



2 ASEAN ambassadors in Kuwait celebrate 51st anniversary of bloc



6 Malaysian ex-premier Najib charged with money laundering



24 Ford celebrates 10 millionth Mustang, banks on car's draw



28 Chelsea set for record Kepa swoop as deadline looms



Kuwait Airways launches new terminal with flight to Manama

Bahraini leaders hail Kuwait's achievements, honored to be destination of first flight from T4



MANAMA: Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan meets Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa at Al-Safriya Palace yesterday, after arriving with a Kuwaiti government and media delegation onboard an inaugural Kuwait Airways flight to the Bahraini capital from its new Terminal 4 building.

By Faten Omar and Agencies

KUWAIT/MANAMA: Kuwait Airways yesterday launched its new Terminal 4 (T4) with an inaugural flight to Bahrain. The flight marked the official start of operations at T4, which will be fully operational by the end of August. Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf said Kuwait is proud of the achievements and commended efforts exerted by the Ministry of Public Works, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and governmental and supervisory authorities to get Kuwait back on the right track. He said the building will contribute to boosting operations at the airport by 10 percent, especially as its opening coincides with the most important period of the year - the hajj season. Hajraf added that the new terminal will also provide employment opportunities for the national cadre.

Chairman of Kuwait Airways Yousef Al-Jassim said initial operations will start from Aug 15, when four commercial flights will be operated - the destinations will be decided later. The number of flights is expected to increase by the end of September. He said that for the first time in the history of Kuwait, Kuwait Airways has its own building, stressing the company's keenness to gradually increase the number of regular daily flights to 92.

Jassim said with the new building, Kuwait

Airways will avoid many of the obstacles encountered in the provision of services at the main airport (T1) due to heavy pressure because of the increasing numbers of passengers of various airlines operating from that building. He said 25 of the latest aircraft will operate from the T4 building with a target of serving almost 4.6 million passengers by the end of this year and adding 33,600 regular flights annually to connect 43 cities in 26 countries. "The new building will play an important role in supporting the services

SEE PAGE 3

offered by Kuwait Airways to its customers. The T4 and the T5 buildings of Kuwait Airways will reduce pressure on the main airport by 60 percent," added Jassim.

Minister of State for Housing Affairs Jenan Bushehri said the launch of the first flight from the new terminal is a step towards strengthening relations between Kuwait and Bahrain, thanking the authorities and leaders in Bahrain for their warm hospitality. "The brotherly relationship between the two countries is far too great to be described in simple words," she added. Bushehri noted that the airport has a capacity of 22 million passengers annually and efforts are being made with

the executing company to complete all its activities, as the aim of the airport is to compete with the world's largest companies.

Meanwhile, Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa congratulated Kuwait Airways on the success of its inaugural flight after designating Bahrain as its first destination, which reflects outstanding relations and advanced cooperation. The Bahraini leader hailed Kuwait's landmark achievements under the wise leadership of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, which comes in line with his vision to turn Kuwait into a world-class business and financial center by 2035.

The Bahraini king made his remarks during a reception at Al-Safriya Palace of the visiting Kuwaiti government and media delegation. King Hamad also extended greetings and good wishes to HH the Amir and HH the Crown Prince, hailing deep-rooted historic and steadily-growing relations binding the two countries and peoples. The Bahraini leader praised as well the stances of Kuwaiti leadership and people in support of Bahrain in all circumstances, taking pride in the solid historic ties between the two countries.

The Kuwaiti delegation expressed thanks and appreciation to the Bahraini king, hailing strong fraternal relations binding the two countries and peoples.

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News in brief

Kids shouldn't head footballs

LONDON: The debate over the damage inflicted by heading a football took another turn yesterday as a leading expert in brain injuries said children under the age of 18 should not be allowed to. Dr Bennett Omalu, who was the first specialist to discover how American footballers were affected by the brain disease chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), told the BBC he realized his remarks might jar with some people but that society was evolving. "No child under the age of 18 should be heading the ball in soccer," said the 49-year-old Nigeria-born American. "The human brain floats like a balloon inside your skull so when you head the ball you suffer brain damage," said Omalu. "It does not make sense to control an object travelling at a high velocity with your head." — AFP

Researchers find WhatsApp flaw

PARIS: Researchers at Israeli cybersecurity firm said yesterday they had found a flaw in WhatsApp that could allow hackers to modify and send fake messages in the popular social messaging app. CheckPoint said the vulnerability gives a hacker the possibility "to intercept and manipulate messages sent by those in a group or private conversation" as well as "create and spread misinformation". WhatsApp said in a statement: "We carefully reviewed this issue and it's the equivalent of altering an email to make it look like something a person never wrote." However, WhatsApps said: "This claim has nothing to do with the security of end-to-end encryption, which ensures only the sender and recipient can read messages sent on WhatsApp." — AFP

Cave boys, coach get citizenship

BANGKOK: Thailand yesterday granted citizenship to stateless members of the football team rescued from a cave last month in a saga which gripped the world. Thailand is home to around 480,000 stateless people, according to the UN refugee agency. The long-ignored issue came into focus during the rescue mission when it was revealed that four of those trapped inside lacked citizenship, including the coach, prompting calls for the government to fast-track applications. "Today all of you get Thai citizenship," Mae Sai district chief Somsak Khanakham said in a ceremony yesterday at a local office, as they were handed national ID cards. Citizenship requests for some 20 other people, most of them children, were also approved, he added. Somsak told AFP that the "Wild Boars incident" had nothing to do with the development and said they had merely qualified. — AFP

Riyadh rules out mediation in Canada row

RIYADH/DUBAI: Saudi Arabia said yesterday there is no room for mediation in the kingdom's deepening diplomatic dispute with Canada, and that Ottawa knew what it needed to do to "fix its big mistake". "There is nothing to mediate. A mistake has been made and a mistake should be corrected," Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir told a news conference in Riyadh. In an indication that the quarrel may worsen, Jubeir said that the kingdom was still "considering additional measures"

against Canada, but did not elaborate.

Saudi Arabia on Sunday froze new trade with Canada and expelled the Canadian ambassador in retaliation for Ottawa's call to free arrested Saudi civil society activists. It also ended state-backed educational and medical programs in Canada, making plans to relocate tens of thousands of Saudi students and patients to other countries. Responding to a question about the reason for the activists' arrests, Jubeir said that charges against them would be made public once their cases reach the courts, repeating earlier allegations that they had been in touch with foreign entities. "The matter is not about human rights; it is a matter of national security," the minister said.

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RIYADH: Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir gives a press conference in the capital yesterday. — AFP

Palestinian-American to be first Muslim woman in Congress

NEW YORK: Rashida Tlaib, a mother of two and daughter of Palestinian immigrants once detained for disrupting a Donald Trump speech, made history yesterday, poised to become the first Muslim woman in US Congress. The 42-year-old former social worker won a Democratic primary in Detroit safe seat. With no Republican or third-party candidates, she is positioned to enter the House of Representatives after November midterm elections. "Thank you so much for making this unbelievable moment possible. I am at a loss for words," she tweeted. "I cannot wait to serve you in Congress."

Her defeat of five other candidates tees her up to become the first Muslim woman in Congress, 12 years after Minnesota's Keith Ellison became the first Muslim in the US House of Representatives. She would also be the first Palestinian-American woman elected to the House. Representative Andre Carson, elected in 2008 and from Indiana, is the only other Muslim currently in Congress.

Tlaib is one of scores of Muslims and hundreds of women running in

record numbers in elections up and down the country this year, most of them part of a groundswell of Democratic opposition to the Republican president. Video footage shared on social media showed an emotional Tlaib surrounded by ecstatic supporters and hugged by her mother, who comes from a village in the West Bank, where extended family were cheering her on. "They're glued to the TV. My grandmother, my aunts, my uncles in Palestine are sitting by and watching their granddaughter," she said tearfully.

She has called Trump's election a "bat signal" for all women and described her run as very personal, motivated by her sons' anxiety about being Muslims amid increased Islamophobia in America. The Pew Research Center estimates that around 3.45 million Muslims live in the United States, making up about 1.1 percent of the total US population. "Me being elected is a big message to the whole country that we are part of the government. We are part of society and that we want to give back just like anyone else," Tlaib told CBS News last May.



Rashida Tlaib

"Clear out the room boys, let's put some women there... Let's deal with all these crises that we have in our country. It's about time that maybe we get an opportunity to take a stab at it," she added.

She now stands to replace 89-year-old John Conyers, who resigned after 52 years in the House following sexual harassment accusations. Her two-year congressional term is scheduled to start in January. Twenty-eight-year-old political novice Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, whose own insurgent win in a New York primary jolted the Democratic establishment in June, was among those who congratulated her yesterday. Born and raised in southwest Detroit, Tlaib was also the first Muslim woman elected to the

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Syria first lady diagnosed with breast cancer



DAMASCUS: Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad sits next to his wife Asma as she begins treatment for early-stage breast cancer yesterday. — AFP

DAMASCUS: The wife of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad has begun treatment for early-stage breast cancer, the presidency said yesterday. "Asma Al-Assad is beginning the first stage of treatment for a malignant tumor in the breast that was discovered at an early stage," the presidency announced on its social media accounts. The announcement came with a photo of the first lady in loose clothing and trainers, sitting on a chair in a hospital room with an intravenous drip inserted in her left hand. She was smiling at her husband, who sat to her right.

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Local

Amir, Crown Prince receive senior officials

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in Bayan Palace yesterday. His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

ASEAN marks 51st anniversary; fastest growing economies with combined output of \$2.5 trillion

ASEAN's success rests on its open, inclusive and outward-looking nature: Chairman



KUWAIT: Assistant Foreign Affairs Minister of Kuwait Ali Sulaiman Al-Saeed (center) and ambassadors of the Association of South East Asian Nations participate in a ceremony hosted by the Malaysian Embassy yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Diplomats from the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) marked its 51st anniversary at the Malaysian Embassy yesterday with native cuisines and cultural performances. The event was graced by Assistant Foreign Affairs Minister of Kuwait Ali Sulaiman Al-Saeed, Ambassador of Thailand, the current chairman of ASEAN, Dusit Manapan, and other dignitaries. "Today marks the



Dusit Manapan

51st anniversary of the Association of South East Asian Nations since it was founded in August 1967. If we compare ASEAN with a human, ASEAN today is a matured adult full of life experiences. As a regional grouping, it has shouldered responsibilities for promoting well-being and a more secure, stable and peaceful environment for its people, region as well as the world," Dusit said in his opening speech.

He said ASEAN has been consistent in its aspirations in pursuing its aims and purposes enshrined in the Bangkok Declaration, namely accelerate economic growth, social progress, cultural development and promote regional peace and stability. Dusit said ASEAN has grown to become a highly competitive economic community of 10 vibrant and fast-growing economies with a total population of about 620 million people, adding the ASEAN community's combined output exceeds \$2.5 trillion. "We have a good reason to be proud of our success, even though there are still many



Children perform during the ceremony.

challenges ahead to overcome," he said. The chairman said the success of ASEAN rests on its open, inclusive and outward-looking nature. "ASEAN has never failed to embrace and cultivate ties with external partners. Our leaders from generation to generation realized the importance of external linkages in community-building efforts. We have several regular meetings with all key global players and regional groupings including the GCC and international organizations. Up to now ASEAN has 11 dialogue partners which include the EU and the United Nations, 78 accredited ambassadors from non-ASEAN member states and organizations around the world and 42 ASEAN committees in third countries," Dusit added.

The ASEAN Community in Kuwait or ACK comprises of nine resident ambassadors and one non-resident ambassador of Singapore. "We have organized regular



The ASEAN flag is raised during the ceremony.

activities ranging from meetings and seminars to cultural events like fashion, dance, food and film shows to sports like bowling, soccer, badminton and ping-pong to solidarity promoting events like the ASEAN family day with the aim to raise ASEAN awareness in our host country. We are

very thankful for the good cooperation we have received from the local agencies. The ACK will continue to work to boost the ASEAN profile as well as foster close collaboration with the local Kuwaiti authorities and the private sector at all levels," he said.

Local

Kuwait Airways launches first flight from Terminal 4 to Bahrain

Part of strategy to transform Kuwait into a commercial and financial hub



MANAMA: Bahrain's Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa poses for a group picture with the Kuwaiti delegation. —Photos by Faten Omar and KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait Airways yesterday launched its new Terminal 4 (T4) with a flight to Bahrain. The flight marked the start of official operation of T4, which would be fully operational by end of August. The flight carried a high-level Kuwaiti delegation featuring ministers and media representatives, who met with Bahrain's Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa. T4, inaugurated by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on July 4, is part of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation's (DGCA) strategy to transform Kuwait into a commercial and financial hub in line with the 2035 vision. The \$173.2 million new terminal consists of state-of-art technology and internationally-approved security system.

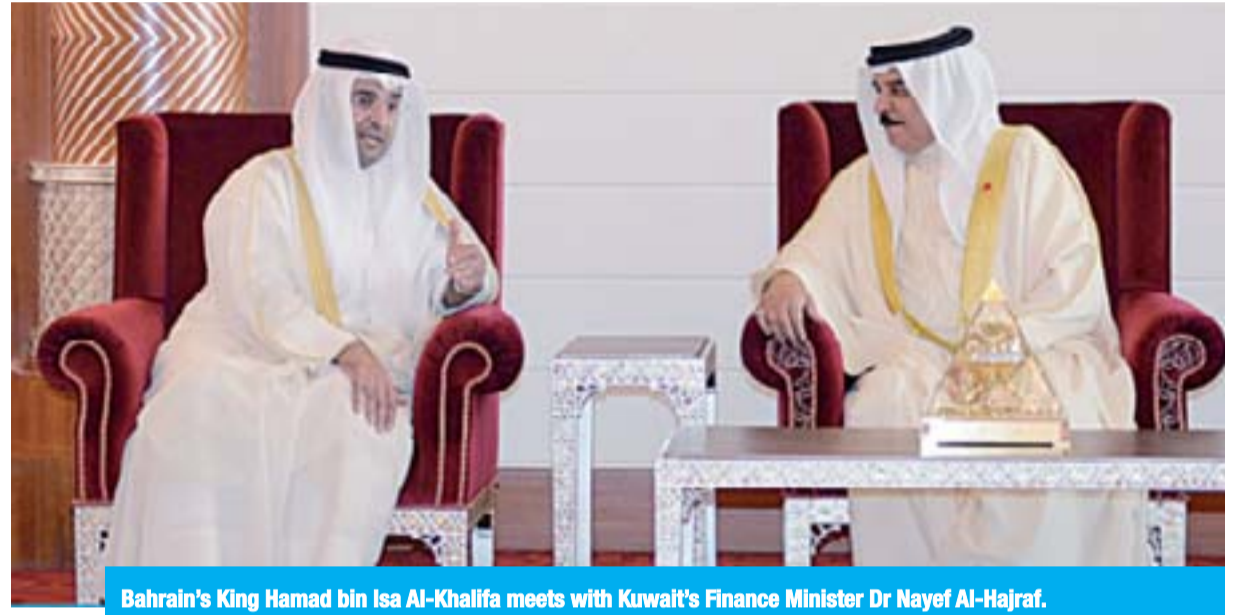
Kuwait Airways had said T4 would be fully dedicated for the national carrier thus reducing the pressure on

Terminal One (T1). It said its 25-plane fleet would be using T4 to transport 4.6 million passengers by the end of this year. Kuwait Airways will be operating 33,600 flights every year to 43 cities in 26 countries. The 55,000-square-meter T4 includes 14 gates for departures and 10 for arrivals.

The new terminal will host around 4.5 million passengers every year, including a parking lot for over 2,000 cars, 20 check-in counters and special counter for people with special needs, and a duty free. T4 will provide around 2,000 jobs with revenues projected at \$60 million per year. Kuwait Airways opened Mubarakiya Lounge at T4 for the first and business class passengers. The 426-square-meter two-storey lounge includes 113 seats, 10 TV screens, a business center and a buffet. Kuwait Airways was established in 1953 and became fully owned by Kuwait government in 1962. — KUNA



Terminal to host 4.5m passengers per year



Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa meets with Kuwait's Finance Minister Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf.



The Kuwaiti delegation presents a memento to Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa.



Officials launch the first flight from the new Terminal Four (T4).



Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan (left) and KUNA's Deputy Director General Saad Al-Ali.



Emad Bukhamseen (left) and Adnan Al-Rashid.



Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan (left) is seen with Minister for Housing and Services Jenan Boushehri (center) and Minister of Finance Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf.

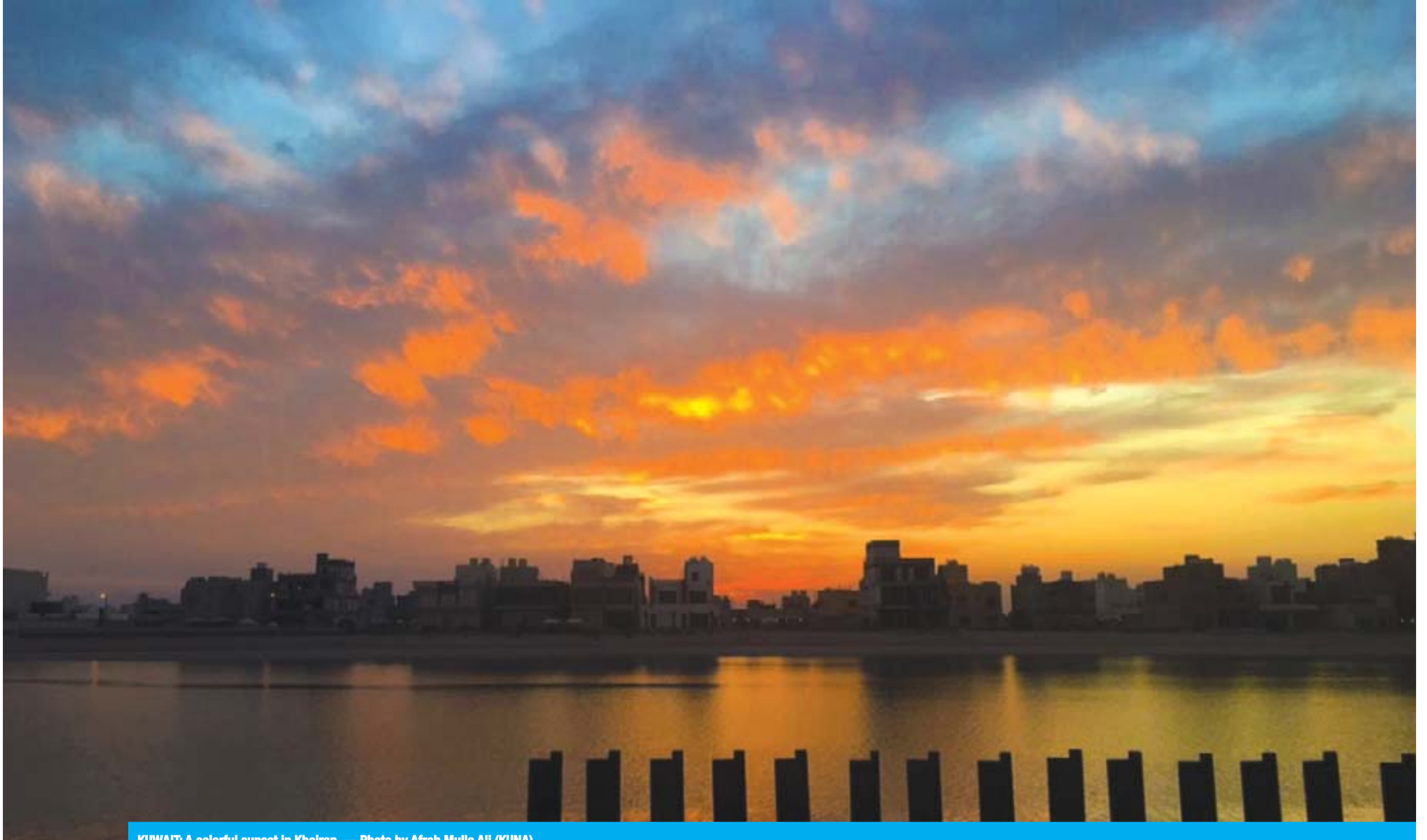


Interior and exterior views of the new Kuwait Airways Terminal 4 building.



Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A colorful sunset in Khairan. — Photo by Afrah Mulla Ali (KUNA)

Manpower authority sets measures, punishments against labor law violations

Panel invites education minister to discuss forged degrees

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Manpower is proceeding with measures to prevent violation of the labor law. The authority decided the punishment if the law is violated will start with partially suspending the employer's file all the way to permanent closure and going to court. The authority said the concerned department can suspend the employer's file partially, while authorizing the director to temporarily lift the suspension to give the employer time to correct the situation, then the file can be suspended again if the reasons for the suspension are not corrected.

The authority has the right, if violations reach a grave level to the point of affecting public interest and harming Kuwait's reputation, to close the file either temporarily or permanently based on the gravity of the violation (lying, cheating or forgery of documents submitted to the authority).

The authority banned employers from closing the work premises if there are workers registered on the license, and if this is not adhered to, the inspection department has the right to suspend the file until the violation is removed. In case the violation is repeated, the addition of new labor will be suspended for a minimum of three months.

Meanwhile, the authority explained the reasons that

allow an employer to file an absconding report against an employee - that is not reporting to work for seven days. The employer must submit it to the interior ministry within 15 days - also he must put the report in a visible place at



Mechanic killed in Abdaly

the workplace until a decision is made. The authority stipulated an employer who files an absconding report to not restore the worker to his job until after the report is cancelled. The authority can ban the worker from getting a work permit for a minimum of two years in case the worker

violates the labor law or the terms of the contract.

Forged degrees

The parliament's education committee will invite Education Minister Hamid Al-Azmi next week to learn about the latest developments in the case of forged degrees, sources said. Committee Chairman Ouda Al-Ruwaii said the committee wants to know how the government is dealing with the issue and the referrals to the prosecution. The issue will take another turn as an inspection campaign in pharmacies will be carried out next week to make sure about the degrees of those working there following some investigations, as the matter is related to the health and safety of citizens and expats. The sources said if forged certificates are discovered, severe punishments will be levied against owners and may lead to the closure of the pharmacy.

Mechanic killed

A Syrian mechanic was killed while working on a dump truck in Abdaly. The truck fell on him, killing him instantly. The body was recovered by the forensics department.

Scam

A citizen in his 40s told Abu Halifa police that an Egyptian man swindled him of KD 4,200 after claiming he traded in goods from China and made 100 percent profits. He asked the citizen to be partners with him and that he will double the money in three months. Three months after giving the suspect the money, the citizen called him, but he had disappeared and shifted from his residence. The scammer is now wanted for questioning. Separately, a citizen told Ahmadi police someone entered his farm located in the "camels' area" and stole two television sets and two smartphones.

Accidents

Seven people sustained various injuries when the bus they were in flipped over on Mutlaa Road. The accident was due to the driver overspeeding. The injured men, all Asians, were taken to Jahra Hospital. Meanwhile, two trucks flipped over on King Fahd Road injuring two Asian nationals, who were taken to hospital for treatment. — *Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Anbaa*

Ooredoo concludes annual summer training program

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait concluded its sixth summer training program for youth in collaboration with the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP), awarding the participants of the program in an event held at the company's head office in Kuwait City on Monday. The event was attended by Tareq Al-Kandari, the supervisor of training programs at the MGRP, in addition to representatives of Ooredoo Kuwait's Human Resources department.

Ooredoo is participating in this program for the sixth consecutive year, reiterating its commitment as a private sector organization to the society, by taking an active role in training youth and providing them with the necessary tools to embark on their career journey. Over the course of five weeks, eight students worked extensively with different departments in Ooredoo Kuwait, including consumer and business sales, marketing, and customer care.

Commenting on this, Ooredoo Kuwait's Chief Human Resources and Administrative Services Officer Omar Al-Bassam noted that Ooredoo's involvement stems from its

deep-rooted values of caring, connecting, and challenging. He added in a statement, "We aspire to have a proactive role that leaves a big impact on society, especially with the youth segment which is one of the biggest and most important segments. We believe in empowering youth - that is, in fact, one of our core values at Ooredoo, and we believe that giving them appropriate training before they begin their career can have a very positive impact on their future and in turn the future of our country. We're also very proud to be giving students a very



KUWAIT: A group photo of trainees with Ooredoo staff.

constructive and useful outlet for their talents and aspirations, especially during the summer."

The training period included one-on-one training with Ooredoo Kuwait employees from different departments, in order to give trainees a clear understanding of the day-to-day business. Over the years, Ooredoo has collaborated with various entities, both public and private, to support and empower youth. These include Kuwait's Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, the leading entity in supporting youth in the country.

Kuwaitis in Indonesia safe after earthquake

KUALA LUMPUR: All Kuwaiti citizens are safe from the earthquake that hit both islands of Bali and Lombok recently, the embassy said in a statement yesterday. In cooperation with local authorities, the embassy checked if there are any Kuwaiti victims or injuries; which there was none, the statement noted. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah ordered all Kuwaiti citizens in both islands to be moved to the Indonesian capital Jakarta, and the embassy is currently arranging for their return home, it pointed out. Indonesia is hit by earthquakes on a yearly basis due to its location within the 'Ring of Fire'; an area close to the Pacific Ocean and one of the most vulnerable areas to earthquakes in the world.

The earthquake has caused the displacement of some 70,000 people, suffering from shortages of food, water and medicine, a local official announced. Head of the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) for Information Data and Public Relations Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said yesterday that they face many difficulties in shelters despite intensified evacuation and rescue efforts. Roads and bridges are damaged, there is a difficulty in reaching affected areas to deliver aid and there are not enough volunteers, Nugroho pointed out, adding that there is a great need for medicine and food. Relief and rescue teams continue to remove debris from collapsed buildings, houses and mosques, especially in the northern and eastern regions. At least 105 people were killed and 236 others injured in the powerful magnitude-7 tremor. — KUNA

Local

Public sector employees' salaries to be paid on August 16 ahead of Eid

Center for women's skills development 100% complete

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: The finance ministry said August salaries for public sector employees will be deposited on August 16th on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. In other news, Head of the Fatwa and Legislation Department Salah Al-Musad banned workers at the department - be they employees, advisors or lawyers - from having any accounts on websites or social media with the term "fatwa" directly or indirectly. The ban includes publishing any political opinions or information related to the department or cases they work on. He said those in violation will be disciplined.

Women's skills

The center for the development of Kuwaiti

women's economic and crafts skills is 100 percent complete, sources said, adding that the KD 1.2 million project will be operational by the end of this year. The project aims at supporting Kuwaiti women. The center also aims at improving the relative ranking of Kuwait in marketplace performance and readiness of manpower indicators from 43 percent/63 percent in 2015/2016 to 46 percent/66 percent at the end of the development plan, and limit problems of marginal labor.



Rising debt

The State Audit Bureau advised against borrowing to finance the budget deficit, and instead resort to capital projects with a long-term strategy to deal with the risks of rising public debt. The bureau said in a report on high risk topics that it is necessary to account for real estate assets of the government and comply with the law to reveal commissions when signing any contracts related to public debts. The report said violations reached KD 5.8 billion at the end of 2016/2017, and

Bureau advises against borrowing

due to non-settlements, the budget deficit rose from KD 5.9 billion to KD 6.8 billion during the abovementioned year.

Hajj costs

Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ministry Undersecretary Fared Emadi said the ministry has taken several measures against the high cost of hajj campaigns that helped in reducing prices. He said not all trips are expensive, as prices are considered lower compared to last year, while 14 campaigns have rates of less than KD 2,000. Although Saudi Arabia increased charges by 10 percent, the awqaf ministry will take measures to reduce prices for next year. He said the current rise in prices is due to services extended during the pilgrims' stay in Saudi Arabia.

Kuwait, UK, US army officials discuss cooperation

KUWAIT: Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Mohammad Khaled Al-Khodr met yesterday with Britain's Senior Defense Advisor on the Middle East Lieutenant General Sir John Lorimer. The Defense Ministry's Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a statement that the joint meeting discussed ways of promoting and bolstering military cooperation. Separately, Khodr also met with the visiting US Naval Forces Central Commander Admiral Scott Stearney and his accompanying delegation. The officials discussed issues of mutual concerns. Chief of the Army's Joint Training General Fawaz Al-Harbi attended both meetings.

In other news, Kuwait and Tunisia yesterday discussed ways of promoting and developing bilateral military cooperation, mainly in the field of training and exchange of expertise. This came during a meeting of the Kuwaiti-Tunisian military committee, held in Tunis with a Kuwaiti army delegation attending. Head of the Kuwaiti delegation Major General Mohammad Al-Kandari said the first-of-its-kind meeting aims at reinforcing bilateral relations and serving common interests between the armed forces of both Arab countries. The talks reflect mutual willingness to bolster bilateral cooperation in various military domains, he said. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Mohammad Khaled Al-Khodr meets with Britain's Senior Defense Advisor on the Middle East Lieutenant General Sir John Lorimer. — Defense Ministry photos



Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Mohammad Khaled Al-Khodr meets with the US Naval Forces Central Commander Admiral Scott Stearney.

10-day military exercise underway

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Al-Khafeer exercise began yesterday and will continue for 10 days with the Interior Ministry, Defense Ministry, Kuwait National Guard and American army troops participating. The exercise aims at enhancing combat competence and readiness for all forces to deal with any emergencies and face terrorism of all kinds, the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Media Department announced in a statement.

Passports

The Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Information Department appealed to citizens who received text messages to collect their passports, as many passports are piling up (40,000

passports are ready) and have not been claimed. The department said the six new centers are open from 8 am to 2 pm and from 4 pm to 9 pm.

Standardization

The higher committee for the implementation of the quality system at the Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) met with KFSD Director General Lt Gen Khalid Al-Mikrad in the presence of Deputy Director General for Manpower Development Maj Gen Khalid Al-Tarkait. A presentation was made of the project to create and implement the international organization for standardization (ISO 9001:2015) for planning and administrative development department.

Campaign

Hawally municipality emergency team removed shades set up illegally on state property based on a complaint from the awqaf ministry. Director of the Hawally branch Saif Al-Ajmi said the campaign resulted in removing 25 encroachments on state property.



KUWAIT: The higher committee for the implementation of the quality system at the Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) meet with KFSD Director General Lt Gen Khalid Al-Mikrad.



KUWAIT: As temperatures expected to remain high for at least two more weeks, water activities - such as jet-skiing and boat cruises - remain among the most favorite pastime leisure pursuits during the summer in Kuwait. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



Lombok quake leaves 150K homeless, death toll hits 131

Canadian UN peacekeepers return to Africa after 24 years

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CARACAS: A woman gestures at a room of the University Hospital. — AFP

Eating a risk in Venezuela's hospitals

‘There are cockroaches in the area where they prepare the baby bottles’

CARACAS: Hardly anybody likes hospital food but in Venezuela, it's so awful-monotonous, starchy diets cooked in filthy conditions, and newborns fed intravenous solution for lack of baby formula—that experts call it an actual health risk. Take Carla Lopez, 40, who has been hospitalized for three months to treat open wounds on her foot as a result of diabetes.

Lopez should go easy on pasta and rice—but that's all she gets. “I eat whatever they give me,” Lopez said as she waves away flies buzzing over a plate of rice and lentils at University Hospital in Caracas. It is pretty flavorless stuff as the hospital is out of salt. An excess of starch causes her blood sugar levels to shoot up.

Even if she were out of the hospital, she could not afford, say, a kilo (2.2 pounds) of chicken, which costs 1.5 times her monthly salary in this oil-rich but economically ravaged country saddled with runaway inflation. Lopez says that for breakfast, she gets a kind of cornmeal patty known here as an arepa, and for lunch, it's either pasta or lentils with rice. “In the evening, they serve you another arepa—a small, skimpy one,” said Lopez.

