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Erdogan vows to defy US 'threats' after lira crashes

President vows no concessions • Ankara eyes new allies • Iran slams US 'bullying'

ISTANBUL: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan vowed yesterday to defy US "threats" over a detained pastor, showing no signs of concessions in a bitter row that has caused the Turkish lira to crash. Relations between the two NATO allies have sunk to their lowest point in decades over a string of issues including the detention of US pastor Andrew Brunson on terror-related charges, prompting the lira to hit record lows against the dollar.

The Turkish strongman also lashed out at interest rates, denounced them as a "tool of exploitation" which should be kept as low as possible. The embattled lira tumbled 16 percent against the dollar on Friday, falling further when US President Donald Trump said he had doubled steel and aluminium tariffs on Turkey. "It is wrong to dare bring Turkey to its knees through threats over a pastor," Erdogan said in the Black Sea town of Unye. "Shame on you, shame on you," he said in remarks directly addressed to Washington. "You are exchanging your strategic partner in NATO for a priest."

Trump announced the punitive doubling of tariffs on Twitter, with the White House saying the sanctions would take effect from Aug 13. In a second speech, this time in the Black Sea city of Rize, Erdogan ruled out any change in the country's interest rates policy. "Interest rates should be kept to a minimum because they are a tool of exploitation that makes the poor poorer and the rich richer," he said. "The country is neither crumbling, nor being destroyed or bankrupt or in a crisis," he said, and added that the way out of the 'currency plot' was to boost production and "minimize interest rates".

"I am asking you. What possible reason could there be behind the lira which was at 2.8 against dollar in July 15, 2016 to slide below 6 yesterday? During this period, Turkey has set records in its exports, production and employment," Erdogan said. He repeated a long-standing plan to shift to trading in national currencies and said Turkey was preparing for such a step with Russia, China and Ukraine.

The nominally independent central bank has defied pressure over the last few weeks to hike interest rates in the face of high inflation and a collapsing currency. Erdogan has downplayed the currency crisis, urging Turks to convert any stashed-away gold or foreign currency into lira, thereby waging a "war of independence" against America. "If they have the dollar, we have Allah," he said. Erdogan said high foreign exchange rates were being used as a weapon against Turkey. "We know very well that the issue is not the dollar, the euro or gold. These are the bullets, cannonballs and missiles of an economic war waged against our country," he said. Ankara had already taken measures to respond and would continue doing so, he added.

In an op-ed published in New York Times, Erdogan warned Washington not to risk its relations with Ankara, saying otherwise it would look for "new friends and allies". "Unless the United States starts respecting Turkey's sovereignty and proves that it understands the dangers our nation faces, our partnership could be in jeopardy," he wrote.

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ORDU, Turkey: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan addresses people in the Unye district during his visit to a flooded area in this Black Sea province yesterday. — AFP

News in brief

16 zones for Eid prayers

KUWAIT: The ministry of awqaf and Islamic affairs has prepared 16 zones throughout the country's governorates and residential areas for Eid Al-Adha prayers, Undersecretary Farid Al-Emadi announced yesterday. In a press release, Emadi said that in coordination with the ministries of education and interior as well as the Public Authority for Sport (PAS), some schools, sports arenas and facilities of large capacity will host Eid prayers. Previously, the interior ministry restricted Eid prayers in some open areas which were not adequately prepared to hold this mass ritual, said Emadi. — KUNA

Floods kill 37 in Kerala

NEW DELHI: Flash floods in Kerala have killed 37 people and displaced around 36,000, Indian officials said yesterday, after heavy monsoon rains led to landslides and overflowing reservoirs across the southern state. Those forced from their homes "have moved to 350 relief camps across the state", an official at the Kerala State Disaster Management control room said. The army has been roped in for rescue efforts in Kerala after two days of heavy rain drove authorities to open the shutters of 27 reservoirs to drain out the excess water. One of the five shutters of a large reservoir in the mountainous Idukki district was opened for the first time in 26 years. — AFP

Egypt foils church bombing

CAIRO: A suicide attack against a church on the outskirts of Cairo was foiled yesterday when a bomber blew himself up before reaching the target, state media and security sources said. The alleged assailant was forced to detonate a suicide belt as a result of the heavy police presence around the Virgin Church in the Shobra el-Kheima district, state media reported. The man was hiding the explosives under a fluorescent vest, state-run newspaper Akhbar el-Youm said. The blast took place about 200 m away from the church, security officials said. — AFP

Spain warns of 'sextorsion'

MADRID: Spanish police warned yesterday of a massive blackmail campaign to expose web users' supposed visits to porn sites unless they pay up. Demands are typically for between \$400 and \$2,900, and the cyber criminals threaten to send the videos to the person's "loved ones" unless they pay up. Police recommend that targets of the shakedown stay calm and refuse to pay because the blackmailers are usually bluffing and have no video because no computers were actually hacked. — AFP

Blast kills Jordan policeman; Amir sends condolences

AMMAN: A member of Jordan's security forces died and six were wounded when a bomb exploded under a patrol car at a music festival near Amman, the interior ministry said yesterday. The blast hit a security patrol in Al-Fuhais, 12 km west of the capital on Friday evening, it said. "It killed Sergeant Ali Adnan Qawqaza and wounded six other members of the patrol," the ministry said, adding that an investigation was underway into the cause of the blast. Security forces had been deployed to protect the town's annual festival, which hosts prominent Arab music acts.

Prime Minister Omar Al-Razzaz vowed that Jordan would "not be complacent in the hunt for terrorists". "Jordan will always

be at the forefront of the fight against terrorism and obscurantist ideas which target the lives of innocents and try to undermine security and stability," he said in remarks carried by the official Petra news agency.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable to Jordanian King Abdullah II, offering his condolences over the victims of the criminal bombing. The Amir stressed Kuwait's principled position which rejects any aggressive act that threatens the kingdom's security and stability, wishing mercy for the "martyrs" and a swiftly recovery for the injured. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH

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JERASH, Jordan: The funeral of a policeman who was killed in a blast a day earlier is held yesterday. — Petra

Mechanic steals, crashes plane from Seattle airport

SAN FRANCISCO: A young mechanic described as suicidal stole an empty passenger plane from Seattle-Tacoma Airport, took it on an hour-long flight that included a hair-raising loop as F-15 fighter jets gave chase, then crashed, killing himself. Officials ruled out any link to terrorism in the incident, which took place late on Friday, and saw the man holding a conversation with an air traffic controller in which he seemed to apologize for what he was doing.

Video taken by a bystander showed the 76-seat plane making a big, slow loop-the-loop, then flying low over Puget Sound before crashing into Ketrion Island, a sparsely-populated area in the northwestern US state of Washington. The crash sparked a fire in the dense forest. Flames lit up the night as they spread from the burning wreckage to nearby trees. Officials said there were no victims on the ground. The stolen plane was a twin-engine turboprop Q400 belonging to Horizon Air, its parent company Alaska Airlines said on Twitter. The Pierce County Sheriff's office ruled out terrorism.

"Most terrorists don't do loops over the water," said Sheriff Paul Pastor. "This might have been a joyride gone terribly wrong." But Ed Troyer, who also works at the sheriff's office, described him as "suicidal". He was identified as a 29-year-old airline mechanic called Rich or Richard, who lived locally and had acted alone. His full name was not given. The sheriff's office said the F-15s arrived minutes after the plane was stolen and kept the aircraft "out of harm's way and people on the



SEATTLE: This frame grab taken from footage filmed by a bystander shows an empty passenger airplane stolen from Seattle-Tacoma airport making an unlikely upside-down aerial loop on Friday. — AFP

ground safe." The fighter jets flew at supersonic speed, triggering a boom first taken to be an explosion, as they raced to intercept the plane. In a video statement, Horizon Air's chief operating officer Constance von Muchlen said the plane was taken by one of its employees. "We believe (the plane) was taken by a single Horizon Air employee and no other passengers or crew were on board," she said. The plane was stolen at around 8:00 pm (0300 GMT yesterday) and crashed 90 minutes later, officials said. President Donald Trump was briefed and the White House praised authorities' quick response to the crisis.

John Waldron, who captured the plane's loop-the-loop on video, told CNN he was out for an evening stroll when he saw two fighter jets following a turboprop plane, initially thinking they were practicing for an air show. "So I started to capture video, just because I thought it was kind of bizarre," he said, later realizing that the jets were chasing the plane. Then the plane "did a complete loop... I couldn't believe he recovered."

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China delays razing mosque after protest

WEIZHOU, China: Authorities in northern China delayed the demolition of a massive mosque yesterday after thousands of people demonstrated to stop its destruction, local residents said, amid a nationwide government drive to tighten restrictions on religious activities. Across China, officials have sought to limit religious freedoms for Muslims as part of a widespread attempt to bring believers in line with the dictates of the ruling Communist Party. Protesters began gathering Thursday ahead of a deadline to demolish the grand mosque in the town of Weizhou in the northern Ningxia region, local residents said.

Videos posted on social media in recent days showed protesters gathering in front of the building as police with riot shields stood by. Holding Chinese flags, they sat quietly on the building's steps and milled around a large plaza, before heading to Friday night prayers, according to the videos, which could not be verified by AFP. "The government said it's an illegal building, but it's not. The mosque has several hundred years of history," a restaurant owner surnamed Ma told AFP. Around noon yesterday, a local official had read a document saying that the government would hold off on the mosque's demolition, locals told AFP. After that, many who had participated in the sit-in dispersed.

People had come hundreds of kilometres from other Muslim regions to show support and bring

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Local

Ahmadi governorate launches campaign to celebrate charity organizations

Hosted by center of social development in Hadiya from Aug 9-11

By Jeri Al-Jeri

KUWAIT: The Ahmadi governorate launched its campaign Kisaat Watan (Story of our Land), to celebrate charity organizations that have made Kuwait a beacon of love and hope for all mankind. Layla, the spokesperson of Kisaat Watan, said in the opening of the ceremony: "On the 28th anniversary of Iraq's invasion, we see how Kuwaitis are more united for one common goal - Kuwait's prosperity." The campaign is in its third year with multiple charity organizations and groups participating.



All around the main venue, I saw carefully decorated tables and signs representing various organizations welcoming visitors from all over Kuwait with the intent of educating them about their causes. Loud and proud, charity representatives shared with me their messages. All of their messages were noble, yet I personally found that CAN (Cancer Awareness Nation) has the most necessary message in our day and age, and may I say, the most urgent. Dr Hussah Al-Shaheen of CAN made the importance of early checkups very clear to the attendees. CAN's goal is to share valuable information about the many ways cancer can be treated and prevented.

Joy of recycling

Walking to the next hall, I stumbled upon a table occupied by mothers and their little girls facing a pile of empty plastic bottles and colorful strap bands. It was about a project by the Hadiya social development center to make good use of water bottles and other random unwanted household items to create artistic objects that can be utilized as pots for house plants. The two female instructors successfully taught young children the joy of recycling. Laughing and smiling, these adorable Kuwaiti kids decorated their sliced plastic bottles, then filled them with dirt and finally planted flowers to take home.

Going to the main hall, a rather peculiar sign caught my attention that said #Laajlej. Translated as "for you", it's a group's hashtag of their campaign that has a much needed message for all our youth. Its message is that we must fight social media rumors at all costs, and the



best way to win this battle is by training Internet users to read every social media post or tweet with sharp and relentless criticism prior to sharing it all around the cyber world. Dr Hussain Folath has given a lot of speeches about this subject matter and is very enthusiastic about the awareness hashtag #Laajlej that serves as a counterattack against cancerous Internet rumors that have plagued our society.

Prince of Hearts

At the far corner of the venue huddled three Kuwaiti adult women with their pens and smartphones in the air, so I began to speculate. They were standing in front of a huge poster of our beloved Prince of Hearts Sheikh Jaber Al-Sabah, pinning tiny square yellow notes on which were written heartwarming words to 'Baba Jaber'. I wrote a sentence of my own too: "My heart expands with more love for you." Surely, he was an iconic figure that inspired kindness and generosity. This rather simple and honest idea was by the Grandsons Group to let Kuwaitis express their love for Baba Jaber.

This comforting moment was cut off by a parrot's screech from another hall. Tens of parrots and owls, perched on a long row of posts were staring and chatting at wide-eyed kids. The Kuwaiti Awareness Team of Birds' representative Dr Adnan, with a brown owl, was answering children's questions and educating bird owners about how to keep their pets happy and healthy.

The event concluded with a spontaneous band of youth who sang the national anthem as loudly as possible while roaming the halls to applause and cheers, with a lot of cellphones following them to bid all visitors good night. The center of social development in Hadiya hosted this event from Aug 9-11.



Central Bank sets up multi-bills ATM machines for Eid

KUWAIT: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced yesterday that ATM machines, offering all types of banknotes and bills, would be available for the masses

before the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. Bills of one, five, 10 and 20 Kuwaiti Dinar denominations would be available in ATM machines at the Avenues, Gate, 360 and Awtad Al-Jahra malls, said the CBK.

