPPLE WALLABIES

PERTH: Scrum-half Ross Cronje has shrugged off an ankle injury and Pieter-Steph du Toit returns at lock in the only changes to the South Africa team to face Australia in Perth tomorrow. Cronje, who has established himself as regular this season, missed the Rugby Championship win over Argentina in Salta with the knock he suffered in the Springboks' opening match against the Pumas in Port Elizabeth. But he has proven his fitness and will partner fly-half Elton Jantjies, while Francois Hougaard returns to the bench.

In the only other change to the starting team, du Toit comes in for Franco Mostert, who has been a stalwart for the Springboks and gets a break because of his heavy workload. It means du Toit is reunited in the

second row with captain Eben Etzebeth, who makes his 60th appearance.

The only other change to the matchday squad sees the inclusion of experienced fly-half Handre Pollard among the reserves. "Even though we travelled to three continents in 10 days, this group has the desire to get better, and learn from previous experiences," said coach Allister Coetzee.

"The performance in Salta was not perfect, but we are looking forward to the next opportunity to improve as individuals and as a team." The Springbok coach again emphasised that the Wallabies will come with a massive challenge. "They are a well-coached side, with great deception on attack. Their playmakers

and strike runners complement each other very well and we will have to be very sharp on defence," he said.

"If you look at their performances against New Zealand, you will see how well they have functioned in scoring nine tries and 63 points in two matches."

South Africa (15-1) - Andries Coetzee; Raymond Rhule, Jesse Kriel, Jan Serfontein, Courtnall Skosan; Elton Jantjies, Ross Cronje; Uzair Cassiem, Jaco Kriel, Siya Kolisi; Pieter-Steph du Toit, Eben Etzebeth (capt); Coenie Oosthuizen, Malcolm Marx, Tendai Mtawarira

Replacements: Bongsi Mbonambi, Steven Kitshoff, Trevor Nyakane, Lood de Jager, Jean-Luc du Preez, Francois Hougaard, Handre Pollard, Damian de Allende. —AFP



SYDNEY: A file photo taken on August 18, 2017, shows Australian Wallabies rugby player Bernard Foley receiving a pass during the Captain's Run ahead of their Test match against the New Zealand All Blacks in Sydney. — AFP

RUGBY

NEW-LOOK ALL BLACKS OFFER PUMAS CHANCE TO SHINE

NEW PLYMOUTH: Argentina will put their rugby credibility on the line in New Plymouth this weekend against an All Blacks experimenting with their line-up. Now in their sixth year of the Rugby Championship, much more was expected of the South Americans than just three wins from 29 matches. They have never beaten New Zealand.

Two years ago, things looked good for Los Pumas when they made the World Cup semi-finals and with the bulk of their squad joining the Jaguares to play Super Rugby the following year. But in two games against the All Blacks last year they appeared to have taken a step backwards—conceding a total of 93 points.

Both sides have made seven changes for Saturday's clash. While the All Blacks are looking to build depth, Argentina are in search of a glimmer of confidence. Coach Daniel Hourcade tried to put a positive spin on the disappointing history against New Zealand when he named his side yesterday.

"For us to play against the All Blacks is always a huge motivation and you end up with positive things, because facing the best makes you grow," he said.

But Hourcade could be forgiven for wondering what to do next. Easing up on Argentina's traditional bruising forward game in favour of a more open, running style has not paid the desired dividends. When Los Pumas do play tight, captain

Agustin Creevy is able to muster a powerful unit that has caused the All Blacks problems in the past, but he will be without one of his finest lieutenants this weekend with 78-Test veteran Juan Manuel Leguizamon dropped.

Enforcer Tomas Lavanini was also not required despite being cleared of further punishment after being sent off against South Africa a fortnight ago when he collected two yellow cards.

In all there are four forward changes and three in the backs with Hourcade saying he chose his best line-up, which includes the return of Nicolas Sanchez to partner Tomas Cubelli in the halves.

GIVE IT A CRACK

If the All Blacks have concerns about their misfiring performances against Australia they were not showing it. Instead, coach Steve Hansen did not hesitate to rest Sam Whitelock, Liam Squire, Aaron Smith, Ryan Crotty and Rieko Ioane who represent 201 Tests-worth of experience.

Sam Cane goes to the bench and Ben Smith goes on holiday-between them worth a further 110 Tests. Up steps an injury-free Nehe Milner-Skudder for his first appearance since the 2015 World Cup final and a natural fit for the high-paced game Hansen is developing. —AFP

RIVERON HAS DIFFICULT CHALLENGE AS NFL OFFICIATING CHIEF

NEW YORK: Alberto Riveron has a difficult challenge, and he's taking it on at a pivotal time in the NFL. Riveron has stepped in this year as the league's chief of officiating, replacing Dean Blandino, who joined his predecessor, Mike Pereira, as an analyst at Fox. Both Blandino and Pereira have been lauded for their skills in communicating and explaining officiating calls, something they carried into television from their positions at the NFL.

Riveron plans to continue the transparency - Blandino was a regular on Monday talk shows and on social media, breaking down plays from the previous day - as he directs a staff that now will include 21 full-time officials. He worked as Blandino's main assistant before moving up, so the adjustment hasn't been overwhelming in any way.

But there are differences. "I was not as in tune with internal workings like I am now," the 57-year-old Riveron says. "I was involved in the officiating, the evaluating and the developing of the officiating program. I now basically overlook the entire department. That means working with other departments like broadcasting, marketing, strategy, a lot more than I was before. My job and my goal is to be consistent and to get it right."

Fans often believe game officials get it wrong too often, though Troy Vincent, who runs the league's football operations, cites the extremely high percentage of correct calls. Vincent is emphatic when describing a smooth transition for Riveron.

"Al has always been in AMGC (Art McNally GameDay Central, where video reviews are made) the past four to five years," Vincent explains. "Al and Dean were the ones in AMGC making the calls, collaborating with the referees and those they had been handling with stadium instant replay, and dealing with the (TV) trucks over the last three to four years. We look at succession planning all the time, seeing is there a better setup?"

The new setup also has Russell Yurk and Wayne Mackie assisting Riveron. "Russell, not just Dean, was someone who was always part of the implementation of our instant replay policies and rules," Vincent adds. "Now actually having him in-house, we just upgraded in that particular role. Now, he's inside of AMGC; he was based in Arizona before."