Back in better times, this hospital used to have different cooks for different medical problems, said nutritionist Gladys Abreu. Now, everybody gets the same fare, and not much of it: 40 grams of rice and 25 grams of legumes. “That is hardly enough for a small child,” said

one staffer in the hospital kitchen. Another hospital employee who asked not to be named complained that garbage piles up at the facility, an imposing 11-story building that is 60 years old.

Indeed, a nearby trash bin overflows with detritus. The National Hospital Survey, published in March by the opposition-controlled National Assembly and by an NGO called Doctors for Health, said 96 percent of Venezuela's hospitals fail to feed their patients adequately, or do not feed them at all. The poll covered 104 state-run hospitals and 33 private ones.

Intravenous solution as milk

At the Concepcion Palacios maternity clinic, also in Caracas, doctors stopped providing formula for newborns because there was no money for it. Parents can provide their own, but one mother, Yereercis Olivar, who just gave birth to her second child, cannot afford formula. She could not nurse the baby, either, because they were separated to protect the child from the chicken pox that Olivar came down with while pregnant. It has left her skin covered in blisters.

Olivar was desperate, so she started trying to extract milk from her breasts with a syringe. It took three days for that excruciating method to kick in and provide milk. During that time, the baby lived “only on serum”—the kind used in intravenous solutions to keep adults hydrated. It was fed to the child from a baby bottle.

Baby formula, like so many basic goods in Venezuela, is available only on the black market and a can of it costs around 50 million bolivars, or \$15. That is nine times the average monthly salary. The hospital survey said 66 percent of Venezuela's maternity wards have no formula to give to babies. The decline into hellish health care conditions has been swift in recent years, said Olivar, whose first child was born at the same hospital

in 2016. It was better back then: she could not nurse her child, but there was baby formula. Now, “there are cockroaches in the area where they prepare the baby bottles,” said Silvia Bolivar, a nurse with 25 years on the job. From holes in the walls and ceiling, water leaks and rodents scamper, she added. The health ministry ignored a request from AFP for comment on this story.

Patients going hungry

On the sixth floor where she is being treated, Olivar says she has heard nurses protesting for the past six weeks to demand better pay and working conditions. Posters on the wall say nurses also want better food for sick people. President Nicolas Maduro said the crisis in Venezuela's hospitals has been aggravated by US sanctions against his government.

He says this punishment prevents the country from buying medical equipment and medicines, 80 percent of which are in short supply, according to labor unions. “It is hard when patients come to us, trembling and on the verge of fainting, to say they are hungry,” said nurse Bolivar. At the maternity clinic, the baby bottles smell bad. There is no soap to wash them and the sterilization machine is broken.

Dark mold covers containers of rice and pasta that is fed to mothers. Both there and at the University Hospital, the floors and bathrooms are dirty. There is no disinfectant. Cleaning is done with water and rags. Lopez, the lady with complications from diabetes, does not know how much longer she must remain in her decrepit hospital room, which is furnished with broken chairs. Her foot is not getting any better. But it's not all gloom: her hospital roommate gave her a bouquet of sunflowers to brighten things up. — AFP



Everybody gets the same fare, and not much of it

Malaysia ex-PM charged with money laundering

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's former Prime Minister Najib Razak was hit with new charges yesterday linked to a multi-billion-dollar financial scandal that contributed to his shock election defeat in May. Appearing at a court in Kuala Lumpur, Najib was charged with three counts of money-laundering over claims he pocketed 42 million ringgit (\$10.3 million) from a former unit of scandal-hit sovereign wealth fund IMDB.

These are in addition to the charges he faced last month after he was first arrested — three for criminal breach of trust and a separate count that he abused his position to take the money. The 65-year-old, who is free on bail, has denied all the charges. Malaysia's new government is probing allegations that billions of dollars were looted from IMDB, which was set up and overseen by Najib, in an audacious fraud that spanned the globe.

Allegations of massive corruption were a major factor behind the electoral earthquake in May that toppled Najib's long-ruling coalition and ushered in a reformist alliance headed by his 93-year-old former mentor

Mahathir Mohamad. In a packed courtroom, the three new charges were read out to Najib. Asked if he understood them, Najib — dressed in a dark blue suit and looking tired — said he did. His case was transferred to another court, where he entered not guilty pleas, meaning he will stand trial. Trial dates will be fixed on Friday, the judge said.

‘Long live Najib’

As he left court, a handful of supporters shouted “long live Najib” while his lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah said the toppled leader believed the case was driven by politics. “I am confident of a fair trial for my client, but my client thinks this is a political prosecution,” he told reporters. Najib is facing a long time behind bars if found guilty — the money-laundering charges carry maximum jail terms of 15 years each, while the other four charges carry sentences of 20 years each.

The money-laundering charges allege 42 million ringgit stemming from illegal activities was transferred to Najib's bank accounts between December 2014 and February 2015. All the charges relate to fund transfers from SRC International, an energy company that was originally a subsidiary of IMDB. The sums involved are just a fraction of the \$681 million that was mysteriously transferred to Najib's personal bank accounts several years ago, sparking uproar in Malaysia.

The then attorney general — who had ties to Najib's party — cleared the leader of wrongdoing, and said that the money had been a donation from the Saudi royal



KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's former prime minister Najib Razak (C) reacts as he leaves Duta court complex. — AFP

family. Najib, who has consistently denied any wrongdoing, and his allies are accused of plundering billions of dollars from IMDB to buy everything from US real estate to artworks.

The US Department of Justice, which is seeking to recover items allegedly bought with stolen IMDB cash in America, estimates that \$4.5 billion in total was looted from the fund. Following Najib's election loss, police seized a vast trove of items — including expensive handbags and jewelry — from properties linked to him with an estimated value of up to \$273 million. — AFP

Two dead in stampede at politician's funeral

CHENNAI: Indian police yesterday used batons to drive back tens of thousands of mourners thronging the funeral of a revered regional politician, triggering a stampede that reportedly left two devotees dead. Grieving supporters of Muthuvel Karunanidhi poured into the southeastern city of Chennai to pay last respects to the man who died Tuesday aged 94.

A sea of mourners swelled in the streets as the coffin was taken to its resting place in the Tamil Nadu state capital. But there was a stampede as police pushed back against mourners as they strove for a final glimpse of Karunanidhi. Two people were killed and others injured in the melee, Indian news outlets reported. Police officials contacted by AFP were

unable to confirm the reports. Tension had been building in the city after the state government Tuesday denied permission for the politician to be buried at the popular Marina beach.

Karunanidhi's party, the opposition Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), approached the state's highest court. It ruled that the five-time state chief minister should be buried next to his mentor C.N Annadurai at the seaside memorial. Karunanidhi, a charismatic self-styled champion of the poor, reshaped regional politics through his opposition to high-caste hegemony and was idolised by legions of his supporters.

He earned the loyalty of many rural voters with a series of populist schemes and fiery speeches in support of the so-called backward castes. A school dropout, Karunanidhi became involved in politics at a young age, spearheading the DMK party through 12 state elections, all of which he contested and won. Affectionately called “Kalaigarnar” or scholar, he wrote reams of poems, lyrics and books and was a prolific screenwriter for the Tamil film industry. — AFP

International

Close-fought Ohio election fuels Democratic hopes for November

The narrow margin is little comfort for Republicans

WASHINGTON: A hotly contested race in Ohio for a US House of Representatives seat that has gone Republican for more than 30 years remained too close to call yesterday, in an encouraging sign for Democrats heading into the Nov. 6 elections. Republican Troy Balderson led Democrat Danny O'Connor by about 1,700 votes with all precincts reporting, but the final result is likely to be days away as state officials count more than 8,000 provisional and absentee ballots.

Even if Balderson is eventually declared the winner, the narrow margin is little comfort for Republicans as they head into the November vote. It is certain to hearten Democrats, who performed dramatically better than expected. The close Ohio special election has become a referendum on Republican President Donald Trump's leadership and a last chance to gauge Democratic strength ahead of November's midterm elections, in which the Republicans are defending majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

"This gives me optimism," Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez told CNN yesterday. Four other states held nominating contests, including a battle for governor in Michigan in which a mainstream Democratic candidate beat a progressive and a high-profile

conservative challenge to the incumbent Republican governor in Kansas that was also still too close to call yesterday.

The races highlighted the challenges both parties face heading into November, with Democrats facing the limits of their more liberal wing in the US Midwest and national Republicans split under Trump, whose voice still appeared to drive his base to his preferred, more firebrand choices that fellow conservatives worry could lose in the general election. The Democratic race for governor in Michigan tested the electoral power of the party's progressive wing. However, former Detroit health director Abdul El-Sayed lost his bid to become the country's first Muslim governor to a more moderate Democrat, former state Senate leader Gretchen Whitmer.

In Kansas, conservative firebrand and staunch Trump ally Kris Kobach clung to a lead of less than 200 votes in the Republican gubernatorial primary over current Governor Jeff Colyer with most votes counted. Both men had about 41 percent of the vote in Kansas. Kobach has faced criticism for his hard-line views on immigration and efforts to remove voters from the rolls that he said is necessary to fight voter fraud.

Ohio's contest drew an avalanche of national

attention in recent weeks as opinion polls showed it tightening, with Republicans and their allies outpacing Democratic groups by more than 4 to 1. Trump took credit for the Republican's lead, saying on Twitter that Balderson's campaign took "a big turn for the better" after he campaigned for him in the district on Saturday. Other Republicans, including Vice President Mike Pence and Ohio Governor John Kasich, had also rushed to Balderson's aid.

Trump won the district by 11 percentage points in the White House race in 2016. Republican Pat Tiberi won re-election to the House by 37 percentage points but resigned before finishing his term, triggering the special election. O'Connor, who did not concede on Tuesday, and Balderson will face off again in November to serve a full two-year term. "The fight continues," O'Connor told MSNBC in an interview on Wednesday, declining to say whether he would seek a recount if one was not automatically triggered. "We're going to be sprinting."

The Ohio secretary of state's office said it could not yet declare a winner. Under state law, absentee and provisional ballots cannot be counted for 11 days with an automatic recount if the margin of results is within 0.5 percent of the



TOPEKA: Republican primary candidate for governor Kris Kobach and his wife Heather speak to supporters just after midnight yesterday in a tight race with Jeff Colyer that is too close to call. — AFP

votes cast. Democrats need to win 23 more seats in the House and two in the Senate to control Congress and put the brakes on Trump's agenda.

All 435 House seats, 35 of 100 Senate seats and 36 of 50 governors' offices are up for grabs in November. — Reuters

Statement by E3 FMs on the re-imposition of US sanctions

Here in lies a joint statement by High Representative Federica Mogherini and Foreign Ministers of E3 (Jean-Yves Le Drian of France, Heiko Maas of Germany, Jeremy Hunt of the United Kingdom) on the re-imposition of US sanctions due to its withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) - "We deeply regret the re-imposition of sanctions by the US, due to the latter's withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)."

"The JCPOA is working and delivering on its goal, namely to ensure that the Iranian programme remains exclusively peaceful, as confirmed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 11 consecutive reports. It is a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture, crucial for the security of Europe, the region, and the entire world. We expect Iran to con-

tinue to fully implement all its nuclear commitments under the JCPOA."

"The lifting of nuclear-related sanctions is an essential part of the deal - it aims at having a positive impact not only on trade and economic relations with Iran, but most importantly on the lives of the Iranian people. We are determined to protect European economic operators engaged in legitimate business with Iran, in accordance with EU law and with UN Security Council resolution 2231. This is why the European Union's updated Blocking Statute enters into force on 7 August to protect EU companies doing legitimate business with Iran from the impact of US extra-territorial sanctions."

"The remaining parties to the JCPOA have committed to work on, inter alia, the preservation and maintenance of effective financial channels with Iran, and the continuation of Iran's export of oil and gas. On these, as on other topics, our work continues, including with third countries interested in supporting the JCPOA and maintaining economic relations with Iran. These efforts will be intensified and reviewed at Ministerial level in the coming weeks. Preserving the nuclear deal with Iran is a matter of respecting international agreements and a matter of international security."

— Provided by the embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

35,000 to run in Syria local polls: Commission

DAMASCUS: Almost 35,000 candidates are to contest town council elections next month, in Syria's first local polls since war broke out in 2011, a leading newspaper reported yesterday. "The candidacy committees from the provinces accepted 34,553 candidacy requests for the local administration elections... from more than 55,164 requests," said Suleiman Al-Qaed, who heads the Higher Judicial Committee for Elections, quoted in Al-Watan. The elections are set for September 18.

Qaed told the paper, which is close to the government, that 18,478 seats were up for grabs, a slight increase from the roughly 17,000 seats open in 2011. "A large number of villages were transformed into municipalities, which is what explains the increase in the local seats that are being competed for," Qaed said. But some provinces submitted no requests at all, including eastern Deir Ezzor, northeast Hasakeh, and Daraa in the south, according to Al-Watan.

Syrian government forces control the western half of Deir Ezzor province and its capital

city, but in Hasakeh they only hold a few positions in Qamishli and Hasakeh cities. Regime troops recaptured all of Daraa province, typically seen as the "cradle" of Syria's uprising, last month. That has put Syria's government in charge of just under two-thirds of the country, while jihadists, rebel forces and Kurdish militia hold the rest.

State news agency SANA has reported the government would open special centers in Hama city so people from areas outside regime control — northwest Idlib and northern Raqa — could still register as candidates. The country last held parliamentary elections in 2016. A presidential vote in 2014 renewed President Bashar Al-Assad's rule for another seven years. The new local councils are expected to have increased responsibilities. "There will be much more work for the new council," said the current secretary-general of the Damascus provincial council, Bashar Al-Haffar. "It will oversee the task of setting development plans, suggesting investment projects, and making practical decisions appropriate for the reconstruction phase," said Haffar.

With his troops comfortably in control of much of the country, Assad said last month that his top priority would be "reconstruction". Seven years of war in Syria have made public services like water and electricity unavailable in many areas and wrecked civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and schools. — AFP

Malaysia told to stop 'policing' women's clothing

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian government's plan to introduce a dress code for Muslim women in the workplace has sparked a backlash from women's rights groups, which accuse officials of acting like "fashion police". Women in the Muslim-majority country, which has a large population of ethnic and religious minorities, have been barred from government offices in the past for attire that officials deemed as indecent, such as skirts or shorts.

Those who work in the civil service already have to follow regulations that typically prohibit women from wearing sleeveless tops or skirts above knee level. But the government has now said it is in the final stage of drawing up guidelines for Muslim women in the private sector, which will comply with Islamic princi-

ples. No details have been made public, but Malaysian women's rights groups condemned the dress code. Tan Heang Lee of the Women's Aid Organization, branded it as "dehumanizing".

"There has been a trend where various agencies attempt to police women's bodies and their clothing," she said yesterday. "Why is there this obsession with what women wear? They should be focusing on women's talent and capability. The last thing we should be thinking of is the length of a woman's skirt," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Mujahid Yusof Rawa, a minister who oversees religious affairs, told parliament this week that the guidelines are meant to protect Muslim women who wish to wear headscarves or other Islamic garb. Islamic groups have previously complained about policies at some hotels that reportedly banned female frontline staff from wearing headscarves. Some groups have also criticized female flight attendant uniforms as being too tight and un-Islamic. — Reuters

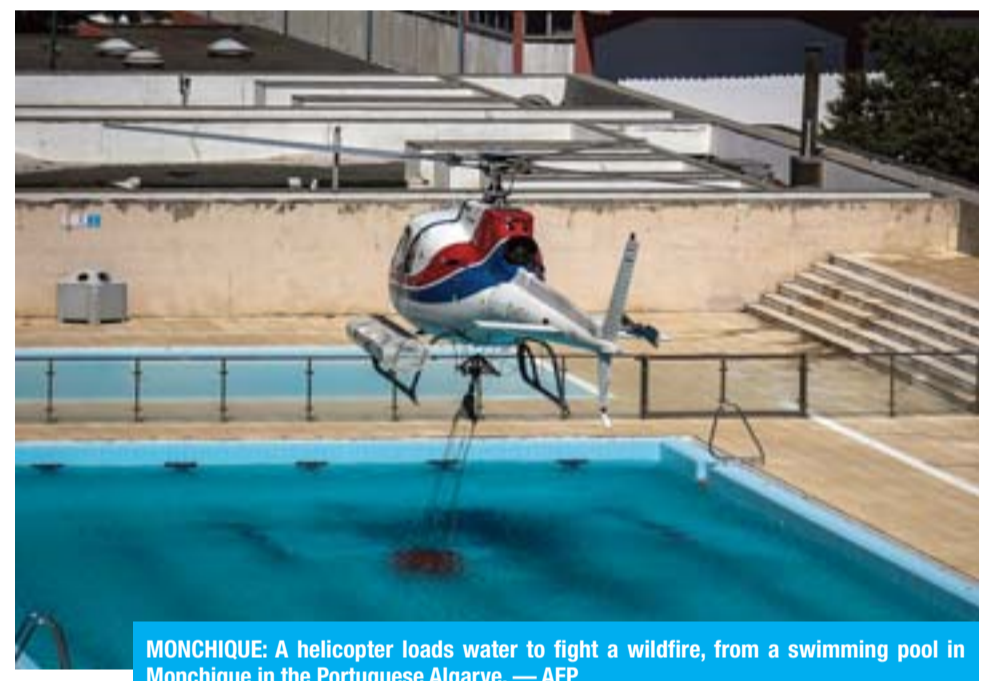
Arid and ablaze, Europe battles deadly heat

LISBON: Europe's scorching heatwave has killed nine people in a week in Spain, health authorities said Tuesday, as stifling temperatures kindled wildfires in the country and neighboring Portugal where a ferocious blaze encircled a resort town. Weeks of nonstop sunshine and near-record temperatures have caused droughts and seen tinder-dry forests consumed by wildfires from the Mediterranean to the Arctic Circle, in what many fear could be the region's new normal in an era of climate change. The devastating effects of the heatwave were visible from space, according to images of swaths of arid landscape taken by the German astronaut Alexander Gerst from the International Space Station. "After several weeks of night flying, I was able to take the first day pictures of central Europe and Germany. The sight is shocking. Everything that should be green is parched and brown," Gerst said on Twitter.

Resorts threatened

Spain and Portugal approached record temperatures at the weekend, with the mercury hitting 46.6 degrees Celsius (116 Fahrenheit) at El Granado in Spain and 46.4 C in Alvega, Portugal, according to the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO). While the deadly hot spell is expected to ease in parts of western Europe in the coming days, firefighters in Spain and Portugal struggled to contain wildfires that have swept southern areas. In the southern Portuguese holiday region, residents and tourists have been evacuated from around an Algarve resort town as fire crews struggled to extinguish wildfires that have raged for days leaving 30 people injured, one seriously. Hundreds of firefighters and soldiers used helicopters and planes, as well as several hundred vehicles, to douse the blaze around the mountain town of Monchique as strong winds fanned the flames, with meteorologists warning of "significant" gusts to come. In the Valencia region of neighboring Spain some 2,500 people were driven from their homes overnight to escape flames that have already swept across around 1,000 hectares, as fire crews struggled to bring the fires under control.

A spokesman for the regional health department in the southwestern region of Extremadura, near Portugal, said a 66-year-old man and a 75-year-old woman who died in recent days had both



MONCHIQUE: A helicopter loads water to fight a wildfire, from a swimming pool in Monchique in the Portuguese Algarve. — AFP

succumbed to heat stroke. This brings to nine the number of people to have died as a direct consequence of the heatwave.

Heat moving east

While parts of Western Europe are forecast to have a reprieve in the coming days, the sweltering temperatures are expected to travel eastwards across the region. "The same circulation pattern persists which brings hot air from North Africa over Europe, but this whole system is now moving slowly to the east so the western parts of the continent will get cooler air from the Atlantic," said WMO spokeswoman Sylvie Castonguay. "This will relieve the situation in most countries in southwestern Europe, while the hot weather conditions will spread further to Eastern Europe."

In France, violent thunderstorms brought an end to the heatwave there but led to rail cancellations with trees toppled and powerlines down in some parts of the country. Gusts exceeded 100 kilometres per hour (62 mph) in the Somme and Pas de Calais regions according to meteorologists. Wildfires have sparked in parts of northern Europe, with blazes still burning up to the Arctic Circle in Sweden, which sizzled in record temperatures in July that also caused mountain top glaciers to melt, according to the WMO. The Arctic regions of Finland and Norway have been so hot that they have experienced 12 "tropical" nights so far this

year, with temperatures topping 20 C. Roughly a thousand kilograms (a tonne) of dead fish have been scooped from rivers and lakes in Switzerland in recent days, as the heat raised water temperatures. "We have been watching dead fish for several days floating down the Rhine," Andreas Vogel, an official with the hunting and fisheries department in northern Schaffhausen canton, told the public broadcaster RTS.

The most severely affected area is the stretch of the Rhine river that runs from Lake Constance to the Rhine Falls. The cold-loving grayling, a member of the salmon family, can struggle when water temperatures exceed 20 C, but certain areas of the Rhine have recorded temperatures above 27 C in recent days. In Britain, the sustained heat has seen a spike in cases of avian botulism reported among wild waterbirds like swans and geese.

Botulism, a naturally occurring neurotoxin activated in warm weather by bacteria in silt, is passed along to waterbirds through infected bugs, causing paralysis. It is not contagious to humans. "Many drown because they cannot lift their heads out of the water," Melanie Nelson, a trustee at the Swan Sanctuary in southeast England, told AFP. "Whole lakes are affected at a time meaning entire waterbird communities become sick and die." Temperatures in southeast England were expected to climb to 30 C on Tuesday before easing off for the rest of the week. — AFP

Manafort defense attorneys rip into star witness

ALEXANDRIA: Defense attorneys for Donald Trump's former campaign chief Paul Manafort, on trial for tax and bank fraud, sought to shred the credibility of the prosecution's key witness on Tuesday, forcing him to reveal that he had an extramarital affair and stole money from his boss. Rick Gates, Manafort's long-time deputy, came in for a withering cross-examination as he took the stand in a packed federal courtroom in Alexandria, Virginia.

The 46-year-old, who has pleaded guilty to conspiracy and is cooperating with the government, began the day by describing how he helped Manafort evade US taxes on millions of dollars earned from political consulting work they did in Ukraine. Under questioning by prosecutor Greg Andres, Gates walked the six-man, six-woman jury through the foreign bank accounts used by Manafort to receive payments from Ukrainian politicians — money that was not reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

"He always had control over the accounts," Gates said of Manafort, and the income was not reported to his bookkeepers, his accountants or the US tax authorities. When it was his turn to question Gates, defense attorney Kevin Downing went on the offensive, pressing him on what amount of time he would have expected to face in prison had he not agreed to cooperate with the government.



ALEXANDRIA: Kevin Downing, attorney for former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, walks past journalists on his way to the Albert V Bryan US Courthouse on the seventh day of Manafort's trial. — AFP

Gates conceded it was "in excess of 50 to 100 years," but said any eventual sentence — including avoiding jail by receiving probation — would be up to a judge. Downing forced Gates to admit he had stolen hundreds of thousands of dollars from Manafort by filing bogus personal expenses claims and that he had engaged in an extramarital affair and kept an apartment in London for that purpose. "Were these payments for your secret life?" Downing asked. "I acknowledge I had a period of time when I had another relationship," said Gates, who is married and has four children. "I already admitted on the record that I took unauthorized funds from Mr Manafort."

Manafort, seated at the defense table, stared intently at Gates while his defense attorney hammered him with aggressive questions, but his former business partner carefully avoided his gaze.

"After all the lies you've told, and the fraud you've committed, you expect the jury will believe you?" Downing asked Gates. "I'm here to tell the truth," Gates replied. "Mr Manafort had the same path. I'm here. I'm trying to change," he said. Gates appeared to be referring to his decision to enter into a plea agreement with the office of Special Counsel Robert Mueller in exchange for his trial testimony. — AFP

International

Canadian UN peacekeepers return to Africa after 24 years

One of the United Nations' most difficult and dangerous missions

GAO, Mali: Soaring over the Niger river before entering the savannah in northern Mali, a Canadian twin-engine military helicopter is making one of its first forays into the country. Two artillerymen are scanning the ground below when the pilot announces that "one of the gauges has stopped. We only have one engine left". As Canada sends its first full-blown peacekeeping force to Africa in 24 years, they are discovering a conflict — and weather conditions — unlike anything they have dealt with in a long time.

They have joined one of the United Nations' most difficult and dangerous missions — the 14,000 strong MINUSMA operation in Mali, a linchpin West African country in the vast, arid Sahel region. Flying in northern Mali, which is mostly covered by the Sahara desert, "is like working in the Arctic, you just swap ice for sand and -40 degrees for +40," jokes Lieutenant-Colonel Chris Morrison, commander of the Canadian air troops in the northeast city of Gao. Aircraft have to operate in extreme conditions in the Sahara and "there are few runways to land on" for repairs or refills, says Morrison, whose previous missions include Bosnia and Afghanistan.

Canadians back in blue helmets

While it was Canada that helped mastermind the idea of large-scale UN peacekeeping missions back in the 1950s, it hasn't deployed significant numbers of "Blue Helmet" troops — as the peacekeepers are known — for more than a decade. Nevertheless, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is keen for Canada to return to peacekeeping operations, not least in a bid to secure a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council in 2021. The Mali operation marks the first full-throated Canadian peacekeeping mission to

Africa since the Rwandan genocide in 1994, when Ottawa led the UN mission there.

Since last month, a contingent of 250 Canadian soldiers and six helicopters — two Chinook flying ambulances and four Griffon attack aircraft — have taken over from German troops in conducting medical evacuations. They are stationed at Camp Castor in Gao with around 900 German and 100 Dutch soldiers. Not far away, another 4,000 soldiers from non-NATO countries are stationed in the UN "Supercamp".

UN's most dangerous mission

MINUSMA is currently the UN's most dangerous peacekeeping mission. Since it was deployed in 2013, over 170 members have been killed — more than half the UN soldiers killed during this period around the world. Islamist extremists linked to Al-Qaeda took control of the desert in northern Mali in early 2012, but were largely driven out in a French-led military operation launched in January 2013.

However, large stretches of the country remain outside the control of the Malian, French and UN forces, which are frequent targets of attacks. "We want to help the UN, but it is a difficult mission," says Chris McKenna, commander of the Canadian troops in Mali. "It is complicated, but it is what we expected. The environment is harsh, with dust and heat. Working in a multi-lateral, multi-national environment comes with challenges, but we are doing very well," McKenna insists. The soldiers themselves are happy about Canada's return to the Blue Helmets. "It is a good thing to be back," says Major Dominique Simard, a helicopter pilot. "We are here to save lives, it is rewarding."

The Canadian troops only take part in flying missions and are not deployed on foot. And when they are



This aerial view shows a Canadian UN peacekeeping helicopter during a patrol over Gao on July 31, 2018, part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). —AFP

not out in their helicopters, the soldiers are not allowed to set foot outside Camp Castor. To pass the time, they have internet access, postal services, a cafeteria staffed with Indian cooks, a gym and a bar that does not serve alcohol. But it's not easy being cooped up for so long.

"600 meters by 600 meters for seven months," one officer complains. "Every day, we are in the sky, 35 feet above the theatre of operations, but we are not going to have terrestrial convoys, we are not equipped for it. That is not our mandate," says McKenna. —AFP

Swedish pro-Gaza ship activists deported

STOCKHOLM: Seven Swedish activists detained by Israel's navy for attempting to breach its blockade of Gaza have been deported to Sweden, the organizers of the Ship to Gaza activist flotilla said yesterday. Four of the activists arrived back in the Scandinavian country yesterday, and the three others were expected later in the day, Ship to Gaza Sweden spokesman Dror Feiler told AFP.

The Israeli navy said it intercepted the ship, Freedom for Gaza, late Friday "in accordance with international law", and took it to the port of Ashdod. The ship was carrying medical supplies and had a total of 12 crew and activists on board, hailing from Sweden, Spain, Canada and Germany and France. All have been deported, Feiler said. Meanwhile, Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom said yesterday Israel's interception and boarding of the ship, as well as the detention of the activists and crew, violated international law.

"The (Swedish) government has been in contact with Israeli authorities about Ship to Gaza and has insisted that the actions of the Israeli authorities regarding the Swedish-flagged vessel Freedom and the people on board are not backed up by international law," Wallstrom said in a statement. She said her government had also demanded that the ship and its cargo be released.

'Break the blockade'

The Gaza Strip has been under Israeli blockade for more than a decade, with Israel saying it is necessary to prevent the Palestinian enclave's militant Hamas rulers from obtaining weapons. Israel has defended the legality of Friday's seizure, recalling that a 2011 UN report found its naval blockade on Gaza was legal. Freedom was the second boat of the "Freedom Flotilla" to be intercepted en route to "break the blockade" on Gaza, organisers said. —AFP

Zimbabwe oppn to challenge election result in court

HARARE: Zimbabwe's MDC opposition party yesterday vowed to overturn in court President Emmerson Mnangagwa's narrow election victory, alleging that he won the historic vote via "mammoth theft and fraud". The country's first election since Robert Mugabe's ousting has been marred by rigging allegations, the army opening fire on opposition demonstrators killing six people, and accusations of a security crackdown on opposition supporters. The MDC has until Friday to lodge its suit after Mnangagwa — formerly a close ally of Mugabe — won 50.8 percent in last week's vote, just scraping in above the 50 percent run-off threshold.

"Those results represent a total negation of the will of the people," MDC lawyer Thabani Mpfu told reporters in Harare. "The election results made by ZEC (Zimbabwe Electoral Commission) will be challenged." Under Zimbabwean law, the deadline for filing the challenge is Friday. The Constitutional Court must rule on the petition within 14 days, delaying Mnangagwa's planned inauguration. "ZEC's figures in our view grossly mathematically fail to tally," said Mpfu. "We are convinced once this has been placed before a court, there will only be one outcome." —AFP

May, Prince William mark centenary of key WWI battle

PARIS: Britain's Prince William and Prime Minister Theresa May will join over 3,000 guests at a service yesterday marking the centenary of the Battle of Amiens, which heralded the beginning of the end of World War I. Families of soldiers who took part in the lightning Allied advance, which smashed German defenses and morale, have travelled to Amiens from across the world for the ceremony in the city's magnificent medieval gothic cathedral. Representatives of the Australian, British, Canadian, French and US governments will also commemorate the tens of thousands of troops killed in the four days of fighting, along with former German president Joachim Gauck. The Battle of Amiens sounded the start of the Hundred Days Offensive on the Western Front, which led to the Armistice in November 1918.

It marked a shift away from trench to armoured warfare, with the Allies deploying hundreds of tanks to push deep into German lines on what German General Erich Ludendorff called a "black day" for the German army. May's visit is her second to France in under a week, coming days after she held talks with President Emmanuel Macron at his Mediterranean holiday retreat over her Brexit plan. She will read from the memoirs of

British wartime leader Lloyd George.

Prince William will also address the proceedings and the two will also meet with soldiers' families, including descendants of the crack Canadian and Australian troops who led the Allies into battle. Macron, a native of Amiens, is not expected at the service, which French Armed Forces Minister Florence Parly will attend. Denis Holden, a 65-year-old retired policeman, travelled from Melbourne in Australia to honour his grandfather, Private Michael Willis of the 14th Australian Infantry Battalion, who was injured in shelling on the first day of battle. "He never told us anything about the war but he showed me the wounds down his back," Holden told AFP.