"The service is being provided for the second year in a row due to high demand," the bank indicated in a press release. "The bank will provide this service in cooperation with the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), Kuwait retail payment service (KNET) and designated commercial malls," the bank added. — KUNA



KUWAIT: People use ATM machines provided by the Central Bank of Kuwait at the Avenues Mall. — KUNA

Kuwait looking forward to free elections in Burundi

NEW YORK: Kuwait's Representative to the United Nations welcomed on Thursday the current clam in Burundi and expressed hope for seeing peaceful, credible and transparent elections in 2020. Addressing a Security Council session on the situation in Burundi, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi called on all stakeholders in the East African country, notably the government political parties and the civil society, to renew commitment to inclusive dialogue, effective engagement and freedom of expression in the run-up to the planned presidential polls. "With great interest we have followed up the political developments in the Republic of Burundi over the recent months, notably the referendum on the constitution on May 17, 2019," he said.

"We took note that the process was conducted in the

framework of inclusive dialogue, and on the basis of the Arusha Agreement of August 28, 2000, and the Constitution of Burundi," the Kuwaiti diplomat pointed out. He appreciated the efforts made by the UN, the African Union (AU), the European Union and the East African Community (EAC), as well as President of Uganda Yoweri Museveni and former president of Tanzania Benjamin W Mkapa to facilitate the Burundian political dialogue. The engagement of international organizations and neighboring countries in the fifth round of the Burundian dialogue will contribute to the advancement of the political process and elections of 2020, he stressed. Regarding the humanitarian situation, Ambassador Otaibi said it continues to be a cause of concern for the international community given the fact that there are nearly 400,000 Burundian refugees, 180,000 internally displaced and 3.6 million in need of aid.

On the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees, he noted that 30,000 people were able to return home thanks to the tripartite agreement between the governments of Burundi and Tanzania and the UN Refugee Agency. He highlighted the need of bringing to justice those accused of human rights abuses as a means of ensuring security, stability and rule of law for all Burundians. — KUNA



NEW YORK: Kuwait's Representative to the United Nations Mansour Al-Otaibi addresses a Security Council session on the situation in Burundi. — KUNA

Local

State departments told to prepare lists of replaceable expats by March 2019

Efforts to increase Kuwaitis in administrative jobs in private sector

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The finance ministry asked all state departments to prepare lists that include the number of Kuwaiti employees and other sites where expatriate labor can be replaced by Kuwaitis before the end of March 2019, so that the ministry can continue its reforms.

Sources said the completion of the e-government system will reduce a large portion of manpower, so significant number of employees - both Kuwaitis and expats - will be let go, as electronic linkage will boost the ease of work environment and reduce the number of employees, which calls for replacement of foreign labor with Kuwaiti ones in addition to maintaining technical jobs.

The relative improvement in oil prices lately helps the general budget to reduce the deficit by a good percentage, but this does not mean that Kuwait should stop the financial reform program or the restructuring of the population structure, the sources noted. Meanwhile, official Public Authority for Civil Information statistics show a rise in the number of Kuwaitis working in the public and private sectors in the age group 15-19 years to 1,350.

Administrative jobs

State departments related to manpower listed the

administrative jobs that Kuwaitis can occupy instead of expat labor in the private sector in the next eight years, an informed source said. The source added that the total number of Kuwaitis working in administrative jobs reached around 26,000 compared to 83,000 expats. The current year will see 8,000 Kuwaitis replacing expats, according to the source, including 2,000 graduates, besides transferring 6,000 from state departments to the private request as per their request. The jobs Kuwaitis would replace expats in include 24 administrative fields including administrative specialists, storekeepers, administrative researchers, heads of department, liaison officers, secretaries, exchange operators, data entry personnel, managers, supervisors and administrative assistants.

The source said the jobs also include assistant deputy CEOs, advisors, data registrars, supervisors, mandoubs (representatives), coordinators, deputy officials and manpower superintendents, besides other administrative jobs in the private sector. State departments included in their work plans for next year the replacement of 7,200 jobs including 2,000 jobs for new graduates and 5,000 from the public sector, the source said.

Meanwhile, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) is preparing to form a committee to continue implementation of the Civil Service Council decision 11/2017 with regards to the rules and procedures of Kuwaitization of government jobs. The sources said that the commission will prepare a study for the next fiscal year 2019/2020 that includes deciding the jobs groups included in Kuwaitization of jobs.

The sources said the committee will go to govern-

ment departments separately, then decide the number of non-Kuwaiti employees that should be terminated to reach the percentage mentioned in the decision. Sources said the expat replacement plan for the new fiscal year will not include more than 3,000 expats. It said the number will be less than last year, adding that expats cannot be all terminated at once, adding that the decision aims at reaching the target percentage after five years.

Financial situation

Secretary General of the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) Fawzi Al-Majdali asked students working in the private sector who were accepted at Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) to go to the MGRP to settle their financial situation and check their eligibility to receive labor support allowances so that they do not become legally responsible.

He said there are 797 students who owe a total of KD 4.318 million due to violation of Cabinet decision 572/2009 and its amendment 391/2001 with regards to granting social allowance to workers in the private sector, as they combined study and work in the private sector. He said the student will not benefit from the support unless he is over 25 years of age and has spent three years in the private sector.

Minimum wage

Informed sources at Kuwait University (KU) said the university sought the opinion of the fatwa and legislation department over a decision of the social affairs ministry that set the minimum salary of workers in ten-

ders signed with government bodies at KD 75 per month per laborer. The sources said this comes at the recommendation of the KU purchase committee, and the reason for this is the demand by a cleaning company to pay the difference in its workers' salaries. They said the university will seek the opinion about the company's demand of the salary difference and whether it has the right for all its workers to receive the salary difference based on the decision that set the minimum salary in state departments.

Approval canceled

The State Audit Bureau cancelled its approval of allowing the Public Authority for Roads and Transport to put forth two tenders that were approved earlier because of a mistake in qualifying companies. The first tender is related to developing Abdaly highway from Mutlaa city to the intersection with the north regional road. The second tender is to construct and maintain bridges and roads and rainwater drainage in South Surra.

Car rental allowance

Municipal Council Secretary General Yousuf Al-Suqobi said there are serious attempts to approve the car rental allowance for council members, like leaders who work in the council and municipality, of KD 250 each. He said that no car will be issued to any member, as per the Cabinet's decision, but there is correspondence with the Civil Service Commission to approve the allowance. He added "in case the allowance is approved, it will be paid retroactively from May 22, or from the date of approval".

local spotlight

In memory of Abu Adnan



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Yesterday was the first death anniversary of the Kuwaiti comedian Abdulhussain Abdulredha, or Abu Adnan, as he was popularly known. Several activists on social media revived the anniversary of this legendary artist's departure on Aug 11, 2017 on Twitter with the hashtag #anniversary of the death of Abdulhussain Abdulredha, where Kuwaitis recalled the memory of the late actor and his art, from which many benefited for generations.

For those of you who do not know who he is, let me tell you. Abdulhussain Abdulredha was a Kuwaiti actor who gave us a history of high-end comedy and beautiful art over the years. He was one of the most prominent Arab artistes and one of the pioneers of acting in the Gulf region. He passed away at the age of 78 on Aug 11, 2017 after falling into a coma following surgery in London.

Actors who leave a mark after their absence are few, because they presented a distinctive art and lived for art as a message and for the passion of comedy, and not only to make money. This is the thin line of what make me and many others recall Abu Adnan today. This is what characterized the march of Abu Adnan and made him great in the hearts of people in his life and after he died. People are still recalling all the moments of laughter and happiness which he offered to people.

I believe art is an important means to deliver targeted messages and address the problems facing society. It is a science and industry that achieves the goal indirectly, but unfortunately, some have a misperception over this. I watch comedy shows and hear offensive jokes or bad comments, whether on others' skin color or accents or race or jobs, especially against women, teachers and non-Gulf people, which are common in many Arab and local shows and drama series, for example. These are presented as comedy shows, so I feel sad about what we are offering our kids and youth to watch. This is my personal opinion.

In Ramadan, I saw a few scenes of an Egyptian series with a sarcastic portrayal of a Gulf woman who seemed ignorant. I was sorry for this stupid show, which presented women in a sarcastic and wrong way. Not every woman from the Gulf is stupid or ignorant, and vice versa. The seriousness of this matter is that such stories, which are presented as comedies, provide a message that, for example, the teacher is not worthy of respect. This is a mistake and it is dangerous because it spoils the image of the teacher in the society. I say not all that is presented is comedy. This is not the way to entertain, by making fun of others!

I think the difference in comedy between the past and today, whether in the Arab world or the Gulf region, is that representatives believed in the role of comedy in educating people and introduced a pleasurable show for all family members. I still remember the films of many celebrities in Egypt and Kuwait, in addition to Abu Adnan, which we grew up with. These gathered us as family into many moments of laughter, even after many years of their absence. Abu Adnan and a number of those who lived in that beautiful era of art have left this world, but their memory will always remain present. Their message for which they lived will never vanish.

No injuries in Zoor fire

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Firemen from five different fire stations controlled a fire in a 1,000-sq-m building under construction in Zoor, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) said. Firefighters successfully put out the blaze, and no injuries were reported.

In other news, the interior ministry's relations and security information department commented on a video of a fight in Luluat Al-Khairan, saying that a call was received by Ahmadi operations about a fight at dawn yesterday, so patrols went to the area and found the fight was between 18 persons, and six persons were injured. Police arrested those involved and sent them to Nuwaiseeb police station.

Swindling

Criminal detectives received several complaints from citizens and expats including Gulf women about being swindled by a man who placed online ads about jobs and loan facilities. When the victims called the advertiser, he told them his secretary will call them back. They then received calls from landlines by the same man but he spoke like a girl, and agreed with them to provide the required services for a certain amount of money. He told them a mandoub (representative) will come to them to receive an advance, but then disappeared. The source said detectives were able to identify and arrest him. He was identified in a lineup by the victims. In a separate case, a citizen filed a complaint against a contractor at Khaitan police station, who took KD 7,000 and disappeared. Farwaniya detectives are looking for him. The citizen said he agreed with an Arab man to build an apartment in Ishbiya, who gave him contracts that were found to be forged, and the phone numbers in them were not correct. Meanwhile, a citizen accused a Jordanian man of forgery at Andalus police station. The citizen said he borrowed KD 1,000 from the suspect with KD 200 interest, but the suspect allegedly forged the contract and changed the original loan to KD 20,000 with KD 6,000 interest, prompting him to file the complaint.



KUWAIT: Smoke is seen at the site of a fire in Zoor after the flames were extinguished.

Theft

A citizen accused his Filipino worker of stealing goods worth KD 5,000 after he returned from a treatment trip. Detectives are looking for the suspect.

Under the influence

A citizen was sent to the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) with a bottle of liquor. The man was seen driving erratically in Farwaniya, so he was pulled over and found under the influence. He told policemen "I promise not to do it again", but his plea was ignored. Meanwhile, two men, Kuwaiti and Iraqi, were sent to DCGD after they were caught with two hashish joints.

Domestic abuse

A Kuwaiti woman called police after her Jordanian

husband beat her, threatened to harm her further, stole money and left home. The woman went to the police station in a very bad shape, and told them she was insulted and kicked before the money was stolen. The Jordanian did not respond to police's phone calls, so an arrest warrant was issued and a travel ban was placed against him.

Copyright laws

Ahmadi police arrested an Indian man who was selling CDs, some of which had pornographic material. A citizen said that while in a Fahaheel cafe, an Asian approached him and offered to sell him movies. He discovered they were copies, and some had explicit content. Police found 137 CDs with the suspect, all in violation of copyright laws, besides the pornographic ones.

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Local

Sattva yoga warrior's awareness shoots high in Kuwait's sky

Spreading wisdom and self-mastery of body and mind

KUWAIT: With Adrenaline rush and awareness levels at miles high, Sattva yoga in Kuwait is portraying the concept of the warrior's core enhancing mental wellbeing, physical strength and spirituality. Sattva yoga, founded by Guru Anand Mehrotra in the Himalayas over a decade ago, focuses on intense and energizing yoga practices and themes to spread wisdom and self-mastery of body and mind. Speaking about the merits of the concept, Romanian Yoga Teacher Natalia Medelet, Kuwaiti Yoga Practitioner Mansoor Al-Mansoor and Kuwaiti lawyer and yoga practitioner Moudhi Al-Raish all described their involvement in yoga as of a 'physical and mental sense'. "Sattva means you are creating new things on the spot, connecting with people's energies in the class," Medelet, who has been living in Kuwait for seven years, explained. "There are different kinds of music prepared, if people are down, you shift up the energy and Sattva flows like the ocean, rising and dropping down, heating up the physical form," she added. Her credentials include a 200-hour yoga-training course conducted by Kashmir Shaivism School of Yoga and a 300-hour teaching training program conducted by Sattva Yoga Academy in Rishikesh, India.