"Having Wayne coming off the field - one of our better officials - now leading our efforts on development and identification, there's a better team approach." Riveron, who was born in Cuba and moved to the United States with his family at age 5, takes over just when New York headquarters will make the final decisions on replay reviews, in consultation with the referee at each stadium. Those refs will be using Microsoft Surface tablets for reviews rather than going "under the hood" as part of the NFL's emphasis on eliminating dead time in games.

"We want to make the game more enjoyable for not only our fans in the stadium, but also for our viewers at home," Riveron says. "We are in the entertainment business, and we want to make sure that we come out with the best possible product. From the officiating side, there are certain things that we can do without giving up the consistency and efficiency of what we do of moving the game along." Such as a 40-second clock now in use after a score or a PAT when TV doesn't go to a break. "It consistently moves the game along and tells everybody what is next," he says. "There's not that lull period in between where we are guessing what's next and what's coming. All 17 crews are doing it the same way." — AP

INDIANS WIN 14TH IN A ROW, 5-1 OVER WHITE SOX

CHICAGO: Carlos Carrasco allowed three hits in a complete game, giving the Cleveland Indians their 14th straight win in a 5-1 victory over the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday. Cleveland equaled its longest winning streak in franchise history and also won its 10th straight road game as the right-hander lost his shutout with two outs in the ninth inning when Adam Engel homered. Carrasco (14-6) faced 28 batters and threw 97 pitches in his eighth career complete game, throwing 76 strikes. Carlos Santana hit a two-run home run as Cleveland added three runs in the eighth inning to break open a 1-0 game. After not allowing a hit through four innings, the White Sox had leadoff singles in the fifth and sixth innings off Carrasco, but Avisail Garcia and Kevan Smith were both doubled off on the next at-bat.

CUBS 1, PIRATES 0

Alex Avila knocked an RBI triple in the ninth inning, capping a duel between Jose Quintana and Gerrit Cole and lifting Chicago over Pittsburgh. After Cole limited Chicago to two hits over eight innings, Avila scored pinch-runner Leonys Martin from second base with a drive to the right-field corner off reliever Daniel Hudson (2-6). The only hits against Cole were Javier Baez's infield single in the second and John Jay's single in the eighth. Wade Davis struck out two during a perfect ninth for his 29th save, preserving a win for Pedro Strop (4-4).

RED SOX 6, BLUE JAYS 1

Doug Fister gave up one run over seven innings, Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a two run homer and drove in three runs and Boston beat Toronto a day after the teams played a 19-inning marathon. It was the second straight win for the AL East-leading Red Sox, who moved four games ahead of the second-place Yankees. New York's game at Baltimore was rained out. Playing just 18 hours after completing a victory that lasted six hours and ended on Hanley Ramirez's bloop single, the Red Sox took charge with a four-run fourth that was capped by Bradley's homer. Fister (5-7) allowed four hits, struck out nine and walked three, improving to 3-1 in his last four starts with a 1.50 ERA. Joe Biagini (3-10) was tagged for five runs in 3 1/3 innings.

TWINS 10, RAYS 6

Eduardo Escobar had three hits and three RBIs, Brian Dozier and Ehire Adrianza both homered and Minnesota beat Tampa Bay. Minnesota ended a three-game skid streak and moved a half-game ahead of the Los Angeles Angels for the second AL wild-card spot. The Twins scored three runs in the seventh to take the lead for good. Dozier, who hit his 29th homer leading off the game, was walked by reliever Steve Cishek (2-1) to open the inning. Jorge Polanco then bunted and Cishek threw wildly past first base, allowing Dozier to come all the way around to score for a 7-6 lead with Polanco advancing to third. One out later, Escobar singled to right-center to drive in Polanco. Robbie Grossman doubled off Austin Pruitt and pinch-hitter Joe Mauer was intentionally walked to load the bases, and Max Kepler followed with a run-scoring grounder. Taylor Rogers (6-3) pitched 1 1/3 innings for the win.

NATIONALS 8, MARLINS 1

Gio Gonzalez and four relievers combined on a six-hitter, and Washington beat Miami for the eighth consecutive time. Gonzalez (14-6) pitched five scoreless innings but needed 101 pitches. Ryan Zimmerman hit his 31st homer, and Michael A. Taylor added his 14th. The Nationals, who completed a three-game sweep, have outscored Miami 53-12 in their past eight meetings. Washington increased its lead in the

NL East to 18 games over second-place Miami. The Marlins have lost nine of their past 10 to fade from the NL wild-card race. Announced attendance was 14,390, smallest of the year for the second night in a row at Marlins Park. With South Florida bracing for Hurricane Irma, a head count at first pitch put the actual crowd size at 799. Dillon Peters (0-1) gave up three runs in five innings.

RANGERS 12, BRAVES 8, 1st game BRAVES 5, RANGERS 4, 2nd game

Freddie Freeman hit a two-run double during Atlanta's five-run second inning against Cole Hamels and the Braves held off a rally to beat Texas and split a doubleheader Wednesday night. Nomar Mazara had a two-run homer in the nightcap for Texas, which won the first

the speedy Marte. David Peralta singled and J.D. Martinez was intentionally walked to load the bases. Daniel Descalso was hit by Avilan, forcing in Rosales and extending Arizona's lead to 3-1. The Dodgers have lost a season-high six in a row and 11 of 12, with six of those defeats to the second-place D-backs. Los Angeles still owns baseball's best record at 92-47.

ROYALS 13, TIGERS 2

Salvador Perez homered twice as Kansas City broke open a close game to rout Detroit. The Royals snapped a 2-2 tie with four runs in the seventh, then scored seven in the eighth. Perez drove in three runs, while Whit Merrifield had three doubles and three RBIs. Alcides Escobar had four hits, falling a homer short of the cycle. Jason Hammel (8-10) got the win, giving up two

REDS 7, BREWERS 1

Rookie Luis Castillo struck out 10 in his final start of the season, Zack Cozart and Jose Peraza homered and last-place Cincinnati completed a three-game sweep of Milwaukee. The playoff-contending Brewers have lost four of five. Neil Walker's homer in the first inning was all Milwaukee could muster. Castillo (3-7) retired 11 straight batters in one stretch and 22 of the last 24 while pitching eight innings. He allowed four hits, didn't walk anybody and wound up with a 3.12 ERA in 15 starts. The Reds are shutting down Castillo to limit his innings. The 24-year-old righty threw 111 pitches, matching his second-highest pitch count of the season, in this start. Matt Garza (6-9) gave up five runs in 2 2/3 innings.