Willis penned a poem on the ship that brought him home about the fighting in which he reflected on the Australians "enjoying a life of freedom/Away from the stench of blood". He was also scarred psychologically. "In the years after the war, whenever his Model T Ford backfired, he would yell out 'Get under the bed, we'll all be killed!' I guess that today you'd call it post-traumatic stress syndrome," said Holden, who wore two of his grandfather's service medals pinned to his blazer.

Shock tactics

By the summer of 1918 American troops were pouring into France and the Allies had drastically boosted their firepower, emboldening them to strike back at flagging German forces who had shot their bolt in a massive offensive meant to finish the war earlier in the year. Anxious to capitalize on a victory at the Second Battle of the Marne in July 1918, Supreme Allied Commander

General Ferdinand Foch devised plans for an attack around the city of Amiens, a key rail and logistics hub.

When guns began pounding German positions before dawn on August 8, the Germans were caught off guard. Marooned in dense fog, many dazed soldiers surrendered to the Allies, who punched a gaping, 12-kilometre hole into German lines, backed by some 600 tanks and 2,000 warplanes. The stunned German army, which had 27,000 soldiers killed, injured or captured on the first day, never recovered. By early September it was in retreat and two months later the conflict was over. But within two decades the battle drums were echoing



AMIENS: Britain's Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, and French Minister of the Armed Forces, Florence Parly, attend a religious ceremony to mark the 100th anniversary of the World War I (WWI) Battle of Amiens, at the Cathedral in Amiens. —AFP

again and many of the officers who made a name for themselves in the so-called "war to end all wars" were back in action.

Attending the ceremony was Helen Patton, granddaughter of World War II hero General George Patton. World War I was a "training ground" for Patton, who was badly injured by machine gunfire while leading a tank brigade in battle near Verdun in September 1918. "He learned to pray, to cuss and to handle troops", his granddaughter said. Despite Amiens marking a turning point in the war the battle never gained the same place in the popular imagination as longer, bloodier World War I clashes such as the Somme or Verdun. —AFP

Georgia marks 10th anniversary of Russia war

TBILISI, Georgia: Georgia yesterday marked the tenth anniversary of its war with Russia which has left the country dismembered with its separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia remaining under Moscow's control. Georgia's five-cross red-and-white national flags were flying at half-mast outside government buildings as the tiny Black Sea nation mourned the victims of the bloody war.

Yesterday morning, President Giorgi Margvelashvili laid a wreath at the memorial cemetery of the Georgian soldiers killed in the conflict. He is later due to address troops at the Senaki military base that was looted and destroyed by invading Russian forces during the conflict and then rebuilt as a showpiece of Georgia's drive to join NATO.

Georgia and its Soviet-era master Russia have long been at loggerheads over Tbilisi's bid to join the European Union and NATO with the spiralling confrontation culminating in a full-out war on August 8, 2008. The Russian army swept into Georgia — bombing targets and occupying large swathes of territory — after Tbilisi launched a large-scale military operation against South Ossetian separatist forces who had been shelling Georgian villages in the region.

Over just five days, Russia defeated Georgia's small military and the hostilities ended with a ceasefire mediated by France's then-president Nicolas Sarkozy, who at the time held the European Union's rotating

Chorus of condemnation

Georgia and its Western partners have condemned Russia's continued "occupation" of its territory and demanded the Kremlin reverse its recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Yesterday the Georgian presidency said US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo phoned Margvelashvili to reiterate Washington's "strong support to Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty."

He "underlined that the United States would never reconcile with the occupation of Georgian territories" and "pledged to continue helping Georgia in addressing the challenges still facing the country ten years after Russia's military aggression," it said in a statement. The Georgian foreign ministry denounced Russia's continued military build-up in the separatist regions. "The Russian Federation has not implemented its international obligations despite constant calls from the international community... and has further reinforced its illegal military presence on the ground," the ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

In a show of solidarity with Tbilisi, the foreign ministers of Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, and Ukraine's vice premier visited the country and issued a joint statement urging Russia to "start honoring international law and the right of sovereign neighboring states to choose their own destiny." They also expressed "strong support for Georgia's



TBILISI: Relatives of Georgia's servicemen killed during the 2008 brief war with Russia over control of South Ossetia mourn during a ceremony on the 10th anniversary of the conflict at the memorial cemetery. —AFP

sovereign choice to pursue the ultimate goal of membership in the EU and NATO."

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the EU's foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said the "Russian military presence in both Abkhazia and South Ossetia continues to violate international law". The German and French foreign ministries called Russia's recognition of the breakaway Georgian areas Abkhazia and South Ossetia "unacceptable."

Mikheil Saakashvili — Georgia's president in 2004-2013 — accused Russia of preparing to invade his country for years before the war, claiming Russian forces started entering Georgian territory ahead of Tbilisi's offensive on the enclave in an op-ed

published Tuesday. But the Kremlin has called its Georgia campaign an "operation to force Georgia to peace" and save South Ossetia's population from "genocide."

Russian President Vladimir Putin — who served as prime minister during the war — said in 2012 that he approved a plan of military action against Georgia as early as in 2006 and that Russia has "trained South Ossetian militia." Russia and separatist authorities in South Ossetia have rejected repeated calls from the UN General Assembly for the "safe and dignified return to their homes" of the 18,500 ethnic Georgians who were forcibly displaced from the region" in what the EU has said was "an ethnic cleansing." —AFP

International

Lombok quake leaves 156,000 homeless as death toll hits 131

'We believe some people buried are still alive'

TANJUNG: The death toll from a powerful earthquake on the Indonesian island of Lombok rose above 130 yesterday, as authorities appealed for food, clean water and medical help for some 156,000 people forced from their homes. Many frightened, displaced villagers are staying under tents or tarpaulins dotted along roads or in parched rice fields, and makeshift medical facilities have been set up to treat the injured. Evacuees in some encampments say they are running out of food, while others are suffering psychological trauma after the 6.9-magnitude quake, which struck just one week after another tremor surged through the island and killed 17.

"We still need long-term aid, even though we have already received help from various (regional) governments," national disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said. Around 1,477 people were severely injured in the disaster, with tens of thousands of homes damaged, and authorities say the toll of 131 is likely to rise. Workers with heavy machinery are searching the rubble of homes, schools and mosques, with hope of finding any survivors fading. "The corpses are starting to smell and we believe some people buried are still alive — that's why it's a critical time," Nugroho said.

Local authorities, international relief groups and the central government have begun organizing aid, but shattered roads have slowed efforts to reach survivors in the mountainous north and east of Lombok, which bore the brunt of the quake. Muhammad Zainul Majidi, governor of the West Nusa Tenggara region which

covers Lombok, said there was a dire need for medical staff, food and medicine in the worst-hit places. Hundreds of bloodied and bandaged victims have been treated outside damaged hospitals in the island's main city of Mataram and other badly affected areas.

"We have limited human resources. Some paramedics have to be at the shelters, some need to be mobile," Majidi told AFP. "The scale of this quake is massive for us here in West Nusa Tenggara, this is our first experience." Some evacuees are grappling with the traumatic scenes of death and destruction that accompanied the quake. "I saw my neighbor get stuck in the rubble and die. He asked me for help, but I couldn't help him, we just ran to help ourselves," Johriah, who like many Indonesians goes by one name, told AFP tearfully.

'Destruction almost 100 percent'

The Indonesian Red Cross said it had set up 10 mobile clinics in the north of the island. A field hospital has also been established near an evacuation centre catering to more than 500 people in the village of Tanjung Kurniawan Eko Wibowo, a doctor at the field hospital, said most patients had broken bones and head injuries. "We lack the infrastructure to perform operations because (they) need to be performed in a sterile place," Wibowo said.

Across much of the island, a popular tourist destination, once-bustling villages have been turned into virtual ghost towns. "In some villages we visited the destruction was almost 100 percent, all houses col-

lapsed, roads are cracked and bridges were broken," said Arifin Muhammad Hadi, a spokesman for the Indonesian Red Cross. Many farmers were reluctant to move far from their damaged homes and leave precious livestock behind, he added. The Indonesian military said that three Hercules transporter planes packed with food, medication, blankets, tents and water tanks had arrived in Lombok. The West Sumatra government has donated one ton of its most famous culinary export, beef rendang — a slow-cooked coconut curry.

'We have no clean water'

But some evacuees have complained of being ignored or experiencing long delays for supplies to arrive at shelters. "There has been no help at all here," said 36-year-old Multazam, staying with hundreds of others under tarpaulins on a dry paddy field outside West Pemenang village. "We have no clean water, so if we want to go to the toilet we use a small river nearby," he said, adding they needed food, bedding and medicine.

At an orphanage in West Lombok, some 80 children — including a one-year-old — were huddling under two large tents after their dorms were destroyed. "We still have supplies for the next few days, but I'm not sure about after that," Billa Rabbani, a spokeswoman from the Peduli Anak orphanage, told AFP. The quake struck as evening prayers were being said across the Muslim-majority island and there are fears that one collapsed mosque in north Lombok had been filled with worshippers.



LOMBOK: People search for their belongings through the rubble of damaged houses in Menggala, north Lombok yesterday, three days after the area was hit by an earthquake. — AFP

Rescuers have found three bodies and also managed to pull one man alive from the twisted wreckage of the mosque, reduced to a pile of concrete and metal bars, with its towering green dome folded in on itself.

Meanwhile, the evacuation of tourists from the Gili Islands — three tiny, coral-fringed tropical islands off the northwest coast of Lombok — has finished, officials said. — AFP



YANGON: A student holds a portrait of General Aung San during a ceremony to mark the 30th anniversary of the 8888 uprising in front of city hall. — AFP

Myanmar remembers storied uprising

YANGON: Students and former activists in Myanmar marked the 30th anniversary of the famed 1988 pro-democracy uprising with a rousing but low-key ceremony, the culmination of three days of events to commemorate the revolt and its brutal suppression. Some 2,000 people packed the Yangon University recreation centre, which was festooned with red flags sporting the "fighting peacock" logo of the movement that helped catapult Aung San Suu Kyi to prominence.

They crammed past exhibitions of photos and paintings, wrote messages of support on a mock prison cell wall, and took turns waiting for a photo next to a sculpture of a symbolic clenched fist. Former protest leaders mounted the stage to reflect on the struggle against the military that first seized power in a 1962 coup. "After 30

years, we students have come back here again," Min Ko Naing, one of the more prominent protest leaders, told the crowd to applause. "But some aren't able to come back." After years of economic decline and a tightening clampdown on rights, student-led protests swelled into nationwide strikes and marches on August 8, 1988. But troops rushed in to stamp out the movement, shooting protesters and locking them up en masse. The number of political prisoners in Myanmar's fetid jails swelled while many fled the country into prolonged exile.

During the uprising, Suu Kyi — the daughter of independence hero General Aung San who had returned from England to care for her sick mother — was seen as a beacon of hope, giving rousing speeches to adoring crowds and maddening the paranoid junta. She was placed under house arrest for a combined total of 15 years before being released in 2010 and leading her National League for Democracy (NLD) party to victory in historic 2015 elections. But her reputation as a global icon for rights has been shattered due to her handling of the country's Rohingya crisis. — AFP

Bangladesh photographer back in police custody

DHAKA: An award-winning photographer who accused Bangladesh officers of assaulting him after his arrest during major protests in Dhaka was back in police custody after a medical checkup, an official said yesterday. Shahidul Alam, 63, was held by plainclothes police at his home Sunday after giving an interview to Al Jazeera about the student demonstrations, an arrest which drew condemnation from international rights groups. The high court on Tuesday ordered authorities to transfer Alam to hospital. "We have completed the checkup and he didn't need hospital admission. He was taken back after the procedure," Bangabandhu hospital director Brigadier General Abdullah al Harun told AFP.

Doctors would report on Alam's condition to a higher court, he added. Alam had been remanded in custody by a lower court for violating controversial laws on internet speech, but the remand order was suspended by a higher court. He was accused of making "false" and "provocative" statements as tens of thousands of students protested in Dhaka to demand improvements to



DHAKA: Renowned Bangladeshi photographer Shahidul Alam, 63, gestures in a hospital. — AFP

road safety and an end to corruption. The renowned photographer told reporters outside a magistrate's court on Monday that he had been beaten so badly in police custody that his tunic needed washing to get the blood out. On

Tuesday morning he was shifted to hospital, his wife Rahnuma Ahmed told AFP, adding he looked better than during his appearance in court when he seemed shaken and was limping. "He was walking by himself," she said. — AFP

Indian state to investigate children's shelters

MUMBAI: A northern Indian state is conducting audits of all children's shelters after 23 girls and boys were rescued in a raid on one home where police said they were being sold for sex. Acting on a tip from a 13-year-old who escaped a shel-

ter in the city of Deoria, in Uttar Pradesh state, police said they conducted a raid on Sunday night, rescuing 20 girls and three boys.

"The child who tipped us off told us that girls were sent in cars in the night, and they would come back crying in the morning," said Dayaram Singh Gaur, a police officer in Deoria who is investigating the case. Officials throughout the state have been ordered to check conditions at all shelters in their districts. Uttar Pradesh Women and Child Welfare Minister Rita Bahuguna Joshi told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"This is a shocker. In 2018, when we are talking of women's empowerment, this is an unfortunate situation," she said. The raid came just weeks after police rescued 29 girls from a shelter in neighboring Bihar state, and arrested 10 people who are under investigation for crimes including rape. India's national minister for women and children, Maneka Gandhi, was quoted in The Indian Express newspaper yesterday saying she had ordered all childcare institutions across the country to be audited within 60 days. Gandhi's office declined to comment. — Reuters

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Analysis

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Britain walks Brexit high wire over financial services

Britain must avoid tying Brussels up in red tape or antagonizing its soon to be former European Union partners and the United States if it is to maintain access to the bloc's financial services market after Brexit. At risk is Britain's biggest financial services export market, which was worth a record £26 billion (\$33.45 billion) last year out of total sector exports of £60 billion. Brexit will mean banks, insurers and asset managers in Britain losing the unfettered access to the bloc's customers they currently have under EU "passporting" rules.

However a transition deal, if it can be agreed between Britain and the rest of the EU, would allow passporting to continue after Brexit next March until the end of 2020. After that, a new trade agreement covering all economic sectors would be needed, although its outline has yet to be agreed. Britain is seeking future financial trade based on a more generous version of the existing equivalence system for firms from non-EU states, such as the United States and Japan, where domestic regulation is aligned closely enough with the bloc's.

Karel Lannoo, chief executive of Brussels think tank CEPIS, said accommodating Britain would put political pressure on the EU to improve access for other non-EU states and annoy Norway, which pays for EU market access. "Brussels does not want to open a Pandora's Box as they would have to give the same treatment to other third countries like the United States. Norway will also say what is the purpose of the EEA," Lannoo said, referring to the European Economic Area.

Seventy percent of financial services currently passported between EU states are not covered by equivalence, including commercial lending, deposit taking, payments, asset management and core insurance, meaning firms must pay up to open new EU hubs or face a severe loss of market. Brussels knows it is treading a delicate line when it comes to amending equivalence - it has already had clashes with the United States over clearing houses, and with Switzerland over stock exchanges - and US regulators warn that their equivalence agreements must not be disrupted by Brexit deals. Around 100 EU rules would need amending to broaden equivalence, potentially tying up EU legislators for years.

French villain

Britain's finance ministry has asked the City and experts like Rachel Kent, a partner at Hogan Lovells law firm for advice on how to enhance equivalence, Reuters reported last month. "We have to know what to ask for. We are already fully aligned with the EU. It's about taking items out rather than putting things in, and that should make it a much quicker process," Kent said, adding that the sector is now stress testing the government's proposals for financial services.

European Commission officials told Reuters in June there were no plans to go beyond the limited changes already proposed, a hardset position viewed by the City as standard negotiating tactics. Changes made to equivalence so far are viewed in London as a Paris-backed drive to restrict access so that more UK firms open new EU hubs benefitting Paris, Frankfurt, Dublin or Luxembourg. "France is conveniently portrayed as the on-duty villain, but Germany and in fact most of the core EU and part of the rest think it would be unjustifiable and unacceptable that the UK keeps the advantages of the single market after having left it," said Jacques Lafitte, a former EU official who helped create the euro.

Time for approving changes is also running out as the European Parliament goes to the polls next year and a new European Commission is appointed, meaning a legislative hiatus. But consultants say the EU is unlikely to turn off the tap to UK financial services after 2020 as it needs to build up its own capital market after decades of City dominance. "Does the EU want to see enhanced access continuing between the EU and UK? Almost certainly in the short term," said Andrew Pilgrim, government financial services leader at consultants EY.

Blunter guillotine

Still, few believe the EU will offer Britain a binding commitment to expand equivalence. "The City kids itself by hoping for anything better than 'normal' equivalence," said Lafitte, who now advises financial firms on EU policy in Brussels. Others say the bloc may at least change how it administers the process. Britain says the 30-day guillotine or notice period for withdrawing access - which has never been triggered - makes equivalence unreliable. "I suspect that a withdrawal period of a year or two instead of 30 days will make its way into the EU equivalence regime," Kent said.

Brussels-based consultants say that Britain would have to make commitments in return for broader equivalence, such as promising not to compete unfairly. Some EU officials worry that Britain will dilute financial rules to bolster the City of London's role as a global financial center. Bank of England Governor Mark Carney has suggested that the cap on bankers' bonuses imposed by the EU and long opposed by Britain, could be changed after Brexit. — Reuters

Cartoon for the Soul



Canada foreign policy could be costly

Canada's determination to place human rights at the heart of its foreign policy could cost it billions in trade with an incensed Saudi Arabia - the price of a diplomatic initiative that some observers say could pay off in the long run. Since Riyadh announced the expulsion of Ottawa's ambassador and a severing of trade ties on Monday, several top officials have reiterated Justin Trudeau's mantra since becoming prime minister in 2015: there can be no compromise on the country's progressive principles. "We are going to lead with our values," Finance Minister Bill Morneau said Tuesday. "It's important that we bring Canadian values around the world, and we are going to continue to enunciate what we believe are the appropriate ways of dealing with citizens."

Canada has long pressed Saudi Arabia for the release of jailed blogger Raif Badawi, after granting asylum in 2013 to his wife and their three children. A Twitter message calling on Riyadh to "immediately release" his sister and other women's rights activists appears to have tipped the scale. But that so-called ethics-based approach has its downsides. In addition to the diplomatic rupture, Saudi Arabia also suspended scholarships for more than 15,000 Saudi students in Canada with plans to relocate them to other countries, and the state airline Saudia suspended flights to Toronto.

Canada had been eager to boost investment and exports to Saudi Arabia as the kingdom diversifies its economy. Saudi Arabia is its second largest export market in the Gulf behind the United Arab Emirates. In 2017, exports to the kingdom stood at CAN \$1.4 billion (US \$1.

billion). The first possible big hit Canada could suffer relates to the sale of light armored vehicles to the kingdom, worth CAN\$15 billion. Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland said Monday she "looks forward" to hearing from Riyadh about the future of the deal.



Questions over 'rights first' diplomacy

Choices to make

The clash with the Saudis is not the first time Canada risked losing major business over its "rights first" diplomacy. Earlier this year, the Philippines cancelled a defense contract for 14 Canadian helicopters after Trudeau's government ordered a review of President Rodrigo Duterte's rights record. Canada's insistence on environmental protections in new trade deals has also made negotiations harder, for example, with the United States and Mexico, and with China. "There is a moment when politically we must make choices," said Ferry de Kerckhove, a professor at the University of Ottawa. "It is clear that, in the eyes of

the world, there is a perception of Canada as one of the last bastions of the defense of the international liberal order, both economic, political and social," he told AFP.

Cost of doing business

And while it may cost Canada a few business deals, its rights-based diplomatic demarches have more benefits than long-term drawbacks, according to Bessma Momani, a professor at the University of Waterloo. "Even for Arab business leaders, when they sign a contract with Canada, they know from their own experience, from hearing from a cousin, an uncle, that Canada is a multicultural society that respects human rights," she said. "For all of those lost deals with authoritarian governments resulting from our human rights-centric policy, there's a whole host of contracts that we are getting because we honor human rights."

But other analysts questioned what, if anything, Canada has gained by squaring off with Riyadh. "This has nothing to do with human rights. That's just a poor excuse," Amir Attaran, a professor at the University of Ottawa, told AFP. "There are geopolitics at play, particularly the strategic and theocratic rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. And Saudi Arabia is taking aim at Canada over Trudeau's refusal to endorse sanctions on rival Iran." David Chatterton, a former Canadian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, was blunt. "Was our objective to mitigate the circumstances for Mr Badawi? If so, we failed. Was it to influence the broader direction of Saudi Arabia? I don't think we achieved that," he said. "Have we advanced any Canadian interests? No. It was a total failure." — AFP

In peace between Ethiopia, Eritrea, UAE lends a helping hand

When the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea embraced in Asmara last month, promising to end the two-decade-old state of war between their two countries, it looked like a sudden breakthrough. But the rapprochement was, in fact, the culmination of a year of back-channel talks, sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters. One of the drivers behind that process was the United States, which has been a major player in the Horn of Africa for decades. More surprising was the role played by a much smaller nation: The United Arab Emirates.

The oil-rich Gulf state has gained increasing influence in the region in recent years, according to UAE and Ethiopian officials and diplomats. Driven in part by a desire to tap Ethiopia's growing economy and in part by a fear that rivals such as Iran and Qatar could gain a foothold in the Horn of Africa, the UAE has pushed into the region for more than a decade. Its newfound assertiveness underscores the shifts underway in the continent, where China now challenges the historic power of western nations and where Russia, Brazil and the UAE and its Gulf States are growing in prominence.

Publicly, the UAE downplays its influence. Minister of State for International Cooperation, Reem Al-Hashimy, told an event in Washington last month that her country had "played a humble role in trying to bring these two countries together". But two diplomats in the Gulf told Reuters that the UAE has privately taken credit for the peace agreement. The Ethiopian prime minister's chief of staff, Fitsum Arega, acknowledged meetings with UAE officials, but said the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea were responsible for ending the war. Eritrea's information minister, Yemane Ghebremeskel, was not available for interview when Reuters visited the country's capital, Asmara, last month.

Opportunity

The UAE has enjoyed virtually unchallenged influence in Eritrea for at least a decade. Eritrea is the most diplomatically isolated state in Africa. The United Nations imposed sanctions including an arms embargo

in 2009, accusing the government of supporting Islamist militants in neighboring Somalia - a charge it denies. But Abu Dhabi has a military base there which it uses to help prosecute the war in Yemen, located just across the Red Sea.

Earlier this year, Hashimy, the UAE minister, met with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's predecessor, Hailemariam Desalegn, in Ethiopia. When Abiy took office in April, Abu Dhabi ramped up that effort. The timing was fortuitous: the UAE's relationship with Somalia, another nation in the Horn of Africa, was falling apart and Abu Dhabi was looking for a new partner. "After years of investing in Somali security forces, the UAE saw its gains swept away by what it perceived to be an axis of Qatar and Turkish influence," said Elizabeth Dickinson of the International Crisis Group.

A month after taking office, Abiy visited the UAE capital Abu Dhabi to meet Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. The new Ethiopian leader offered to mediate between Abu Dhabi and Somalia, two diplomats in the Gulf said. Officials from the UAE affiliate of the Red Crescent society, Emirates Red Crescent, later visited Ethiopia to discuss aid projects with Abiy. Those visits complemented efforts by Washington to move toward a restoration of relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The United States has been conducting shuttle diplomacy for more than a year, according to regional diplomats. In 2017, Eritrean officials visited Washington twice and again once this year, leaving messages that the Americans passed to Ethiopian officials. In late April this year, Donald Yamamoto, then the top US official on Africa, met Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki in Asmara - the first visit by a US official of that rank in more than a decade - before meeting Abiy in the Ethiopian capital.

With the promise of financial support from the Gulf and with Washington's backing, Abiy made his move. "Neither Ethiopia nor Eritrea benefit from a stalemate," he said on June 6, a day after his ruling coalition, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), announced it would implement a peace deal with Eritrea dating back to 2000. "We need to expend all our efforts towards peace and reconciliation and extricate ourselves from petty conflicts and divisions and focus on eliminating poverty."

Nine days later, Sheikh Mohammed visited Addis Ababa with officials including Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber, the head of the state-owned oil company. The prince announced a \$3 billion support package, made up of a \$1 billion deposit in Ethiopia's central bank and a pledge of \$2 billion in investments. Ethiopian officials said the deposit, plus an offer from Saudi Arabia of a year's sup-

ply of fuel with payment delayed for 12 months, helped ease a foreign exchange crisis that had caused shortages of medicine and a slowdown in manufacturing. "[The UAE's] good relationship with both parties helped with re-establishing the relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea and we see that as a positive thing," Saad Ali Shire, Foreign Minister in the semi-autonomous state of Somaliland told Reuters.

Decision

It's been a long time coming. Ethiopia and Eritrea are linked by blood and history. An Eritrean secessionist movement helped overthrow a military regime in Addis Ababa in 1991 and the new Ethiopian government then gave Eritrea its independence. For a few years the two countries co-existed peacefully. Landlocked Ethiopia depended on Eritrea's main port, which sits on one of the world's busiest shipping lanes. But in 1998, the two went to war after a border dispute. Two years of brutal fighting left at least 80,000 dead. A shaky ceasefire followed.

Things finally began to change after the death of Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in 2012. Members of his ruling coalition began quietly discussing how to approach Isaias Afwerki in Eritrea. "It became clear to us that normalization was not only beneficial to Ethiopia but for the entire region," said Hailemariam, who succeeded Meles before resigning in February.

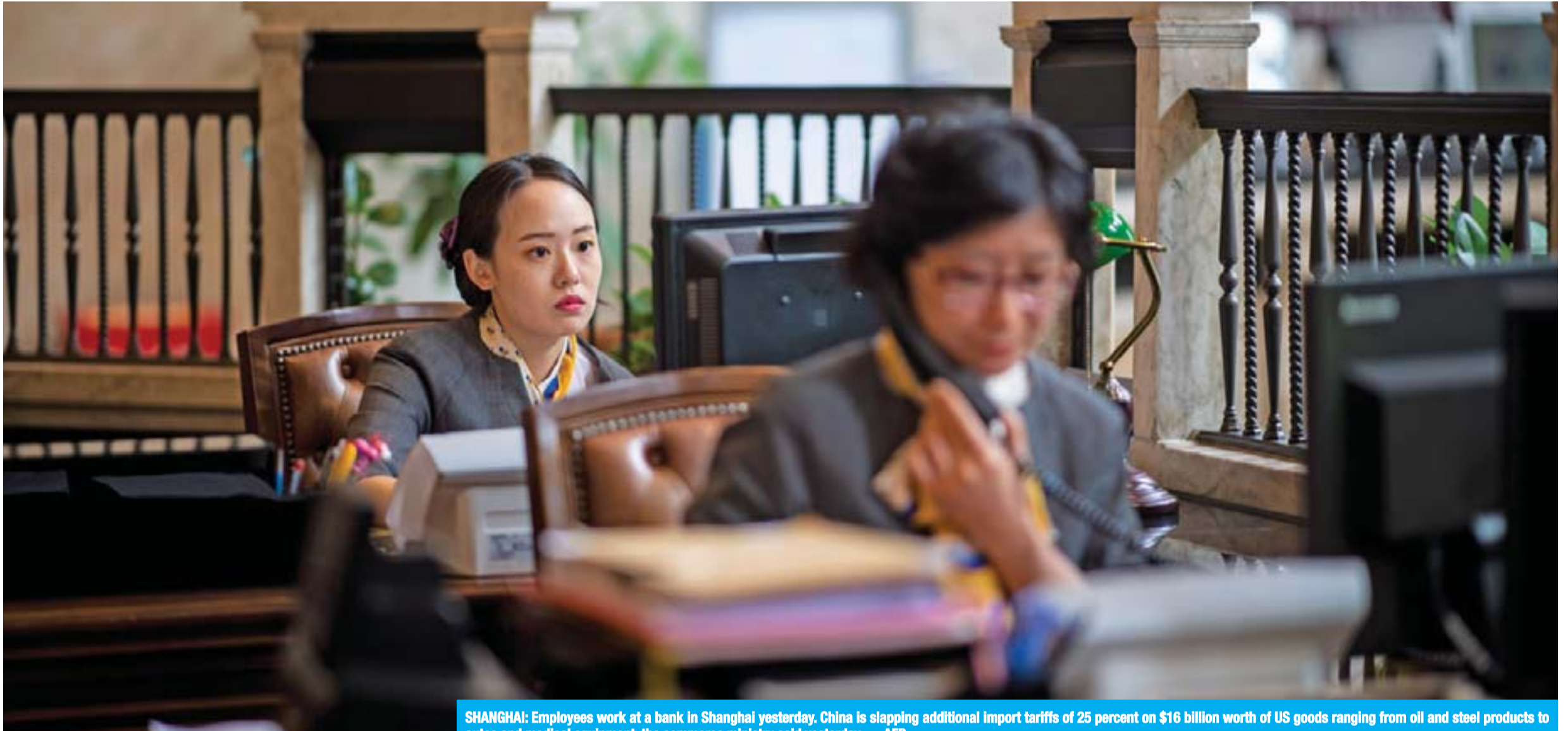
Ethiopia's ruling coalition agreed in principle during Hailemariam's tenure to accept the peace deal and withdraw Ethiopian troops from a border town awarded to Eritrea in 2002, he said. His story was confirmed by other senior politicians and diplomats in Ethiopia. But it was the appointment of Abiy that really encouraged Eritrea, Ethiopian officials, politicians and diplomats in the region say.

Preaching forgiveness and an end to the Ethiopian state's preoccupation with security, Abiy cuts a very different figure from his two predecessors. "The PM made it clear he will work to ensure lasting peace and ... he proved himself through real gestures like releasing political prisoners," said his chief of staff Arega. Abiy was able to act because his party had seen off the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front, long the dominant force within the ruling coalition and traditionally opposed to Eritrea.

When Isaias, the Eritrean leader, accepted the olive branch, he praised Abiy and welcomed the TPLF's weakening grip on power. When Abiy and Isaias embraced last month, some in Africa likened the moment to the fall of the Berlin Wall. A few weeks later the two leaders travelled to Abu Dhabi. A photo from that meeting shows the two men holding hands with the crown prince as he led them up a palace staircase. — Reuters

Business

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12 German Ryanair pilots to join European strikes tomorrow**13** Toyota sailing into the future with Energy Observer**14** After high-profile exits, fewer non-white CEOs remain in US

SHANGHAI: Employees work at a bank in Shanghai yesterday. China is slapping additional import tariffs of 25 percent on \$16 billion worth of US goods ranging from oil and steel products to autos and medical equipment, the commerce ministry said yesterday. — AFP

China slaps additional 25% tariffs on US goods

Chinese exports accelerate despite US tariffs, surplus remains strong

BEIJING: China is slapping additional import tariffs of 25 percent on \$16 billion worth of US goods ranging from oil and steel products to autos and medical equipment, the commerce ministry said, as the world's two largest economies escalate their trade dispute.

"This is a very unreasonable practice," the commerce ministry said on its website www.mofcom.gov.cn, responding to the United States' decision to slap 25 percent tariffs on another \$16 billion of Chinese goods on Aug 23.

China's exports surged more than expected in July despite US duties and its closely watched surplus with the United States remained near record highs, as the world's two major economic powers ramp up a bitter dispute that some fear could derail global growth.