Re-learning to breathe

Medelet's classes focus on concepts such as re-learning to breathe and teaching the mind how to breathe properly; including 'Breath of Fire', which clears the respiratory system. Another technique, 'Warrior Breath' shifts energy and revitalizes, while 'Chest Expansion' is a type of 'Warrior Breath' that causes intense body heat. "In life you are a warrior; you are in a constant battle with yourself. You have two choices: either suffer from the past pain or move forward because future will come no matter what and it is an illusion," she said. She further explained, "Warrior means the battle inside of the mind, with society misunderstanding or it can be different kinds of battles. It is about how you choose to be a winner."

During class, the group did sitting poses such as 'Siddhasana,' 'Sitting Forward Bend' and 'Butterfly' followed by standing poses such as 'Warrior One,' 'Warrior Two' and 'Bow and Arrow.' Then 'The Warrior's Dance' allowed the group to harness the energy of the warrior and strengthen their immediate presence, connecting them like a single consciousness. Her classes start and end in

silence to cool down the brain. "Ego is the lower mind, it judges, it does not know the future, it just knows the past but the past is wrong because it judges you strongly, detach from it and overtime destroy it," she stressed.

Refocusing on the end goal

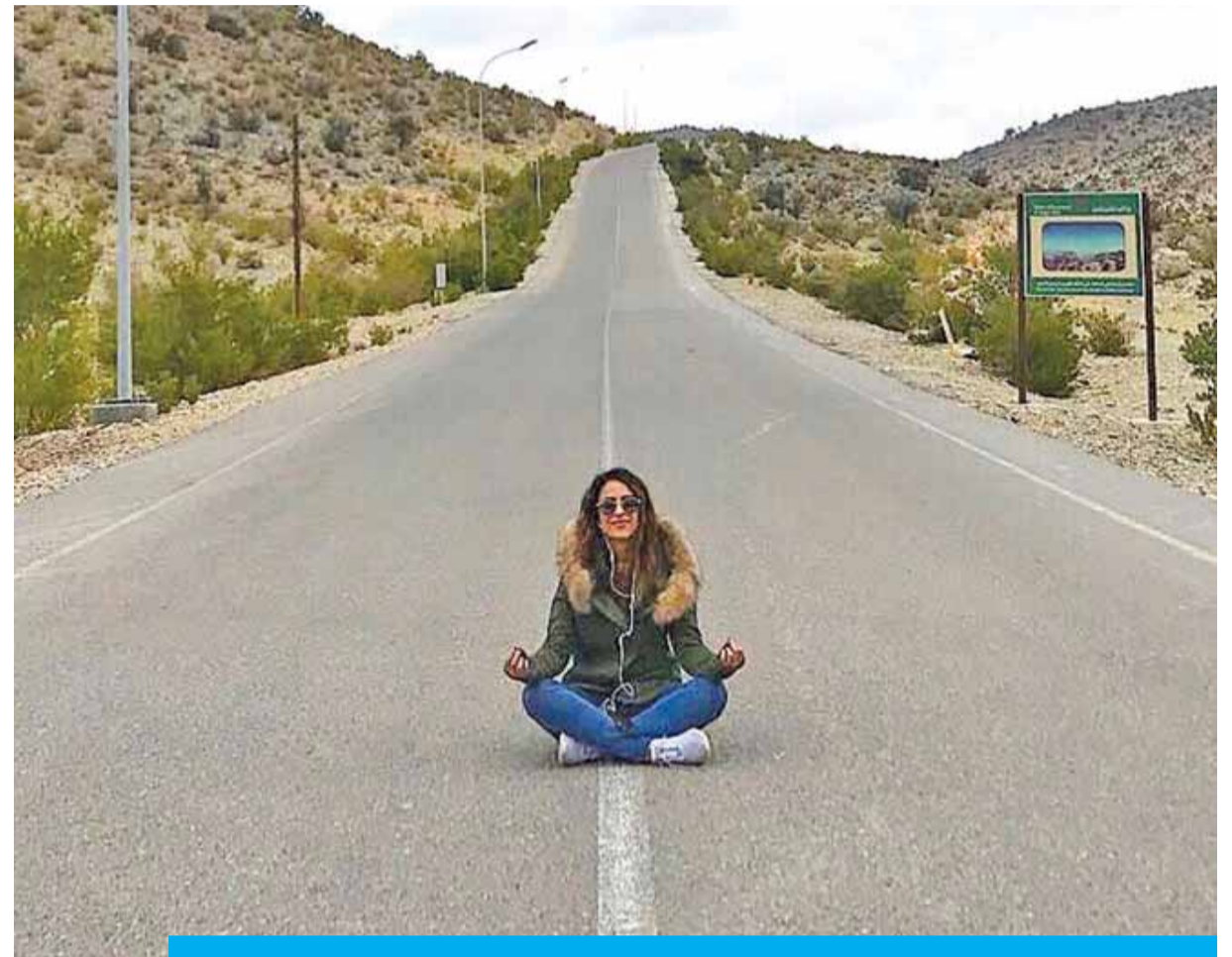
Meanwhile, Mansoor works at Kuwait Drilling Company (KDC) where he prepares a range of equipment including forklifts, pickup trucks and mud pumps, in addition



Sattva means creating new things on the spot

to pulling and picking up pipes: a highly charged and quick-based work environment. Yet, yoga centers him. Yoga teachings allow him to detach immediately and refocus on the end goal of what matters, helping him with his aches, injuries, breathing, flexibility, psyche and control over muscles. "Negativity can be good, negative thoughts are going to push you through and further yourself. Acknowledge negativity without being consumed. Everyone controls their stress differently," Mansoor said. He added, "Self-awareness and mindfulness both deviate from negative thoughts towards your ideal mindset of creative freedom. Empathy towards people and being aware of what they think and how they act strengthens self-awareness intelligence. When you know yourself, nobody would be able to gaslight you."

Yoga fooled his mind to stir away from the fact he is in the scolding desert heat, until he realized that yoga is "mostly mental, everything in life is fooling your mind," he said, emphasizing that "ego cannot be killed, it can keep bleeding. Be aware that you will die, the focus shifts to yourself." Another truth seeker, Raish is impeccable with



Lawyer and yoga practitioner Moudhi Al-Raish.

her statements at court because of mindfulness. "Meditation helps with productivity and better decision making," she said. "I know what to say to get the defendant silent or make them feel guilty. I make my own reasoning and destroy them with a few words. Perspectives

are from every angle." Raish and Mansoor confirmed the yoga teacher's outlook on why Kuwaitis do yoga, with the latter saying "I don't do yoga for spirituality, it is for physical abilities and it allows me to stay calm and meditate under stress in extreme environments." — KUNA

Wataniya Airways apologizes for canceled flights

KUWAIT: Wataniya Airways sincerely apologizes to its customers for canceling some of their flights strictly due to faced technical issues, which necessitated canceling these flights for the sake of passengers' safety being our number one priority.

In a statement issued by the company, Wataniya Airways affirmed its commitment and respect to all civil aviation rules, in addition to its confidence and appreciation to the hard work performed by its staff. Furthermore, Wataniya Airways is relentlessly keen to fully comply with international safety and security standards and regulations in all of its operations and activities in order to achieve required safe-

ty level and therefore enhance the welfare and comfort of all passengers on board of the company's aircrafts.

Wataniya Airways additionally will compensate all passengers who have been notified of their flights cancellation and will contact them directly on their contact numbers and emails that they have provided during the reservation/booking with our airways. The company would like to reiterate its apologies and regrets for the occurrence of some technical issues, repeatedly encountering all airlines.

Constantly aiming to meet its esteemed customers' expectations, Wataniya Airways announced as well that the company is in the course of transiting during the next two years to an important and renewed phase in terms of operational plans to expand its network of destinations, as well as enhancing its fleet of aircrafts with latest international airlines' inventions. Such actions are part of Wataniya Airways' plan to become the newest company in the market that meets the needs and aspirations of its valued passengers.



EQUATE, MGRP continue partnership through student internships

KUWAIT: EQUATE Petrochemical Company, a global producer of petrochemicals, continued its partnership with the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) by hosting 27 students for a summer internship program.

During a ceremony to recognize the students, the Supervisor of the Student Training Project at MGRP Tareq Al-Kandari commended the collaboration with EQUATE to provide training for university undergraduates, noting that this is a strategic partnership aimed at investing in the human capital and preparing them for the future. Kandari added, "This cooperation is

focused on empowering Kuwait's youth and building their competencies to ensure overall readiness for starting their careers." He expressed overall appreciation to EQUATE for this partnership that will result in more effective initiatives in the future.

EQUATE Learning and Development Leader Ghada Dashti said that it makes good sense for EQUATE to invest in the development of tomorrow's leaders. "Our collaboration with MGRP is a strategic element. These students will play an important role in achieving overall sustainability in every sector. On this basis, this program is an opportunity to prepare the students for their professional journey because their success will benefit us all," she said.

The one-month internship program provided the students with specific professional training in a number of fields at EQUATE's industrial complex and headquarters in Kuwait. Since launching the internship program in 2000, EQUATE has trained hundreds of interns from various universities and majors, such as engineering, accounting, finance, business administration, chemistry, environmental sciences, industrial operations and maintenance.



KUWAIT: EQUATE and MGRP officials pose with the student interns for a group photo.

Burgan Bank celebrates International Youth Day with its interns

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, one of the leading providers of progressive career opportunities, celebrates the 'International Youth Day' which is observed annually on August 12th. It was designated by the United Nations General Assembly, to limit growing concerns, equip each with resourceful practices and recognize young people's role in enabling social cohesion and equality, inclusivity and societal sustainability. Owing to its firm belief that education aids better decision making and is the cornerstone of youth empowerment and development, the bank celebrated the occasion with 20 talented interns from its ongoing summer internship program this year.

Organized every year by the Learning and Development department at Burgan Bank, the 2018 summer internship program is an intensive educational course of two weeks designed for youth between the ages of 15 and 19. It consisted of workshops that are a combination of practical and theoretical training dedicated to providing applicants with valuable knowledge on the banking sector and preparing future leaders with high professional efficiency. In addition to offering a variety of subjects such as leadership skills, teamwork, creative thinking, public speaking and modern banking, Burgan Bank, through its summer internship program, aims to offer its interns the opportunity to witness real life challenges and expertise in



KUWAIT: A group photo featuring Burgan Bank representatives and the summer trainees.

the banking sector, and enabling a positive influence on their career planning prospects. On the occasion of "International Youth Day", Burgan Bank's Public Relations representatives, in coordination with the Learning and Development Department, distributed gifts to future bankers to inspire and motivate diligence, ambition and dedication to Burgan Bank by investing valuable time in its specially designed summer programs that will be beneficial in the long run.

The bank is always keen to attract, select and train only the most determined young minds who are driven by hard work and excellence, key factors that define Burgan Bank's internal culture and policy. Backed by customer satisfaction as the primary goal, Burgan Bank deploys intensive training programs that combine methodological and scientific testing grounds to better serve its consumers. Reiterating its

role as a financial leader locally and regionally, Burgan Bank aims to impart quality learning and professional skills through its proficient staff to develop high caliber young bankers, provide better employment opportunities in a competitive market as well as create strong role models who will become future leaders in the banking industry.

Burgan Bank's support of this initiative falls under its dynamic full-fledged community program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural and health driven initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a leading Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the community.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Al-Raed Security Company

Announces to its clients: Banks, Companies, Establishments, Individuals that it no longer has a relation with