GIANTS 11, ROCKIES 3

Joe Panik completed a torrid series with five more hits and Johnny Cueto threw five effective innings, helping the Giants beat Colorado to snap a 10-game skid against the Rockies at Coors Field. Panik wore out Rockies pitching by going 12 of 15 - setting a Giants record for most hits in a three-game series. Austin Slater and Gorkys Hernandez each added two-run singles as the Giants won in Denver for the first time in a year to the day. Cueto (7-7) looked like his vintage self, allowing one run and striking out seven. It was his second start since coming back from blister issues and a strained flexor tendon that sidelined him for 45 games. Kyle Freeland (11-10) never found his groove in giving up five runs over 3 1/3 innings.

ASTROS 5, MARINERS 3

Newly acquired Cameron Maybin hit a two-run homer in the ninth inning to lift Houston past the Mariners, as the Astros completed a three-game sweep to extend their winning streak to seven. Carlos Beltran opened the ninth with a double down the left-field line off closer Edwin Diaz (3-6), who relieved to start the inning. Jake Marisnick ran for Beltran and advanced to third on Max Stassi's roundout to short. Chris Devenski (8-3) pitched the final 1 1/3 innings for the win.

CARDINALS 3, PADRES 1

Stephen Piscotty hit a two-run homer, rookie Jack Flaherty threw five innings of one-run ball and the streaking Cardinals beat the Padres. St. Louis has won four straight and six of seven. Piscotty hit his ninth homer in the seventh - only the Cardinals' third hit to that point - and St. Louis tacked on an unearned run in the eighth on Harrison Bader's sacrifice fly. Three Cardinals relievers blanked the Padres over four innings, with Tyler Lyons pitching a wobbly ninth for his second save. The Padres had the tying runs aboard with no outs before Lyons retired three straight. Ryan Sherriff (1-1) got the win. Dinelson Lamet (7-7), who lost a pitching duel to the Dodgers' Clayton Kershaw in his previous outing, stymied the Cardinals through six innings, giving up just one hit. Then Jose Martinez led off the seventh with a sharp single, and Piscotty followed with his two-run blast. When Lamet then walked Greg Garcia, his night was done and he was charged with two runs and four walks. He struck out eight. — AP



BOSTON: Toronto Blue Jays' Ryan Goins advances to third base as Boston Red Sox's Rafael Devers gets a late throw during the seventh inning of a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston, Wednesday.—AP

game behind four hits from Elvis Andrus. The Rangers are two games behind the Twins in the race for the second AL wild card. Julio Teheran (10-11) earned his second straight home win, allowing three runs, five walks and five hits in five innings in Game 2. Hamels (9-3) gave up five runs, four earned, in six innings. After facing 10 batters in the second, he allowed only one hit over his next four innings. Arodys Vizcaino gave up two-out singles to Jared Hoying and Carlos Gomez in the ninth. Vizcaino ended the game on Joey Gallo's fly ball to center for his 10th save. Luiz Gohara (0-1), a 21-year-old native of Brazil, allowed six runs in four innings in his major league debut for Atlanta in the first game. Austin Bibens-Dirkx (5-2) threw three scoreless innings in relief for Texas.

DIAMONDBACKS 3, DODGERS 1

Pinch-hitter Adam Rosales doubled in the go-ahead run in the seventh inning and the Diamondbacks overcame a rare deficit to beat the Dodgers for their franchise-record 13th straight win. Their winning streak is the second-longest in the majors this season behind Cleveland's current 14 in a row. The D-backs swept the NL West-leading Dodgers for the second consecutive week for the first time since September 2005 to keep a comfortable lead in the wild-card race. Ketel Marte singled leading off the seventh against Luis Avilan (2-2). Rosales followed with a double to deep center, scoring

runs, nine hits and two walks in six innings. He struck out six while winning for the third time in four starts. Tigers starter Matthew Boyd (5-9) pitched six-plus innings, allowing four runs, seven hits and two walks while striking out four.

ATHLETICS 3, ANGELS 1

Sean Manaea pitched six-plus innings of shutout ball and Khris Davis homered as Oakland snapped a season-high eight-game losing streak. The Angels, locked in a tight wild-card race, were trying for their seventh series sweep and second against the A's this year. Los Angeles is among five teams competing for two wild-card berths that were separated by four games entering the day. Manaea (10-9) struck out six and allowed five hits and three walks. Davis hit an opposite field shot to right off starter Tyler Skaggs (1-5) leading off the bottom of the fourth. His 39th home run broke a scoreless tie. Home plate umpire Mike Everitt ejected A's third baseman Matt Chapman after an exchange between Chapman and Angels catcher Juan Graterol in the bottom of the fourth inning triggered by allegations of stealing signs. Chapman said the Angels catcher was staring down A's hitters in an effort to intimidate them.

METS 6, PHILLIES 3, 6 innings

Robert Gsellman pitched well in a winning return from the minors and Travis d'Arnaud homered to help New York beat Philadelphia in

CRICKET

LYON SPIN GIVES AUSTRALIA CRUSHING WIN OVER BANGLADESH

CHITTAGONG: Nathan Lyon spun Australia to a series-levelling win over Bangladesh yesterday with a 13-wicket match haul in the second and final Test.

Chasing 86 for victory on a deteriorating Chittagong pitch, the visitors lost their top three batsmen before completing a seven-wicket win in the final session of the fourth day. Glenn Maxwell, who hit the winning six to take his score to 25, and Peter Handscomb, on 16, helped Australia bounce back from their loss in Dhaka last week. Bangladesh had been on a high after their historic first Test win over Australia. But Lyon brought them back to earth with a bump.

The off-spinner, who received the man of the match award, set up the win for Steve Smith's side after returning career-best match figures of 13-154.

Lyon claimed a third successive six-wicket haul to dismiss Bangladesh for 157 in their second innings. He took his series tally to 22 wickets, the most by an Australian bowler in a two-match contest. Opener David Warner also stood out with two successive centuries in the series including 123 in Australia's first innings that helped secure a crucial 72-run lead.

"We played some good cricket at times. To restrict them to what we did in the first innings was great. There wasn't a great deal in the surface for Lyon, but he was remarkable," Smith said of Lyon's 7-94 that helped restrict Bangladesh to 305 in the first innings. "I think he took 22 wickets for the series so that was a really good effort... But credit to Bangladesh, they really made us fight throughout the series," he added.

The hosts had bowled out Australia for 377 in the first innings, preventing their visitors from adding a run Thursday morning to the overnight total and restricting their lead to 72. But Bangladesh skipper Mushfiqur Rahim said his batsmen were not good enough after electing to bat first.

"Credit to Australia. The wicket was pretty good to bat on, we missed out in the first

innings. That's what cost us. We should've got 350 at least," said Mushfiqur.