In the latest move by President Donald Trump to put pressure on Beijing to negotiate trade concessions, Washington is set to begin collecting 25 percent tariffs on another \$16 billion in Chinese goods on Aug 23. In a statement on its official website late yesterday, China's commerce ministry criticized the US move as being "unreasonable", saying it had no choice but to adopt the same measure on an equal amount of American goods ranging from oil and steel products to autos and medical equipment.

Yesterday's Chinese data provide the first readings of the overall trade picture for the world's second-largest economy since US duties on \$34 billion of Chinese imports came into effect on July 6. All the same, China's exports for July rose a bigger than expected 12.2 percent year-on-year, showing lit-

tle tariff impact for now and beating June's 11.2 percent rise and analysts' expectations in a Reuters poll for 10 percent growth. Of more direct consequence in the Sino-US trade war, China's surplus with the United States shrank only marginally to \$28.09 billion last month from a record \$28.97 billion in June. Washington has long criticized China's trade surplus with the United States and has demanded Beijing cut it.

Tariffs to hit

The first round of President Donald Trump's punitive tariffs on China will hit the full \$50 billion in goods starting August 23, the government announced Tuesday.

Washington already imposed 25 percent tariffs on \$34 billion in Chinese products on July 6. But it held off on a final \$16 billion as a result of concerns raised by US companies. Although the move was expected, it cements the view that there appears to be no effort underway to defuse the dispute between the world's two largest economies that have continued to exchange threats. China has already retaliated with duties of its own, and has pledged to match the United States dollar-for-dollar with new tariffs, including on the next \$16 billion.

Americans import far more from China than the other way around, however, meaning Beijing may at some point need to

look for other means of retaliation. Economists say China appears to be taking a more hands-off approach to the yuan, which marked its worst 4-month fall on record between April and July and has provided some reprieve for exporters in the face of the rising trade tensions.

ANZ senior China economist Betty Wang said Beijing will likely resist using its closely managed currency as a tool in the trade war. "Currency devaluation, which may have helped exports to some extent, has been largely market-driven in our view and is not a preferred policy tool by Chinese policy makers as part of the retaliation measures," Wang said.

China's trade with the US also continued to rise in July despite the tariffs, with exports up 11.2 percent year-on-year, and imports increasing 11.1 percent. Analysts still expect a less favorable overall trade balance for China in coming months given its early days in the tariff brawl.

Beijing boosts liquidity

After a strong start to the year, growth in the world's second-largest economy cooled slightly in the second quarter, partly hit by the government's years-long efforts to tackle debt risks. China's imports rose 27.3 percent year-on-year in

July, in a sign domestic demand remains solid, but the worry is that the escalating Sino-US trade war, rising corporate bankruptcies, and a steep decline in the yuan could put a significant dent on the economy. The government has responded by releasing more liquidity into the banking system, encouraging lending and promising a more "active" fiscal policy. World financial markets have taken a battering in recent months as fears grow that Trump's "America First" policies could derail a global economic revival. Several large American companies have said they would adjust their supply chains to source outside of China if tariffs on Chinese goods impacted them, while China's Haier Group said rising steel prices amid hefty US import tariffs was driving up costs for its business in America.

"Stick of hegemony"

China has repeatedly warned it will strike back against any further punitive measures by Trump, saying the United States is threatening the global free trade order with its protectionism. Chinese state media, reflecting the government's stance, has said China will not be cowed in the face of US threats. The latest commentary from state media on Wednesday took a softer line after resorting to personal attacks against Trump earlier in the week, saying China could get through the storm but refrained from directly mentioning the US president.

China has not yet given a date for its previously announced retaliatory tariffs on \$16 billion in US goods, which will target commodities such as crude oil, natural gas, coal and some refined oil products. — Reuters

China, Germany defend business with Iran in face of US threats

BEIJING/BERLIN: China and Germany defended their business ties with Iran yesterday in the face of President Donald Trump's warning that any companies trading with the Islamic Republic would be barred from the United States.

The comments from Beijing and Berlin signalled growing anger from partners of the United States, which reimposed strict sanctions against Iran on Tuesday, over its threat to penalize businesses from third countries that continue to operate there. "China has consistently opposed unilateral sanctions and long-armed jurisdiction," the Chinese foreign ministry said. "China's commercial cooperation with Iran is open and transparent, reasonable, fair and lawful, not violating any United Nations Security Council resolutions," it added in a faxed statement to Reuters.

"China's lawful rights should be protected." The German government said US sanctions

against Iran that have an extra-territorial effect violate international law, and Germany expects Washington to consider European interests when coming up with such sanctions. The reimposition of US sanctions followed Trump's decision earlier this year to pull out of a 2015 deal to lift the punitive measures in return for curbs on Iran's nuclear program designed to prevent it from building an atomic bomb. Tuesday's sanctions target Iran's purchases of US dollars, metals trading, coal, industrial software and the auto sector. Trump tweeted on Tuesday: "These are the most biting sanctions ever imposed, and in November they ratchet up to yet another level. Anyone doing business with Iran will NOT be doing business with the United States. I am asking for WORLD PEACE, nothing less!"

EUROPEANS WITHDRAW

European countries, hoping to persuade Tehran to continue to respect the deal, have promised to try to lessen the blow of sanctions and to urge their firms not to pull out. But that has proved difficult: European companies have quit Iran, arguing that they cannot risk their US business. Among those that have suspended plans to invest in Iran are France's oil major Total, its big carmakers PSA and Renault, and their German rival Daimler. Danish engineering company Haldor Topsoe, one of the world's leading

industrial catalyst producers, said yesterday it would cut around 200 jobs from its workforce of 2,700 due to the new US sanctions on Iran, which made it very hard for its customers there to finance new projects.

The chief executive of reinsurance group Munich Re said it may abandon its Iran business under pressure from the United States, but described the operation as very small. Turkey, however, said it would continue to buy natural gas from Iran.

In Tehran, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was quoted by an Iranian newspaper as saying that a US plan to reduce Iran's oil exports to zero would not succeed.

US officials have said in recent weeks that they aim to pressure countries to stop buying oil from Iran in a bid to force Tehran to halt its nuclear and missile programs and involvement in regional conflicts in Syria and Iraq. "If the Americans want to keep this simplistic and impossible idea in their minds they should also know its consequences," Zarif told the Iranian newspaper. "They can't think that Iran won't export oil and others will export." President Hassan Rouhani hinted last month that Iran could block the Strait of Hormuz, a major oil shipping route, if the US attempted to stop the Islamic Republic's oil exports. Trump responded by noting that Iran could face serious consequences if it threatened



TEHRAN: An Iranian man walks in front of a currency exchange shop in the Iranian capital Tehran yesterday. — AFP

the United States. "The Americans have assembled a war room against Iran," Zarif said.

"We can't get drawn into a confrontation with America by falling into this war room trap and playing on a battlefield." Iran has dismissed a last-minute offer from the Trump administration for talks, saying it could not negotiate while Washington had reneged on the 2015 deal to lift

sanctions. In a speech hours before the sanctions were due to take effect on Tuesday, Rouhani rejected negotiations as long as Washington was no longer complying with the deal. "If you stab someone with a knife and then you say you want talks, then the first thing you have to do is remove the knife," Rouhani said in a speech broadcast live on state television. — Reuters

Business

Toyota sailing into the future with its path-breaking Energy Observer

Energy Observer: A showcase for renewable energy



KUWAIT: Launched in 2017 in Saint-Malo (France), Energy Observer is more than just a boat. The vessel is a vehicle to deliver positive and inspiring information. In addition, it demonstrates and shares solutions for extracting energy harmlessly from nature. Energy Observer showcases technologies that will support tomorrow's energy networks to make them efficient and applicable on a large scale. It is this model, based on a mix of renewable energy sources and energy storage that the Energy Observer team will promote on their worldwide tour.

Energy Observer is the first autonomous hydrogen vessel that emits no greenhouse gases or fine particles. This electrically propelled vessel of the future operates by using a mix of renewable energies and a system that produces carbon-free hydrogen from seawater.

This journey is both a human and technological challenge. A six year odyssey to test on-board technology in extreme conditions. An endeavor to navigate the first energy autonomous boat around the globe. In addition, the crew led by Victorien Erussard and Jerome Delafosse, is also searching for solutions to champion an ecological and energy transition.

Toyota and hydrogen

Hydrogen is at the very heart of the Energy Observer project and the major reason for Toyota Motor Europe's participation. On board the boat, it allows the vessel to gain a considerable weight advantage (50% of the displacement of the ship) when compared to an exclusive battery storage solution.

Used as an energy storage means, it is key to overcoming the issue of the inter-

mittent supply of energy both on land and at sea: to exploit surplus energy and thus extend the autonomy of both mobile and stationary installations.

Tokyo 2020: A common goal

After sailing in France in 2017, now in the Mediterranean and on to Northern Europe in 2019, Energy Observer aims to reach Tokyo in time for the Olympic Games in 2020.

Toyota has been pioneering hydrogen technology for the last 20 years. Carrying out considerable testing in demanding conditions to ensure hydrogen can work as a practical fuel alternative. Hydrogen allows for quick refueling, a significant driving range and a great emission-free driving experience that is helping to power cars, buses, trucks and even forklifts.



Sterling plunges to 2018 lows as Brexit unease builds

LONDON: The pound was engulfed in a heavy selloff yesterday, skidding to its lowest levels against the dollar and euro in almost a year as markets ramped up bets on Britain leaving the EU without an agreement with Brussels.

London-based traders reported a significant increase in investor hedging against a possible freefall in sterling in the event of a 'no-deal' Brexit, which could damage the economy by raising trade barriers with the UK's biggest export market. The exodus began after UK trade minister Liam Fox said on Sunday there was up to a 60 percent chance the country could leave the European Union next March without any new trade deals in place. The currency move has snowballed since.

There was no obvious trigger for yesterday's big moves lower, but rather a building sense of investor anxiety as the clock ticks down towards a series of EU-Britain meetings starting in September with no agreement in sight.

"What we are seeing is broad sterling weakness, a very aggressive weakening trend," said Peter Kinsella, strategist at Commonwealth Bank of Australia. Sterling tumbled against the euro, dollar yen and Swiss franc. The slide against the euro, the biggest one-day fall since end-May, left the pound below 90 pence for the first time in nine months.

Three-month sterling implied volatility, a gauge of expected swings in a currency, surged to its highest since March. The vol, as the measure is known, was headed for its biggest one-day jump since November.

Part of the hedging trade was being driven by companies. "A lot of companies can't wait for the (Brexit) negotiations outcome in October, so of course are trying to hedge against a drop in the pound," said Christophe Barraud, an economist at Paris-based brokerage Market Securities.

Sterling slumped 0.6 percent versus the euro to 90.175 pence. The pound fell to as low as \$1.2859 against the dollar.

No rates rescue

Analysts said the pound was also being hit by a growing realization that, after last week's Bank of England's policy meeting, UK interest rate increases were likely to be as limited as one a year and contingent on a smooth Brexit. The BoE raised rates from crisis-era lows last week, but few investors saw the increase as a vote of confidence in the economy with so much political uncertainty ahead.

"Some are thinking in the market that the BoE raised in order to give them ammunition to cut rates in the face of a 'no deal'," said Neil Jones, head of hedge fund FX sales at Mizuho Bank. "The next move could be a cut rather than another hike."

Options markets supported the idea that there would be little relief in the coming months for sterling. — Reuters

IMF says India economy will put on new spurt

MUMBAI: India will remain one of the world's fastest-growing major economies in coming years, the International Monetary Fund said yesterday, in welcome news for Prime Minister Narendra Modi before elections next year. In a wide-ranging report on Asia's third-biggest economy, the IMF commended government economic reforms but called for action to contain inflation and increase the number of women in the workforce.

The Washington-based institution forecast GDP growth for the 2018-2019 fiscal year at 7.3 percent, rising to 7.5 percent the following year. The pickup follows a fall to 6.7 percent growth in 2017-2018.

The IMF said India was facing a "broadly positive outlook" thanks to "strengthening investment and robust private consumption" but warned of risks from higher fuel prices and a weakening rupee.

Growth expanded to 7.7 percent for the quarter

from January to March, the highest for seven quarters, as the economy started to recover from a rocky start to Modi's economic initiatives.

Despite teething problems, the IMF commended Modi's government for introducing a nationwide goods and services tax (GST) in 2017, which replaced a myriad of state and national taxes.

But it added that GST, which sets different value-added taxes for different types of goods, could be improved. "GST has a complex structure with a relatively high number of rates (and exemptions), which could be simplified," it said.

India's quarterly growth fell as low as 5.7 percent in mid-2017 as the economy readied for GST and reeled from a shock cash ban in late 2016.

The decision to scrap 86 percent of currency notes, known as "demonetization", in November 2016 dealt a major blow to the economy. The IMF noted that the move had caused "an acute monetary shock" but said the economy has since recovered.

Rising inflation

It praised the government for taking measures to tackle crippling debts at India's public-sector banks and for relaxing rules on foreign direct investment, but said more reforms were still needed.

"India would benefit from further liberalization of

trade and foreign investment," the IMF said.

It also said India could boost growth further by bringing more women into formal employment. Women are massively underrepresented in workplaces across patriarchal India. The IMF said its directors stressed "the importance of modernizing labor laws and regulations and other measures to help increase formal employment, particularly the employment of women".

Inflation is on the rise due to high oil prices and a falling rupee. The country, which is expected to hold a general election in spring 2019, imports nearly 80 percent of its oil and fluctuations in crude oil prices can seriously affect the economy.

The IMF said it projects inflation to rise to 5.2 percent this financial year, well above the target of 4 percent set by India's central bank and a 17-year-long low of 3.6 during the last fiscal year. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has raised interest rates twice this summer and the IMF said it "will need to gradually tighten policy further, in response to inflation pressures".

The IMF predicted that India's current account deficit would widen to 2.6 percent. It also warned of instability caused by a trade war between the United States and China. IMF directors "underscored that risks to near-term growth persist, mainly arising from volatile oil prices and tightening global financial conditions," the report said. — AFP

Markets stumble as trade fears dog investors

LONDON: A global markets rally faltered yesterday as the ongoing US-China trade row eroded investor sentiment, dealers said. Wall Street stocks retreated at the opening bell, with the Dow slipping less than a tenth of a percent. In Europe, Frankfurt and Paris stocks drifted downwards but London's benchmark FTSE 100 index carved out a gain of 0.7 percent on the back of the struggling Brexit-hit pound.

"While the rest of Europe wilted in the face of the USA's latest tariffs on Chinese goods, the FTSE benefited from the continuation of sterling's awful August," said Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell.

The pound sank this week on growing concern of a chaotic no-deal exit for Britain from the European Union in March 2019. The weak currency however lifts shares in multinationals that derive the lion's share of their earnings in dollars.

Full-blown trade war?

On the trade war front, the US government announced Tuesday that the first round of President Donald Trump's punitive tariffs on China will hit the full \$50 billion in goods starting August 23. That is on top of the measures Washington had already imposed on \$34 billion of imports last month. The move had been widely expected. But with China putting retaliatory measures in place, it reinforced fears the two sides are heading for an all-out trade war that could hammer the global economy.

"Fears of a full-blown trade war between the world's two biggest economies are set to intensify after the Trump administration announced another round of tariffs on Chinese products," noted FXTM analyst Lukman Otunuga.

The White House has also lined up another \$200 billion in Chinese imports to target in future.

Asia equities stuttered yesterday, with Tokyo down 0.1 percent, Shanghai shedding 1.3 percent, but Hong Kong ended up 0.4 percent in value. Global stock prices had risen Tuesday on the back of solid second-quarter US corporate earnings which temporarily took investor attention off festering trade wars, dealers said. Wall Street had provided a strong lead for Asian markets with the Nasdaq approaching a record high, while energy firms rallied on higher oil prices. However, markets ran out of steam despite forecast-beating Chinese trade figures.

'Herd behavior'

China released figures showing its trade surplus with the US dipped only slightly in July. Globally its exports rose a better-than-forecast 12.2 percent and imports surged 27.3 percent, also beating expectations. The yuan got some support after a Bloomberg News report said the Chinese central bank had emphasized the need for currency stability to the country's lenders as it looks to halt a slide in recent months. It said officials called on them to prevent "herd behavior" and momentum-chasing moves in the forex markets, fearing a run on the yuan similar to 2015-16. This hammered the unit and sent global markets into a tailspin. Oil rose earlier this week after Washington re-imposed a first round of sanctions on Tehran after leaving the nuclear deal, with an embargo on the country's crude exports in November. However it recoiled on the resurgence of trade war fears. — Reuters

FOR RENT

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



3 Bedrooms Apartments:

3 Bedrooms + 3 Bathrooms (2 Master) + Big Salon

Duplex Villas:

3 Bedrooms + 3 Bathrooms + Big Salon + Pool

Tripix Villas:

4 Bedrooms + 4 Bathrooms (2 Master)

+ Big Salon + Pool

All Master Bathrooms is Marble

- Volleyball Court

- Basketball Court

- Hotel Lobby

- Pools + Jacuzzi

- Billiard

- 213 Car Parking Areas

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Business

After high-profile exits, fewer non-white CEOs remain in US

Indra Nooyi's departure from PepsiCo sets a trend

NEW YORK: Following other recent exits by non-white CEOs, Indra Nooyi's departure from PepsiCo announced this week renders America's collective corner office even whiter.

The Indian-born Nooyi cut an especially rare figure in corporate America as an immigrant woman of color. She will be replaced in October by Ramon Laguarta, a European man, the company said Monday.

The announcement follows the 2016 exit of former Xerox chief executive Ursula Burns, a rare African American female CEO, who stepped down when the company broke itself up. In October, Kenneth Chenault announced he was stepping down as head of American Express, leaving just three African Americans CEOs among the Fortune 500, the lowest count since 2002.

Chenault, who was replaced as CEO by Stephen Squeri, a white male, later called the paucity of African American CEOs "a real problem and embarrassing for corporate America" in a November 2017 interview.

Richie Zweigenhaft, a professor of psychology at Guilford College in North Carolina who has long tracked diversity at big US companies, said the progress in promoting women and nonwhites to CEO began stagnating after hitting a peak in 2011, well before Donald Trump was elected president in 2016.

"This trend certainly precedes the elec-

tion but in the current political situation, I don't think there's been as much pressure to change this downward trend as there has been at various times in the past," Zweigenhaft said in a telephone interview.

A critic of affirmative action, Trump has unapologetically picked white men for most of the top jobs in his administration and often sparred with prominent minorities, including Kenneth Frazier, the African American chief executive of Merck. Last

with the comings and goings of executives and because of the variance between different indices such as the S&P 500 versus the Fortune 500. But regardless of the details, the dominance of white men atop major companies is clear. White men held the top job at 447 of the companies in the Fortune 500 at the end of 2017, by Zweigenhaft's count.

Zweigenhaft noted in an unpublished paper that the number of African Americans and Hispanics CEOs remained well below their share of the population.

Women were also significantly underrepresented, although white women had made gains compared with 2005. The paper also noted that Apple chief executive Tim Cook had publicly come out as gay, a first for a big company.

Also of note, some of the most prominent chief executives in the US do not fit this mold, including Microsoft's Satya Nadella, GM's Mary Barra and Sundar Pichai at Alphabet-owned Google.

Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, a senior director for research at nonprofit Catalyst, agreed that the headline numbers of women and minority CEOs was indeed too low but noted the figures had always been disproportionately low.

But Thorpe-Moscon said the group has seen improvement in the pipeline of senior executives and predicted more minorities and women would be promoted no matter who was president.



Dominance of white men atop major forms is clear

August, Frazier stepped down from a White House advisory committee after Trump's muted response to a violent white supremacist rally in Virginia. Frazier's resignation set off a cascade of other CEO resignations, ultimately leading to the demise of a pair of CEO White House advisory panels.

Improving the pipeline?

The exact number of women and minority CEOs is difficult to pin down



NEW DELHI: Former PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi poses during an interview in New Delhi in this file photo.

"Getting to inclusion is a journey that companies are on right now," she said. "Regardless of the cultural context we're in, companies are always going to be responding to the need for the top talent, the need for innovation," she said, adding that these dynamics were amplified in today's tight US job market. Thorpe-Moscon said corporate interest in diversity and inclusion remained robust. Major companies have sought the nonprofit's assistance after a February study found nonwhites pervasively reported being on-guard against racial and gender bias.

The report labeled this sense an "emo-

tion tax" and recommended steps such as encouraging co-workers to "speak up, challenge the status quo, share dissenting opinions, and assume positive intent."

A report last month from executive search firm Heidrick & Struggles said women filled 38.3 percent of new independent board seats at Fortune 500 companies in 2017, the biggest share since the firm began tracking the data in 2009.

However, the total number of women on boards rose only 1.2 percent to 22.2 percent, suggesting that most of the new directors were replacing women who stepped down, the firm said. —AFP

KFH & EY sign strategic partnership agreement

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has signed a partnership agreement with Ernst & Young (EY) to launch an ambitious Robotic Process Automation (RPA) program.

In line with the bank's commitment to offer pioneering added-value services to its customers whilst staying abreast of advances in banking technology, KFH maintains its stronghold in the Kuwaiti banking space, with a groundbreaking move to integrate Artificial Intelligence into operations. This makes them the first financial institution to do so in the region.

KFH's digital transformation and focus on technology brings the Bank one step closer to providing the optimum customer experience, offering simple, secure transactions to the end user. A win-win scenario for both customer and bank, given the implicit increase in productivity and reduction in operational costs, improved customer satisfaction and loyalty, and a yet firmer footing at the pinnacle of Kuwaiti banking.

Group Chief Retail and Private Banking Officer at KFH, Waleed Khaled Mandani said of the partnership with EY, "AI is the future of banking and by far the most influential element of modern technology. It is essential for KFH to utilize developments in AI when designing innovative products and services, not only to focus our efforts on today's customer needs, but also to continue to differentiate ourselves from our peers. It also gives us the ability to place our existing resources where they do the most good. EY will assist us in achieving our goals with the very best tools at our disposal".

The Robotic Process Automation (RPA) system is characterized by its contribution to improving business efficiency and enhancing performance quality. RPA systems evaluate the creditworthiness of potential customers, achieving operational efficiency in strict compliance with the instructions of the regulatory authorities, analyzing customer data, filling out the required documents and allowing a whole host of other procedures to be carried out electronically.

Mandani is a firm believer that AI will have a decisive impact on the future of the bank. "AI technology is in line with KFH's growth strategy and our mission of delivering superior innovation and unparalleled customer service, whilst protecting the interests of stakeholders. KFH has made great strides in introducing a wide range of innovative services in different sectors at Group level.

He added that the RPA will eliminate the element of human error from operations, as the volume of manual procedures decreases. Operational costs will see a considerable reduction, with improved efficiency generating a simultaneous boost in revenue as less time is spent on tasks of a less strategic nature by staff.



Waleed Khaled Mandani

Wataniya Airways offers light snacks menu for its passengers

KUWAIT: Wataniya Airways, the newest air carrier in Kuwait, announced that it has decided to stop offering free meals to its passengers on board since the launch of the company's operations in July 2017, which had a one-year time limit. Light snacks will be made available instead.

Wataniya airways said in a statement that the company's regulations and operating system did not outline this service as free, which is also evident on the company's website that does not mention such service within its provided services section.

Wataniya added that the company has chosen to currently provide a list of meals to its valued passengers based on its continuous endeavors to provide the best services that meet their expectations and satisfy their needs. It is this same outlook that sustained the free meal service for a full year alongside a variety of



offers, services and various advantages on the occasion of the launch of its flights. Wataniya Airways expresses its appreciation and gratitude to its valued passengers

for their understanding of this decision, and reiterates its commitment to providing fresh and innovative products and services to its passengers.

Benefit today from Chevrolet Alghanim's mega offer on all Tahoe editions!

KUWAIT: Calling out all Chevy SUV lineup's lovers, get the chance today to own the luxurious SUV, 2018 Chevrolet Tahoe, at an outstanding price since Chevrolet Alghanim, the exclusive distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in Kuwait, is presenting its customers with a mega deal on all Tahoe editions allowing them to choose between 0 percent interest for 5 years and \$5,000 cash-back throughout the month of August.

Owning the popular full-size 2018 Chevrolet Tahoe, has never been this amazingly easy thanks to Chevrolet Alghanim's exclusive summer deal. Acclaimed by far as the best large SUV on the market, 2018 Tahoe is the perfect choice for families with plenty of space for everyone. Additionally, Chevrolet's all new Tahoe comes with a long list of special features and fantastic technology that make the trip enjoyable for all passengers alike. Offering a

smooth and quiet ride, this car is a pure joy to drive.

Whether searching for a striking design, a true off-roader, or a luxurious vehicle equipped with state-of-the-art technologies, customers' preferences are sure to be satisfied with Tahoe 2018 editions.

With more than 20 years of experience, Chevrolet Tahoe has been coupled with all latest technologies and top-notch specifications as its manufacturers paid special attention to the smallest details. Today, Chevrolet Tahoe editions are known to deliver a distinguished and legendary performance along with a premium driving experience. Additionally, Tahoe 2018 displays a pack of advanced safety features, a superior design, and an incredible power thanks to the EcoTec3 engine: all of which contributed to its global and local success besides acquiring it a large market share.

EcoTec3 powertrain

Tahoe's standard 5.3L V-8 engine features state-of-the-art technologies, including direct injection, cylinder deactivation, continuously variable valve timing and an advanced combustion system, designed to make the most of power, torque and efficiency across a broad range of operating conditions.

Improved engine mounts, electronic throttle control, adaptive exhaust systems, improved aerodynamics and other technologies help the engines operate

in four-cylinder mode more often with Active Fuel Management, further increasing efficiency.

The engine is mated to a Hydra-Matic 6L80 six-speed automatic transmission, featuring TapShift control, Tow/Haul mode and Auto Grade Braking.

Contemporary designs

The exterior designs of the 2018 Tahoe are more refined and precisely sculpted. New inlaid doors fit into the body side openings instead of over the top of the body, significantly improving the quietness of the interior cabin and contributing to improved aerodynamics - an attribute that helps the vehicles slip through the air on the highway with less drag for greater efficiency. Lightweight aluminum hood and lift gate panels also enhance efficiency through reduced overall mass.

Projector-beam headlamps flank the Chevrolet-signature dual-port grille - chrome on all models - and sweep into the front fenders. High-intensity discharge headlamps and light-emitting diode daytime running lamps are included on the up level LTZ model.

Inside, premium materials and enhanced ergonomics demonstrate the Tahoe's blend of sophistication, craftsmanship and function. A new instrument panel houses a MyLink system eight-inch color touch screen with a secured storage bin behind the motorized screen. The compartmentalized center console is large enough to store a laptop or iPad.

State-owned China Tower trades flat on HK debut

HONG KONG: State-owned China Tower-the world's largest operator of telecoms towers-ended its trading debut unchanged in Hong Kong yesterday, having chalked up the world's biggest initial public offering for two years. The Beijing-based firm's \$6.9 billion IPO was at the lower end of its expected range, making it the second to fall short of its main target with investor confidence hit by uncertainty linked to the China-US trade row. China Tower is the world's largest IPO since Postal Savings Bank of China's \$7.6 billion offering in 2016, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. Last month Chinese smartphone maker Xiaomi raised less than half its \$10 billion initial target.

Some observers say investors may see China Tower as a safe bet on the country's mobile market because of its government backing.

But others argue the state-backed monopoly could face limited growth because of a lack of competition. Shares in the firm edged up and down through the day before end at their HK\$1.26 IPO price. The muted trading price was "reasonable" given market conditions, said Jackson Wong of Huarong International Securities. China Tower would enjoy favorable policies as a strategic asset, particularly given China's push for next-generation 5G wireless internet technology, and that would benefit investors in the future, Wong added.

And while he described the stock as "old-economy and not really sexy", he said it could still be profitable to investors. "It's a pretty simple business model and China is trying to push 5G so we should see dividend-paying very soon," he said.

Chinese telecoms companies Huawei and ZTE are poised to become global leaders in the 5G rollout, which is beginning this year in several countries.

New player

However, they are likely to face severely tightened access to the US market over data security. The technology is heavily cloud-based, potentially leaving sensitive data accessible by the service provider. Mo Jia, a Shanghai-based research analyst at Canalis, said China Tower is a

relatively new player in this field and will need to deepen its technology and patent pool.

In its listing document, China Tower said it would "research and develop new technologies and products of telecommunications tower infrastructure in response to the development needs from new technologies including 5G". The company was established by China Mobile, China Unicom and China Telecom in 2014. They agreed to combine their tower assets by selling them to China Tower in 2015.

Speaking at Wednesday's launch in Hong Kong, chief executive Tong Jilu noted that the company had just celebrated its fourth birthday.

"Today is our new milestone," he said of the stock debut. Hillhouse Capital, affiliates of China National Petroleum Corp and Taobao-a subsidiary of Alibaba-are reported to be among the 10 cornerstone investors. The company said at its IPO launch event in Hong Kong in July that "international companies and giant domestic companies" were among the cornerstone investors.

Hong Kong is seeking to become a destination for major IPOs after being snubbed by Alibaba's overseas listing in 2014. Since then, listing rules have been overhauled to allow weighted voting rights for different sets of shareholders. —AFP

Technology & Science

Musk weighs go-private deal for electric carmaker

Going private to take company out of quarterly reporting cycle

NEW YORK: Controversial Tesla chief executive Elon Musk said Tuesday he was considering taking the electric carmaker private, sending shares sharply higher in anticipation of a big premium. Going private would take the company out of the quarterly reporting cycle, making it "free from as much distraction and short-term thinking as possible," Musk said in a blog post. Musk, who has depicted the quest to build up no-emissions electric cars as an environmental mission, said he viewed going private as "the best path forward," but that a final decision had not been made and ultimately rested on shareholder support.

Shares finished up 11 percent at \$379.57 after being suspended for about 90 minutes following a series of Musk statements on Twitter in which he initially floated the idea of going private. Musk's first tweet said funding was "secured" for a transaction that could value the company at \$420 a share. At that price, the Tesla transaction would be worth more than \$71 billion. A leveraged buyout of this size-one using debt would eclipse by a wide margin the prior record, the purchase for utility TXU Corp. in 2007 by a consortium that included KKR and TPG for \$44 billion.