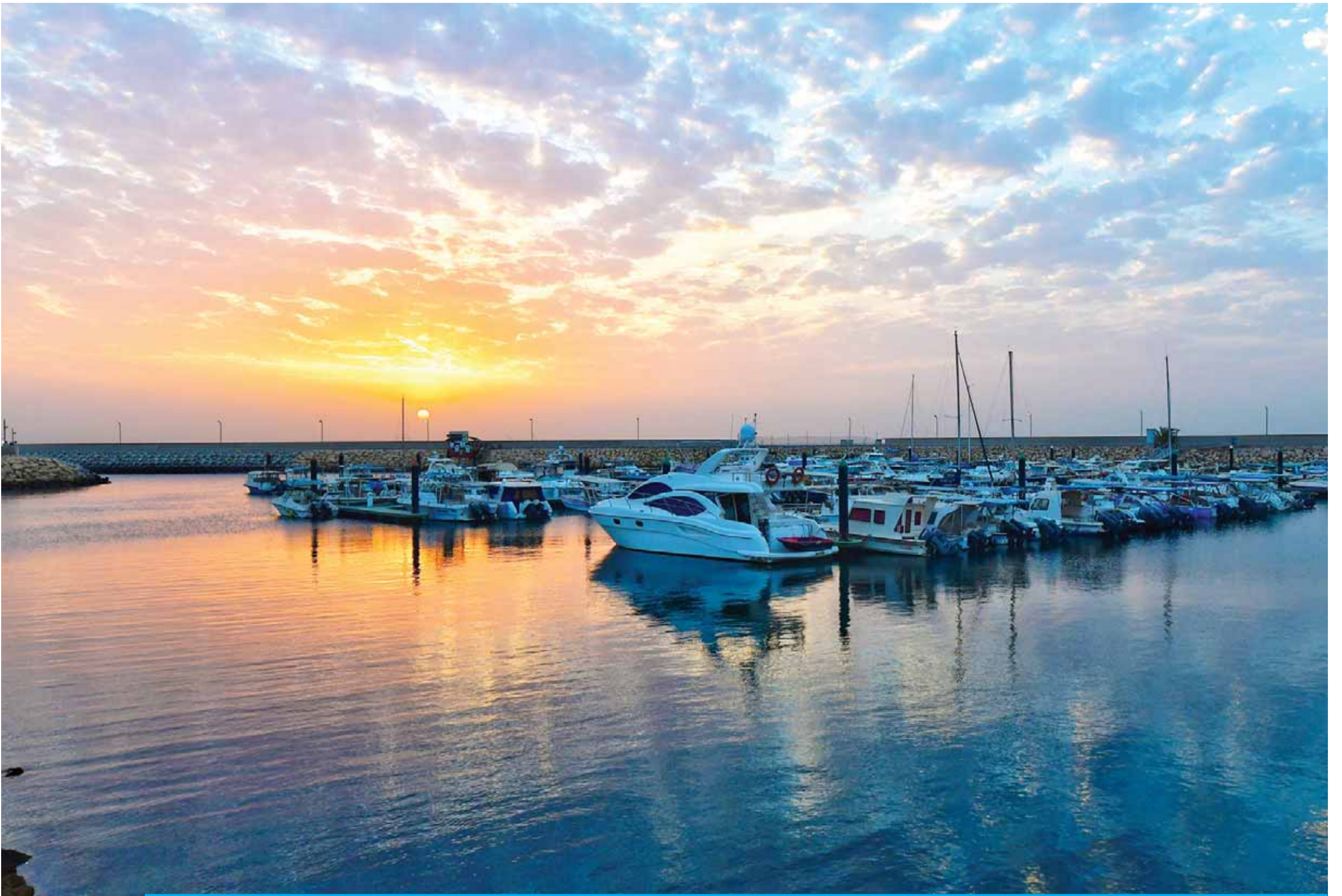
Marwan Anees Abu Zareeba
(a Jordanian)
Civil ID No. 266080803687



Who worked for the company as Deputy General Manager for Engineering Affairs. The relation was terminated on 18/7/2018 and warns against any dealings with him.

The company is not liable for any dealings with the said person at present or future.

Photo of the Day



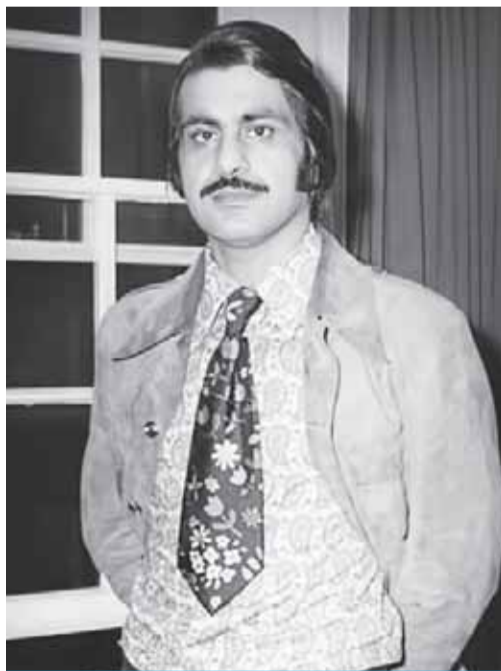
KUWAIT: High clouds paint the sky with beautiful shapes as the sun rises. — Photo by Nasser Al-Foudari (KUNA)

One year after, Abdulredha still revered by bereaved fans

KUWAIT: Today marks the first year anniversary since Kuwait's iconic comedic actor Abdulhussein Abdulredha passed away, with his fans still in bereavement. He was announced dead at the age of 78 in a London hospital last year. His side-splitting slapstick comedy in the 1960s; dapper and dashing performances during the 1970s and mature and well-rounded productions in the 1980s and beyond seared his name in the Arabic artistic memory. Frequently referred to as 'Kuwait's Forth Tower', Abdulredha was in many ways; and seen by many of his fans of different generations, the personification of the Kuwaiti man, whether it was for his political humor, social rants, or even own speech and appearance. — KUNA



Kuwait's iconic comedic actor Abdulhussein Abdulredha.



Abdulhussein Abdulredha in his youth.



The poster of 'Darb Al-Zalqa', a 1977 hit television series which shot Abdulhussein Abdulredha into stardom.



Abdulhussein Abdulredha (left) during one of his performances.



Waves of bereaved fans gather at Abdulredha's funeral.

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The American University of Kuwait received its Institutional Accreditation from the Private Universities Council (PUC), Ministry of Higher Education in the State of Kuwait, and has a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation with Dartmouth College (Hanover, New Hampshire - USA).



Saudi-led coalition probe Yemen attack

Video shows Cameroon security forces executing civilians

Page 8

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LAKE ELSINORE: A firefighting helicopter makes a water drop as the Holy Fire burns near homes in Lake Elsinore, California. — AFP

California fires threaten populated areas

Authorities issue mandatory evacuation orders, health warnings

LAKE ELSINORE: Authorities battling massive wildfires in large swathes of California issued mandatory evacuation orders and health warnings yesterday over the worsening air quality as the flames grew ever closer to populated areas. After almost a month of wildfires, the National Weather Service warned that satellite images showed “widespread smoke” drifting from the fires into western and central Canada before heading back south in the US Northern Plains. The Kaibab National Forest service in neighboring Arizona warned that “wildfires across the West are creating regional haze.”

But it was northern California where most air quality alerts were being issued, with warnings of “unhealthy conditions” for vulnerable groups such as the very young and old. The Mendocino Complex, made of two separate blazes, has been declared the most destructive fire in the state’s history. Its largest blaze, the Ranch Fire, was only 53 percent contained compared to 87 percent for its twin River Fire. Further north, the Carr Fire was declared 51 percent under control, after scorching 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) of land and claiming the lives of three firefighters and five civilians, making it California’s third deadliest fire ever.

More than 14,000 firefighters, including reinforcements from as far away as Australia and New Zealand,

have fanned out across the state to stop the multitude of infernos. Some inmates even assisted in the effort. The Miramonte jail camp made a fire line to stop the advancing Holy Fire from consuming homes in the area. “Oh man, it’s hard, but we make it look easy,” said one of the inmates, Michael Henson. “Man, you know, we (are) just trying to get the job done. You know, us firefighters help protect the community.”

Erratic court appearance

The man accused of deliberately starting the latest fast-moving blaze faces life in prison if convicted of arson and other charges. Forrest Gordon Clark, 51, stands accused of starting the Holy Fire, which in four days has burned more than 18,000 acres of Cleveland National Forest 60 miles (100 kilometers) north of San Diego. It is still spreading. Prosecutors say Clark started the fire, which is only five percent contained, with the intention of causing damage to others and burning a forest. The blaze has razed a dozen properties so far. He has also been charged

with threatening neighbors - one of whom lost his cabin in the fire — and resisting arrest. He faces sentences ranging from 10 years to life imprisonment.

During his initial court appearance, Clark flipped his dark, waist-length hair, spat and paced back and forth behind the chain-link fence of the court cell. “That’s a lie,” Clark interrupted the judge while charges were read.

His lawyers had to intervene repeatedly to ask him to keep quiet. At first, Clark would not show his face, his lawyers saying he feared reprisals against his family. His lawyers asked to postpone the preliminary hearings by a week so that they could study the government’s evidence. “May I pay for that immediately? Can I post bail? I can handle a million (dollars) right now, easily,” Clark added, but the judge refused his request.

He had refused to leave his jail cell on Thursday. Mike Milligan, the local volunteer fire chief who owns a cabin near Clark’s, told The Orange County Register that Clark had long-running feuds with neighbors in the area. Milligan said that Clark had recently sent him an

email warning, “this place will burn.” The head of the Orange County team fighting the Holy Fire said the blaze had started near Clark’s cabin in Jim Canyon. Before his arrest, Clark told a reporter he had nothing to with the fire. “I was asleep. I had two earplugs in,” he told the reporter. “I woke up and my stuff was all on fire,” he said. He also claimed he had been threatened by the MS-13 gang.

Mass evacuations

The blaze has already forced the evacuation of 7,400 homes and more than 21,000 people. Many schools have been forced to close, and more evacuation orders were being issued. InciWeb, the interagency incident information management system offering updates on more than a dozen fires in the tinder-dry west of the country, said that “steep inaccessible terrain will continue to allow the fire to spread into new areas.” High temperatures were expected to worsen conditions and “increase the likelihood of extreme fire behavior as well as heat illness issues for the firefighters and the public,” it said. The forest service said: “We continue to actively engage, but cannot get ahead of the fire.” California Governor Jerry Brown has declared a state of emergency for Orange and Riverside counties, where the fire is concentrated. —AFP



Wildfires across the West creating regional haze

‘A few screws loose’: Pilot opens up to control tower

SAN FRANCISCO: The “suicidal” mechanic who commandeered and crashed a plane without passengers from a US airport in Washington state seemed excited, confused, and at times calm while talking with the air traffic control tower. The 29-year-old man identified as “Rich” or “Richard” flew out of the Seattle-

Takoma airport with a twin engine, 76-seat turboprop Bombardier Q400 belonging to Horizon Air at around 8 pm Friday (0300 GMT Saturday). Two F-15 fighter jets were scrambled as “Rich” flew the passenger plane in an aerial loop, then headed south. He died when the plane crashed after a 90 minutes “joy ride.”

The local sheriff’s office quickly described him via Twitter as “suicidal,” but audio from his conversation with the Sea-Tac control tower portrays a more complex picture. “Rich” said in a matter-of-fact way that he fueled the airplane “to go check out the Olympics,” according to audio posted by The Seattle Times newspaper. He then expresses about fuel-it “burned quite a bit faster than I expected”—as the air traffic control officer gently tries to direct him to a nearby military

base. “Oh man,” “Rich” answers. “Those guys will rough me up if I try and land there ... They probably have anti-aircraft.”

“They don’t have any of that stuff,” the air-traffic controller assures him. “We’re just trying to find a place for you to land safely.” “I’m not quite ready to bring it down just yet,” the pilot says. “This is probably jail time for life, huh?” he asks. “I would hope it is for a guy like me.” “Oh, Richard,” the controller responds. “We’re not going to worry or think about that. But could you start a left turn please?” Later on the pilot says: “I’ve got a lot of people that care about me. It’s going to disappoint them to hear that I did this. I would like to apologize to each and every one of them. Just a broken guy, got a few screws loose, I guess. Never really knew it, until now.” —AFP

Venezuelans endure the painful journey to Ecuador

QUITO: Jose Carrizales sits on a wooden chair with his feet in the air, waiting for the blisters to heal. Having travelled to Colombia after fleeing his home town of Valencia in Venezuela a month and a half ago, Carrizales realized he hadn’t reached the promised land. The 60-year-old quit Venezuela with his three children and a son-in-law because “there was nothing left.”

Carrizales was fleeing abject poverty in his homeland where a collapsing economy and hyperinflation have destroyed salaries and left shortages of food and medicine, as well as failing public services. But after travelling hundreds of kilometers, he found Colombia was saturated by more than a million Venezuelan immigrants, according to estimates, and Carrizales knew his journey was only beginning. “Colombia is overwhelmed with Venezuelans,” he said.

So he and his family kept going, but this

time on foot, walking for 15 days and 1,200-kilometers (750 miles) until they crossed another border, with Ecuador, and reached the capital Quito. Occasionally a kind-hearted motorist would ease their burden for a while, but most of the trip was on foot. Eventually, Carrizales and his family reached an improvised refuge on the outskirts of a bus terminal in the north of Quito. Alongside more than 100 other Venezuelans, he spends day and night sheltering under black plastic sheets tied to a tree. It’s dusty and cold, and children huddle together to keep warm. It’s a tough existence, sleeping out in the open, but Carrizales still feels reborn.

‘Everything turned upside down’

In Venezuela, where some towns can rarely count on running water, “we were stinking,” he recalls. “Everything was turned upside down. I still can’t believe it,” he said, with unconsolable sadness tinging his voice. The wave of migrants giving up on oil-rich Venezuela is putting a huge strain on the rest of the continent. Colombia has already given temporary residence to 820,000 Venezuelans, but others have decided to keep heading south, on to places like Chile and even Uruguay. Ecuador has declared an emergency after seeing some 4,200 migrants a day enter the country. —AFP



SEATTLE: This frame grab taken from footage shows black smoke from empty passenger airplane, stolen from the Seattle-Tacoma airport. — AFP

International

Iran rejects talks; Washington reimposes tougher sanctions

Iraq PM to visit Iran, Turkey as US sanctions bite

TEHRAN: Iran gave its most explicit rejection yet of talks with the United States yesterday, and accused Washington of an "addiction to sanctions" over its latest spat with Turkey. The US reimposed harsh sanctions on Iran on Tuesday following its May withdrawal from a landmark 2015 nuclear agreement, dealing a heavy blow to the already troubled economy.