"Win or lose, there are a lot of areas of improvements. Our batsmen made things tough for themselves, hopefully we'll learn," he added.

Mushfiqur managed a top score of 31 off 103 balls in Bangladesh's second innings. But none of the other batsmen could cope with a pitch that brought joy to Lyon.

HIGHS AND LOWS

Bangladesh started the day on a high, dismissing number 11 batsman Lyon in the second over of the day. But Lyon returned to pick up further wickets as Bangladesh slipped to 83-5 at lunch.

A 54-run sixth-wicket stand between Mushfiqur and Sabbir Rahman steadied the innings briefly but an unrelenting Lyon had Sabbir stumped for 24.

Mushfiqur fell to fast bowler Pat Cummins after being caught behind, leaving his side in dire straits.

Cummins and Steve O'Keefe, who combined with Lyon to wipe off the tail in the final session of play, took two wickets each, bowling Bangladesh out for 157 and leaving Australia requiring just 86 to win.

With meagre room for manoeuvre bowling in the fourth innings, Bangladesh had early success when Mustafizur Rahman dismissed Warner, who shared the man of the series award with Lyon, for eight.

Spinners Shakib Al Hasan and Taijul Islam then took the wickets of Steve Smith for 16 and Matt Renshaw for 22 to leave Australia at 48-3. But Handscomb and Maxwell then dug in and saw Australia home with their unbroken 39-run stand.

"We all know that we haven't had the best of success in the sub-continent. It was important for us to come here as a young group and stand up," said Lyon. Australia now travel to India where they will play five one-day internationals and three Twenty20 matches between September 17 to October 13. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh: Final scoreboard of the second and final Test between Bangladesh and Australia at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday:

Bangladesh first innings 305 (Mushfiqur Rahim 68, Sabbir Rahman 66; N. Lyon 7-94)		Mushfiqur Rahim c Wade b Cummins	31
		Sabbir Rahman st Wade b Lyon	24
		Mominul Haque c Cummins b Lyon	29
		Mehedi Hasan not out	14
		Taijul Islam b Lyon	4
		Mustafizur Rahman b O'Keefe	0
		Extras (b12)	12
		Total (all out, 71.2 overs)	157
		Fall of wickets: 1-11 (Soumya Sarkar), 2-32 (Tamim Iqbal), 3-37 (imrul Kayes), 4-39 (Shakib Al Hasan), 5-43 (Nasir Hossain), 6-97 (Sabbir Rahman), 7-129 (Mushfiqur), 8-149 (Mominul), 9-156 (Taijul), 10-157 (Mustafizur)	
		Bowling: Cummins 11-3-27-2, Lyon 33-11-60-6, O'Keefe 22.2-6-49-2, Agar 5-1-9-0	
Australia 1st innings			
M. Renshaw c Rahim b Mustafizur		4	
D. Warner c Imrul b Mustafizur		123	
S. Smith b Taijul		58	
P. Handscomb run out		82	
G. Maxwell c Rahim b Mehedi		38	
H. Cartwright c Soumya b Mehedi		18	
M. Wade lbw b Mustafizur		8	
A. Agar b Shakib		22	
P. Cummins lbw b Mehedi		4	
S. O'Keefe not out		8	
N. Lyon c Imrul b Mustafizur		0	
Extras (b8, lb3, w1)		12	
Total (all out; 119.5 overs)		377	
Fall of wickets: 1-5 (Renshaw), 2-98 (Smith), 3-250 (Handscomb), 4-298 (Warner), 5-321 (Cartwright), 6-342 (Wade), 7-346 (Maxwell), 8-364 (Cummins), 9-376 (Agar), 10-377 (Lyon)			
Bowling: Mehedi 38-6-93-3, Mustafizur 20.5-2-84-4 (w1), Shakib 31-3-82-1, Taijul 21-1-78-1, Nasir 6-2-14-0, Mominul 2-0-6-0, Sabbir 1-0-9-0			
Bangladesh 2nd innings			
Tamim Iqbal st Wade b Lyon		12	
Soumya Sarkar c Renshaw b Cummins		9	
Imrul Kayes c Maxwell b Lyon		15	
Nasir Hossain c Smith b O'Keefe		5	
Shakib Al Hasan c Warner b Lyon		2	
Australia 2nd innings (target 86)			
M. Renshaw c Mushfiqur b Shakib		22	
D. Warner c Soumya b Mustafizur		8	
S. Smith c Mushfiqur b Taijul		16	
P. Handscomb not out		16	
G. Maxwell not out		25	
Extras		0	
Total (3 wickets, 15.3 overs)		87	
Fall of wickets: 1-13 (Warner), 2-44 (Smith), 3-48 (Renshaw)			
Did not bat: H. Cartwright, M. Wade, A. Agar, P. Cummins, S. O'Keefe, N. Lyon			
Bowling: Mustafizur 5-1-16-1, Shakib 6-1-35-1, Taijul 4-0-26-1, Nasir Hossain 0.3-0-10-0.			
Result: Australia won by seven wickets.			



CHITTAGONG: Australian cricketer Matt Renshaw (L) plays a shot as the Bangladeshi cricket captain Mushfiqur Rahim (R) and Mominul Haque looks on during the fourth day of the second cricket Test between Bangladesh and Australia at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday. —AFP

ANDERSON ON BRINK OF 500 CLUB AFTER WINDIES DOUBLE

LONDON: James Anderson was just one wicket away from becoming the first England bowler to take 500 Test wickets after striking twice against the West Indies at Lord's yesterday.

West Indies, who won the toss, were 35 for two at lunch on the first day of the third and deciding Test with a three-match series all square at 1-1.

England spearhead Anderson, who started this match on 497 Test wickets, had lunch figures of two for 18 in 10 overs after removing both Kraigg Brathwaite and Kyle Hope with the aid of catches by wicket-keeper Jonny Bairstow.

Kieran Powell was 17 not out and Shai Hope eight not out.

Despite a green-tinged pitch affected by fungus, West Indies captain Jason Holder-whose side were unchanged following their shock five-wicket win in the second Test at Headingley-opted to bat first as he backed his top order to come through the tricky overcast conditions.

Anderson, who went wicketless in the second innings at Leeds, should have had his 498th Test wicket when he took Brathwaite's outside edge when the

opener, who made 134 and 95 at Headingley, was on three.

But Alastair Cook, who floored two first-slip catches as West Indies chased 322 for victory last week, dropped a seemingly routine chance.