Gains following the tweet added to upward movement on the stock after the Financial Times reported that a Saudi Arabian sovereign wealth fund had built a stake of between three and five percent in the company. Musk's tweet comes as Tesla faces continued pressure to ramp up output of the Model 3 sedan, its first effort at the middle market. The billionaire Musk, who owns about 20 percent of the company, said a

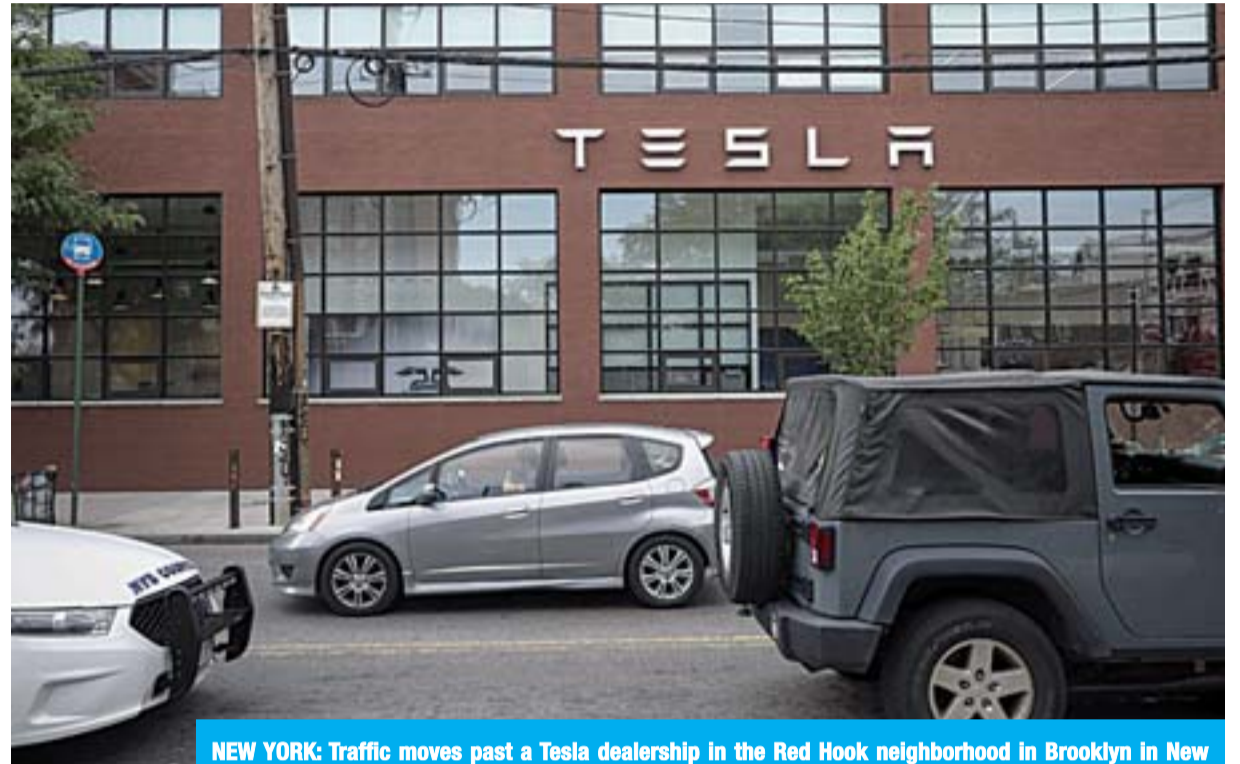
transaction would not "substantially" alter his stake and that he expected to continue to lead the company if it occurred.

Polarizing figure

Musk has previously discussed possibly going private as a means to realize long-term growth and accomplish a goal that some Tesla acolytes embrace with near-messianic passion. Supporters of Musk and the company view him as a visionary akin to Apple co-founder Steve Jobs, while critics have likened him to a "Wizard of Oz" like figure who has yet to turn a profit. Tesla shareholder Quint Tatro, managing director of Joule Financial, praised the idea as "brilliant," adding that "Musk is tired of dealing with all the challenges of being public."

The South African-born Tesla chief has courted plenty of controversy. Last month, he apologized for calling British caver Vernon Unsworth, who helped rescue 12 Thai boys from a cave, a "pedo"-short for pedophile—after Unsworth spoke dismissively of the Tesla chief's proposal for bringing the boys to safety. He has also had a prickly relationship with Wall Street, apologizing last week to equity analysts after refusing to answer questions on a May investor call.

Musk's approach to a possible go-private transaction also went against the grain of many companies that release major news in non-trading hours. By contrast, Musk made the initial comment on Twitter and then embellished on the remarks in a series of responses to users on the platform. In its August 1



NEW YORK: Traffic moves past a Tesla dealership in the Red Hook neighborhood in Brooklyn in New York City. —AFP

earnings release, Tesla confirmed output was on track after missing earlier benchmarks as it reported a bigger-than-expected loss.

Shares have rallied strongly since those earnings, but Musk has continued to show a short fuse towards critics, lambasting "short" sellers of Tesla shares—those who take bets that the stock will fall in value. Following the company's surge after last week's

earnings, Musk took aim again at a short-seller in a reported short YouTube video that likened these investors to Hitler's last days. Musk amplified this point Tuesday, saying on Twitter that going private "will be way smoother," end "negative propaganda from shorts" and benefit shareholders. "Am super appreciative of Tesla shareholders," Musk said. "Will ensure their prosperity in any scenario." —AFP



Tesla transaction worth more than \$71 billion

NASA poised to launch first Sun-skimming spaceship

TAMPA: NASA is poised to launch a \$1.5 billion spacecraft on a brutally hot journey toward the Sun, offering scientists the closest-ever view of our strange and mysterious star. After the Parker Solar Probe blasts off from Cape Canaveral, Florida on August 11, it will become the first spacecraft ever to fly through the Sun's scorching atmosphere, known as the corona.

Understanding how the corona works will help scientists anticipate dangerous space weather storms, which can disrupt the power grid on Earth. "It's of fundamental importance for us to be able to predict space weather much the way we predict weather on Earth," explained Alex Young, a solar scientist at NASA. The corona is a "very strange, unfamiliar environment for us."

Touch the Sun

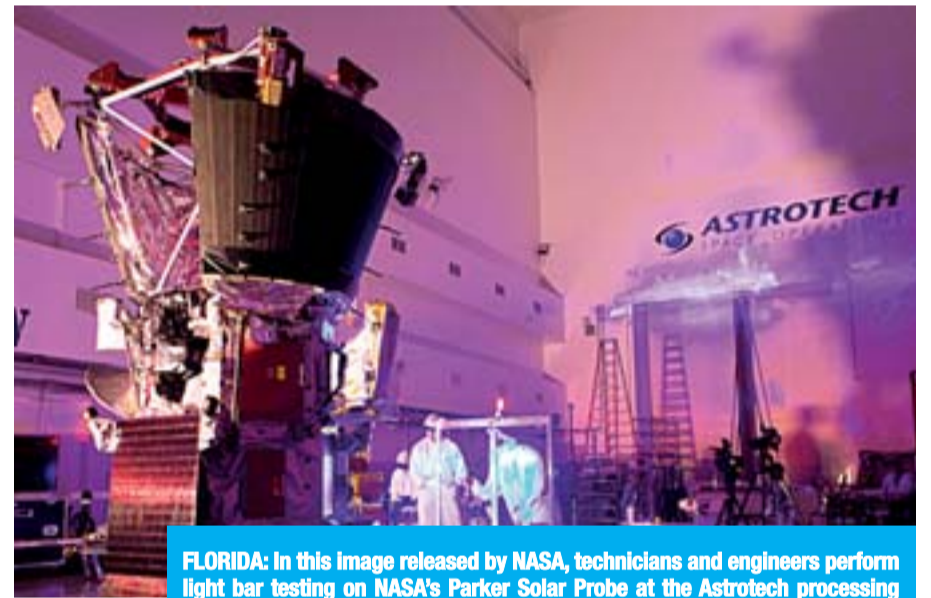
The unmanned probe is named after Eugene Parker, the 91-year-old pioneering solar astrophysicist, and the US space agency has coined it as the first

mission to "touch the Sun." It will actually skim by at a distance of 3.83 million miles (6.16 million kilometers) above the Sun's surface. Mission managers say that may sound like a lot but is really quite a close shave, given the sweltering conditions out there. The Sun-facing side of the probe will endure temperatures of about 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit.

The spacecraft is protected by a heat shield that will keep it closer to room temperature, about 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Speeding by at a pace of 430,000 miles per hour will make it "the fastest human-made object," said project scientist Nicky Fox of the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab. Over the course of its seven year mission, the spacecraft aims to pass through the corona 24 times, which Fox said makes for an "incredibly daring journey."

Why the corona?

Unlike a campfire, which feels hottest at the source, the heat from the Sun gets more intense further away from its surface. "As we go from the surface of the Sun, which is 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and move up into the corona, we find ourselves quickly at millions of degrees," he said. NASA calls this mismatch "the coronal heating problem," and hopes the Parker Solar Probe will solve the mystery of why the corona reaches temperatures of up to 10 million degrees Fahrenheit. Fox said scientists



FLORIDA: In this image released by NASA, technicians and engineers perform light bar testing on NASA's Parker Solar Probe at the Astrotech processing facility in Titusville, Florida, near NASA's Kennedy Space Center. —AFP

have already studied the corona "every way imaginable," and a closer look is now needed. "We need to get into this action region, where all of these mysteries are actually occurring."

Heat shield

The probe is protected by a 4.5-inch-thick carbon-composite shield, built to withstand 500 times the Sun's radiation on Earth. A series of instruments on board the spacecraft will measure the magnetic and electric fields,

plasma waves and high energy particles. There is also a white light imager, taking pictures of what the spacecraft is about to "plow through," said Fox. "The goal is to have the instruments on all the time but the prime science gathering for us is about 11 days," she told reporters ahead of the launch. A 45-minute launch window opens on Saturday at 3:48 am. Awaiting liftoff, the car-sized probe is already packed on to the Delta IV-Heavy rocket at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida. —AFP

iPhones are not listening in on consumers: Apple



NEW YORK: An Apple store stands in lower Manhattan in New York City. —AFP

NEW YORK: Apple Inc told US lawmakers on Tuesday that its iPhones do not listen to users without their consent and do not allow third-party apps to do so either, after lawmakers asked the company if its devices were invading users' privacy. Representatives Greg Walden, Marsha Blackburn, Gregg Harper and Robert Latta wrote to Apple's chief executive Tim Cook and Alphabet Inc chief executive Larry Page in July, citing concerns about reports that smartphones could "collect 'non-triggered' audio data from users' conversations near a smartphone in order to hear a 'trigger' phrase, such as 'Okay Google' or 'Hey Siri.'"

In a letter to Walden, an Oregon Republican who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Apple said iPhones do not record audio while listening for Siri wakeup commands and Siri does not share spoken words. Apple said it requires users to explicitly approve microphone access and that apps must display a clear signal that they are listening. The letters, in which lawmakers cited reports suggesting third-party applications had access to and used "non-triggered" data without users' knowledge, followed congressional hearings in April into Facebook Inc's privacy practices, which included testimony by its CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

Alphabet did not respond to questions about whether it had replied to lawmakers. Apple declined to comment beyond its letter, which was seen by Reuters. A spokeswoman for the Republican majority on the House Energy and Commerce Committee said "both companies have been cooperative thus far. The Committee looks forward to reviewing and analyzing the responses as we consider next steps." Apple wrote that it had removed apps from its App Store over privacy violations but declined to say whether it had ever banned a developer. It also said it was up to developers to notify users when an app was removed for privacy reasons.

"Apple does not and cannot monitor what developers do with the customer data they have collected, or prevent the onward transfer of that data, nor do we have the ability to ensure a developer's compliance with their own privacy policies or local law," Apple wrote. The iPhone maker's App Store has generated \$100 billion in revenue for developers over the past decade. Apple told lawmakers in its letter that it rejected about 36,000 apps from among the 100,000 submitted each week for violations of its guidelines. —Reuters

Canadian start-up seeks French testing ground for hyperloop train

DROUX, France: A Canadian company hoping to build what it bills as the future of public transportation will seek permits this week to set up a testing centre in central France for developing super-fast "hyperloop" trains. Transpod co-founder Sebastien Gendron said that his company would file its application Friday with officials in the Haute-Vienne region for a three-kilometer track, which it claims would be the longest in the world.

It is one of several groups developing the technology, which aims to transport people in train-like "pods" through low-pressure tubes that would reduce atmospheric friction, allowing travel at nearly the speed of sound. High-profile investors including Elon Musk, the head of electric car pioneer Tesla, and Virgin's Richard Branson have also put their financial muscle behind hyperloop projects.

Transpod, which has raised nearly 50 million euros from North American and Italian investors, aims to build its first commercial line running at 1,000 km/h (620 mph) by 2030, Gendron said. The technology "will make humans and freight travel on earth as fast as a plane, while feeling like you're in the metro," Gendron said. It chose the town of Droux—population 400—north of the central city of Limoges for the 21-million-euro project



NEVADA: A recovery vehicle moves a test sled down a track after the first test of the propulsion system at the Hyperloop One Test and Safety site in North Las Vegas, Nevada. —AFP

after intense lobbying by enthusiastic local officials.

"The state needs to act as a facilitator in this case because, whether or not its the future of transportation, the possibility of a research facility on this scale can only benefit the region's reputation and its university," said Raphael Le Mehaute, the government's representative in the Haute-Vienne department.

Transpod said it would unveil French and international partners for the project this autumn—the national train operator SNCF has already invested in Virgin Hyperloop One, which announced this week plans to build a \$500-million research site in Spain. France is already home to a research site for Hyperloop Transportation Technologies, an American company which is operating in Toulouse, southwest France. —AFP

Samsung to invest billions in new tech to drive fresh growth

SEOUL: South Korea's Samsung Group yesterday said it would invest \$22 billion over the next three years in cutting-edge technology including artificial intelligence, self-driving cars and biopharmaceuticals, as it searches for ways to drive future growth. The investment will be primarily led by Samsung Electronics, the world's biggest maker of memory chips, which has faced a string of setbacks in recent years, including a fall in smartphone sales and a corruption scandal that saw its vice-chairman Lee Jae-yong jailed last year.

Although demand for its memory chips remains robust, the market for its smartphones appears to have hit a wall, prompting the company to search for fresh growth opportunities. "Samsung expects innovations powered by AI technology will drive the industry's transformation, while the next-generation 5G telecommunications technology will create new opportunities in autonomous driving, the Internet of Things (IoT) and robotics," the company said in a statement.

The \$22 billion is part of a total of 180 trillion won (\$161 billion) that the group plans to invest over the next three years across its businesses, with more than 70 percent of the money to be spent in South Korea. Samsung will also expand investments in manufacturing hubs, seeking to increase production of semiconductors and display screens as well as dominate new markets by developing technology to power self-driving cars.

"Today's announcement shows Samsung is serious in its efforts to develop new growth engines" at a time when its semiconductor business and mobile sector are both facing mounting competition from Chinese rivals, Greg Roh of HMC Securities & Investment said. The company said it expected to add 40,000 new jobs over the next three years, in news that will likely bring relief to South Korea's government which is currently struggling with high youth unemployment. —AFP

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Health & Science

Sicily's farmers go tropical, exotic as climate warms

Demand grows as consumers become aware of health benefits

TERRASINI, Italy: When Sicilian farmer Rosolini Palazzolo first started growing papayas 11 years ago, hardly any of his neighbors even knew what they were. Now, the southern Italian island famed for its picturesque orange and lemon groves is dotted with the kind of exotic fruit trees more usually associated with tropical climates - from papaya to bananas to mangoes. "I get shivers when I eat mangoes now," Palazzolo laughed as he recalled how unimpressed he was when he first tasted the fruit after buying one imported from Brazil.

The 39-year-old is part of a new generation of Sicilian farmers producing exotic fruits - encouraged by demand and made possible by climate change. "The temperature rise has been good for us ... for these fruits," he said as he cut open a passion fruit. Demand has also grown as consumers have become more aware of the health benefits of eating fresh, locally grown papayas and other tropical fare, Palazzolo added. "They got the information from the internet about vitamins and so on, and they started buying. This was the process."

Others have followed suit. Letizia Marceno's family has been farming on the outskirts of Sicily's capital Palermo for seven generations and began growing bananas about eight years ago. "It became more favorable and more useful to cultivate the bananas," said Marceno, whose seven-hectare farm now has 1,200 banana trees growing alongside more traditional Sicilian fruit and vegetable crops. Encouraged by their success, they recently added avocados and mangoes to their repertoire.

Hotter and drier

Average temperatures in Sicily have risen about 1.5

degrees Celsius in the last century, said local climate researcher Francesco Viola, who rarely saw exotic fruits or greenhouses while growing up. The trend is also driven by competition from cheap imports of more traditional crops that has forced farmers to diversify. But there are threats to the island's exotic fruits boom. Farmers said while the new crops brought in more money, costs were also higher as tropical fruits need a lot of water.

And while temperatures on the island are rising, rainfall is decreasing, according to a 2013 paper by researchers including Viola, who works at Sardinia's University of Cagliari. "The most likely scenario for Sicily in the next years is ...

less rainfall and higher temperatures," said Viola, warning this could affect crop productivity. Coldiretti, the influential Italian farmers' association, said climate change was influencing agriculture across Italy.

"The rise in temperature has favored the launch of tropical crops in Sicily and Calabria," said its president, Roberto Moncalvo. "It also

pushed up the 'olives line' to a point where now there are small olive oil productions even on the Alps." Water shortages are already a big issue for small farmers in Sicily, said Francesco Sottile, a professor at the University of Palermo's Department of Agriculture and Forestry Sciences. Sottile now works to help farmers grow the indigenous, drought-friendly vegetables that were forgotten when irrigation became available.

"We have a lot of experience and tradition, mostly in the internal part of Sicily, for tomatoes, melons, eggplants, aubergines, peppers ... that are able to grow with a very small amount of water," he said. Sottile said he remained optimistic about Sicily, where youth unemployment in 2017 was almost 60 percent, and 55 percent of the population lives on or below the



TERRASINI: Passion fruits at a farm owned by the Palazzolo brothers that produce tropical fruits in Terrasini, Sicily. — Reuters

poverty line - double the national average. "I have many agriculture students. They choose to go back to the farm after the graduation and that gives me enthusiasm," he said.

Innovate and collaborate

Scientists say the changes to conditions could vary across Sicily, which is the largest island in the Mediterranean and has diverse microclimates and soil types. Andrea Passanisi, a law-graduate-turned-farmer who grows avocados in the shadow of Mount Etna, said the rich volcanic soil and clear water provided ideal growing conditions. Passanisi, who converted his grandfather's old vineyard and lemon farm 15 years ago,

said the island's agriculture industry must innovate and collaborate if it is to have a future.

He has brought together other Sicilian avocado growers under a single brand and now exports the popular fruit to France and Poland. A third of sales are online. "Altogether, in Sicilia Avocado, we have more than 100 hectares. If just me? Only 24 hectares," he said. Fruit farmer Palazzolo agreed that innovation was the key to success - and was already thinking up his next venture. "You don't have the know-how, but no one around you has (it) either," he said. "We want to be the first coffee producer in Italy. And when I travelled Cuba and I tasted the sugarcane rum, I said, 'I have to take this back'." — Reuters

Antidepressants change songbirds courtship rituals

LONDON: Songbirds altered their courtship behavior following exposure to antidepressants increasingly found in the natural environment, according to scientists in Britain who conducted a three-year study. Male starlings sang less and were more aggressive towards females who had been given small doses of the antidepressant fluoxetine, commonly known as Prozac, researchers at the University of York found.

They believe the study-to be published in the journal *Chemosphere*-shows such changes in behavior could put songbirds at risk in the wild. "Here is the first evidence that low concentrations of an antidepressant can disrupt the courtship of songbirds," said Kathryn Arnold, from the university's environment department. "This is important because animals that are slow to find a mate often won't get to breed. "With many wildlife populations in decline, we have to ask whether more could be done to remove chemical contaminants like pharmaceuticals from our sewage."

River systems around the world are coursing with over-the-counter and prescription drugs waste which harms the environment,



PARIS: In this file photo, a European starling is pictured in the Carrousel gardens near the Louvre museum in Paris. — AFP

according to the European Geosciences Union conference in Vienna in April. If trends persist, the amount of pharmaceutical effluence leaching into waterways could increase by two-thirds before 2050, it was reported. In Britain, there were 64.7 million antidepressant items prescribed in 2016, the York study noted.

Like other human pharmaceuticals, they enter the environment via sewage and con-

taminate birds foraging on invertebrates at wastewater treatment plants. With the implications poorly understood, the York scientists tested the impact on starlings, a species commonly found feeding at such sites. The most visible results emerged after they paired males for two days with a female who had been dosed with prozac, with changes in typical behavior. — AFP

Despair as crippling drought hammers Australian farmers

MURRURUNDI, Australia: A crippling drought is ravaging vast tracts of Australia's pastoral heartlands, decimating herds and putting desperate farmers under intense financial and emotional strain, with little relief in sight. While the country is no stranger to "big dries" and its people have long had a reputation as resilient, the extreme conditions across swathes of Australia's east are the worst in more than 50 years.

A smattering of rain earlier this week did little to ease one of the driest starts to the year on record, turning pastures to dust and destroying huge areas of grazing and crop lands. With no feed, farmers have been forced to ship in grain or hay from other parts of the country to keep sheep and cattle alive, spending thousands of extra dollars a week just to stay afloat. Some exhausted graziers spend hours each day hand-feeding their stock because the ground is too dry for grass to grow. Others have been forced to shoot starving cattle.

"They are shooting their stock because they don't want them to suffer. They are shooting them because they just can't afford to feed them anymore," Tash Johnston, co-



AUSTRALIA: This photo shows a road dividing two dry farm paddocks in the drought-hit area of Quirindi in New South Wales. — AFP

founder of charity Drought Angels, said. Farmers have also had to ration water for their families and their herds because the dams on their properties are dry or nearly empty. Many face the prospect of abandoning their homes altogether-some after being on the land for generations.

It is a scenario repeated across New South Wales state, where agriculture contributes more than Aus\$15 billion to the state's economy annually, employing more than 77,000 people. Authorities on Wednesday officially declared the entire state in drought.

Conditions are similarly dire in Queensland to the north, where the state government says nearly 60 percent of land is suffering drought conditions.

"This would be the first time in two generations, back to the 1930s, that we haven't got a crop up in the autumn or winter time," Greg Stones, who runs a small farm of cattle, sheep, grain and crops near drought-hit Gunnedah, a five-hour drive north of Sydney, said. "The land is too dry... We've put cattle on the highway (near the farm) for the first time in my life (so) they get a bit of rough grass." — AFP

WWF uses fake Singapore ivory store in campaign

SINGAPORE: An apparent online ivory store which caused a furor in Singapore has been exposed as a hoax set up by environmental group WWF to highlight perceived shortcomings in local laws. The outlet called Ivory Lane purportedly offered items including earrings and necklaces for sale and had a well-produced website, including a price list and images of women modeling the jewelry.

The hoax shop, which appeared online last week, insisted its products were made from ivory obtained before 1990, when an international ban on the trade came into force. It is still legal to sell pre-1990 items in Singapore. But consumers in the city-state reacted with outrage at the website, flooding its Facebook page with angry comments and accusing the shop of supporting the slaughter of elephants.

Some media including Agence France-Presse reported on the growing furor.

After a few days, a post from someone claiming to be the store's owner appeared and insisted all the products were "completely legal" in Singapore. But in a statement late Tuesday, WWF admitted it had set up the online shop, and said the hoax was aimed at highlighting shortcomings in local wildlife laws. The group said that by continuing to allow the sale of ivory obtained before 1990, recently poached ivory could be disguised as vintage ivory.

"It is not easy to understand wildlife laws and what is legal and not, a reality that is often misused by illegal traders," said Elaine Tan, chief executive of WWF-Singapore. The WWF said setting up Ivory Lane had sparked a heated debate and generated over 65,000 reactions. It was part of a broader investigation by the group, which found more than 40 shops in Singapore selling ivory products.

Tan said there was a need for strong legislation to address the issue in Singapore, a major hub for the illegal wildlife trade due to its status as a global trading hub. Singapore's Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority said the government was considering a domestic ban on the sale of ivory. —AFP

Sri Lanka battles wild elephants

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka yesterday announced plans to substantially extend electric fencing after marauding elephants killed 375 people in the past five years and villagers retaliated by slaughtering nearly 1,200 of the beasts. The government said the toll marked a clear escalation of the human-elephant conflict and urgent steps were needed to protect both people and wildlife. Government spokesman Gayantha Karunathilaka said authorities would begin constructing 2,651 kilometers of new electric fencing to keep elephants away from villages bordering wildlife reserves.

The cabinet also approved a plan to upgrade the existing 4,349 kilometers of electric fences-which repel elephants but do not seriously hurt them-and ensure better maintenance. There was no immediate estimate of the costs. The announcement came two days after

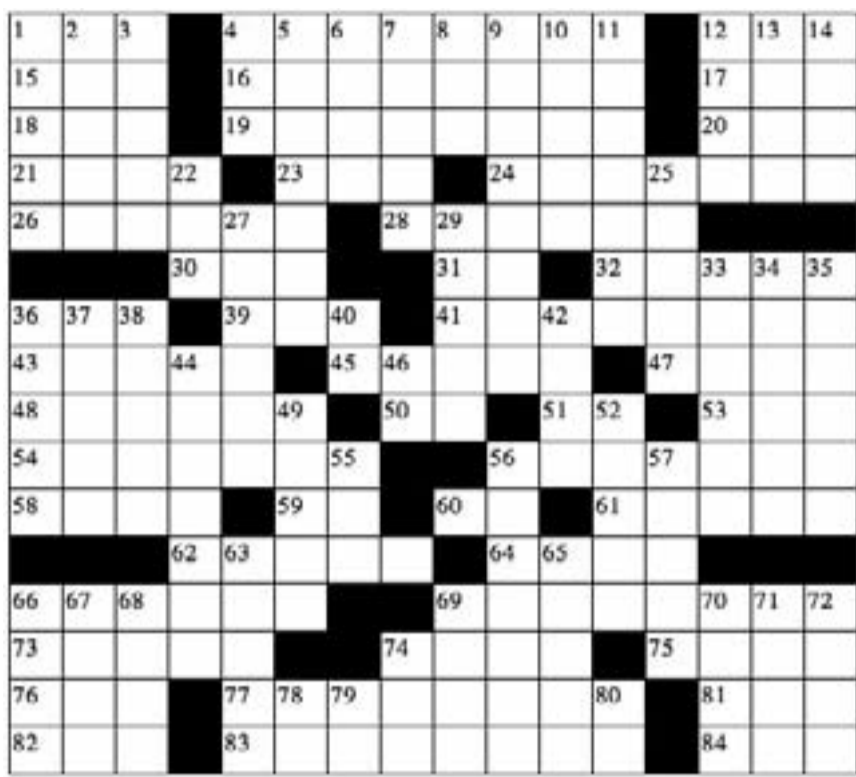
President Maithripala Sirisena called for urgent action, saying elephants were straying from national parks, raiding villages and destroying crops. Sirisena said wildlife, including elephants, destroyed about 35 percent of the country's agricultural produce.

A monkey population of one million in the island of 21 million people was responsible for wiping out much of the coconut harvest earlier this year and driving prices up, the president said. He also said there were almost daily reports of elephants attacking villagers or destroying property. Official figures show 5,800 incidents of elephants attacking property in the past five years. Elephants are considered a Buddhist symbol and protected by law. Killing wild elephants is an offence punishable by death, but there were regular reports of angry villagers poisoning or shooting them.

Sri Lanka also bans the capture of wild elephants, although many people have illegally raised baby jumbos- seen as a status symbol.

Official records show there were about 200 domesticated elephants in Sri Lanka before the recent ban on capturing them. The population in the wild is estimated at 7,500. —AFP

CROSSWORD 1981



ACROSS

1. Any of several small ungulate mammals of Africa and Asia with rodent-like incisors and feet with hooflike toes.
4. Bubble shells.
12. Inquire about.
15. A groove or furrow (especially one in soft earth caused by wheels).
16. (Italian cookery) Squid prepared as food.
17. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
18. A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
19. Fix firmly.
20. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
21. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
23. (used as a combining form) Recent or new.
24. Pale yellow seedless grape used for raisins and wine.
26. A large fleet.
28. The psychological result of perception and learning and reasoning.
30. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
31. A rare polyvalent metallic element of the platinum group.
32. Deciduous South African tree having large odd-pinnate leaves and profuse fragrant orange-yellow flowers.
36. American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
39. Tag the base runner to get him out.
41. Someone who ascends.
43. Spanish poet and dramatist (1898-1936).
45. Genus of erect herbs of the Middle East having showy flowers.
47. A genus of Mustelidae.
48. Any of numerous ornamental shrubs grown for their showy flowers of various colors.
50. (chemistry) P(otential) of H(ydrogen).
51. Informal terms for a mother.
53. God of war and sky.
54. A Powhatan Indian woman (the daughter of Powhatan) who befriended the English at Jamestown and is said to have saved Captain John Smith's life (1595-1617).
58. Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits.
59. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
60. A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances.
61. Sluggish tailless Australian arboreal marsupial with gray furry ears and coat.
62. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
64. A complex red organic pigment containing iron and other atoms to which oxygen binds.
66. The capital of Eritrea.
73. A cushion on a throne for a prince in India.
75. The lean flesh of a fish similar to cod.
76. The shape of a raised edge of a more or less circular object.
77. Eurasian plant apple-scented foliage and white-rayed flowers and feathery leaves used medicinally.
81. An enlarged and muscular saclike organ of the alimentary canal.
82. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
83. A long plume (especially one of egret feathers) worn on a hat or a piece of jewelry in the shape of a plume.
84. An accidental happening.