US President Donald Trump has offered talks on a "more comprehensive deal" but Iran has balked at negotiating under the pressure of sanctions and has instead leant on its increasingly close ties with fellow US sanctions targets Turkey and Russia. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was asked by the conservative Tasnim news agency whether there was any plan to meet with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. "No, there will be no meeting," was the blunt response from Zarif.

He said there were also no plans for a meeting with US officials on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York next month, which both Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Trump are due to attend. "On Trump's recent proposal (of talks), our official stance was announced by the president and by us. Americans are not honest and their addiction to sanctions does not allow any negotiation to take place," Zarif told Tasnim. It was Iran's most explicit rejection of talks to date, after much speculation that economic pressure would force its leaders back to the table with Washington or at least to engage in backroom discussions in New York.

Earlier yesterday, Zarif waded into the mounting row between Turkey and the United

States. "Trump's jubilation in inflicting economic hardship on its NATO ally Turkey is shameful," he wrote on Twitter. "The US has to rehabilitate its addiction to sanctions (and) bullying or entire world will unite - beyond verbal condemnations - to force it to," he warned. "We've stood with neighbors before, and will again now." Trump said Friday he was doubling steel and aluminum tariffs on Turkey as part of an ongoing row over the detention of American pastor Andrew Brunson and other issues. The tensions have fuelled a run on the Turkish lira, which dropped 16 percent to a record low on Friday, with Trump tweeting that the currency was sliding "rapidly downward against our very strong Dollar!"

Rial pain

Iran too has suffered a major decline in its currency this year - in part due to US abandonment of the nuclear deal - with the rial losing more than half its value against the dollar since April. Ironically, the rial strengthened in the two days leading up to the reimposition of US sanctions on Tuesday, after the government announced new foreign exchange measures giving greater freedom to trade dollars at market rates. But there has since been a fresh decline of almost 13 percent, with the rial at 106,200 per dollar yesterday, according to currency tracking website Bonbast - approaching the record low of 119,000 that it reached on July 31. Analysts say this is due to uncertainty in the market, with currency traders still unsure of the new rules and struggling to access dollars from the central bank.

Zarif met repeatedly with then US secretary of

state John Kerry during the negotiation and implementation of the 2015 agreement - but those relatively warm ties were abruptly ended when the Trump administration came to power. Rouhani said last week that Iran "always welcomed negotiations" but that Washington would first have to demonstrate it can be trusted. "If you're an enemy and you stab the other person with a knife and then you say you want negotiations, then the first thing you have to do is remove the knife," he said in an interview on state television.

Iraq PM to visit Iran

Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi is to visit top trading partners Turkey and Iran next week, an official said yesterday, days after Washington slapped new sanctions on Tehran and piled economic pressure on Ankara. Abadi "will head to Turkey on Tuesday and Iran on Wednesday to discuss economic affairs with the two countries," the official said on condition of anonymity. Iraq is the second-largest importer of Iranian non-hydrocarbon products, buying some \$6 billion (5 billion euros) worth of goods from its eastern neighbor in 2017.

It also buys in Iranian-generated electricity in efforts to deal with chronic power cuts that have been a key factor sparking mass protests in recent weeks. Abadi on Tuesday said Iraq would reluctantly comply with sanctions against Tehran which took effect the same day. It came after the administration of US President Donald Trump's, unilateral withdrawal from a landmark 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers. "We don't support the sanctions because they



BAGHDAD: An Iraqi peddler holds Iranian currency for sell in the capital Baghdad. Caught in the crossfire between its key allies Tehran and Washington, Iraq's economy could suffer the heaviest collateral damage from the US reimposing sanctions against Iran. — AFP

are a strategic error, but we will comply with them," Abadi said.

Baghdad is allied with Washington, a strategic partner in the war that saw Iraq declare "victory" over Islamic State jihadists in late 2017. But it also has strong ties to Tehran, a Shiite powerhouse that is heavily involved in Iraq's political affairs. Abadi's visit to Ankara is also

overshadowed by a bitter row between NATO allies Turkey and the US. Trump said Friday he was doubling steel and aluminum tariffs on Turkey as part of an ongoing row over the detention of American pastor Andrew Brunson and other issues. The row has caused the Turkish lira to crash, dropping 16 percent against the dollar on Friday. — Agencies

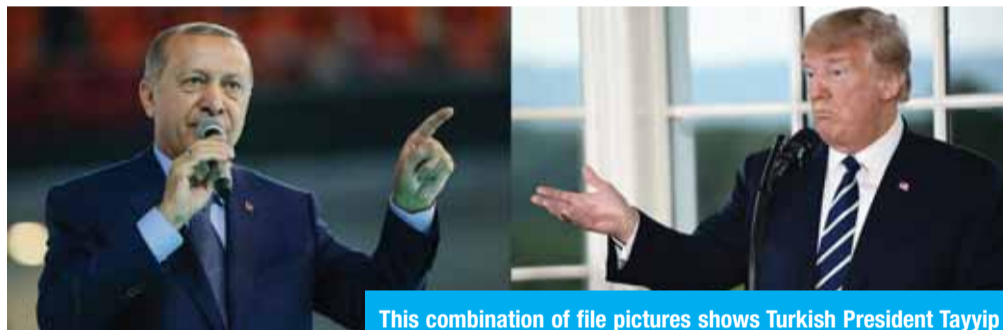
Issues leading to the tailspin in US, Turkey relations

ANKARA: Turkey is a key NATO ally to the United States, but the countries' bilateral relationship has become quite strained. Reverberations spread through global markets on Friday after US President Donald Trump imposed higher tariffs on metal imports from Turkey, sending the country's lira currency deeper into a tailspin. The fallout has been exacerbated over American Christian pastor Andrew Brunson, who is now under house arrest in Turkey. The Trump administration has demanded his release. But Brunson is not the only sticking point between the two countries. The following is a look at a few of the issues that have contributed to the deterioration in relations between the United States and Turkey:

Halkbank & Iran sanctions case

A US court in May sentenced Mehmet Hakan Atilla, a Turkish citizen and banker at Turkey's state-controlled Halkbank, to 32 months in prison after he was convicted of taking part in a scheme to help Iran evade US sanctions. Federal prosecutors accused Atilla of conspiring with gold trader Reza Zarrab and others to elude US sanctions using fraudulent gold and food transactions. Zarrab pleaded guilty and testified for the prosecutors. Zarrab described a scheme that he said included bribes to Turkish government officials and that was carried out with the blessing of Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan.

Erdogan has condemned the case as a political attack on his government. The United States is also considering a fine against Halkbank for allegedly helping Iran evade US sanctions, drawing additional opprobrium from Ankara. Turkish diplomats visited Washington this week to address frictions between the NATO allies fueled by Ankara's detention of US consular staff, as well as Brunson, but no breakthrough was announced. The team also held a meeting with the US Treasury, which imposed sanctions on Turkey's justice and interior minister over Brunson's imprisonment.



This combination of file pictures shows Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan (left) and US President Donald Trump. — AFP

Turkey is infuriated with the United States over its support for the YPG militia in Syria, which Ankara sees as a terrorist organization. Washington sees the militia as a key ally in the fight against the Islamic State. With US forces stationed alongside Kurdish YPG fighters in northern Syria, Erdogan warned earlier this year that US soldiers could be caught in the crossfire of Turkish military action against the militia near the town of Manbij. In June, the two countries agreed that the YPG would withdraw from Manbij and began coordinated but independent patrols near the city. Erdogan last week said that he did not expect the joint roadmap with the United States regarding Manbij to be impacted by bilateral tensions.

Failed coup, exiled cleric

Turkey's demand the United States extradite Islamic cleric Fethullah Gulen, who Ankara has said orchestrated a failed 2016 military coup against Erdogan is another sore point between the two countries. US officials have said the courts would require sufficient evidence to extradite the elderly Gulen, who has denied any involvement in the coup. The attempted coup is at the center of the most recent fallout between Washington and Ankara over the detention of Brunson, a pastor from North Carolina who has lived in Turkey for over 20 years.

Brunson is being held on terrorism charges for allegedly supporting Gulen's network, blamed by Ankara for the failed coup. He has denied those charges. He faces up to 35 years if found guilty. His appeal to be released from house arrest was rejected. F-35 VS S-400 Washington is also concerned about a deal made between Turkey and Russia for the pur-

chase of Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile batteries, which are not compatible with NATO's defenses. Congress has put up roadblocks over the delivery of advanced F-35 fighter jets following the agreement Ankara made with Moscow. The Turkish delegation visiting Washington earlier this week to discuss Brunson pushed for the delivery of the F-35s, a US official familiar with both sides' positions said.

Turkey last year arrested a translator at the US consulate in the southern province of Adana and detained a Drug Enforcement Administration employee in Istanbul. Turkey and the United States suspended the issuance of visas last year after Washington complained about the detention of two locally-hired consular employees on suspicion of a role in the failed 2016 coup. Both countries resumed issuing visas in December. Washington also says a third locally employed consular staffer is under house arrest.

Washington, DC street brawl

Erdogan was vocal against the US justice system over the indictment of his security personnel, who engaged in a brawl with protesters during Erdogan's visit to Washington in May 2017 where 11 people were hurt. Washington's police chief described it as a "brutal attack" on peaceful protesters. US prosecutors in March decided to dismiss charges against 11 of 15 members of Erdogan's security team. Assault charges are pending against four remaining members. "This is a complete scandal," Erdogan told reporters after prayers for the Muslim Eid Al-Adha celebration in September 2017. "It is a scandalous sign of how justice works in the United States." — Reuters

Gaza protest death toll rises to three

GAZA: A 40-year-old Palestinian hit by Israeli fire on the Gaza border died of his wounds yesterday, taking the death toll from protests the previous day to three, the territory's health ministry said. He was among at least 131 Palestinians wounded by Israeli bullets during Friday's protests, even as an informal truce ending a deadly flare-up between Gaza's Islamist rulers Hamas and the Israeli army largely held.

The health ministry identified the man as Ahmed Abu Lulu and said he was shot in a section of the border east of the southern city of Rafah, where the two other Palestinians were also killed. The ministry had earlier identified the other two as Ali Al-Alul, 55, and volunteer medic Abdullah al-Qatati, 21. Funerals for the three dead Palestinians took place yesterday, attended by thousands

of people. Doctors and first responders were among the attendees, in a show of solidarity for Qatati.

On Friday, a few thousand protesters had gathered at various locations along the border, setting tyres ablaze and throwing stones, but in smaller numbers than in previous weeks, AFP correspondents said. The Israeli army said a grenade was thrown at troops guarding the border with northern Gaza, without causing any casualties, and that troops responded with tank fire against two Hamas posts. But the border was otherwise calm after a reported deal to end all rocket fire into Israel and air strikes on the Gaza Strip appeared to take effect around midnight (2100 GMT) on Thursday.

There was no official confirmation of the truce from Israel or Gaza's Islamist rulers Hamas but there were no fresh air strikes on Friday. Thursday had seen extensive Israeli raids in retaliation for the launching of more than 180 rockets and mortar rounds by Hamas and its allies on Wednesday night. It was one of the most serious escalations since the 2014 Gaza war and followed months of rising tensions. Three Palestinians were killed in the Israeli strikes, including a pregnant woman and her 18-month-old daughter. Seven Israelis were wounded by Palestinian rocket fire.

The European Union said Gaza and Israel were "dangerously close" to a new conflict and called for urgent efforts to protect civilians. At least 168 Palestinians



RAFAH: Relatives of 21-year-old Palestinian volunteer medic Abdullah Al-Qatati mourn over his body during his funeral in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday, after he was shot while trying to help wounded protesters along the Israel-Gaza border. — AFP

have been killed since the border protests began on March 30, with most succumbing to Israeli fire during demonstrations. Others have died in air strikes. Over the same period, one Israeli soldier has been shot dead by a Palestinian sniper. — AFP

Mali's Keita on track for 2nd term in election runoff

BAMAKO: Malians vote today in a presidential runoff expected to return Ibrahim Boubacar Keita to the helm of a country battling jihadist violence and ethnic attacks. The second round - a rerun of the 2013 election between Keita and former finance minister Soumaila Cisse - is the climax of a campaign in which Mali's security crisis has taken centre stage. After a first round marred by violence and accusations of fraud, Keita, 73, was credited with 41.7 percent of the vote while Cisse, 68, picked up 17.78 percent. Despite trailing badly, Cisse insisted on Friday he could "turn things around" on polling day. "I am not worried about being behind, because I know the difference is due to fraud," Cisse told French radio RFI.

The international community hopes the winner will revive a 2015 accord that Mali, a linchpin state in the troubled Sahel, sees as its cornerstone for peace. Despite the deal, gathering the government, government-allied groups and former Tuareg rebels, a state of emergency remains in force and heads into its fourth year in November. Jihadist violence, meanwhile, has spread from northern Mali to the centre and south and spilled into neighboring Burkina Faso and Niger, often inflaming communal conflicts. France still has 4,500 troops deployed alongside the UN's 15,000 peacekeepers and a regional G5 Sahel force, aimed at

rooting out jihadists and restoring the authority of the state.