It was not a costly error as Anderson, however, squared Brathwaite up on 10, and Bairstow made no mistake with a simple catch to leave West Indies 18 for one. Rain then stopped play for some 40 minutes and when the match resumed Anderson had Kyle Hope out for a duck when the batsman, trying to withdraw his bat, was well caught by Bairstow diving to his right, in front of Cook.

Anderson had taken two wickets for no runs in 12 balls and West Indies were 22 for two. Hope's exit brought in younger brother Shai Hope fresh from scores of 147 his maiden Test century—and a match-winning 118 not out in Leeds. The 23-year-old, carrying on from where he left off, got off the mark first ball by punching Anderson, now just one wicket away from becoming only the sixth bowler to join Test cricket's '500 club', through the covers for an elegant four. — AFP

MANCHESTER CITY THREATEN TEBAS WITH LEGAL ACTION

LONDON: Manchester City have threatened La Liga president Javier Tebas with legal action after he said their partnership with Spanish club Girona was an attempt to “cook the books”. Tebas made his remarks during an appearance at the Soccerex football conference in Manchester on Wednesday.

He said City and French giants Paris Saint-Germain were “destroying football” with state-enabled spending. But a City spokeswoman, in a statement released late on Wednesday, said: “Mr Tebas’s statements are ill-informed and in parts pure fiction. “As you

would expect, Manchester City Football Club and the City Football Group are seeking appropriate legal counsel and will act accordingly on that advice.” PSG prised Neymar from Barcelona in a world-record 222 million euros (\$265 million) deal and have also signed Kylian Mbappe from Monaco in a move that could be worth 180 million euros.

City outspent any other European club in the transfer window by lavishing around £221 million (242 million euros, \$288 million) on new players. Tebas said the assistance City and PSG received from their respective

Emirati and Qatari backers amounted to “financial doping”. He said the two clubs were “laughing” at European governing body UEFA’s Financial Fair Play rules, which oblige clubs to minimise their losses. UEFA has opened an investigation into PSG’s transfer dealings, but City are not under investigation.

In particular, Tebas raised questions about the legitimacy of City’s decision to loan five players to Girona for the coming season, suggesting the players had been undervalued. Asked if City and Girona were “trying to cook the books”, Tebas replied: “They were trying

to, but they didn’t manage to do it.” City purchased a 44.3 percent stake in Girona last month, matching the stake already held by City manager Pep Guardiola’s brother Pere. Girona were promoted to the Spanish top flight last season. Tebas is reported to have held a meeting to discuss the matter with City chief executive Ferran Soriano on Wednesday. France’s Professional Football League has strongly criticised Tebas.

“These unworthy remarks are unbecoming of an institution as respectable and successful as the Spanish Liga,” the LFP said. —AFP

PREMIER LEAGUE STARS FACE AWKWARD RETURNS TO CLUBS

MANCHESTER: Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain was greeted with a high five and a warm hug from Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp ahead of the midfielder’s first training session at his new club on Wednesday.

For some of the other high-profile players returning to their Premier League teams following the international break, the reception might be a little frostier. Unlike Oxlade-Chamberlain, who managed to secure a transfer from Arsenal, three stars of the league - Alexis Sanchez, Philippe Coutinho and Riyad Mahrez - failed to get the moves they wanted on the final day of Europe’s transfer window last week.

They have since been training and playing for their countries, but the time has come to go back to their clubs. And it could be an awkward situation for all concerned. Mahrez so wanted to quit Leicester that the winger left the Algerian national team’s training camp in Sidi Moussa on deadline day and returned to England, so that he would be in a better position to complete the formalities of a transfer if a club made a late bid. Unfortunately, a transfer didn’t materialize.

Now Mahrez must put that disappointment behind him and get ready for Leicester’s home match against champion Chelsea tomorrow. It could be even more uncomfortable for Coutinho. The Brazil playmaker hasn’t played for Liverpool this season while being the subject of three huge offers from Barcelona, and even lodged a transfer request in early August in an attempt to force through a move to the Spanish side.

Officially, Coutinho was absent for Liverpool’s first three league games because of a back injury, yet he trained as normal when he was on international duty and made two appearances as a substitute in World Cup qualifiers against Ecuador and Colombia.

Liverpool visits Manchester City on Saturday in the stand-out match of the fourth round of league games, and it remains to be seen if Coutinho is in the right state of mind to be in contention. Oxlade-Chamberlain could make his debut for Liverpool, but would likely have to displace one of Emre Can and Georginio Wijnaldum - two of the Reds’ best players in their 4-0 win over Arsenal in the last game before the international break.

Sanchez is still an Arsenal player after a prospective transfer to Manchester City was aborted hours before the window closed, because Arsenal could not find a replacement at such a late stage.

The forward had a tough time on international duty with Chile - the team lost both of its games and no longer occupies an automatic qualification spot in the South American zone for next year’s World Cup in Russia - and he made his frustration clear by saying on Instagram that he was “fed up” with the criticism he was receiving. Arsenal, which accepted a bid from Man City for Sanchez last week, is at home to Bournemouth tomorrow and is looking to avoid a third straight loss.

Another player who might need to be reintegrated at a Premier League team now the transfer window is closed is Virgil van Dijk, who hasn’t trained with Southampton’s first-team squad since the end of last season after handing in a transfer request amid interest from Liverpool.— AP



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain’s new forward Kylian Mbappe holds his jersey during his presentation at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris on September 6. The 18-year-old striker moved to PSG in a season-long loan deal with a 180 million euro buy-out clause attached, making him the second most expensive player of all time behind new teammate Neymar.—AFP

MBAPPE EMBARKS ON NEW ADVENTURE WITH PSG

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe takes centre stage today as the French league returns from the international break with Paris Saint-Germain taking on Metz where they will unleash their latest marquee recruit. The 18-year-old starlet joined PSG on a season-long loan from champions Monaco in a deal that includes the option to buy Mbappe for a fee rising to 180 million euros (\$215 million), the second most expensive transfer in history.

“It’s a great pleasure to join this club, it’s one of the best in the world,” Mbappe said as he was unveiled at the Parc des Princes on Wednesday. “It’s extremely ambitious and wants to become the best.

“It’s putting everything in place to make that goal more than possible and that’s important to me.” The France international is set to make his PSG debut away at rock-bottom Metz on Friday with Unai Emery’s side chasing a fifth successive win to maintain their

perfect start to the season.