DOWN

1. Any of numerous low-growing cushion-forming plants of the genus *Draba* having rosette-forming leaves and terminal racemes of small flowers with scapose or leafy stems.
2. 100 aurar equal 1 krona.
3. Water at boiling temperature diffused in the atmosphere v l.
4. (informal) Of the highest quality.
5. A Dravidian language spoken in southern India.
6. Other than what is under consideration or implied.
7. A device that, on receiving radar signals, transmits coded signals in response to help navigators determine their position.
8. The United Nations agency concerned with international maritime activities.
9. A female ballet dancer.
10. An arc-shaped whitish deposit sometimes seen in the cornea.
11. Suggesting an eye or eyes.
12. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
13. The act of scanning.
14. God of love and erotic desire.
22. A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.
25. Wild ox of the Malay Archipelago.
27. Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
29. Any of various herbaceous plants of the genus *Atriplex* that thrive in deserts and salt marshes.
33. One of 7 to 12 sons of Aditi.
34. In or belonging to the air or operating (for or by means of aircraft or elevated cables) in the air.
35. Any physical damage to the body caused by violence or accident or fracture etc..
37. Diuretic (trade name *Lozol*) used in the treatment of hypertension.
38. Feeling or showing extreme anger.
40. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
42. Fabric dyed with splashes of green and brown and black and tan.
44. Having its true character concealed with the intent of misleading.
46. A long-playing phonograph record.
49. Jordan's port.
52. Red pear-shaped tropical fruit with poisonous seeds.
55. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
56. Room or live together.
57. Attractiveness to the opposite sex.
63. Any plant of the genus *Erica*.
65. Departing or being caused to depart from the true vertical or horizontal.
67. A large piece of fabric (as canvas) by means of which wind is used to propel a sailing vessel.
68. Designer drug designed to have the effects of amphetamines (it floods the brain with serotonin) but to avoid the drug laws.
69. Willing to face danger.
70. Profane or obscene expression usually of surprise or anger.
71. Gull-like jaeger of northern seas.
72. A worker (especially in an office) hired on a temporary basis.
74. A prominent rock or pile of rocks on a hill.
78. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
79. 1/1000 gram.
80. The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Aries, you may find someone within your circle exuding a type of energy that you perceive as harsh. This could leave you feeling drained and on edge. Emotionally this could cause a blockage in your world and leave you extremely frustrated. This may be a person you should just walk away from rather than facing head on. You will only bring yourself down by engaging in confrontation. This is a very challenging time for you and you may feel as if you are lacking support from your peers. This is a time to keep a positive attitude and focus on things in your life that you do have control over. Do not let anyone steal your joy. Aries. Stay positive and focused and press on.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, this is a wonderful time to surround yourself with the ones you hold near and dear to your heart. It is a great time of understanding in your life and you may be able to really bond with a special someone. You are happy and there is a feeling of peace and harmony in your world. Your mind is quick today and your words are sharp. You could find your words to be the only weapon you need when dealing with a conflict that may arise in the workplace. You know who you are and are full of self confidence. This may be bringing out a bit of jealousy from a co-worker. You will be able to handle this calmly and quickly. You are who you are and your work ethic is strong. Keep doing the right thing and the nay sayers will work their selves right out of the picture, Taurus.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini, a need to be respected is a strong desire for you now. You seem to have a knack for organization. You wish not only to have the things in your life organized, but also the people. You seem to know which person would play the best role when it comes to projects in the workplace. This talent may bring attention and opportunity your way. You know what to do and know how to act without haste. You may be offered a new position or asked to lead a project in the workplace. Not only your hard work, but the fact you exhibit a vast amount of common sense seem to draw others to you, Gemini.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Cancer, lovers, children, and those close to you in general seem to have attracted your focus. You long for stable relationships. A feeling to be needed and appreciated is strong within you. You put others needs before your own and you truly feel as if this goes unnoticed at times. We all have a desire to be loved. You may find others beginning to not and appreciate your creative side. Expect recognition and compliments today, Cancer.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, energy levels are high and so are your emotions. Even though this can be an extremely productive time, it is also a time you will have to practice self-control. It is very difficult for you to relax. If you find yourself becoming over-emotional, take a deep breath and walk away. You can be right or you can be happy. Choose happy. Some battles are not worth the reward. This evening would be a great time for a quiet evening with those you love. Relax and rejuvenate, Leo.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, you may feel a bit pushed to your limits today. This could make it difficult for you to stay calm and in control. Enjoy the beauty around you today. Take a moment to stop and take it all in. Resist the urge to overspend or indulge. Today is about finding beauty in the smallest of things. Keep today full of appreciation and simplicity. Aries, you will find great pleasure in having deep conversations with those you love. Be more practical today and don't be afraid to let your creativity flow. Virgo, be sure and avoid confrontation today, sit back and relax without reaction.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Libra, you may find yourself getting carried away and not as focused on the reality of what is best for you. You may be too focused on your wants rather than what you truly need. You may find that others will be quick to offer unsolicited advice when your actions aren't what they expected nor see as the best option for you. You may feel as the world around you is one big blur. This is a nice time to take a step back and focus on the decisions you are making and possibly put them off for a time your mind is clear. Libra. You may find that others are not as drawn to you when you are in this dreamy state. You could greatly benefit from some time alone tonight.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Scorpio, today finds you in a wonderful mood full of appreciation and happiness. You are drawn to the beauty of the world around you. You are loving and nurturing today. You may tend to lavish those close to you with gifts and attention. You have a great sense of peace, happiness, and calm about you today. You put much value into those who are upfront and honest with you. Today you have no time nor tolerance for any perversion, lack of honesty, or those you feel may have secret motives. You are able to see right through this. You are experiencing a degree of mental clarity that has enabled you to conquer this day and all problems and tasks that are presented to you with grace and ease. Scorpio, enjoy this day.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Sagittarius, gratitude is your magic word today. While others focus on the negative, you will see the positive and be amazed. You celebrate abundance rather than bemoaning scarcity. You have open hands, not clenched fists. You are part of the solution, not part of the problem. And it is because you aware that you are fortunate. Gratitude, Sagittarius. The tendency is to fantasize about tomorrow. The truth is that "free beer tomorrow" sign means exactly what it says. The same sign will be there tomorrow, and you will still be looking forward to the future. If you decide to make this a good day, you are likely to have a good day tomorrow. Your future begins now. Start living it, Sagittarius.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Capricorn, when there is a problem others seem to run to you. You have proven time and again to be solution oriented and you defiantly know how to remain calm under pressure. You may be asked to lead a team or speak to a group on behalf of your company today. This is the perfect task for you. Today finds you speaking confidently with grace and compassion. This is a day you will be able to look back with pride, Capricorn.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Aquarius, you may find you cross paths with someone who is quite your opposite today. You and this individual could not be more different. From your morals to your appearance it seems everything about you clashes. This is one of the times in life you must ask yourself if it is better to be right or better to be happy. Sometimes the reward is not worth the battle. Walk away from confrontation and do what is necessary to keep peace and harmony in your world. You may find comfort when confiding in someone older or some authority figure in your life today, Aquarius.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, seems like you have a bit of a rebellious spirit today. You may tend to ignore or fail to appreciate the law. Your values may not be in line with the traditional values of the majority. You seem to be marching to the beat of your own drum. You may find yourself involved in conflict with someone who doesn't appreciate your decisions or actions today. Someone may see your other-worldly views as offensive. Work on becoming more tolerant of other's views, and you may find others becoming more tolerant of yours, Pisces.

Wordsearch Puzzle

1950's Songs

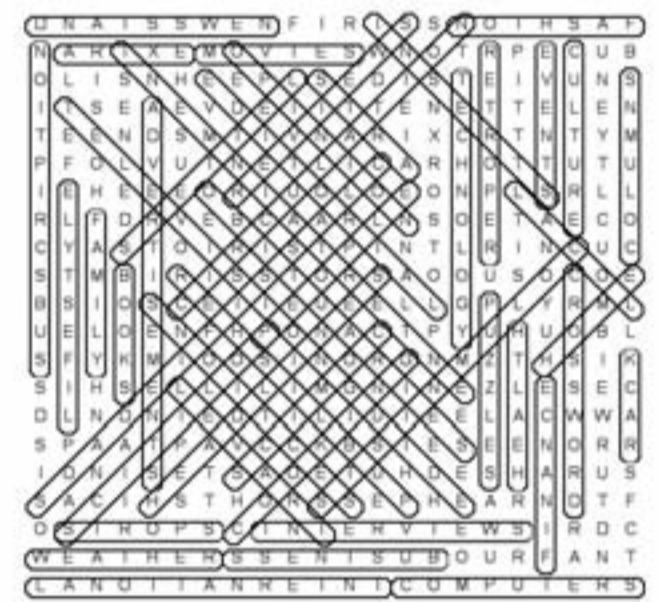
Find and circle all of the 1950's song titles that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional 1950's song.



- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| BLUEBERRY HILL | HOUDO DOG | MONA LISA | SEARCHIN' |
| BO DIDDLEY | JAILHOUSE ROCK | MOVE IT | SHOUT |
| BYE BYE LOVE | KANSAS CITY | MYSTERY TRAIN | SIXTEEN TONS |
| CRAZY ARMS | LA BAMB | NIGHT TRAIN | SPEEDO |
| DJANGO | LONELY TEARDROPS | ONLY YOU | SUZIE Q |
| DONNA | LONG TALL SALLY | PEGGY SUE | TAKE FIVE |
| EVERYDAY | MACK THE KNIFE | RAVE ON | TEQUILA |
| FEVER | MANNISH BOY | RED HOT | TUTTI FRUTTI |
| HEARTBREAK HOTEL | MAYBELLENE | RIP IT UP | YAKETY YAK |
| HONKY TONK | MISTY | RUMBLE | YOU SEND ME |

Yesterday's Solution

Newspaper



- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| ADVERTISEMENTS | CULTURE | INTERNATIONAL | PUZZLES |
| ARTS | EDITORIAL | INTERVIEWS | RACK |
| BOOKS | ENTERTAINMENT | LETTERS | REPORTER |
| BUSINESS | EVENTS | LIFESTYLE | REVIEWS |
| CIRCULATION | EXTRA | LOCAL | SECTIONS |
| CLASSIFIEDS | FAMILY | MOVIES | SPORTS |
| COLUMNISTS | FASHION | NEWSSTAND | SUBSCRIPTION |
| COLUMNS | FINANCE | OBITUARIES | TECHNOLOGY |
| COMICS | HEADLINES | OPINION | TELEVISION GUIDE |
| COMPUTERS | HEALTH | PEOPLE | TRAVEL |
| COOKING | HOME | POLITICS | WEATHER |
| CROSSWORD | INSERTS | PUBLISHER | |

The hidden message is: FIRST PUBLISHED IN SEVENTEEN SIXTY FOUR THE OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY PUBLISHED NEWSPAPER IN THE USA IS THE HARTFORD COURANT.

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

Lifestyle

THURSDAY, AUGUST 9, 2018



This photo shows a Michael Jackson mural painted by Brazilian street artist Eduardo Kobra in New York City. — AFP

EGYPTIAN IN RED SEA RESORT TOWN CHARMS SNAKES TO SLEEP

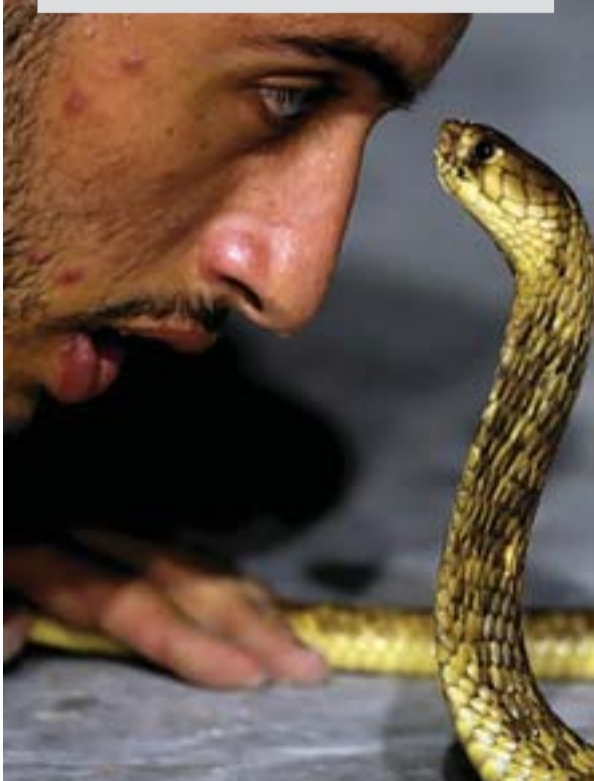
In Egypt's premier Red Sea resort of Sharm El-Sheikh, snake charmer Amier El-Refaie puts some of the world's most dangerous snakes to sleep. Refaie, who has been charming snakes for the past five years, says the reptiles have become closer to him than some of his human friends. "The world of snakes is vast, the trainer must learn the secrets of hunting and capturing snakes ... if he is not knowledgeable he could be exposed to deadly venom at any moment," he said.

Refaie holds each snake by the tail and gently swings it back, forth and sideways to soft Indian music. Then he looks directly into its eyes before touching its head with his forehead and laying it on the ground. The 29-year-old has more than 13 snakes and hopes that snake charming could become a growth industry in Egypt, where tourism is slowly picking up after years of downturn

caused by political turmoil and attacks by Islamist militants.

Beaches and dive sites around Sharm El-Sheikh once attracted around one fourth of the tourists who visited Egypt before a 2011 uprising scared visitors away. The tourism industry, one of the country's main sources of foreign currency, has gradually recovered in recent months, with revenues up about \$1 billion in the first three months of 2018, a boon for thousands of workers like Refaie whose wages depend on the flow of visitors. "I hope Egypt can host international shows, where I will not be the only one doing this beautiful work ... It can attract more tourism still as I've seen in the last period how much visitors to Sharm El-Sheikh love this show," Refaie said. — Reuters

“ The world of snakes is vast, the trainer must learn the secrets of hunting and capturing snakes. if he is not knowledgeable he could be exposed to deadly venom at any moment ”



Photos show Amier El-Refaie dances and sways with a cobra during his show at the Red Sea resort of Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. —Reuters



Made in China since the Qing dynasty: Beijing shoemaker taps into the future

In an ornately decorated building in central Beijing, cobbler Cai Wenke painstakingly makes shoes by hand in a process that has hardly changed since the business first started in 1853. Neiliansheng has made shoes with traditional 'thousand-layer' soles and hand-stitched fabric uppers since the Qing dynasty, which ruled China until 1912. Among its satisfied customers, it counts politicians and celebrities, from Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping to Jackie Chan.

The shoes, first designed for court nobility commonly carried around in sedan chairs, are made with more than

40 types of tools, in a specific sequence of more than 90 steps. Each pair usually takes about four to five days to finish. Cai, 39, learned the trade almost a decade ago, and skillfully demonstrated the craft, nailing the white cotton fabric to the sole, which is formed from 35 layers of cotton interwoven with hemp thread in a criss-cross fashion.

After the shoes are made, colorful or patterned cloth is sewn on. A pair of these classic shoes costs about 500 yuan (\$73). Neiliansheng, which has changed hands many times over the years, now makes more than 300 varieties of the shoes, all based on the same design conceived 150

years ago. New, more fashionable styles such as open-toed sandals and prints featuring characters such as Hello Kitty and Angry Birds cater to younger customers, while shoes embellished with feathers and pearls are used by Chinese opera performers. "To make good shoes, one needs qualities such as conscientiousness, persistence and concentration," said Cai as he sat at a small table, finishing off another pair. — Reuters

Cobbler Cai Wenke works on a 'thousand-layer' cloth shoe at the demonstration workshop of the Neiliansheng shoemaker in Beijing. — Reuters photos



People walk past the Neiliansheng shoemaker in Beijing.



A combination of pictures shows designs of the traditional 'thousand-layer' cloth shoe at the Neiliansheng shoemaker in Beijing.

Cruise beats Pooh as 'Mission Impossible' again tops box office

Tom Cruise continued to test the limits of the possible this weekend as "Mission Impossible-Fallout" clung for a second week to the top spot in North American theaters, beating new Disney film "Christopher Robin," industry tracker Exhibitor Relations reported. Paramount's "Mission," the sixth stunt-filled edition in the popular franchise, took in an estimated \$35 million for the three-day weekend. Critics and audiences have warmed to the film, in which Cruise again does his own vertigo-inducing, cliff-hanging, exploding-car stunts.

Disney's live-animated "Christopher Robin" placed second, at \$25 million. Inspired by AA Milne's classic "Winnie-the-Pooh" books, it tells the story of a now grown-up and stressed-out Christopher reuniting with his old stuffed friend and relearning the joys of childlike imagination. The film stars Ewan McGregor and Hayley Atwell, along with the voices of Brad Garrett and Jim Cummings. In third was another new release, Lionsgate's "The Spy Who Dumped Me," at \$12.4 million. The action comedy stars Mila Kunis and Kate McKinnon as friends being chased frantically through Europe after a former



This image released by Disney shows Ewan McGregor in a scene from "Christopher Robin." — AP photos



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Tom Cruise in a scene from "Mission: Impossible - Fallout."

boyfriend turns out to be a CIA agent with a pack of killers hot on his trail.

The star power of "Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again"—with its toe-tapping ABBA soundtrack and gorgeous Greek scenery—helped keep the Universal film afloat in fourth place, taking in \$9.1 million for a worldwide total to date of \$231 million. Its cast includes Meryl Streep, Amanda Seyfried, Colin Firth, Cher and Pierce Brosnan.

In fifth was Sony's "The Equalizer 2," with superstar Denzel Washington playing the part of a quiet former black-ops agent who is drawn back into action to avenge a friend's death. Its take was \$8.8 million in its third week out. Also of note: Disney has announced that "Black Panther" has taken in more than \$700 million in North America since its release in February, joining only "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" and "Avatar" in that exclusive category.

Rounding out this weekend's top 5 were: "Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation" (\$8.2 million) "Ant-Man and the Wasp" (\$6.2 million) "The Darkest Minds" (\$5.8 million) "Incredibles 2" (\$5 million) "Teen Titans Go! To the Movies" (\$4.9 million)—AFP

Italian hat maker Borsalino finds new owners

Italy's Borsalino, one of the world's most famous hat makers whose fedora was made famous by Humphrey Bogart in the film "Casablanca" and Harrison Ford in "Indiana Jones", officially passed into new ownership yesterday, a month after being put up for auction. Swiss-Italian investment fund Haeres Equita, which has already been managing the hat maker since the end of 2015, was the only bidder in an auction organized by its administrators on July 12.

And since no new offer has been forthcoming since, Haeres Equita is now officially the new owner of Borsalino, the brand, its factory in Alessandria, the equipment, work contracts and retailing rights. The hat maker, whose fedora was also worn by Alain Delon and Jean-Paul Belmondo in the film "Borsalino", celebrated its 160th anniversary last year. The firm with 135 employees had racked up a debt 30 million euros as a result of the mismanagement of its former chief, Marco Marengo, who has since been sentenced to five years in prison for fraudulent bankruptcy.

Haeres Equita chief Philippe Camperio had said in mid-July that Borsalino would be listed on the stock exchange "within four or five years". It currently has annual sales of around 17.5 million euros and Haeres Equita hopes to increase annual production of currently 150,000 fedoras "fivefold in five years". — AFP



Brittany's capital revives forgotten heritage: Italian mosaics

Photo shows a mosaic made by Italian brothers Isidore and Vincent Odorico on the "Poirier building" in Rennes, western France. — AFP photos

Italian mosaics, once all the rage in France, fell into neglect and ruin by the 1970s, when homeowners began covering them up with parquet floors or even linoleum. The legacy is one that the Brittany capital Rennes has set out to showcase—and with good reason, because the city boasts dozens of works by key purveyors of the craft—the Odorico brothers from Italy's northeastern Friuli region. Their mosaics can be spotted in 122 towns and cities across western France, but they are concentrated in Rennes, where the brothers settled in 1882. Every summer, the city's tourism office puts on tours devoted to the work of two generations of Odoricos.

Facchina, also from Friuli, at work decorating the Palais Garnier, the Paris opera house completed in 1875 that would become an icon of the Second Empire style. Facchina was the inventor of a revolutionary mosaic technique—the reverse, or indirect, method in which the mosaic is created in reverse on a temporary surface, then transferred to its permanent home. The technique enabled mosaicists to work faster and more cheaply, making the art more accessible to private clients.

Venetian and Roman styles

The Odoricos left Paris, settling first in the central city of Tours before moving to Rennes. At the time, the mosaic was

city of Rennes became one of France's leading producers of mosaics.

At the height of their success, the family employed up to 100 mosaic craftsmen. Vincent handled the back office, while Isidore, who had studied at Paris's prestigious School of Fine Arts, created original Art Deco works that are "recognisable at a glance", Jannes says. A prominent example is the mosaic over the entrance to the city's former central market, now a contemporary art centre, with the name "municipal market" in geometrical blue letters against a green and yellow background featuring subtle gradations.

Another key stop on the tour is the Poirier building, which boasts an example of one of the younger Isidore's favourite techniques—that of contrasting matte and glossy tiles. Shiny gold and silver tiles are set in circles against a nuanced grey, blue and smoky green background. Mosaics cover the entire facade of the building—very avant-garde in its time. Admiring the work, tourist Julie Garfield of California said: "I love the interplay between light and dark."

'Unmistakable'

Maeva Urvoy, visiting from nearby Saint-Brieuc, remarked on the mosaics' harmony with the architecture, saying they "are perfectly aligned with the building's shapes and spaces." The final stop on the tour is the Saint-Georges municipal pool, a converted church where Isidore Odorico left his indelible mark. Odorico Brothers shut down in 1979, more than three decades after Isidore's death. Mosaics had long gone out of style, so much so that many works by Italian immigrants had fallen into neglect or were even destroyed. "One day a lady found a mosaic at her home. An architect told her to remove it because it wasn't worth anything," Jannes recalls—it turned out to be an Odorico.

But today "awareness of this heritage is really growing," she says. "People find mosaics under their linoleum or the parquet. The works aren't necessarily signed but some characteristics are unmistakable." — AFP

enjoying a heyday in France, and the Odoricos positioned themselves as experts in the Venetian and Roman styles. The two brothers rapidly built up their order book for both public and private projects. In 1918, six years after Isidore died, his widow and their sons—also named Isidore and Vincent—created the company Odorico Brothers, opening branches in nearby Dinard but also just outside Brittany in Nantes and Angers. By then, when Art Nouveau was giving way to Art Deco, the rapidly industrialising

observers hailed last year's blockbuster hit "Wonder Woman" — the first superhero movie to star a woman since 2005 and the first to be directed by a woman — as a sign of changing times. One of Arora's drawings shows a bare-chested, masked Spider-Man in a thong, holding a strategically-placed beach ball in front of his groin, while another



A mosaic made by Italian brothers Isidore and Vincent Odorico on the "Poirier building".



A mosaic made by Italian brothers Isidore and Vincent Odorico on the "Poirier building" in Rennes.



A mosaic made by Italian brothers Isidore and Vincent Odorico at a covered market in Rennes, western France.



A mosaic made by Italian brothers Isidore and Vincent Odorico at the Saint Georges Swimming pool.

The tours, snubbed by the public during the 1990s, are now often sold out as interest in the neoclassical art has burgeoned. An association of "Friends of Rennes Heritage" has identified at least 47 Odorico works in the city. Tourist guide Therese Jannes says the brothers Isidore and Vincent Odorico emigrated to France for "economic reasons" before making it big in Rennes at the height of the Art Nouveau movement.

They started off in Paris, where they met their mentor Gian Domenico

Spider-Man in a thong? Indian artist redraws comic covers to call out sexism

Fancy seeing Spider-Man in a thong? Or Superman in a skimpy leotard? These images are part of a set of revamped comic book covers that aim to highlight the "sexist" depiction of superheroines, the artist behind the project said on Tuesday. Shreya Arora, a 21-year-old graphic design student, made six drawings and juxtaposed them with the original covers of comic book giants Marvel and DC Comics that show scantily-dressed women in sexually suggestive poses.

"I have been reading comic books for a while but increasingly I noticed that while the stories inside had become a lot more inclusive and empowering to women, the covers did not necessarily follow," she

told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I decided to take the covers with really demeaning or sexist portrayals of superheroines and recreate them as superheroes ... I wanted the shock value to get a conversation started." Critics have long accused the male-dominated comic book industry of representing women as hypersexualised objects of desire, given secondary roles and less dialogue than men.

Observers hailed last year's blockbuster hit "Wonder Woman" — the first superhero movie to star a woman since 2005 and the first to be directed by a woman — as a sign of changing times. One of Arora's drawings shows a bare-chested, masked Spider-Man in a thong, holding a strategically-placed beach ball in front of his groin, while another

has Iron Man crouching in a pose that accentuates his apple-shaped posterior.

Only about 27 percent of all Marvel and DC Comics characters are women and just 12 percent of mainstream superhero comics have female protagonists, according to a study by the digital platform, The Pudding. "Females are more than twice as likely to be given a name that may make her seem weak, less dangerous, less aggressive and not on equal footing with male characters," said Amanda Shendruk, author of the study.

Arora said her next targets are Indian comics, which often depict women as accessories or as annoying wives, and to teach children about feminism to help curb sex attacks in India. More than

100 cases of women being raped were reported daily in 2016, according to government data. "You can look at sexual assault as a problem but it is basically because of rape culture that exists in our country and I want to get to the root of the problem — combat sexism and misogyny from a young age," Arora said. (Reporting by Annie Banerji @anniebanerji, Editing by Katy Migiro; Please credit the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters that covers humanitarian issues, conflicts, land and property rights, modern slavery and human trafficking, gender equality, climate change and resilience. — Reuters)



Aleksey Kachko, co-owner of the small pizzeria "Pizza Veterano" in Mariupol, hands out pizza to Ukrainian servicemen at the frontline with Russian-backed separatists. — AFP photos



Ukrainian servicemen who fight against Russian-backed separatists hold a box with pizza delivered to the frontline by Aleksey Kachko, co-owner of small pizzeria "Pizza Veterano" in Mariupol.



An employee of pizzeria "Pizza Veterano" prepares pizza to be delivered to the frontline for Ukrainian servicemen.

FRONTLINE PIZZA: UKRAINIAN VETERANS FEED SOLDIERS IN HOTSPOTS

There's no knock on the door, just the tantalizing smell of melted cheese, ham and tomato sauce reaching the noses of Ukrainian soldiers. The pizza delivery man has arrived. As the war goes on in Ukraine's separatist east, some veterans of the conflict are risking their lives by going back to the frontline to bring pizza to those still in the trenches. "Eat it up quickly, while it's hot and they're not shooting," says the bullet-proof-vested Oleksiy Kachko, opening a box of pizza in front of a group of surprised soldiers. "This is for us?" the soldiers ask in amazement, smiling.

and people who have fled the war. One of the first things they did was to start delivering pizza to soldiers on the frontline, which is about 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Mariupol. Kachko got the idea from watching the American television series "Generation Kill" about US troops in Iraq dreaming of hot pizza. "We thought how cool that would be and it really did turn out to be very cool," said Kachko, a tall man with striking blue eyes.

Hiring veterans

Wounded in the war, Kachko lost a lung and decided to use his veteran's pension to open a cafe. He and Chaban opened a franchise of the successful Pizza Veterano network launched in Kiev by another former soldier several years ago. "It's not just about earning money, it is employing veterans who find it very hard to get jobs," Kachko says, while the pizzeria helps them with "adaptation to peaceful life."

According to President Petro Poroshenko, more than 300,000 Ukrainians—many of them volunteers—have participated in Kiev's military operations in the east since the outbreak of the conflict four years ago which has claimed more than 10,000 lives. Kiev and its Western allies accuse Russia of funneling troops and arms across the border to fan the flames of the conflict. Moscow has denied the allegations despite overwhelming evidence that it has been involved in the fighting and its explicit political support for the separatists.

20 large pizzas

Every week Kachko and Chaban return to the frontline with pizzas paid for with donations made online and in the pizzeria. For security reasons they have to agree the schedule and route of their visits with the military command. "Once a week we bring 20 large pizzas to the soldiers. It's different units each time, we alternate them," says Chaban, a slender bearded man wearing a cap with the logo of the US Special Forces. He says he "gets a huge kick out of" bringing the takeaway treat. This time it's the turn of the village of Vodyane, whose residents have almost all fled the war.

"We try to make sure the delivery is done safely," says Chaban, pressing hard on the accelerator of his dusty SUV as the road passes through an area of open steppe less than 300 meters from the rebel positions.



A Ukrainian serviceman carries boxes with pizza delivered to the frontline by Aleksey Kachko.

Feeling less alone

The delivery guys duck into a low dark trench hidden among tall grass and weeds. Their appearance in the Ukrainian positions closest to rebel territory is greeted with pleasure. The battalion is so close to enemy lines that soldiers are not allowed to use electricity and mobile phones, smoke cigarettes or even speak loudly. The marines shake hands with their guests and thank them for bringing a hot dish, a welcome change from their cold soup and tinned food.

But it's not the food that really matters, says Vadym Sukharevskiy, the battalion commander. "When a soldier is stuck under constant fire and short of sleep and he sees a guy coming over with pizza, he realizes he's not alone, that there are many people behind him, praying for him and worrying about him, cheering him on to win and stay healthy." — AFP

“ Eat it up quickly, while it's hot and they're not shooting ”



Ukrainian servicemen carry boxes with pizza delivered to the frontline by Aleksey Kachko.

"The enemies are less than 80 meters (yards) from here. I reckon they can smell our pizza and their mouths are watering," Kachko says. Kachko, 23, previously fought in the Azov volunteer battalion and his partner in the deliveries, Bogdan Chaban, is also a 23-year-old former volunteer fighter. Now they manage a pizzeria called Pizza Veterano in Mariupol, the only major city still under Kiev rule in the eastern regions controlled by the pro-Russia separatists.

Opened in May, the pizza joint employs mostly veterans



Professor Cayetana Johnson wears a rare golden earring believed to be more than 2,000 years-old, discovered at the archaeological site of the City of David in East Jerusalem.

Ancient Greek earring found at east Jerusalem site

Israel yesterday unveiled a golden earring dating from the second or third century BC, found in the shadow of the Old City walls in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem. The Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) said the artifact, in the Hellenistic style and shaped like a horned animal, was found in October in the City of David National Park, between the Old City and the flashpoint Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan.

The find was not announced publicly until now to give archeologists time to study the find and publish an academic paper. "It is unclear whether the gold earring was worn by a man or a woman, nor do we know their cultural or religious identity, but we can say for certain that whoever wore this earring definitely

belonged to Jerusalem's upper class," an IAA statement said, citing "the quality of the gold piece of jewelry".

Following the conquest of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC, Jerusalem remained under Hellenist rule for the next 200 years. "We do not know much about Jerusalem in the Hellenistic period," Yuval Gadot of Tel Aviv University and co-director of the excavations told AFP. "This opens a debate about the nature of Jerusalem's population" at the time, he said. The City of David is run as an archaeological park by hardline settler organization Elad which seeks to bolster the Jewish presence in mainly Palestinian east Jerusalem. — AFP



An Israeli archeologist shows a rare golden earring believed to be more than 2,000 years-old, discovered at the archaeological site of the City of David in East Jerusalem near the walls of the old city. — AFP photos



Israeli archeologists work at the site.



Bones and pieces of ceramic found by Israeli archeologists are seen at the site.

Classifieds

Thursday, August 9, 2018

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 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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 Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot with light to moderate freshening at times especially over coastal areas north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over some open areas.

BY DAY: Very hot with light to moderate freshening gradually north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 45 km/h causing rising dust over open areas.

WEATHER WARNING			Fresh wind + dust	
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART 08/08/2018 1200 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	46 °C	34 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	47 °C	33 °C		
ABDALY	46 °C	32 °C		
BUBYAN	--- °C	--- °C		
JAHRA	47 °C	33 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	45 °C	32 °C		
SALMIYAH	42 °C	34 °C		
AHMADI	43 °C	35 °C		
NUWAISIB	47 °C	33 °C		
WAFRA	46 °C	32 °C		
SALMY	45 °C	29 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	MAX. Temp.	MIN. Temp.	Wind Direction	Wind Speed
Thursday	08/09	Very hot and rising dust over open areas	48 °C	33 °C	NW	12 - 45 km/h
Friday	08/10	Very hot	48 °C	33 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 35 km/h
Saturday	08/11	Very hot	48 °C	34 °C	NW	12 - 38 km/h
Sunday	08/12	Very hot and some high clouds will appear	49 °C	34 °C	NW	12 - 40 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:46
Sunrise	05:13
Zuhr	11:54
Asr	15:29
Sunset	18:34
Isha	19:59

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	47 °C
MIN. Temp.	37 °C
MAX. RH	25 %
MIN. RH	10 %
MAX. Wind	N 60 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

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

Sicon oil & Gas Abu Dhabi-Branch

Resale of used construction materials & tools, location of auction will be in taweelah KZ area. Interested parties to email Mr. Marwan Jrad mjrad@ccc.ae (+971508119342) and confirm by 15-08-18.