Divided opposition

Keita is accused by his opponents, including several former ministers, of floundering in his response to the bloodshed. Nearly 300 civilians have died in ethnic clashes this year alone. But in a pre-election interview with AFP, the president described these attacks as "pockets of violence and remnants of terrorism" and said the state was making a "colossal financial effort" in fighting violence. Another concern is falling living standards. The country became Africa's first cotton producer in 2017-2018, and the economy has been growing at over five percent annually for several years.

But income per capita has fallen since 2014, according to the World Bank, and nearly half of Mali's 18 million citizens live in poverty. Cisse failed to unite the opposition behind him after the first round on July 29. Two losing candidates, businessman Aliou Boubacar Diallo and former prime minister Cheick Modibo Diarra, who came in third and fourth, said on Thursday they would not support anyone. As a result, Keita, commonly named "IBK" after his initials, is clear favorite in the runoff. "The main question is whether IBK will win by a landslide, as happened in 2013," political analyst Souleymane Drabo told AFP.

The election campaign and vote were marred by bouts of violence, mainly in the restive northern and central regions. Not a single ballot was cast in 871 polling stations due to violent attacks, representing nearly a quarter of a million voters. Accusations of fraud mounted in the days following the first round, with three main opposition candidates petitioning the country's top court over alleged ballot-box stuffing and other grievances. — AFP

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International

Two police officers among four killed in east Canada

Latest eruption of gun violence across the country

FREDERICTON: Four people, including two police officers, were killed in a shooting in eastern Canada on Friday in the latest eruption of gun violence across the country that has led to calls for weapons bans in cities. Police in Fredericton, a city of about 56,000 that is the capital of the province of New Brunswick, said a suspect was in custody and was being treated for serious injuries. A local health official said multiple shooting victims were being treated at one hospital.

Witnesses said the shooting occurred at an apartment complex, and local media showed emergency vehicles converging on a tree-lined residential street. Nearby facilities were closed and authorities imposed a lockdown for residents before issuing an all-clear message. Officials identified the slain officers as Sara Mae Burns, 43, and Lawrence Robb Costello, 45. They did not release the names of the two civilians who were killed, and said only that the suspect was a 48-year-old Fredericton man. They did not release information about a possible motive or the weapon. "It was scary," said Marlene Weaver, who was in bed on Friday morning when she heard shots. "It takes you back to the shooting in Moncton."

She was referring to a 2014 incident in which three Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers were killed and two wounded in Moncton, New Brunswick, about 195 km from Fredericton in one of the worst incidents of its kind in Canada. Friday's shooting occurred three weeks after a gunman

walked down a busy Toronto street, killing two people and wounding 13 before killing himself. Canadian Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale told reporters the RCMP were assisting Fredericton authorities in the investigation. "We'll see where this investigation leads in terms of what exactly happened, who did it, what was the motivation for doing it and the instruments of destruction that were used," he said.

"But broadly speaking, the government of Canada is obviously taking the issue of



Gun laws in Canada stricter than in US

gun violence very seriously." Gun laws in Canada are stricter than in the United States but a proliferation of weapons has led to an increase in gun-related crimes in recent years. New Brunswick had three homicide shootings in the entire year of 2016, according to Statistics Canada. "Awful news coming out of Fredericton," Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Twitter. "My heart goes out to everyone affected by this morning's shooting. We're following the situation closely."

'I heard those noises'

Fredericton police said their officers responded to a report of shots fired early on Friday morning and found two victims on the ground. Burns, who had two years on the force and had spent two years as an auxiliary officer, had three children, Chief Leanne Fitch told reporters. Costello was a 20-year veteran, and left behind four children. Jeff Magnussen, general manager of a golf course near the site of the shooting, said by phone that he heard multiple gunshots before 8 am local time.

"You hear a lot about gun violence in the United States," he said, "but this morning when I heard those noises, what's starting to sink in is that those noises were people losing their lives. To have it happen so close to us is shocking. Now we're becoming the story that nobody wants to hear." Scott Hill said he was walking his dog by a golf course when an employee told him to get inside because of the shooter.

He said he could still hear sporadic gunfire coming from the apartment complex two hours later, when he was at the office of his property development agency. "This sort of thing never happens here," Hill said. "It's happening." In the wake of the Toronto bloodshed last month, the city council voted overwhelmingly to urge the federal government, which has jurisdiction over gun laws, to ban the sale of handguns in the city.

"Why does anyone in this city need to have a gun at all?" Toronto Mayor John Tory said. Canada's largest city has had 241 shooting incidents this year, resulting in 30 deaths, a 30 percent increase in



FREDERICTON: These two handout photographs show police officers Lawrence Robert Costello (left), 45, and Sara Mae Helen Burns, 43, who were among four people killed in a shooting in eastern Canada. —AFP

fatalities over the same period last year. Bill Blair, the government minister tasked with tackling gun violence, said officials are considering giving provinces the power to designate gun-free cities. "It's possible that we could work with the provinces and territories and allow them the authority to designate certain municipalities as places where guns could not be purchased or possessed," Blair told Reuters.

In 2016 Canada had 0.61 firearm-related homicides per 100,000 people, a 23 percent increase from 2015 and the highest rate since 2005, according to Statistics Canada. For the United States, the University of Washington's Institute for

Health Metrics and Evaluation reported 3.85 deaths per 100,000 that year. Canada's Liberal government unveiled proposals in March to tighten already tough gun control laws to address a spike in crimes involving firearms, including a deadly attack on a mosque last year.

The measures would enhance background checks on people seeking to buy firearms, especially those with a history of violence. Experts said that although Canada's gun laws ban dozens of assault rifles, some permitted firearms can easily be modified for greater damage, and lax US regulations make smuggled weapons accessible. —Reuters

Cameroon probes video showing security forces executing civilians

YAOUNDE: Cameroon's government said it would investigate a video that Amnesty International shows security forces shooting at least a dozen unarmed people in the far north of the country, where they are battling Islamist militants. It also announced the arrests of seven soldiers in connection with a separate video that surfaced last month appearing to show men in military uniform shooting dead two women and two children.

Amnesty said in a statement it had verified the latest video through witness testimony, satellite imagery and analysis of the weapons, dialogue and uniforms. It said the video was shot in the village of Achigaya at an unknown date prior to May 2016. The nearly four-minute video has circulated on social media in recent days. A government spokesman said it was released to undermine President Paul Biya ahead of an election in October.

At the start of the video, several men in military fatigues with automatic-style weapons joke among themselves, with one saying in French: "This is a kamikaze mission." The men then open fire for roughly 12 seconds on about a dozen people sitting or lying down against a wall and under guard. After the firing stops, one of the armed men approaches the motionless bodies and fires several more times from point-blank range. Around them, several buildings in the village are in flames and gunfire can be heard in the background. —Reuters

11-year-old Thai bride returns from Malaysia after uproar

BANGKOK: An 11-year-old child bride returned to Thailand this week following widespread outcry over her marriage to a Malaysian man 30 years her senior, an official said yesterday. Malaysian Muslims below the age of 16 are allowed to wed with the permission of religious courts but news of the union between the girl and the 41-year-old trader went viral on social media, reigniting calls to end child marriage.

The ceremony took place in June over the border in Thailand's Muslim-majority south in Narathiwat province, where the girl returned to Wednesday in the wake of "immense pressure from Malaysian media", provincial governor Suraporn Prommool said. The 11-year-old, believed to be the trader's third wife, is undergoing mental-health counseling because of the intense level of attention, Suraporn said.

He added that the marriage was not recognized under Buddhist-majority Thailand's civil law but that it took place under the auspices of an Islamic council in Narathiwat with the consent of the girl's parents. "We cannot do anything (to annul the marriage) because they married under the religious law," he said. The trader, however, could face six months in jail if it is found that he did not get permission in Malaysia. The girl was born in Thailand to parents who labor in Malaysia's vast rubber plantations and Suraporn said she doesn't speak Thai well. —AFP

Fishermen of Lake Chad cursed by Boko Haram conflict

MAIDUGURI: The fishermen of Lake Chad must sail in secret, forced to evade both Boko Haram jihadists and Nigeria's military in a desperate dance that has strangled livelihoods and caused scarcity of a once-staple food. While in the past boats slid across the vast waters unhindered, sustaining a vibrant fishing industry in northeastern Nigeria, years of bloody Boko Haram militancy has deeply scarred the region. And despite a brief return to stability earlier this year, the fishermen have become ensnared in a fresh Nigerian army counterinsurgency operation against the jihadists in and around the lake launched in May.

Eating lizard and cat

For Aminu Mohammed, that means "no fishing, no selling fish," until the end of August, the date when "Operation Last Hold" is set to end. But he goes anyway, forced to disregard the rules and risk encountering the jihadists in order to survive and feed his six children. The danger is immense. "Boko Haram lurks on the lake and when they do not kill us they take 10,000 naira (\$27, 23 euros) to allow us to fish," the 45-year-old told AFP. There is also a threat of arrest by the Nigerian army, who have detained fishermen in the region and accused them of financing the jihadists by paying them taxes.

The once-teeming fish market at

Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state and major trading hub some 200 kilometers from Lake Chad, looks abandoned after nine years of bloody conflict. Most stalls are empty, their owners, Hausa and Kanuri traders who have made their fortune there for centuries, have left to buy fish at the Cameroon border. Yakubu Dangombe is one of the few to remain, yet business has never been harder. Dangombe said he had two million naira of fish stuck on the road in Baga, the main fishing hub on the Nigerian side of the lake, blocked by soldiers. "I have 35 children, I can't feed them or pay school fees, it's a disaster," says the once rich trader.

To avoid the military, traders smuggle the fish into Maiduguri by road in bundles of 10 or 30 kilograms stashed in cars and "under travelers' suitcases", said a salesman under condition of anonymity. Still, not enough fish gets in to meet demand. The shortage has caused a dramatic spike in fish prices: one pile (seven or eight fish) has surged in the past three months from 4,000 to 10,000 naira. So customers have turned to other sources of protein. In a large yard where men use jerry cans to smoke tilapia and perch, there are some new additions to the menu: monitor lizards and cats.

'Rock and a hard place'

Prior to the conflict, fishing was one of the region's largest sources of income and employment. The industry produced up to 100,000 tons of fish annually and was valued at as much as \$220 million at its peak, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. More than 200 trucks would leave Baga to supply markets all over the country, reaching as far as Lagos and Port Harcourt, Nigeria's southern megacities. Not anymore. According to the fishing union in

hours. After growing up partly in Germany and previously living in Spain, Pardy wants to highlight the freedom of movement benefits that EU membership brings. "The right to explore as well as live and work in Europe without tiresome red tape is an immense privilege," he said. "It would be such a shame to make it more difficult." The future of such visa-free arrangements for Britons is unclear amid stalled Brexit negotiations between London and Brussels.

'Personal statement'

Pardy conjured up his politically-driven escapade while tracking himself jogging on a fitness app, realising he could use the tool to map out words. "It just popped into my head," he recalled. "(I) thought I might be able to do something on a bigger scale." A recent moped accident and death in the family also nudged him towards "re-evaluating" life. So the digital consultant quit his job of five years, purchased a camper van for £6,000 (\$7,650, 6,680 euros) and spent weeks painstakingly plotting his all-important route. The roaming Remainer expects his expenses to cost a further £5,000 - including off-setting the trip's carbon output-cutting into savings originally earmarked to get a mortgage.

"It was a difficult decision," he said, of splashing out instead on an epic road trip. "But it's a different experience and I just decided to go for it. I appreciate how fortunate I have been to be able to do this."



MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA: The inside of a fish trap used in the Lake Chad region is seen at the Baga fish market in Maiduguri. —AFP

Borno, more than 200 fishing towns have been razed by the jihadists since 2009 in their ruthless quest to establish an Islamic state.

At the peak of the insurgency between 2013 and 2014 when Boko Haram reigned supreme over the lake—which is bordered by Nigeria, Chad and Niger—authorities from the three nations totally banned fishing in an attempt to cut what was an important supply for the jihadists. The army eventually regained control of most territories, forcing the jihadists to retreat further into the lake, a difficult terrain to access. By 2016, thanks to the official reopening of the Baga market and the resumption of traffic along some key highways of Borno state, it appeared that some normalcy was returning to daily life. But traders now complain that the army and local

authorities are acting together to wring money from them.

Soldiers are accused of seizing fish stocks transported by road and working with local authorities to collect taxes, which have tripled, according to Assa Yuni, a trader in Maiduguri. But officials say the cost is justified because of the added cost of security escorts. "People would like everything to be like before, but it's not so simple, you have to pay armed escorts on the road, because the situation is volatile," said the secretary of the Fish Producers and Marketers Association of Borno state, Mallam Baba Musa. Not everyone agrees. "Whether it's the military or Boko Haram, we are stuck between a rock and a hard place," said Dangombe, the trader whose stock is stuck near Baga. —AFP



HAMELIN: Andrew Pardy camps with his van in Hamelin in Germany - on his way to Gothenburg in Sweden during his drive around Europe spelling out 'stop Brexit'. —AFP

Pardy began his European odyssey solo in mid-July, mapping out the letter "S" over several days travelling through the British Isles. Joined by his girlfriend, he next navigated Norway and Sweden-camping inside the Arctic Circle and spotting a rare white reindeer-before crossing into Finland to complete the word "stop" this week. The subsequent stages of the road trip will see him spell out "Brexit" backwards, finishing the "B" in the Spanish city of Bilbao in late October.