Metz are the only team without a point in Ligue 1 this term and need no introduction to Mbappe who scored a hat-trick against them in a 5-0 Monaco victory last February. Emery confirmed Mbappe was ready for selection, and an injury to Angel Di Maria while on World Cup duty with Argentina could prompt the Spaniard to thrust the teenager into a fearsome front three alongside world-record signing Neymar and Edinson Cavani. “These are players who for the most part have won everything already, it’s going to be a rewarding experience,” Mbappe said of his new team-mates. “I have a lot to learn and a lot to prove.” Di Maria is set to miss several weeks with a thigh problem, while Italian midfielder Marco Verratti remains suspended with several of PSG’s South American contingent only expected back later.

Monaco, level with PSG at the top, will attempt to extend their record 16-

match winning run away to Cote d’Azur rivals Nice, whose third-place finish last season is swiftly fading from memory.

The title holders raided Serie A to draft in Montenegro striker Stevan Jovetic and Senegal forward Keita Balde from Inter Milan and Lazio respectively to try and fill the void left by Mbappe.

Monaco also have an in-form Radamel Falcao to call upon, the Colombian has scored a league-leading seven times in four outings and earned his country a vital World Cup qualifying point in Tuesday’s 1-1 draw with Brazil.

Nice have lost three times already this season, only once less than all of the 2016-17 campaign, and were trounced 3-0 by top-flight newcomers Amiens last time out.

Unbeaten Bordeaux face Marcelo Bielsa’s Lille on Friday, while Lyon host Guingamp on Sunday with consecutive draws having somewhat stalled their early-season charge.—AFP

PREVIEW

RODGERS LOOKS TO CELTIC YOUNG GUNS FOR HELP

GLASGOW: Celtic manager Brendan Rodgers will return to his roots as he looks to his youth players to help his side through a busy month domestically and in Europe. The Scottish champions return to action today following the international break when they travel to take on Hamilton at New Douglas Park.

It is a measure of the success of Rodgers' side that a large number of his players were involved in the recent World Cup qualifiers with six of the Scotland starting XI in the wins against Lithuania and Malta being drawn from the Hoops squad.

However, with seven games in 22 days - including the first Old Firm clash of the season as well as tough Champions League fixtures against Paris Saint-Germain and Anderlecht - the Celtic boss will look to utilise his squad in order to keep his top stars fresh.

The Northern Irishman has already shown he isn't afraid of giving youth its chance in the first team. Last month against Kilmarnock Rodgers fielded a side with a starting line-up that had an average age of under 23 and included five graduates of Celtic's

youth academy.

Rodgers takes a keen interest in the youth set-up at Parkhead having started his career as a youth coach at Reading before joining Chelsea as youth manager. And Celtic's own head of youth football, Chris McCart, says it is Rodgers' background that ensures young players will always get a chance at the Glasgow giants.

"It definitely helps that he was a youth coach. He's got empathy with every academy coach whether they are doing seven a side football, or five a side and no matter what age group," McCart said of the Celtic boss.

"He started off as an under nine coach, worked his way through and educated himself in different areas away from football. He is putting a lot of work in and is now starting to select the ones he thinks are ready and is prepared to put them in at vital times.

"The manager has been clear in communicating his philosophy, and he wants a similar pattern running all the way from the academy to the first team.

"He wanted a connection and let the youth coaches know they could knock on his door. It's happened a lot and they feel comfortable with that."

Rodgers' counterpart at Rangers, Pedro Caixinha, will get back to his day job again after delivering a series of lectures at the University of Lisbon during the international break.

The 46-year-old was talking to students attending a special postgraduate course for football coaches devised by Professor Antonio Veloso and Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho.

The Rangers fans will be hoping the Portuguese manager is able to communicate his ideas to his own players after the Ibrox club's shaky start to the season. The Gers host Dundee on Saturday having taken just seven points from their opening four games.

Elsewhere, Craig Levein faces a tough task as he starts his second spell in charge of Hearts with a match against an Aberdeen side that are the only team left with a 100 per cent record in the top flight. — AFP



(FILES) This file photo taken on August 27, 2017 shows Arsenal's French manager Arsene Wenger (2nd L) looks on during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Arsenal at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England on August 27, 2017. Rocked by Arsenal's humiliating 4-0 defeat at Liverpool, Arsene Wenger faces a series of damaging transfer window defections that threaten to derail his side's already chaotic season. — AFP

SOCCER

ARSENAL'S WENGER BACKS SANCHEZ TO RETURN TO FORM

LONDON: Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger has voiced confidence that Alexis Sanchez will put his aborted transfer to Manchester City behind him "very quickly". Arsenal reportedly agreed a fee for Sanchez with City on transfer deadline day, only for the deal to collapse after Wenger was unable to complete a move for Monaco winger Thomas Lemar.

Sanchez looked miserable during Arsenal's 4-0 thrashing at Liverpool prior to the international break and then suffered successive defeats with Chile in World Cup qualifying. But Wenger said: "I have no doubt about Alexis's mind and mentality, that people question.

"He needs to come back to full fitness, which he was not (at) against Liverpool. It was his first game and he has suffered a negative experience with Chile. "But he is strong mentally and hopefully he will be back very quickly to his best."

Despite reports Arsenal had agreed to sell Sanchez to City, Wenger would not go into detail about what had happened on deadline day. "The transfer market is over. There was a lot going on on that front," the Frenchman told a press conference at Arsenal's London Colney training base on Thursday.

"It's very difficult for me to speak about that because the most important thing now is our next game." Asked if Sanchez's departure had been contingent on Lemar's arrival, Wenger replied: "That's what I read everywhere, yes.

"My view is that it is too difficult to speak about that because Lemar is now in Monaco and of course Sanchez is here. "I believe you have to keep a certain confidentiality about transfer negotiations. Many things happen at the last second." But the Arsenal manager dismissed suggestions the move for Lemar had failed to materialise because the France international did not want to come to the Emirates Stadium.

"He decided to stay in Monaco and you have to respect that," Wenger said. "The player has a three-year contract to go, so overall you have to respect that." Arsenal host Bournemouth on Saturday and Wenger would not say whether midfielder Jack Wilshere, who spent last season on loan at the south-coast club, would be in his squad.

But he gave a positive update on the fitness of long-term injury victim Santi Cazorla.

The Spanish midfielder has not played since sustaining an ankle injury against Bulgarian side Ludogorets in the Champions League last October. "Santi is having his first run today," Wenger said. "The flexibility of his ankle is good, his mobility is good and now it's time to get him back to full fitness without any setbacks.