Material inventory can be found at this link <https://we.tl/yd9jgC15Xk>

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Aradhna Shailender D/o. Shailender Mukund, holder of Indian Passport No. Z3201847 and Civil ID No. 289040202301 has changed my name to Aradhna Shailender Singh, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5413) 9-8-2018

ACCOMMODATION

For Filipino ONLY Farwaniya block 1, near gulfmart. Available 25 of August, Contact 94418396 or 69972330 6-8-2018

EMERGENCY 112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is **1899988**

For labor-related inquiries and complaints: Call MSAL **HOTLINE 128**

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

Flight Schedule

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Thursday 9/8/2018				Departure Flights on Thursday 9/8/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
FEQ	441	Asyut	00:05	WAN	965	Tbilisi	13:20
KAC	803D	Tbilisi	00:10	MSC	412	Asyut	13:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
KAC	102	London	00:50	ABY	122	Istanbul	13:35
KAC	504	Beirut	00:50	THY	767	Doha	13:40
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	JZR	144	Cairo	14:00
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	MSR	611	Bahrain	14:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	JZR	124	Alexandria	14:05
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	FEQ	242	Alexandria	14:50
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	14:55
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	Luxor	661	Abu Dhabi	15:00
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	691	Muscat	15:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
WAN	416D	Beirut	02:40	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
THY	768	Istanbul	02:40	JZR	188	Dubai	15:10
JZR	607	Kochi	02:55	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	SAW	501	Jeddah	15:45
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KAC	775	Amsterdam	15:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	FDB	8066	Dubai	16:00
RBG	215	Sohag	03:05	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	KAC	615	Doha	16:40
KAC	152	Istanbul	04:15	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:55
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
KAC	344	Jeddah	04:30	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
THY	1414	TXZ	05:05	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	FDB	050	Dubai	17:20
JZR	267	Beirut	05:10	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
KAC	544	Cairo	05:20	NIA	362	Alexandria	17:50
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	SAW	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	553D	Alexandria	06:00	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	362	Colombo	06:00	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
JZR	123	Bahrain	06:15	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	18:30
WAN	344	Alexandria	06:25	JZR	538	Beirut	18:35
QTR	8511	Doha	06:35	THY	1283	TXZ	19:05
JZR	561D	Sohag	06:40	JZR	266	Beirut	19:15
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	KAC	151	Istanbul	19:25
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	WAN	135	Doha	19:25
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
JZR	143	Doha	07:20	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
JZR	529	Asyut	07:30	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:10
KAC	358	Kochi	08:00	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:20
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	NIA	162	Cairo	20:30
JZR	605D	Ahmedabad	08:30	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
WAN	352	Luxor	08:30	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
JZR	751	Madinah	08:50	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KAC	353	Riyadh	21:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
SAW	703	Damascus	09:30	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
IAW	157	Al Najaf	10:00	JZR	550	Alexandria	21:30
SVR	341	Damascus	10:00	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
SWA	512	Riyadh	10:00	QTR	1080	Bahrain	21:35
THY	1516	TXZ	10:05	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	JZR	1540	Cairo	22:10
JZR	541	Cairo	11:05	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	KAC	1543	Cairo	22:15
AHY	5101	Baku	11:55	KAC	230	Colombo	22:20
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:20	KAC	343	Delhi	22:25
WAN	134	Doha	12:20	THY	1401	ADB	22:25
SAW	709	Latakia	12:30	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
MSC	411	Asyut	12:30	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:50
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
ABY	121	Sharjah	12:55	QTR	1083	Doha	23:40
JZR	239	Amman	13:00	WAN	337	Alexandria	23:40
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	JZR	560	Sohag	23:45
JZR	357	Mashhad	13:05	TRQ	231	KRT	23:55
JZR	1543	Cairo	13:05				

Ford celebrates 10 millionth Mustang car

DEARBORN, Michigan: The Ford Mustang - an iconic American brand and a symbol of cool - reached a major milestone yesterday as the 10 millionth vehicle rolled off an assembly line at a Detroit-area plant. Ford marked the occasion for the car, celebrated in American song and film and recognized the world over as a quintessentially American cultural export, with a big party and parade at the Michigan headquarters.

It is a key moment for the carmaker, which is banking on the Mustang's wide appeal to help it grow global market share. US sales of the model are declining, but they are accelerating overseas. "The Mustang is the best-selling sports coupe in Germany, as well as in the United States," Ford CEO Jim Hackett boasted in remarks to revelers assembled at Ford headquarters yesterday morning to kick off the party.

As it celebrates the milestone, Ford is appealing to the sense of nostalgia for what is seen as the original "freedom vehicle" that exemplified the love of the open road. After all, the car was named after a horse that still roams free in the American West. "I can think of no other American car that captures the love affair with the automobile that Americans have had," automotive historian John Heitmann of the University of Dayton told AFP. "It is as American as one can have an American product."

The Mustang germinated an entire subgenre of cars. From a technical standpoint, the original 1965 model was not meant as a muscle car intended to attract those who gravitate to fast wheels. It was in fact one of the original so-called "pony cars" - a smaller, affordable, practical sibling of flashy sports cars intended to appeal to young professionals, including women. But the Mustang became an icon almost from the start, in no small part thanks to marketing that would rival a modern-day iPhone launch.

It debuted in the spring, at the 1964 New York World's Fair, far before other companies that announced their latest offerings in the fall. It was hyped up in advance and automotive industry journalists were on hand. Automotive historian Bob Merlis, at the time a teenager, witnessed the World's Fair launch. "It was almost like pandemonium. People were so excited about this car," Merlis said. "It was sort of a counterpoint to the very square, staid station wagon ethos that Americans grew up with in suburbia," he recalled. "It represented some kind of a freedom vehicle. It embodied that."

The car captured the public imagination, and that was reflected in its popularity on the big screen. The car made its first appearance in 1964 in a chase scene with Sean Connery's James Bond in "Goldfinger", and American film star Steve McQueen drove a Mustang in the 1968 thriller "Bullitt" - cementing the car's cool factor. It even appeared overseas, appearing in the 1966 Oscar-winning French film "A Man and a Woman" by Claude Lelouch. And Wilson Pickett immortalized the car in "Mustang Sally," a rhythm and blues classic from 1966.

Ford has been playing up that nostalgic past. At this year's Detroit auto show, the company unveiled a new limited-edition Bullitt Mustang, along with McQueen's original. For its celebration, Ford intends to highlight Mustang owners' loyalty to the brand by featuring the first Mustang ever purchased - still owned by the original purchaser. Mustang owners - known to form clubs and restore older models - were called upon to bring one Mustang for each year of the car's existence to Ford headquarters.

Owners responded, and the company held a 32 km



FLAT ROCK, Michigan: Employees surround Ford Motor's 10 millionth Mustang produced at its Flat Rock assembly yesterday. — AFP

parade yesterday morning from its headquarters in one Detroit suburb to its Mustang assembly plant in another. "It's been part of my life for a long time," Mike Magri, owner of five different Mustangs since 1988, told AFP while waiting for the parade to begin. The celebration is part of a strategic decision by the American auto giant to focus attention on the sporty icon. Mustangs soon will be one of only two passenger cars from Ford - along with a crossover Focus - sold in North America. All other Ford offerings will be trucks and SUVs.

Ford sold only about 81,000 Mustangs in 2017, a mere 0.5 percent of the North American car market, according to Autodata. But Mustang sales are growing overseas. Auto industry analyst Karl Brauer of Kelly Blue Book said Ford is banking on Mustang's pull as a cultural symbol. "It sells extremely well globally," Brauer said. "So clearly, there's really a fan following." Since Ford began exporting Mustangs in 2015, it has become the world's best-selling sports coupe, according to the company's figures - including in China, which by 2025 is projected to have twice the share of the global car market compared to the US. —AFP

already unsettled by a series of assertive foreign policy initiatives by the top oil exporter.

Inflows slowed in recent years mainly due to low oil prices, but regional turmoil doesn't help, critics of the government say. "Saudi Arabia simply cannot afford to alienate any other sections of the global community in the midst of its unpopular military engagement in Yemen, its indirect confrontation with Iran," commentator Jamal Khashoggi wrote in the Washington Post. The kingdom has taken several measures to punish Ottawa. In addition to the trade freeze, Riyadh has stopped sending patients to Canadian hospitals and "is coordinating for the transfer of all Saudi patients from Canadian hospitals..." It was unclear how many Saudi patients would be affected by the decision and how many were covered by the kingdom's healthcare system. The government provides healthcare services through several government agencies for public employees.

The kingdom has suspended educational exchanges with Canada and moved Saudi scholars to other countries. Saudi state airline Saudi said it was suspending flights to and from Toronto. Saudi Arabia's main state wheat buying agency told grains exporters it will no longer accept Canadian-origin grains in international tenders, European traders said.

Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was expected to hold a news conference in Montreal, where he will be pressed on the diplomatic crisis. The dispute may hurt what is a modest bilateral trade worth nearly \$4 billion a year. Canadian exports to Saudi Arabia were about \$1.12 billion in 2017, or 0.2 percent of the total value of Canadian exports. Canada has indicated it will not back down, despite the risk of imperiling business deals including a \$15 billion agreement to sell Riyadh light armored vehicles. If the deal is scrapped, thousands of jobs could be lost in Canada, experts say. — AFP

bilateral ties. Prince Salman recognized the rapid expansion of flights between Bahrain and Kuwait, adding that the launch of the first flight from Terminal 4 to Bahrain cements the next phase in aviation relations between both countries.

Bahrain's prime minister also heaped praise on HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as a leader whose accomplishments are immeasurable. Bahrain is honored to have been the destination for the first flight to take off from Kuwait International Airport's new Terminal 4. Prince Khalifa bin Salman told the Kuwaiti delegation. He was cited by Bahrain's state-run news agency BNA as saying that the two Gulf neighbors share an impenetrable bond, pointing out that the completion of the new terminal was a testament to the meteoric development seen in Kuwait.

Bahraini Finance Minister Sheikh Ahmad bin Mohammad, as well as Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications Kamal bin Ahmed also extended their congratulations to Kuwait on the opening of the new airport terminal. Kuwait's ambassador to Manama Sheikh Azzam Al-Sabah told KUNA that the opening of the new terminal is a historic milestone that brings Kuwait closer to achieving its development goals.

Removal of roadblocks in Baghdad oils traffic and trade

BAGHDAD: Suha Abdelhamid's life has dramatically improved over the past two months - thanks to the removal of fortified roadblocks that had made her daily commute in Iraq's capital a misery.

Like people across Baghdad, the young dentist finds a certain joy in rediscovering streets that were previously behind a tortuously slow slalom of concrete barriers and checkpoints. "Before, I never thought of passing through here" said Abdelhamid, as she shopped in a small supermarket in her wealthy home district of Al-Bounouk.

The removal of barriers and roadblocks is a work in progress. After years of sectarian violence that culminated in the Islamic State group seizing around a third of Iraq in 2014, Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi declared victory over the militants in December. "More than 1,000 streets and alleyways have been reopened in Baghdad since last year", said General Saad Maan, spokesman for the city's security forces high command. A total of "305 checkpoints and roadblocks have been taken down and the campaign is continuing", he added.

The first concrete walls in the old city sprang up in 2007, as violence between Sunni and Shiite militias intensified. The Sunni dominated Al-Adhamiya district was the first to be sealed off by a "separation wall". Other neighborhoods followed. "In chasing and terrorizing residents in mixed quarters, the 2005-08 civil war enabled the militias to establish homogeneous strongholds", Iraq researcher and author Caecilia Pieri told AFP.

In the decade since then, more than eight million citizens and nearly two million vehicles have had to endure daily jams in the capital, caused by the walls, other barriers and security checks. But thanks to key routes and feeder roads being reopened, traffic circulation is now improving in some districts.

For 27-year-old civil servant Ahmed Abdelrahman, bringing his arthritic mother to a doctor in the largely



BAGHDAD: Iraqi drivers steer their cars next to cement blocks on Aug 5, 2018. — AFP

Sunni district of Al-Harthiya was once a nightmare. The jams between security checks used to make the journey a feat of endurance for her. But "everything has changed since they shut the checkpoints and reopened certain streets", said Abdelrahman, helping his mother out of the car and into the street.

The dismantling of the barriers has also seen trade flow more freely. "We could not bring trucks in and customers had to walk a long way to access the shops", said trader Rami Dhia in Al-Bounouk's main commercial street. Business "activity has soared by four times" since the cement barriers were removed, Dhia added. But Abdallah Ali, who sells children's clothes, will never forget the many years "when we spent several days in a row selling nothing". "Many shops closed" because of the roadblocks, he lamented.

While the economy took a hit from the checkpoints and walls, their presence made law enforcement easier, security specialist Hussein Allawi told AFP. The gradual removal of the barriers is "proof that security is improving and that victory has been won over terrorism", he said. "The next objective is to bring Baghdad back to normal life", he added. That will require sustained peaceful cohabitation between the Shiite and Sunni communities, Pieri said. "We must hope that the dismantling of these walls will be both the symptom and the cause of a real return to this cohabitation", she said. — AFP

Palestinian-American to be first Muslim...

Continued from Page 1

Michigan state assembly, serving from 2009-14. She has a law degree and has worked as an attorney for social justice.

Sally Howell, director of the Center for Arab American Studies at the University of Michigan-DeARBORN who has known her for 25 years, described Tlaib is "tough, capable and hard-working" and "very charismatic". "She cares about people, about the community she grew up in," Howell told AFP. "She was not running as a Muslim per se, but as someone from southwest Detroit... who happens to be a Muslim. But her campaign was definitely picked up and championed by the Muslim community which feels greatly maligned."

Syria first lady diagnosed with...

Continued from Page 1

The presidency did not specify where the first lady was being treated, but the word "military" was printed on a blanket visible in the picture, indicating she was

In Aug 2016, Tlaib interrupted a Trump address in Detroit, telling him "our children deserve better" and imploring him to read the US Constitution, before being grabbed by security guards and ejected from the hall. "My mother, so upset, you got arrested on national TV," Tlaib told CNN. "I got detained. It's fine. It was the most American thing I could ever do." She backs equal pay for women, tuition-free college, public health-care, LGBTQ rights, overturning Trump's travel ban, environmental protections and immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship for those undocumented.

But if Tlaib's seat is progressive, Trump was the first Republican president to carry rust-belt Michigan since 1988. Three other Muslim women, in Arizona, Massachusetts and Minnesota, still in congressional races of their own, will now be hoping that a Tlaib bounce will also help blaze a way for them. "I feel that her win is our win," candidate Tahirah Amatul-Wadud told AFP from Massachusetts. "It is wonderful to be a part of the changing face of democracy and our country." — AFP

likely in a government-run military hospital. Born in 1975, the British-born former investment banker styled herself as a progressive rights advocate and was seen as the modern side of the Assad dynasty. She rarely appeared in public during the first few years of the uprising, but over the past two years has been much more active at charity events. Asma, whose father is a cardiologist and whose mother is a diplomat, has two sons and a daughter with Assad. She married him in 2000. — AFP

Riyadh rules out mediation...

Continued from Page 1

Canadian investments in Saudi Arabia were still ongoing and would not be affected by the dispute, he said. On Tuesday, Reuters reported that Canada plans to seek help from United Arab Emirates and Britain to defuse the row, citing sources familiar with the matter. The Financial Times (FT) reported the Saudi central bank and state pension funds had instructed their overseas asset managers to dispose of their Canadian equities, bonds and cash holdings "no matter the cost", citing unidentified sources.

The central bank did not immediately respond to a Reuters query for comment. A Canadian departmental spokesperson said Global Affairs Canada continues to seek clarity from the Saudi Arabian government on various issues. A source at a Saudi bank told Reuters the bank was contacted by the central bank yesterday afternoon asking for information about all their Canadian exposure - investments in Canada and foreign exchange positions. The bank had received no instructions to sell assets as they do not have any exposure there, the source said.

Russia voiced support for Saudi Arabia in its worsening row with Canada, telling Ottawa it was unacceptable to lecture the kingdom on human rights. Since rising to power in 2015, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has courted Western allies to support his reform plans, offering billions of dollars of arms sales and promising to fight radicalism in the kingdom. But the row threatens to slow Riyadh's foreign investment drive, a campaign

Kuwait Airways launches new...

Continued from Page 1

The delegation conveyed to Bahraini king greetings on behalf of HH the Amir of Kuwait and HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and wished Bahrain and its people further progress and prosperity.

The Kuwaiti delegation also met Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, the Bahraini Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister at Riffa Palace. During the meeting, the Crown Prince extended his congratulations to the delegation on the inauguration of the new terminal, highlighting that it represents a new milestone in Kuwait's efforts to advance its aviation and logistics sector.

He also highlighted Bahrain's commitment to continue advancing cooperation and coordination with Kuwait, and stressed that King Hamad and Sheikh Sabah both play a crucial role in building on historic

Sports

Bartolo Colon becomes Baseball's winningest Latin American pitcher

Dodgers earn rare win in Oakland; Twins beat Indians

TEXAS: Bartolo Colon became Major League Baseball's winningest pitcher from Latin America as the Texas Rangers defeated the visiting Seattle Mariners 11-4 Tuesday night. It was the 246th career victory for the 45-year-old right-hander, breaking a tie with Nicaragua's Dennis Martinez. Earlier this season, Colon passed Juan Marichal (243 wins) for the most for a native of the Dominican Republic. Colon (6-10), making his sixth attempt at the record after going 0-5 since tying the mark on June 30, allowed four runs on eight hits in seven innings. He didn't walk a batter and struck out one. Jurickson Profar, Rougned Odor and Adrian Beltre homered off Felix Hernandez (8-10). The Seattle right-hander gave up 11 runs (seven earned) in six innings.

Red Sox 10, Blue Jays 7 (10 innings)

Mitch Moreland hit a go-ahead, three-run homer, and Jackie Bradley Jr added a two-run blast in a five-run top of the 10th inning as visiting Boston defeated Toronto. After the Blue Jays' Justin Smoak tied the game with a homer in the bottom of the ninth against Craig Kimbrel (3-1), Mookie Betts tripled with one out in the 10th against Ken Giles (0-3) when center fielder Kevin Pillar's diving attempt came up short. Andrew Benintendi walked, and Moreland hit his 14th homer of the season. Xander Bogaerts singled before Bradley hit his ninth homer of the year. J.D. Martinez homered earlier for Boston, while Toronto got long balls from Devon Travis and Pillar, who went deep in the bottom of the 10th.

Twins 3, Indians 2

Mitch Garver hit a three-run homer, and Eddie Rosario had four hits to lead visiting Minnesota over Cleveland. Adalberto Mejia (2-0) blanked the Indians on one hit over the first five innings. He walked one and fanned three, including a strikeout of Jason Kipnis for the second out in the fifth. Mejia appeared to win after throwing the final strike but stayed in to get Rajai Davis to ground out before leaving the game with what was announced as a left wrist strain. Fernando Rodney picked up his 25th save with a scoreless ninth.

Phillies 5, Diamondbacks 2

Nick Williams homered, and Nick Pivetta pitched six shutout innings as Philadelphia beat Arizona in Phoenix. Asdrubal Cabrera contributed a two-run double during a four-run eighth inning as the Phillies won for the sixth time in the past seven games. Cabrera and Williams each had two of the Phillies' six hits. Pivetta (7-9) allowed five hits, struck out six and walked one. Pat Neshek worked a perfect ninth for his second save.

Yankees 4, White Sox 3 (13 innings)

Rookie Miguel Andujar hit a two-out, tiebreaking single in the top of the 13th inning as New York survived a blown save by Zach Britton and pulled out a win at Chicago. Six innings after hitting a game-tying homer, Andujar delivered his first career RBI in extra

innings when he lined a 1-0 changeup from Luis Avilan (2-1) to left, scoring Didi Gregorius from second. Sonny Gray (9-8) made his third career relief appearance and earned the win. Removed from the rotation in favor of Lance Lynn on Saturday, Gray allowed a hit and a walk in three innings while striking out four.

Angels 11, Tigers 5

Shohei Ohtani's three-run home run sparked a seven-run first inning, leading Los Angeles to a victory over Detroit in Anaheim, Calif. Justin Upton also homered for the Angels, who totaled 13 hits, including two each from Ohtani, Upton, Andrelton Simmons, Kole Calhoun and Francisco Arcia. Andrew Heaney (7-7) got the win despite giving up five runs on eight hits in five innings.

Reds 6, Mets 1

Phillip Ervin drove in three runs while Scooter Gennett collected three hits as visiting Cincinnati withstood a lengthy rain delay in the first inning and beat New York. Ervin and Gennett drove in the first two runs of a three-run first inning before the game was interrupted by a 100-minute rain delay. Sal Romano (7-9) allowed one run on two hits in six-plus innings for the win.

Padres 11, Brewers 5

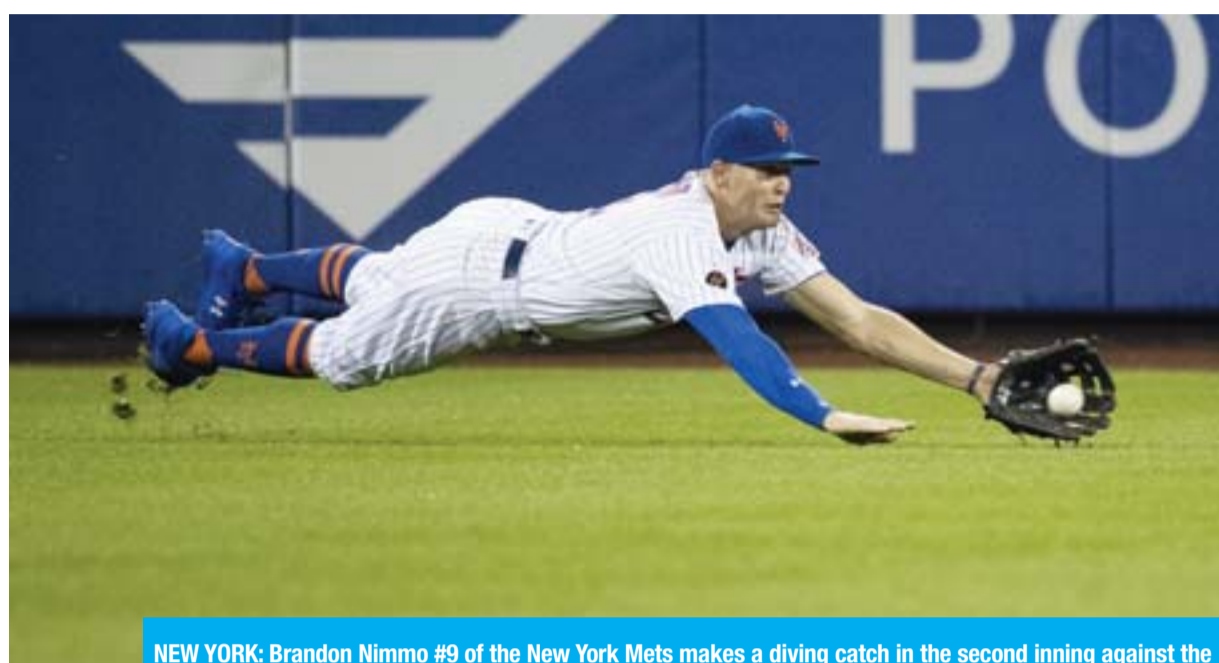
Rookie Franmil Reyes hit a two-out, two-run, seventh-inning double to lift San Diego to a come-from-behind victory at Milwaukee. Reyes lined a Josh Hader 2-1 pitch into left-center field to score Christian Villanueva and Freddy Galvis, breaking a 5-5 tie. Reyes, who went 3-for-3 with a homer, three RBIs and three runs, and leadoff hitter Manuel Margot played major roles in the Padres rallying from a 4-0, first-inning hole. Margot finished 3-for-5 with a homer, a triple, two runs and five RBIs.

Dodgers 4, A's 2

Los Angeles won in Oakland, Calif., for the first time since 2001, riding the four-hit pitching of Rich Hill and four relievers to a victory and a return to first place in the National League West. Austin Barnes squeezed home a run in the second inning, and Enrique Hernandez and Cody Bellinger also drove in runs in the first three innings as the Dodgers knocked A's ace Sean Manaea out of the game early en route to their second straight win. The Dodgers had lost eight in a row in Oakland. Hill (5-4), who pitched a half-season for the A's before getting dealt to the Dodgers in 2016, worked the first 5 1/3 innings, allowing two runs and three hits.

Astros 2, Giants 1

Tyler White hit a two-run home run with one out in the eighth inning, delivering visiting Houston a victory at San Francisco and a sweep of a two-game inter-league series. It was the second game in a row that Houston overturned a late 1-0 deficit with a home run. On Monday, Marwin Gonzalez's three-run shot with



NEW YORK: Brandon Nimmo #9 of the New York Mets makes a diving catch in the second inning against the Cincinnati Reds at Citi Field on August 7, 2018. — AFP

two outs in the ninth inning gave the Astros a 3-1 win. Astros left-hander Dallas Keuchel allowed just Chase d'Arnaud's second-inning RBI single in his six-inning outing, while Giants lefty Madison Bumgarner tossed seven scoreless innings.

Pirates 10, Rockies 2

Jameson Taillon threw his second career complete game, both coming this season, and Starling Marte, Josh Harrison and Jordy Mercer homered as Pittsburgh beat Colorado in Denver. Mercer and Harrison drove in three runs each as Pittsburgh ended a three-game losing streak. Taillon (9-8) yielded two runs on 10 hits and a walk with three strikeouts. Charlie Blackmon had two singles and recorded his 1,000th career hit for Colorado, and Ryan McMahon also collected two hits. Chad Bettis gave up nine runs on eight hits in 4 2/3 innings.

Cubs 5, Royals 0

David Bote drove in three runs, and Mike Montgomery pitched six-plus scoreless innings as visiting Chicago defeated Kansas City. Bote had a two-run triple in the first inning and a run-scoring grounder in the fifth for his first career three-RBI game. He also scored a run in the eighth inning on an Ian Happ sacrifice fly. Montgomery (4-4) won a start for the first time since June 29. He gave up five hits with two walks and four strikeouts. Carl Edwards Jr., Jesse Chavez and Justin Wilson each pitched an inning in relief to complete the shutout.

Cardinals 3, Marlins 2

Matt Carpenter pulled a tiebreaking homer over the right field fence in the eighth inning as St. Louis rallied to win at Miami. Miles Mikolas (12-3) earned the win, allowing five hits, no walks and two runs in seven innings. Mikolas, who grew up less than two hours from Marlins Park, struck out just one batter but got 14 ground-ball outs. Carpenter, who moved into the

National League lead with his 30th home run, hit a 3-2 fastball off of reliever Eliaser Hernandez (2-6). Carpenter became the first major-leaguer this year to reach 30 homers and 30 doubles.

Rays 4, Orioles 3

Willy Adames ripped a walk-off home run over the left field fence with two outs in the ninth inning, lifting Tampa Bay to a win over Baltimore in St Petersburg, Fla. Adames' homer came off Baltimore reliever Miguel Castro (2-6) and allowed the Rays to snap a three-game losing streak. Sergio Romo (2-2), the fourth Rays pitcher of the game, retired both batters he faced for the win.

Nationals 8, Braves 3 (Game 1)

Bryce Harper and Ryan Zimmerman hit back-to-back homers in the fourth inning and combined to drive in five runs as Washington defeated visiting Atlanta in the opener of a day-night doubleheader. The Nationals did all of their damage in the fourth and sixth innings, scoring four runs in each frame. Starter Jeffrey Rodriguez even helped, getting his first major league hit while earning his first win in the majors, throwing five innings of one-run ball. Zimmerman went 3-for-5 with three RBIs. Harper finished 2-for-5 with two RBIs and two runs.

Braves 3, Nationals 1 (Game 2)

Ender Inciarte lined a two-run triple with one out in the top of the ninth to give Atlanta a split of the doubleheader at Washington. The game was tied 1-1 when Freddie Freeman and Nick Markakis led off the ninth with consecutive singles off Kelvin Herrera (2-3). With one out, Inciarte lined a triple down the right field line that brought in both runners. Herrera left the game after the triple. The team announced after the game that Herrera experienced some tightness in his right (pitching) shoulder and that he would undergo an MRI exam on Wednesday. — Reuters

Mountain Biking: Neff and Forster earn Swiss cross-country double

GLASGOW: Jolanda Neff and Lars Forster made light of a punishing course to ride away from their opposition and fashion a golden Swiss double in the mountain biking races at the European Championships on Tuesday. World champion Neff burst clear on the first of five laps of the undulating 28-km course before stretching away to win the women's title from her nearest, though distant, challenger, France's Pauline Ferrand Prevot, by more than two minutes.

If the 25-year-old's victory was as routine as it was emphatic, Forster's was more unexpected—and rather closer—in the men's 33km cross-country race as he only managed to forge clear of dogged Italian Luca Braidot

in the final stages. The course, set at the highest point in the Glasgow city area at the Cathkin Braes trails, was so demanding that even Neff at one point on the first lap had to dismount and push her bike up one of the many steep inclines.

Yet once into her stride, she was in a different league to the opposition, relentlessly increasing her lead over each circuit until she was able to do a 'wheelie' in celebration just before crossing the line in one hour 31 minutes 29 seconds. "I crashed and missed out on this title last year so it's a dream for me," said Neff, who was celebrating her third European crown in four years. Ferrand Prevot clocked 1:33:33 with bronze medalist Githa Michiels of Belgium clocking 1:34:56.

Forster powered to his first major cross-country title, finally breaking Braidot on the last lap after the pair had dueled at the front for two laps. The man from Zurich eventually forged 24 seconds clear, clocking 1:33:01. "I always thought it was possible to win but it's unbelievable to achieve it," Forster said, praising the help from his Swiss team mates, including defending champion Florian Vogel who eventually finished 11th. Spain's David Valero Serrano battled through the field from 28th place after the first of the six laps to take bronze. — Reuters

Chanu withdrawal, the latest setback for India ahead of Asian Games

NEW DELHI: India's bid to win their first Asian Games gold medal in weightlifting suffered a major jolt with women's 48kg world champion Mirabai Chanu pulling out of the competition with a back injury. Expectation has been high since the Manipuri lifter added Commonwealth Games gold in April to her 2017 world championship triumph but a spinal spasm will keep the 24-year-old out of the Games in Indonesia beginning on Aug 18. "Owing to the severe back pain, entry... has been withdrawn," Indian

Weightlifting Federation secretary general Sahdev Yadav said in a statement, adding the lifter was undergoing a rehabilitation program.

Chief national coach Vijay Sharma has advised the federation against rushing Chanu's return and risk aggravating the injury. In her email to the federation, Chanu said she wanted to focus on November's world championship in Turkmenistan instead as it would double up as a qualifying event for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. "Since there is no provision for replacement, we'd be sending four lifters, instead of five," Yadav told Reuters over telephone.

Chanu's withdrawal is a latest setback for the federation following the provisional suspension of two-time Commonwealth Games gold medalist Sanjita Chanu whose a sample tested positive for an anabolic steroid in May. Sanjita has denied charges of any wrongdoing and wants an inquiry into the matter. Rakhi Halder, who will compete in 63kg, will be the lone woman Indian lifter at the Games. In men's competition, Sathish Kumar and Ajay Singh will compete in 77kg, while Vikas Thakur will participate in 94kg. — Reuters



Pivetta pitches Phillies past the Diamondbacks



KUWAIT: Kuwait Under-15 Basketball team travelled to Cairo for training camp (from August 7 to August 17). The team Uwayed Al-Enezi, team manager Mohammad Al-Humaidan and coach Mohammad Abu Al-Ainain is headed by Jali Al-Jali.

Sports

Wawrinka fights back to knock Kyrgios out; Djokovic advance

Djokovic book second round in Toronto Masters

TORONTO: Stan Wawrinka and Novak Djokovic reached the second round of the Toronto Masters on Tuesday, with both men polishing their pre-US Open form. Wawrinka put his comeback from knee surgery back on track with a 1-6, 7-5, 7-5 comeback win over Nick Kyrgios. Wimbledon holder Djokovic eased to victory, beating Mirza Basic 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) after the Bosnian replaced original opponent Chung Hyeon of South Korea, who withdrew before the match with injury.

A pair of Canadian teenagers advanced, with Denis Shapovalov dominating Jeremy Chardy 6-1, 6-4 while good friend Felix Auger-Aliassime, who turns 18 on Wednesday, thrilled his home fans as he defeated Lucas Pouille of France 6-4, 6-3. Three-time Grand Slam champion Wawrinka put 16th seed Kyrgios out with an impressive display after losing a one-sided opening set. Wawrinka has been struggling to find his best form since returning to the ATP Tour after two knee operations a year ago and has slumped to 195 in the world rankings.

"I'm looking for confidence. I'm looking for matches," he said. "I'm grateful I got the wildcard to play directly in the main draw. I knew it was going to be a tough match. Winning 1-6, 7-5, 7-5, it's great for me. Any victory is good to get more confidence. I'm happy with the way I'm practicing. I'm really happy with the level and the way I'm moving on the practice court, and I need to find how to put it in the match." Wawrinka's

victory in just over two hours avenged a 2015 loss to Kyrgios in Canada, when the Swiss had to retire. That contest was also remembered for Kyrgios insulting his opponent's girlfriend Donna Vekic.