"The journey has been incredible so far. I've met loads of wonderful people

along the way, all of whom have been supportive," Pardy said. The 28-year-old added he had been flooded with offers of accommodation, dinner and drinks meet-ups from supporters across Europe after his mission garnered media attention. Pardy, a supporter of holding a second referendum on Brexit, is nonetheless content that his stunt's stated aim will likely remain unfulfilled. "I've been frustrated with the debate and how Brexit has been progressing," he said. "So I just wanted to do something positive and make a personal statement at the same time." —AFP

International

Saudi-led coalition announces probe into Yemen bus attack

Houthis say attack kills 51, including 40 children

SANAA: A Saudi-led Arab military coalition said it would investigate an air strike that killed dozens of children in Yemen, an apparent shift of stance on an attack Riyadh has portrayed as a legitimate action against its Houthi foes. At least 40 children were killed in Thursday's strike on a bus in northern Yemen, the armed Houthi group which controls Yemen's capital said. That raised the toll of children killed in the raid from 29.

The strike by the Western-backed alliance of Arab countries outraged human rights groups and was strongly condemned by UN officials. Henrietta Fore, executive director of the UN Children's Fund UNICEF, said the "horrific" attack marked "a low point in (Yemen's) brutal war". People in Saada started to dig graves in preparation for funerals. "God may give us patience," said Hussein Hussein Tayeb, who lost three sons on the bus, on a trip with other pupils to visit a mosque and tombs.

"I was one of the first to arrive on the scene, seeking to rescue the wounded: I lifted a body and I found that it was Ahmed's face. I hugged him, he was my son." Ahmed was 11. His brothers Yusef and Ali were 14 and 9. UN chief Antonio Guterres called for an independent investigation of the raid which hit the bus as it drove through a market in Dahyan, a town in the Houthis' home province of Saada. The UN Security Council on Friday called for a "credible and transparent" investigation after receiving a closed-door briefing on the strike by a senior UN official. A Reuters TV crew saw boys injured in the strike

lying on beds in the Dahyan hospital, many with their heads wrapped. The face of one was covered in lacerations. The Arab states carried out new air strikes on Friday, killing a girl and injuring several other people whose home was targeted in Marib province, east of the capital Sanaa, the Houthis' Al-Masirah TV said.

ment out of the capital in 2014. Yemen is the poorest country in the Arabian peninsula, and the United Nations says the war has created the world's most urgent humanitarian disaster, with millions of people totally dependent on aid and at risk of famine if supply lines are cut.

'Legitimate'

The Arab states initially said the air strikes on the bus were "legitimate military action" against missile launchers, carried out in accordance with international humanitarian law. Houthi-run al-Masirah TV cited the group's health minister Taha Mutawakil as saying that the estimated number of casualties stood at 51 killed including 40 children, and at least 79 people wounded, of whom 56 were children. The International Committee of the Red Cross reported the same toll on Friday, citing authorities in Saada. It had said on its Twitter account on Thursday that its medical team at the ICRC-supported hospital in Saada had received the bodies of 29 children, all under 15 years old.

The hospital also received 48 wounded people, among them 30 children. Masirah TV said on Friday the Houthis had fired a number of ballistic missiles at Saudi Arabia, targeting Jizan and Aseer provinces which lie at the border. Saudi Arabia intercepted two missiles fired at Jizan, Al-Arabiya TV reported.

The head of the Houthis' supreme revolutionary committee, Mohammed Ali Al-Houthi, hailed Friday's call by UN Secretary-General



Attacks draws international condemnation

Announcing the investigation into the strike on the bus, the Saudi Press Agency quoted an alliance official as saying: "The coalition is firmly committed to investigating all claims regarding mistakes or violations of international law, to sanction those who caused these incidents and to provide assistance to the victims." The Saudi-led Arab alliance, whose members receive Western political support and buy billions of dollars a year in arms from the United States, Britain and France, has been fighting for three years to drive out the Houthis, Iran-aligned fighters who pushed a Saudi-backed govern-

ment out of the capital in 2014. Yemen is the poorest country in the Arabian peninsula, and the United Nations says the war has created the world's most urgent humanitarian disaster, with millions of people totally dependent on aid and at risk of famine if supply lines are cut.

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Syrian defenses confront 'enemy target' near the Lebanese border

DAMASCUS: Syrian air defenses engaged an "enemy target" near the border with Lebanon west of Damascus overnight, state news agency SANA reported yesterday. "Our air defenses confronted an enemy target that penetrated airspace above the area of Deir Al-Ashair in the Damascus countryside," SANA said. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights confirmed air defenses had launched missiles, but said it was unclear what they were targeting or whether there was any target at all.

The Britain-based war monitor said Lebanese Shiite militant group Hezbollah, which has been backing the Damascus government in Syria's seven-year civil war, was present in the area. Israel has carried out numerous raids in Syria in recent years, targeting government forces, Hezbollah and Iran, another ally of Damascus. Last week, SANA said Syrian air defenses confronted another "enemy attack" west of Damascus. Then too the Observatory, which relies on sources inside Syria for its information, said it was unable to determine who was responsible.

Meanwhile, dozens of air strikes and shelling hit parts of the last swathe of Syrian territory still held by rebels on Friday, according to rebels, rescue workers and a war monitoring group, in a possible prelude to a full-scale government offensive. The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said dozens of strikes from helicopters and war planes had hit parts of Hama, Idlib and Aleppo provinces, killing at least 29 people. The three areas in northwest Syria are the last major ones still in the hands of fighters seeking to overthrow President Bashar Al-Assad, whose forces recaptured the area around Damascus and

ment out of the capital in 2014. Yemen is the poorest country in the Arabian peninsula, and the United Nations says the war has created the world's most urgent humanitarian disaster, with millions of people totally dependent on aid and at risk of famine if supply lines are cut.

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Troops in control of embattled city

KABUL: Security forces were in control of the eastern Afghan city of Ghazni yesterday, officials said, more than a day after Taliban fighters launched a major onslaught on the provincial capital, as reinforcements continued a clearance operation targeting the militants.

Interior ministry spokesman Najib Danish said fresh reinforcements had arrived in the area and were battling Taliban fighters north of Ghazni, and that the insurgents were in no position to take control of the city. "The situation is fully under control. The city is not going to fall," Danish told a press conference, after confusion mounted over Ghazni's fate following hours of official silence.

A spokesman for US forces in Afghanistan also described the fight for the city as a clearance operation, with sporadic clashes between security forces and insurgents punctuating relative calm. "The fact remains that the Taliban are unable to seize terrain and unable to match the Afghan security forces or our enablement, retreating once directly and decisively engaged," Lt. Col. Martin O'Donnell told AFP. Insurgents entered Ghazni from several directions late Thursday night, attacking media offices and damaging a telecommunications tower, effectively shutting off mobile service to the city as of Friday afternoon — making information about the fight difficult to verify.

An MP from Ghazni urged caution following Danish's press conference, saying heavy clashes continued to rage between the two sides. "Intense fighting is still ongoing in Ghazni city. The prison is under attack from several directions, they are trying to free the prisoners," said Nafisa Azimi by telephone from Kabul.

"Fear is spreading in Ghazni as the day ends, the Taliban might intensify their attack as it gets dark," Danish said at least 25 security forces had



DAHAYAN, Yemen: Yemenis dig graves for children, who were killed when their bus was hit during a Saudi-led coalition air strike that targeted the Dahyan market in the Houthi rebels' stronghold province of Saada. — AFP

Antonio Guterres for an independent investigation into the air strike. In Paris, the French foreign ministry said France condemned the strike and backed a UN call to bring all parties in the war together for talks in Geneva on Sept 6. The Houthis have however barred without explanation the head of the UN's human rights office in Yemen from returning to the country, a UN

spokeswoman said on Friday. Elobaid Elobaid, a Canadian citizen, had been based in Yemen since October 2016, leading 17 staff in Sanaa and 13 monitors in 11 of Yemen's governorates. His visa expired in June but was not renewed. The UN human rights office has frequently accused all sides of violating international law and committing war crimes. — Reuters



GHAZNI: Smoke rising into the air after Taliban militants launched an attack on the Afghan provincial capital of Ghazni. — AFP

died in the fighting along with 150 Taliban fighters. At least one media worker from a local broadcaster was also killed.

'Under threat'

Earlier yesterday, the Taliban claimed victory in the fight for the embattled city, saying their forces were in control of Ghazni after routing Afghan troops. "Last night, our mujahideen have completely conquered a battalion in Ghazni, seizing weapons and ammunitions and four pickup trucks," said Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid in a message to journalists.

"Our mujahideen are protecting the city of Ghazni." The Taliban often exaggerate their battlefield gains and downplay losses incurred during clashes.

Ghazni — less than two hours by road from Kabul — has been under increasing danger

from massing Taliban fighters for months, with reports suggesting insurgents had already infiltrated the city. Political analyst Atta Noori said the lack of official response to the mounting threat would likely dent already fraying public confidence in Kabul's ability to confront the Taliban.

"The government might be in control of the city but it always remains under threat," said Noori. The attack was the latest attempt by the Taliban to seize an urban centre and comes as pressure mounts on the militant movement to enter peace talks with the government to end the nearly 17-year-old war. It was also the largest tactical operation by the Taliban since an unprecedented ceasefire in June brought fighting between security forces and the Taliban to a temporary halt, giving war-weary Afghans some welcome relief from the bloodshed. — AFP

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Washington Watch

Hype vs reality

By Dr James J Zogby

Fifty years ago, when I was getting started in national politics, Ibrahim Abu Lughod, a friend and mentor, offered words of wisdom I never forgot. Although he read the New York Times every day (he called it his "daily drug"), he cautioned me not to be fooled or swayed by the ebb and flow of events as they are covered in the press. Instead, he insisted that it was important to keep focused on the long-view - the deep currents that pointed in the direction we were heading.

While Ibrahim was specifically referring to coverage of events from the Middle East, I recalled his sage advice this week as I followed the reporting and what passed for analysis of Tuesday's Democratic primary elections. According to the national media, in these contests, the party's progressive wing "hit a wall," "suffered a series of setbacks," or was just plain "defeated." This was in marked contrast to the assessment made a little over one month ago in the aftermath of the stunning victories of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ben Jealous - both of whom defeated establishment-favored candidates. Back then, we were told that there was an "insurgent upsurge", while just two weeks earlier the same media outlets were describing the progressive movement as being on life-support.

This jumping back and forth struggling to find a single theme with which to describe the 2018 election (or any story) could be dismissed as simply a series of mistaken judgments. I suspect, however, that the problem runs deeper. Here are a few possible explanations:

In the first place, hype beats being thoughtful. Despite its self-serving claims, the mainstream media, in its print and electronic forms, isn't always balanced, objective, or in-depth. Whether the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal, or CNN, MSNBC, or Fox News, the job of major media outlets, as they see it, is to grow their audience and sell products (both their own and those of their advertisers). Apparently believing that straight news and thoughtful analysis are boring and have no market value, news marketers have opted for hype to boost viewership.

This is especially true in the case of television, where, for example, the "Breaking News" banner screams across the screen in regular intervals announcing stories that are oftentimes neither "breaking" nor "news." For example, while it can be debated whether or not a bizarre Trump tweet should be given "Breaking News" treatment at 9:00 am, the fact that this same item is still being referred to as such at 4:00 pm is absurd. Then, there's the problem of media "group-think" or "pack journalism." The late Eugene McCarthy, a former Senator and 1968 presidential candidate, once famously compared the media to crows on a power line - "When one lands, they all land. When one takes off, they all take off."

Groupthink

Looking back at coverage of George W Bush's infamous Iraq War "Mission Accomplished" speech, it is striking to see how many liberal and conservative pundits waxed poetic about his performance, describing it as a "presidential" display of "strong leadership". Equally striking, is how once it became clear that the speech was - to be polite - premature, the very same pundits turned on a dime into critics without ever acknowledging their error or apologizing for their earlier fawning. (It appears that being a media pundit means never having to admit you were wrong.)