"It's difficult to predict when he will be available again - not before Christmas. But I hope after Christmas he will be available." — AFP

CHINA DARE TO BELIEVE DESPITE WORLD CUP EXIT

BEIJING: Marcello Lippi is slowly beginning to make China believe they can become a footballing power, despite another failure to reach the World Cup finals. Since his appointment as head coach in October 2016 with China rock bottom of their Asian zone World Cup qualifying group, the Italian has presided over a resurgence that saw just one defeat in six matches, 1-0 away to runaway group winners Iran.

Back-to-back wins to finish the campaign, at home to Uzbekistan and a comeback 2-1 win when down to 10 men at 2022 hosts Qatar on Tuesday, have sent a wave of cautious optimism across fans and officials. It was not enough for the world's most populous nation to continue on the path to Russia next year as they fell just one point short of reaching the playoffs.

But it was enough to keep alive the dream of one day again reaching the finals and of fulfilling the ambition of China's President Xi Jinping to host the global showpiece. "Since Marcello Lippi has been leading the team, the changes have been huge," said Chinese Football Association president Cai Zhenhua of the man who led Italy to World Cup victory in 2006.

"The most noticeable is that the players are now able to express themselves on the pitch and that their confidence is growing. "The ability of the players to carry out the coach's plans and tactics has clearly improved."

LACK OF PASSION

Still many pundits contend that the national team's ambitions will continue to be hampered by mediocre coaching, poor funding choices and lack of passion at the grassroots.

Chinese Super League clubs splashing huge amounts of cash to import foreign strikers such as Oscar, Carlos Tevez and Alexandre Pato does not help. Angela Smith, head of international projects at English Premier League club Stoke City, who have opened academies in China, said while Chinese clubs are "buying strikers, they are not thinking about the development of the whole team".

"If you don't develop the whole team, you are just constantly going to be paying money out to other countries, and the game will never develop from the grassroots levels in clubs and academies," she said. China aspires to have 40,000 football schools by 2020, up from the current 13,000.

But all the academies in the world will not be enough if youngsters lack passion, according to Luiz Ferreira, the Portuguese director of youth training at Chinese Super League (CSL) club Tianjin Teda.

"During a training session, I asked my young players: 'How many of you watched the Champions League final?' It was just one out of three. They just don't care about it," he said.

He added that it would probably "need time" to develop a deep-seated love for the game as found in Europe and South America. The country is no longer hiding the desire to host the FIFA World Cup in 2030, for which Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay have just submitted a joint bid. — AFP

AURIER TO ENJOY FRESH START AT SPURS: POCHETTINO

LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur manager Mauricio Pochettino said yesterday he is confident new signing Serge Aurier will seize his chance after the player was dogged by disciplinary problems at Paris Saint-Germain.

The talented Ivorian right-back joined Spurs for £23 million (\$30 million, 25 million euros) from PSG on transfer deadline day last week. The deal was held up as Spurs' request for a work permit was complicated by the suspended two-month prison sentence Aurier received after an assault on a police officer outside a Paris nightclub in May 2016.

The 24-year-old was also suspended by PSG last year for making a homophobic slur against former coach Laurent Blanc in a social media video. Pochettino, speaking at the club's training centre in north London, places a strong emphasis on discipline but said he trusts Aurier to take his second chance.

"I spoke with him, of course, about different things but I'm a person that likes to move on," Pochettino said ahead of his team's Premier League match against Everton tomorrow. "I think it was good, we had a long chat. He knows very well how we are, what we expect from him and for us it's so important, not only him, every player, how they behave here in the squad.

"We need to keep the dynamic we have created. I trust him, I am confident that he can succeed here and help the team to achieve the things we want. As well as Aurier, Tottenham signed Fernando Llorente from Swansea and Pochettino believes the 32-year-old will bring a winning mentality to his young squad.

Llorente has won the World Cup and European Championship with Spain, as well as the Europa League at Sevilla and three Serie A titles with Juventus. "First of all he's a great professional. He's a world champion—he won the World Cup with

Spain - and that is the mentality that can translate to us with the experience of winning big things," Pochettino said.

"It's not easy to have the facility to sign players like Llorente. It was an amazing chance for us and I think it's fantastic he decided to sign for us." Tottenham's England star Dele Alli is still waiting to hear if he will face disciplinary action from FIFA after the midfielder was caught sticking his middle finger up during the national side's win over Slovakia on Monday.

Alli said after the match the gesture had been directed as a joke at teammate Kyle Walker. "I'm not worried," Pochettino said. "It's true it's not a fantastic gesture but it's not a big issue. It was a joke in a moment with his team-mate. I don't think it'll be a big issue with FIFA or with us."

Alli, 21, has had a number of run-ins with the football authorities and has faced calls to curb his fiery temperament. — AFP

BAYERN STAR RIBERY RELISHING PSG CLASH

BERLIN: Franck Ribery is relishing Bayern Munich's Champions League showdown against Paris Saint-Germain with the French veteran insisting he will not retire even if the Germans win this season's European title.

Bayern are at Hoffenheim tomorrow in the Bundesliga, but open their Champions League campaign at home to Anderlecht next Tuesday having also drawn Paris Saint-Germain and Celtic, who face the French league giants in Glasgow on the same day.

PSG then host Carlo Ancelotti's Bayern at the Parc des Princes on September 27 in a key showdown which could decide Group B. "Paris is a lot stronger than last season, it will be a super game. I hope we are all in top form. And we need to go out thinking 'we're Bayern. We fear no one. Wherever we play, we win'," Ribery told German daily Bild. "Anyone who fears Paris, stays in Munich."

Last month, PSG paid 222 million euros (\$266 million) for Neymar and signed French striker Kylian Mbappe on loan with an option to buy him next year in a deal that could reach 180 million euros.

Ousmane Dembele cost Barcelona 148 million euros from Borussia Dortmund as the Catalan giants seek to replace Neymar. Ribery said inflated transfer fees are a sign of the times. "I can only say that those responsible need to understand again that playing football is a joy, it's fun and you play for your shirt and for the fans," he commented.

"I don't know what I'd have been worth when I was 25, perhaps a lot of money, but it doesn't matter. "When I wanted to be a professional, my aim was to play on television, so my family could see me. I didn't play for money." The 34-year-old Ribery has been at Bayern since 2007 and his current contract expires next June.

He was part of the Bayern team which beat Borussia Dortmund 2-1 in the 2013 Champions League final in London when Arjen Robben scored the winner. However, former France star Ribery says he will not hang up his boots even if the Bavarians lift the trophy in next May's final in Kiev. "I want to win the Champions League once more. That is my dream! That is my adrenalin, my motivation," he said.