Kyrgios, with green fluorescent tape encircling each kneecap, quit injured in last week's Washington quarter-finals, and he was treated in the second set here for his chronically troublesome hip. The 33-year-old Wawrinka broke late in the second set to level the match, and completed his fightback on a second match

point as he also broke in the 12th game of the decider. "My hip is, obviously, a little bit sore. That's why I called the trainer on the court. So it's pretty self-explanatory," Kyrgios said. "It's good to see Stan back, I guess. He's obviously had a tough 12 months with his injury, and it's good seeing him back winning some matches."

Djokovic beats Basic

Djokovic, a four-time winner in Canada, double-faulted while serving for the match to slip into a second-set tie-break, but he finished the job for a second-round spot. "(I need) the consistency of playing on a high level match after match, I haven't had that post-surgery for several months," Djokovic said. "I was struggling to play two or three matches in a row consistently well. So that has changed and obviously feels good." Djokovic win in 90 minutes with nine aces; he now stands 36-6 at the event and next plays Canada's Peter Polansky.



Japan's Nishikori loses to Haase of the Netherlands



TORONTO: Novak Djokovic of Serbia hits a shot against Mirza Basic of Bosnia and Herzegovina during a 1st round match on Day 2 of the Rogers Cup at Aviva Centre on August 7, 2018. — AFP

Japan's Kei Nishikori lost serve five times in a 7-5, 6-1 loss to Robin Haase of the Netherlands. His defeat was the third in three matches for Japanese players after less than two days of play. Russian Karen Khachanov reached the second round at the expense of Serb Filip Krajinovic 6-3, 6-2, while American Sam Querrey beat

Adrian Mannarino of France 6-2, 7-5. American Frances Tiafoe defeated Italy's Marco Cecchinato 7-6 (7/3), 6-1. Greek rising star Stefanos Tsitsipas accounted for Damir Dzumhur 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) and 14th seed Fabio Fognini, winner of two of his last three tournaments, beat American Steve Johnson 6-4, 6-4. — AFP

New-look England try to do without Stokes in 2nd Test

LONDON: England will be without Ben Stokes while India could make changes too for the second Test at Lord's today. Stokes played a starring role in England's 31-run win in the first Test of a five-match series at Edgbaston last week, including taking the wicket of India captain Virat Kohli, who had been anchoring the tourists' run-chase.

But Stokes was omitted by England because he is in court this week on a criminal charge of affray. Fellow pace-bowling all-rounder Chris Woakes has been called up in his place to the England squad, with uncapped Surrey batsman Ollie Pope selected instead of Dawid Malan, dropped after a run of low scores. But in a dry English summer that has seen pitches more receptive to slow bowling than usual, England could recall off-spinner Moeen Ali to partner leg-break bowler Adil Rashid even though England captain Joe Root bowls occasional off-breaks.

Root confirmed Wednesday that Pope would bat at number four but that England would delay a decision on whether to play Ali or Woakes instead of Stokes until the morning of the match, with the uncapped Jamie Porter released from the 13-man squad. "Ollie Pope will come in and bat at four," said Root. That England won their 1,000th Test owed much to Pope's fellow 20-year-old Surrey rising star Sam Curran. As well as taking five wickets in his main role as a left-arm swing bowler, Curran's sparkling second-innings 63, his maiden Test fifty, enabled England to set India a tricky target of 194.

It proved beyond the tourists, despite Kohli making 51 to follow his first-innings 149 — the star batsman's maiden Test century on English soil. Neither side made 300 in the match, England posting 287 before India replied with 274 in the first innings. India struggled against the swinging ball, with England finding it difficult to combat Ravichandran Ashwin's off-spin. In 17 Tests since Root became captain in July 2017, England have managed just nine hundreds between them and, even more concerning for their fans, have been dismissed for under 300 in their first innings seven times and for under 250 in the second innings nine times.

In Pope they have a batsman who has been in superb form for County Championship leaders Surrey so far this season with 684 runs at a huge average of 85.50, including three centuries and a top score of 158 not out. Root, frustratingly run out for 80 in England's first innings at Edgbaston, said it was important to put the side's batting struggles into perspective. "I think it's sometimes easy to criticize the batting group but I thought the way both seaming groups in particular bowled was outstanding."

'Tough choice'

India too could make a top-order change with the experienced Cheteshwar Pujara waiting in the wings if struggling opener Shikhar Dhawan is omitted. They also have the option of playing a second-spinner, be it orthodox left-armed Ravindra Jadeja or left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav, with all-rounder Hardik Pandya the man most likely to miss out if either slow bowler is selected. "It's a good choice, a tough one too," Bharat Arun, India's bowling coach, told reporters at Lord's on Tuesday. "We really need to look at any change in strategy, depending on the wicket." But Arun said Jasprit Bumrah was "out of contention", the paceman still sidelined after missing the first Test with the broken thumb he suffered during a Twenty20 international against Ireland in June. — AFP

Hometown favorite Eugenie Bouchard falls in Montreal

MONTREAL: The vocal support of the home crowd was not enough to carry Canadian Eugenie Bouchard into the second round of the Rogers Cup in Montreal on Tuesday as she fell 6-2 6-4 to Belgian Elise Mertens. Mertens, the 14th seed, won five break points to dispatch Bouchard, who has fallen to 129th in the world after reaching a career-high of fifth in 2014 — the year she reached the Wimbledon final.

Home hopes now rest on 21-year-old Francoise Abanda, who defeated qualifier Kirsten Flipkens of Belgium 6-3 6-2. British number one Johanna Konta fired eight aces en route to a 6-7(6) 6-1 6-2 upset win over 11th-seeded Latvian Jelena Ostapenko. Konta, who handed Serena Williams the worst loss of her career at the Silicon Valley Classic last month, will face former world number one Victoria Azarenka in the second round on Wednesday.

Azarenka was in complete control as she strolled to a 6-0 6-1 win over Kristina Mladenovic of France in a match that lasted less than an hour. Daria Kasatkina, seeded 12th, beat rising Greek talent Maria Sakkari 6-4 4-6 6-1 to set up her first career meeting against fellow Russian Maria Sharapova in the second round. Other players to advance from the first round on Tuesday

Russian Shmeleva foiled by youngster Gros in track finale

GLASGOW: Russian Daria Shmeleva missed out on a fourth European Championship gold on the final day of the track cycling program on Tuesday as the exciting French teenager Mathilde Gros outpaced the triple sprint champion in the keirin. Shmeleva had been a warm favorite to complete her outstanding championships with another title to go with her individual sprint, team sprint and 500m time trial crowns. Yet once the derny motorbike towing the field around moved aside, it was 19-year-old Gros who dominated the race, taking over with 350 meters left and resisting all attempts to outmuscle her in the final massed sprint for the line.

Belgian world champion Nicky Degrendele came on to her shoulder off the final bend but had to settle for silver while Shmeleva, who had never found the right position to attack until too late, won the bronze. "I saw her (Degrendele's) wheel just behind me and when I passed the line I thought, 'Is it me? Am I European champion?'" Gros said. "Then I saw myself up there in first position and thought, 'Wow, it's me.' I couldn't believe it."

Great things have been expected of Gros ever since her triple gold medal-winning performance at last year's world junior championships in Montichiari, Italy, but this still marked a spectacular breakthrough. The men's keirin, the last event in the programme, was won by Germany's former world sprint champion Stefan Boetticher who just prevented a French double by the narrowest of margins, edging out Sebastien Vigier for gold. His victory meant Germany won more medals than any other nation in the track cycling events, 11 in total including three golds, while the Netherlands annexed the most golds with five, ahead of Britain's four.

The Dutch failed to add to their golden tally as double champion Kirsten Wild could only win bronze in the madison with Amy Pieters. The Danish pair of Amalie



MONTREAL: Elise Mertens of Belgium hits a return against Eugenie Bouchard of Canada during day two of the Rogers Cup at IGA Stadium. — AFP

included Spaniard Carla Suarez Navarro and Russian Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, who faced top-seeded Simona Halep yesterday. Sixth seed Caroline Garcia of

France and eighth-seeded Czech Petra Kvitova advanced to the third round with wins over Slovak Magdalena Rybarikova and Estonian Anett Kontaveit. — Reuters



GLASGOW: Russia's Daria Shmeleva celebrates her victory in the women's 500m time trial final of the track cycling during the 2018 European Championships in Glasgow. — AFP

Dideriksen, the 2016 world road race champion, and Julie Leth effectively grabbed victory by managing to steal a lap midway through the 30km race. Matt Walls, at 20 another talented find for the British hosts, rode an immaculate elimination race, keeping out of trouble, picking off his rivals one by one and comfortably sprinting away from his final challenger, Portugal's Rui Oliveira, on the final back straight. — Reuters

Woods' world dominates PGA Championship

ST LOUIS: It wasn't so much media day at the 100th PGA Championships on Tuesday as Tiger Woods Day. If there was any question about whether the golf world still revolves around the 42-year-old surgically repaired American without a major title in a decade, one only needed to peak into the Bellerive Country Club media room as major winners, a Ryder Cup captain and Woods himself were paraded through for a friendly cross-examination to find the answer.

From a morning start to an evening finish the thread connecting the day's agenda was a familiar one — Tiger Woods. Francesco Molinari was given the courtesy of a few questions about the impact of his historic British Open win at Carnoustie last month—the first major triumph by an Italian—but the media did not want to know how it felt to hoist the Claret Jug so much as what it was like playing the final round with Woods. Soon it was time for a walk down Tiger Woods Memory Lane. Molinari being asked to reflect on caddying at the US Masters for his brother Edoardo who happened to be playing in a group with Woods. And finally: "What sort of an influence has he (Woods) been on you?" "I think, in my generation we were all looking up to him, especially around 2000, 2001, 2002," offered an unruffled Molinari. "He was doing unbelievable things. 'He's been a model and an idol for me growing up, and it's nice to see him back playing good golf, and hopefully we'll be paired together late on Sunday again this week.'"

Woods' impact

There are 156 golfers teeing it up at the year's final major and it is likely every one of them has, at one time or another, been asked about Woods' impact on their careers. Of the eight golfers to take questions on Tuesday, six were asked about or mentioned Woods as the media probed for some Tiger nugget left unclaimed. Most of the questions were familiar and the answers more so. At any golf tournament Rory McIlroy, a charismatic four-time major winner, is the main attraction except when Woods is also competing and then the Northern Irishman is left to handicap the American's chances as much as his own. — Reuters

Sports

Ajax stumble as Benfica win in Champions League qualifiers

Dynamo Kiev held 1-1 after late goal at Slavia Prague

LONDON: Standard Liege fought back from two goals down to draw 2-2 with Ajax Amsterdam, while Benfica edged Fenerbahce 1-0 in Champions League third qualifying round, first-leg ties on Tuesday. After going in 2-0 down at halftime, Medhi Carcela pulled one back for Liege before Renaud Emond scored a 94th minute penalty to equalise after Ajax striker Klaas-Jan Huntelaar and Dusan Tadic put the four-time Dutch European Cup winners ahead. Visitors Ajax had looked comfortable after former Southampton winger Tadic set

up the first goal with a swerving cross before drilling home the second himself.

However Belgian side Liege clawed their way back into the game and Emond struck the woodwork before slotting home from the spot after Noussair Mazraoui fouled substitute Moussa Djenepo. The winners of the tie in Amsterdam next week will face either Slavia Prague or Dynamo Kiev in the playoff round for a place in the group stage of Europe's elite club competition. Those teams drew 1-1 in the Czech capital after Josef Jusbauer's

95th minute penalty for a dominant Slavia cancelled out Benjamin Verbic's 82nd minute opener.

In Lisbon, Benfica earned a narrow victory in a match they controlled as Franco Cervi's deflected strike after 69 minutes handed them the advantage over Fenerbahce, with both teams entering in this round of the qualifying process. When the teams played in the European Cup first round in 1975 Benfica won 7-0 but this time the Turkish side can hope to stage a second-leg comeback to secure a playoff against Thessaloniki-based PAOK or

Spartak Moscow who meet on Wednesday. Stanislav Dragan's header earned Belarusians BATE Borisov a 1-0 win at last season's Champions League group qualifiers Qarabag, with the eventual winners facing PSV Eindhoven. Dinamo Zagreb won 2-0 at Astana, who reached the group stage in 2015, with goals from Mario Budimir and the impressive Dani Olmo to put one foot in the playoffs where Young Boys await. Elsewhere, Malmo drew 1-1 with Vidi and Red Star Belgrade were held by Spartak Trnava with the same scoreline. — Reuters

Real Madrid end US tour with 2-1 win over Roma

LOS ANGELES: Gareth Bale is serving notice that he is ready to shine without Cristiano Ronaldo, factoring in both goals as Real Madrid wrapped up their US tour with a 2-1 win over Roma on Tuesday. Bale and Marco Asensio scored for Real Madrid who put on a strong performance especially in the first half of the International Champions Cup friendly at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey.

Real Madrid is hoping Bale is ready to fully evolve into the player they signed for a world record fee in 2013. The 33-year-old Ronaldo ended a nine-year spell at Real Madrid by recently signing with Italian champions Juventus. "We're scoring goals and we're winning matches, so we're doing well," Bale said. "We have to keep improving and we're really looking forward to starting the new season." Asensio, with his third goal of the preseason, opened the scoring just two minutes into the contest. Bale delivered a brilliant pass to the foot of Asensio and he found the back of the net.

Real Madrid struck again in the 15th minute as Bale would score this time, taking an equally superb pass from Dani Carvajal. Bale walked in and beat goalkeeper Robin Olsen to make it 2-0. Real Madrid wasn't nearly as dominant in the second half as most of their starting squad was subbed off. Kevin Strootman made it interesting by scoring in the 83rd minute for Roma. Strootman was left wide open off a throw-in and headed pass and all he had to do was hammer it past the startled Real Madrid goalkeeper.

Meanwhile, Luka Modric returned to training at Real



NEW JERSEY: Roma's French midfielder Maxime Gonalons (right) fights for the ball against Real Madrid's Spanish midfielder Marcos Llorente (left) during their 2018 International Champions Cup at the MetLife stadium on August 07, 2018. — AFP

Madrid yesterday along with five other World Cup players, against a background of contradictory rumors about his future. One Spanish sports daily, AS, reported that the midfielder who led Croatia to the World Cup final was subject to a big bid from Inter Milan, while a competing newspaper, Marca said the 32-year old was about to accept a pay rise from Real and sign a contract extension.

Modric, awarded the Golden Ball as best player at the World Cup, was given a break rather than join Real's pre-season tour of the United States, as were another Croatian World Cup finalist, Mateo Kovacic, who was reported to have travelled to London to join Chelsea, French World Cup winner Raphael Varane and Brazilian duo Marcelo and Casemiro. Yesterday, as the Real first team flew back

to Madrid after beating Roma in New Jersey on Tuesday night, the club said the World Cup players were in training.

"The Croatian midfielder joined Marcelo, Varane, Casemiro and Kovacic, who did individual work in the gym. The four players trained with nine players from the under-18s," Real Madrid said on their web site. Among the conflicting reports, Marca said that Modric, who joined Real in 2012, "did not consider his current salary matched the level of his performances" and that the player, who turns 33 early in September, was about to sign the best contract of his career. AS said Modric, who has not commented publicly, "foresaw joining Inter." Marca said "he would stay at Madrid" because "the club intended to increase his salary." — Agencies

Sprint king Bolt given as long as it takes at club

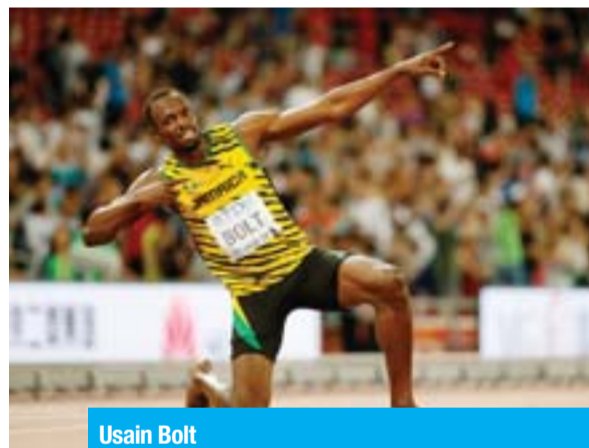
SYDNEY: Usain Bolt will be given as long as it takes to prove he deserves a playing contract, the Central Coast Mariners said yesterday after the Australian club agreed to help the sprint king realise his dream of becoming a professional footballer. The 31-year-old eight-time Olympic champion, who retired from athletics last year, is an avid Manchester United fan who has long wanted to play top-flight football. He has already tried out with teams in Germany, Norway and South Africa, to no avail. Undeterred, the A-League club have agreed to see what he has to offer with the sprint legend set to arrive at their training ground in Gosford, 75 kilometres (47 miles) north of Sydney, later this month.

"It's important to note that Usain Bolt comes to the Central Coast Mariners to train for an indefinite period. His training program will be structured to see if he can reach a level of playing that earns him a professional contract," said Mariners chief executive Shaun

Mielekamp. "This may take three weeks, this may take three months, this may take six months. This may take longer, who knows. Only time will tell. It's exciting to see what this will do for our region but the importance for us right now is to look after an athlete who's coming to try and become a professional player."

'Anything is possible'

Bolt, who has agreed to live on the Central Coast, said he was thrilled to be given another chance to showcase his abilities ahead of the A-League season starting in October. "I am very excited about coming to Australia and would like to thank the owner and management of the Central Coast Mariners for giving me this opportunity," said the Jamaican. "It has been my dream to play professional football and I know that it will involve a lot of hard work and training to get to the level required to play and make an impact in the A-League. I always say that 'anything is possible, don't think limits' and I look forward to the challenge." The 100m and 200m world record-holder has previously trained with Norwegian club Stromsgodset, German Bundesliga side Borussia Dortmund and South Africa's Sundowns. Asked what Bolt needed to do to win a contract, Mielekamp said: "Impress the coach." "He has to get to a level where the coach is confident he'll play regular football and once that decision is reached, then he'll be offered a playing



Usain Bolt

position," he added. Some fans on social media blasted the decision to take on Bolt as a publicity stunt, but Mielekamp said they would not be trying to cash in on his name until he proved himself. "It's not about having a gimmick or a campaign - Usain isn't a contracted player so we won't be launching him with a number or anything yet. Time will tell as things grow." Bolt dominated sprinting since taking double individual gold at the Beijing Olympics in 2008. He went on to win a further six Olympic golds and pick up 11 world titles. — AFP

French glamour club PSG turns to China for fans and funds

SHENZHEN: After three pre-season tours in a row to the United States, French glamour club Paris Saint-Germain turned to Asia in search of new fans and business deals ahead of the new season. It's the market "with the biggest growth potential," according to a PSG official discussing the club's two-week summer trip to Singapore and China. PSG's Asian fan base has grown while its social media presence has exploded along with the French club's rising profile following the signings of world football's most expensive player Neymar and French teenage sensation Kylian Mbappe.

Riding the wave of rising popularity, the French club with the Eiffel Tower logo took advantage of the Asian tour to open a permanent office in Singapore. "With the growth the club has enjoyed in recent years, along with the arrival of our two superstars Neymar and Mbappe, we thought that now was a good time to do it, it was the right moment," said SEbastien Wasels, the club's Asia Pacific director.

He said the Qatari-owned club with ambitions to dominate Europe needs the base to handle rising Asian growth opportunities. And the club that could face sanctions by European football's governing body UEFA for allegedly violating regulations over spending



SHENZHEN: Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian defender Thiago Silva (left), French midfielder Adrien Rabiot (center) and Brazilian forward Neymar Jr celebrate with the trophy after winning the French Trophy of Champions (Trophée des Champions) football match between Monaco (ASM) and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) in Shenzhen. — AFP

limits needs to significantly boost its income. PSG says that it has signed several commercial deals in the region including a multi-million euro partnership with marketing agency Desports for sponsorship and licensing rights in China and Hong Kong.

The club has also pinpointed three geographical growth areas in Asia and plans to hire a team of five expert locals to focus on business development opportunities in China, South Korea/Japan, and Southeast Asia/Oceania. During the club's brief summer Asia stay that included matches in Singapore

and the French Super Cup final against Monaco in Shenzhen, PSG hosted a range of promotional events. The included a cooking class by the club's Brazilian defender Marquinhos and a training session for young players at China's "PSG Academy" by former star player Maxwell, now part of the PSG management team.

PSG's eSports section was also brought into play to woo the younger generation, hosting a FIFA video tournament for 400,000 participants on local platforms to boost the club's active gaming sector. — AFP

Curry excited for rivalry with Lakers

LOS ANGELES: After meeting LeBron James' team in four consecutive NBA Finals, Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry is looking forward to a budding rivalry with James and the reformed Los Angeles Lakers. "A whole new-look Laker team with some of the young kids-it should be fun, the Bay Area and LA and the whole thing," Curry told the Associated Press on Monday. "When I first got into the league, Oracle would be buzzing any time the Lakers came in.

"There probably will be a revolution of Laker fans that are going to try to creep in, but I hope Bay Area and Dub Nation we keep control of that competition because we're on top right now." Curry and James met just twice a year in the regular season while in different conferences, with Curry's Warriors winning six of eight meetings over the last four years. Of course, they met in the Finals after each of those four seasons, with Curry's team winning three titles and 15 of 22 of Finals games.

Now in the Pacific Division together, the teams will meet four times each season, and it should be far more competitive than recent Warriors-Lakers contests. Over the last five seasons, Golden State is 16-4 against the Lakers, with all four losses coming at Staples Center. The Warriors swept LA last year, although both games in Los Angeles went to overtime. The specific dates for their meetings this season will be unveiled when the NBA schedule is released.

Curry also touched on the addition of DeMarcus Cousins, who joined the Warriors in free agency on a one-year deal via the mid-level exception in July. "It's interesting because nobody going into free agency thought about DeMarcus as an option then all of a sudden he found his way onto our team," Curry said. "So for us to have a new dynamic, a new look. Whenever he's fully healthy it should be amazing. I think we got better." Cousins, who is recovering from a torn Achilles, is expected to be worked in slowly, likely sitting out the start of the regular season. His addition gives the Warriors five starters who each have at least three career All-Star appearances, and a total of 27 as a group. — Reuters

Freestyle great Ledecy powers towards Tokyo

IRVINE: Six years on from her stunning 800m freestyle victory at the 2012 Olympics, Katie Ledecy is savoring her status as the grand dame, at 21, of distance freestyle. Ledecy was 15 when she led wire-to-wire in winning the 800m free in London in a race that saw world record holder and British home hope Rebecca Adlington relegated to third. Four more Olympic golds in Rio two years ago, 14 world titles and 15 world records later, Ledecy heads into the Pan Pacific Championships starting on Thursday in Tokyo knowing she's now the swimmer with a target on her back.

"I guess it's a little different," said Ledecy, but she knows that young rivals such as Australian distance phenom Ariarne Titmus and Canadian Taylor Ruck still have a lot of catching up to do. "I know that there are a lot of great swimmers out there that are chasing me," Ledecy said. "That motivates me just as much as chasing someone motivated me when I was 15." Ledecy has made a seamless

transition this year from US amateur collegiate swimming to the professional ranks, inking a sponsorship deal with TYR that the manufacturer trumpeted as "the most lucrative partnership in the history of the swim industry."

Ledecy specifically chose to make the move two years before the Tokyo Games, to give herself time to adjust to the new demands on her time. While some US swimmers struggle with newfound responsibilities, Ledecy has taken it in her stride. "It hasn't been extremely different," Ledecy said. "I guess my practice schedule has changed just a little bit." Jon Urbanchek, the veteran coach recently named the US national team's technical adviser, calls Ledecy "probably the perfect role model" with her fabled work ethic and determination.

"She's on a mission," Urbanchek said. "You can't really distract her." Ledecy lowered her own world record in the 1,500m free in May and came away from the US championships in California in July with victories in the 200m, 400m and 800m freestyles. She opted out of the 1,500m free, which she can still swim at the Pan Paces, preferring instead to get a day of rest ahead of another burst of training before heading to Japan. "I feel like I'm in a really good spot," Ledecy said — an innocuous sounding remark that will strike an ominous note for her rivals. — AFP

25 Dodgers earn rare victory in Oakland; Twins beat Indians



26 Wawrinka fights back to knock Kyrgios out; Djokovic advance



27 Real Madrid end US tour with 2-1 win over Roma



Norway's brothers in arms advance at Euros

Ingebrigtsen boys reach men's 1,500m final



BERLIN: France's Kevin Mayer competes in the men's decathlon long jump event during the European Athletics Championships at the Olympic stadium in Berlin yesterday. —AFP

BERLIN: Norway's defending European champion Filip Ingebrigtsen, along with brothers Henrik and Jakob, moved smoothly into the final of the men's 1500m after successfully negotiating their heats at Berlin's Olympic Stadium yesterday. The 25-year-old Filip, the sixth fastest European of all time over 1500m who also won world bronze in London last year, clocked 3min 40.88sec in finishing third in his heat behind Poland's Marcin Lewandowski and Briton Charlie Grice to progress to Friday's 12-man final.

Henrik, the eldest of the trio at 27, won bronze behind Filip in Amsterdam having previously won the European crown in Helsinki in 2012 and a silver in 2014. He also progressed after coming in third (3:49.54) in his heat won by Britain's Chris O'Hare. Jakob, who will be 18 next month, might be the one to watch out for, however, posting 3:40.81 in winning the third and final heat. The teenager, coached like his siblings by father Gjert, has a fledgling career based on a solid all-rounder's grounding in cross-country, steeplechase and 5000m, as well as over 1500m and the mile. "Of course I'm satisfied to get into the final," he said. "It's all about training. We've been working really, really hard. I'm really excited."

In May this year, Jakob ran a 3:52.28 mile, which included an incredible final lap of 55.42sec, showing how dangerous he could be should family tactics come to the fore

come Friday. "If anyone wants to join the Ingebrigtsen party, please do so!" said a buoyant Henrik, sporting a mohawk and bushy moustache. "I'm a championship runner and I haven't done a fast time this year, so I am confident." Filip admitted that "Henrik has more experience" as temperatures in Berlin soared above 34 degrees Centigrade (93F). And Jakob discounted family tactics, saying: "Initially we were thinking about racing tactics together, but Filip will go for himself, so we decided that we all will do the same."

Howe's reincarnation

Italy's US-born one-time long jumper Andrew Howe admitted he was looking for an unlikely reincarnation over 200m, 11 years on from his last major championships podium. "After I tore my achilles tendon in 2011, I couldn't continue with the long jump," Howe said. "I lacked that reactivity, so my coach suggested I switch to the 200m and it was a really good idea."

Howe, who won the 2006 European long jump title and world silver in Osaka a year later, clocked 20.60sec in his

heat to advance to semi-finals later. In pole for the 200m will be Azeri-born Turk Ramil Guliyev, the reigning world champion who was pushed back into silver in Amsterdam by Spain's Bruno Hortelano. The Spaniard, born in Australia to Spanish parents who then relocated to Canada, insisted he was focused initially on the 200m. "I feel stronger than

ever," said the 26-year-old, who missed all last season after a catastrophic car accident in Madrid, in which he was a passenger, that left him at risk of a hand amputation.

After consulting Spanish surgeon Xavier Mir, the go-to specialist for ranks of battered MotoGP riders, the amputation was avoided and the Cornell University genetics graduate made his return to the track. He has since set Spanish records for both the 200 and 400m (20.04, 44.69). "The 200m is my favored distance and I have a lot less experience over 400m." Yesterday's evening session, with temperatures tipped to top 37C (99F), featured four other medal events as well as the denouement of the decathlon. Women competed in the

10,000m and shot put, while long jump and discus take centre stage for the men before the sapping 1500m finale of the decathlon.

The 100m double

Meanwhile, Britain's Zhanel Hughes and Dina Asher-Smith were crowned as Europe's fastest sprinters on Tuesday, winning high-quality editions of the blue riband 100 meters finals at the European Championships. On a hot, still evening in the Olympic Stadium where Usain Bolt set the world record of 9.58 seconds, Hughes, an occasional training partner of the great Jamaican back in Kingston, set a Championship record of 9.95 to pip fast-finishing team mate Reece Prescod by one-hundredth of a second.

The race to find the continent's fastest woman saw Asher-Smith end the 100m reign of Dutchwoman Daphne Schippers in brilliant style, clocking 10.85, equaling the world's fastest time this year and setting a British record. The 22-year-old Asher-Smith, the reigning European 200m champion, surged clear early in the race, with Germany's Gina Lueckenemper taking silver in 10.98 and Schippers bronze in a season's best 10.99. It is the first time Britain have been able to boast both the men's and women's champion at the same edition in the 84-year history of the Championships. —Agencies

Kepa to become 'most expensive goalkeeper'

MADRID: Athletic Bilbao said yesterday that Kepa Arrizabalaga has paid his 80-million-euro (\$93 million) buyout clause, paving the way for the Spain international to join Chelsea as the world's most expensive goalkeeper. The 23-year-old is expected to replace Thibaut Courtois at Stamford Bridge for a record fee that would surpass the 72.5 million euros Liverpool paid Roma for Brazilian Alisson last month.

"At 12:02 pm yesterday, La Liga informed our club that the player, Kepa Arrizabalaga, had met the conditions to unilaterally break his contract that linked him to Athletic Club," the Spanish side said in a statement. "The amount of the compen-

sation established in the contract has been deposited. "Athletic thanks the player for his contribution during the time he has remained in our club."

In Spain, instead of the buying club paying the selling club the amount set by the contract, the player must buy himself out. This is done by depositing the amount of the buyout clause with La Liga to release the player. La Liga then pass the money onto the selling club. Chelsea's move for Kepa comes with Belgium number one Courtois strongly linked with Real Madrid, having yet to report to training with the Premier League club following the World Cup. Kepa has played 53 times in La Liga for Bilbao over the last two seasons, and made his international debut in a 5-0 friendly win over Costa Rica in November 2017.

He was also in the Spain squad for the recent World Cup in Russia as back-up to David De Gea, but did not get any playing time. Kepa signed a new long-term contract, which increased his release clause

from 20 million euros, with Athletic in January to end speculation linking him with a move to Real. The European champions are instead on the verge of completing a reported 35-million-euro deal for Courtois, who was voted the best goalkeeper at the World Cup. Courtois, who spent three seasons at Atletico Madrid from 2011 to 2014, has repeatedly stated his desire to move closer to his two children in the Spanish capital.

However, Real coach Julen Lopetegui refused to comment on the speculation following his team's 2-1 victory over Roma in the final game of their US pre-season tour on Tuesday. "I always say that I'm not talking about players who're not at Real Madrid," said Lopetegui. "Keylor (Navas) is our goalkeeper and there are no other goalkeepers I can talk about except Keylor, Kiko (Casilla), Andriy (Lunin) and Luca (Zidane). "Keylor is phenomenal, he has our full confidence and is an extraordinary goalkeeper. He's delighted to belong to Real Madrid and we're delighted with him." —AFP



GDYNIA, Poland: In this file photo, Spain's goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga reacts during the UEFA U-21 European Championship in Gdynia. Athletic Bilbao said yesterday that Kepa Arrizabalaga has paid his 80-million-euro (\$93 million) buyout clause, paving the way for the Spain international to join Chelsea as the world's most expensive goalkeeper. — AFP