"I also can't say if this will be my last season. "I am fit and healthy, I can still play for two or three years. I love football. I don't want to sit at home, I want to play." Ribery hopes to be offered a contract extension with fellow veteran winger Robben also out of contract in June 2018. "I have been here for ten years, Arjen for eight," said Ribery. "We have always fought hard and won a lot. "I think the fans and the club can be very happy with us." — AFP



BARCELONA: In this Monday, Aug 28, 2017 file photo, French soccer player Ousmane Dembele gestures during official presentation at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona, Spain. Dembele, the 20-year-old France striker signed by Barcelona to replace Neymar is expected to make his debut in the Catalan derby against Espanyol tomorrow. — AP

SOCCER

DEMBELE GETS FIRST CHANCE TO PROVE HIS WORTH AT BARCELONA

MADRID: Ousmane Dembele is about to step into the spotlight. The 20-year-old France striker signed by Barcelona to replace Neymar is expected to make his debut in the Catalan derby against Espanyol this weekend, getting the first chance to prove his worth after being involved in the second biggest transfer in soccer history behind the Brazilian's move to Paris Saint-Germain.

"Will he be able to score on Saturday?" Barcelona posted on his website, noting that Dembele could join a list of players who debuted with goals in their Spanish league debut at the Camp Nou, including Johan Cruyff, Diego Maradona, Ronaldinho, Romario and Rivaldo.

Barcelona had already mentioned Dembele when listing details about the debut of its "greatest foreign signings," including Ronaldo, Samuel Eto'o, Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Neymar. The club brought in Dembele after losing Neymar in the world-record transfer to Paris Saint-Germain in the offseason. It called the youngster as "one of the most promising young stars in European football," a player with a "golden future."

Dembele tried to avoid comparisons to Neymar the moment

he arrived, saying that while the Brazilian was already "one of the best in the world," he is only a "young player trying to learn every day." He didn't hide he was anxious to be playing alongside Lionel Messi, whom he called "the best in history."

More than 17,000 fans were at the Camp Nou when Dembele was officially introduced to fans on Aug 28 after a transfer from Borussia Dortmund worth 105 million euros (\$125 million) plus add-ons that could reach nearly 147 million euros (\$175 million).

Barcelona initially wanted to replace Neymar with Philippe Coutinho, but Liverpool repeatedly rejected offers for the Brazil midfielder. The English club said it would only release Coutinho for 200 million euros (\$238 million), an amount Barcelona said it was not willing to pay.

Barcelona will be under pressure for Dembele to succeed because it was not able to sign any other top player to help fill the hole left by Neymar. The team reportedly also went after PSG midfielder Angel Di Maria and Juventus forward Paulo Dybala, but could not reach any deals before the end of the transfer window. — AP

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Dembele gets first chance to prove his worth at Barcelona **47**



NEW YORK: Juan Martin del Potro, of Argentina, runs down a shot in a quarterfinal match against Roger Federer, of Switzerland, at the US Open tennis tournament in New York, Wednesday. — AP

Del Potro knocks Federer out of US Open

NEW YORK: Juan Martin del Potro sensationally gatecrashed the US Open again on Wednesday, stunning five-champion Roger Federer and shattering hopes of a first New York showdown between the Swiss legend and Rafael Nadal. The Argentine giant, who won his only Grand Slam title in the city in 2009 by beating Federer in the final after seeing off Nadal in the semis, triumphed 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (10/8), 6-4 in front of a spellbound Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd.

The 28-year-old will once again face world number one Nadal in the semi-finals today, a stunning achievement for a man who had saved two match points to beat sixth seed Dominic Thiem in the last 16. Nadal, who will keep his world number one status following third seed Federer's exit, had earlier defeated Russian teenager Andrey Rublev 6-1, 6-2, 6-2 in just 97 minutes. It will be a sixth US Open semi-final for Nadal and 26th at the majors while Del Potro, the 24th seed, will be playing in just his fourth last-four match at the Slams.

For 36-year-old Federer, it was a first Slam loss of 2017 after he had captured the Australian Open and Wimbledon titles to take his career tally to 19. "I served really good. I hit my forehand as hard as I could and I played a great match. I deserved to win," said Del Potro who will be in his first Slam semi-final since Wimbledon in 2013.

"This feels like my home court. I played Rafa here in 2009 too. Hopefully I can get the same result today." Del Potro, whose career was almost ended last year after undergoing four wrist surgeries, wrapped up the first set thanks to a break in the 11th game secured with a blistering crosscourt pass. Federer, who had a 16-5 winning record over Del Potro ahead of the quarter-final, levelled the tie after breaking for a 3-1 lead in the second. However, the match turned in the third set tiebreak when Del Potro saved four set points before a weary and error-riddled Federer dropped serve again to trail 3-2 in the fourth.

Victory was Del Potro's eight minutes short of three hours with a deep forehand as Federer was left to survey the wreckage of 41 unforced errors. "It's hard to explain, I didn't play that badly," said Federer. "I just ran into a guy who was better on the bigger points. I don't deserve to still be in the tournament." Nadal will take an 8-5 record over Del Potro into the semi-final where the winner will face either Kevin Anderson or Pablo Carreno Busta for the title.

"Juan Martin is a top player. When he's playing well, it's difficult to stop him. Probably the forehand is maybe the fastest on the tour," said Nadal, who is chasing his second major of the year to add to his French Open. Rublev, bidding to be the youngest man in 17 years to reach the semi-finals, had no complaints over his loss to Nadal. "He gave me a lesson: 1, 2, and 2," said the Russian, who lost 16 of the last 19 points of the opening set and finished with 43 unforced errors.

ALL AMERICAN

The women's semi-finals will be an all-American affair after CoCo Vandeweghe and Madison Keys set-up a last-four duel. The other tie will see seven-time major champion Venus Williams face Sloane Stephens. American 20th seed Vandeweghe claimed a 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 win over the Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova, whose brief eight-week stay as world number one ended with Wimbledon champion Garbine Muguruza taking over.

Vandeweghe's victory means that the US Open will have an all-

American semi-final line-up for the first time since 1981 after Keys defeated Estonian qualifier Kaia Kanepi 6-3, 6-3. "I won the juniors here when I was 16 and dreamed of playing on the real stage," said 25-year-old Vandeweghe, who also made the semi-finals at the Australian Open, beating then-world number one Angelique Kerber in the process. — AFP



NEW YORK: CoCo Vandeweghe of the US celebrates defeating Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova during their 2017 US Open Women's Singles Quarterfinal match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York on Wednesday. — AFP

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