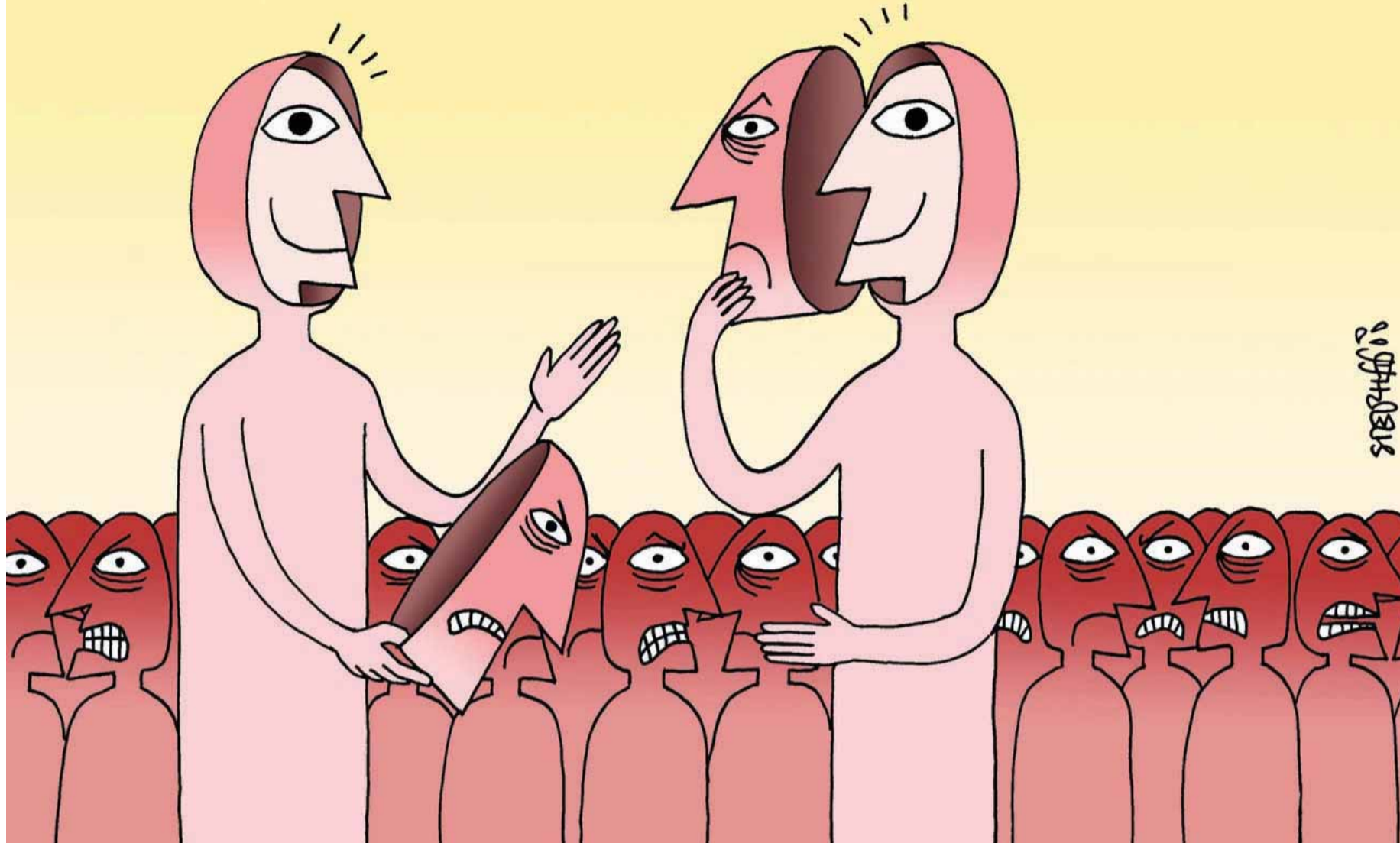
This groupthink problem has been compounded by the network's penchant for inviting journalists to serve as commentators. Night after night, the cable news shows feature show after show of journalists interviewing other journalists - with little or no external independent input. In this situation, agreement with one's peers is viewed as wisdom - "when one lands, they all land..."

Finally, there's the issue of laziness and shallowness leading to snap judgments and hype. This frequently occurs in reporting on political polling - like presidential job performance ratings. A network will announce as "Breaking News" that a new poll shows Trump's rating has hit a new low. Discussing this topic will consume endless hours of punditry without anyone questioning whether this particular poll is in fact an accurate reading of the public's mood.

The University of Virginia's Larry Sabato has cautioned about the media's use and abuse of political polling data. He has warned that the results of two polls can't be compared unless their methodologies and demographics are the same. He also warns against making claims as to whether the results of a new poll represent a genuine shift in attitudes if the difference the polls being compared is within the polls' margins of error. In other words, a telephone poll of "likely voters" cannot be compared with an online poll of "adults." And it is not permissible to conclude that there has been a change in attitudes when the difference between two polls is 3 percentage points, when both polls have a margin of error of 3.5 percent. Such wisdom falls on deaf ears if the results of a false comparison can be shocking enough to be hyped as "Breaking News". Back to the media-driven roller coaster treatment of the last three rounds of primaries. There is a story to be told about this year's primaries - actually several interesting stories - and not the dizzying "they're down, no they're up, no wait, they're really down" story we've been given.

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

Cartoon for the Soul



Canada tweet crosses Saudi red line

For years, Canadian pressure on human rights in Saudi Arabia had elicited no more than a standard rejection. But all that changed last week, when a Canadian complaint was translated into Arabic and set off a diplomatic row. When Riyadh responded to a call from Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland to release civil society activists with an abrupt severing of diplomatic and trade ties, Canadian officials were left scrambling to understand what had happened.

What Ottawa did not anticipate was that in the eyes of the Saudis they had crossed a red line. On Aug. 2, Freeland tweeted in English and French, calling for the release of two jailed Saudi human rights activists. The following day, Canada's foreign affairs department sent another tweet urging Saudi Arabia to "immediately release" those and other activists. That was translated into Arabic by its embassy in Riyadh and sent out on Aug 5 to its approximately 12,000 followers.

The reaction from Saudi Arabia was swift. Hours after the Arabic tweet, the Saudi government recalled its ambassador, barred Canada's envoy from returning and placed a ban on new trade. Two Gulf sources said it was the tweet from the embassy that upset Saudi officials the most. "Matters were being handled through usual channels but the tweet was a break with diplomatic norms and protocol," said one of the sources, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. The sources did not clarify exactly how the tweet broke with diplomacy, but regional experts said it was the step of sending it to a domestic audience that would have angered Saudi officials.

"The Saudi retaliation took some time to allow for political talks in closed doors," Salman Al-Ansari, founder of the Washington-based Saudi American Public Relation Affairs Committee, said. "They thought the Canadians would take steps to back off, but all of a sudden they tweeted it in Arabic. This was a very provocative action by the Canadians to try to embarrass the Saudis in front of their people. The Saudis did not

take this lightly at all." Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Jubeir raised the issue of the Arabic tweet in a call with Freeland on Tuesday, and complained about interference, a person familiar with the matter who declined to be named said. Canadian officials say there was nothing



Kingdom now taking much harsher stance

remarkable about the Arabic tweet, which merely repeated Ottawa's stated position in a common practice for delegations abroad. Canada has raised the issue of civil society activist detentions before. As recently as May, Canada's Riyadh embassy tweeted in English its concern about activist arrests and said it was "crucial that the rule of law" be respected, with no public Saudi response.

'Collateral damage'

The outsized reaction to the tweet underscores how the kingdom is taking a much harsher stance against what it perceives as Western interference in its internal affairs on issues like human rights, perhaps emboldened by Washington's willingness under Donald Trump to de-emphasize rights issues when it comes to its allies.

Riyadh and Washington have been enjoying an exceptionally close relationship - tense during the administration of former U.S. President Barack Obama - as both Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Trump share similar concerns about Iran. By con-

trast, Trump and Trudeau locked horns during the G7 summit in June in an unusually public manner.

The US State Department this week urged the two sides to use diplomacy to resolve the dispute. "Canada is collateral damage," said Thomas Juneau, an assistant professor and Middle East expert at the University of Ottawa. "This fundamentally is not about Canada. This is about Saudi Arabia wanting to send a broader message to its neighbors, to other democracies."

Canadian foreign affairs officials including Freeland, who were gathered at a Vancouver hotel for a conference on Sunday, were taken aback by the Saudi reaction and left scrambling. Canada, government insiders said, was still unclear on what steps it can take to "fix its big mistake", as a Saudi official called it. "I don't think we have a conclusive understanding as of right now," said a Canadian government source. "There may be the need for another call (between Freeland and Jubeir). We're also obviously talking to our partners about it. We do not wish to have bad relations with them (the Saudis)."

Inside Saudi Arabia, the measures were supported by a media campaign criticizing Canada's human rights record and praising the Saudi ruler's firmness in "protecting the kingdom's sovereignty". Saudi state television channels aired reports on the struggle of indigenous people in Canada and said they had been historically subject to discrimination. Other reports listed "the worst Canadian prisons" and described harsh prison conditions.

Thousands of Twitter accounts bearing Saudi flags tweeted on the dispute, elevating the phrase "Saudi Arabia expels the Canadian ambassador" to one of the world's most popular hashtags. Many of the tweets used suspiciously similar language, often a sign of a coordinated campaign by bots, or automated accounts. Saud al-Qahtani, a senior royal court adviser, tweeted a link announcing the decision to ban new trade on Monday along with the hashtag "Saudi first" - echoing a phrase popularized by Trump. — Reuters

Venezuelans endure painful journey to Ecuador

Jose Carrizales sits on a wooden chair with his feet in the air, waiting for the blisters to heal. Having travelled to Colombia after fleeing his home town of Valencia in Venezuela a month and a half ago, Carrizales realized he hadn't reached the promised land. The 60-year-old quit Venezuela with his three children and a son-in-law because "there was nothing left". Carrizales was fleeing abject poverty in his homeland where a collapsing economy and hyperinflation have destroyed salaries and left shortages of food and medicine, as well as failing public services.

But after travelling hundreds of kilometers, he found Colombia was saturated by more than a million Venezuelan immigrants, according to estimates, and Carrizales knew his journey was only beginning. "Colombia is overwhelmed with Venezuelans," he said. So he and his family kept going, but this time on foot, walking for 15 days and 1,200-km until they crossed another border, with Ecuador, and reached the capital Quito.

Occasionally a kind-hearted motorist would ease their burden for a while, but most of the trip was on foot. Eventually, Carrizales and his family reached an improvised refuge on the outskirts of a bus terminal in the north of Quito.

Alongside more than 100 other Venezuelans, he spends day and night sheltering under black plastic sheets tied to a tree. It's dusty and cold, and children huddle together to keep warm. It's a tough existence, sleeping out in the open, but Carrizales still feels reborn.

'Everything turned upside down'

In Venezuela, where some towns can rarely count on running water, "we were stinking," he recalls. "Everything was turned upside down. I still can't believe it," he said, with inconsolable sadness tinged in his voice. The wave of migrants giving up on oil-rich Venezuela is putting a huge strain on the rest of the continent. Colombia has already given temporary residence to 820,000 Venezuelans, but others have decided to keep heading south, on to places like Chile and even Uruguay.

Ecuador has declared an emergency after seeing some 4,200 migrants a day enter the country. The United Nations Refugee Agency says almost 550,000 Venezuelans have entered Ecuador since the beginning of the year, most on foot and in precarious conditions. Only 20 percent of those stay in Ecuador, the rest continue on to Peru and Chile, the UN says.

The problem for many migrants is that neighboring Colombia can be an inhospitable destination. "In Colombia, Venezuelans are looked down upon," Nazareth Vitoria told AFP, saying she felt prejudice. But even in Quito she met people who "cursed us". She sleeps with her three children aged five, four and one in a tent next to a pile of donated clothes.

No money, no shower

Others write signs saying:



Venezuelan citizens wait in line to cross to Ecuador at the Rumichaca International bridge in Ipiales, Colombia, yesterday. — AFP

"Venezuelan looking for work," to display on street corners. Jhony Mora got lucky for seven months in Colombia, but then "the pay wasn't enough" - so the 23-year-old stuffed his backpack with his belongings and decided to head south towards Peru. But he got "lucky" again and found work as a mason in Quito, earning dollars for good measure. Ecuador has been dollarized since 2000 making its market tempting to Venezuelans, for whom the minimum monthly salary of 5.9 million bolivars back home fetches just \$1.6 on the black market.

Still, most hope to scrape together

enough money to leave their makeshift shelter and continue on their journey. In the meantime, they help each other by sharing food and cleaning implements, collecting clothes and tending to the sick. Paramedic Miguel Ochoa arrived in Ecuador only six days ago. He sits at a plastic table with some scattered medicine packs listening to patients recount their woes, mostly problems caused by the cold and a lack of hygiene. "Here, if you don't have a dollar to wash, you don't wash. If you don't have 10 cents, you can't use the toilet," Ochoa told AFP. "It's not easy to get money," one of his patients adds. — AFP

Business

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12 European pilots hit Ryanair with biggest strike yet**13** WTO rejects most of Russian challenge to EU energy rules**14** Lexus LC named Coupe of the Year in 2018 Driver Power customer survey

ISTANBUL: A money changer counts Turkish lira banknotes at a currency exchange office in Istanbul. — AFP

Embattled Turkey lira crashes over 16%

Trump piles pressure with tariffs on steel and aluminum

ISTANBUL: The embattled Turkish lira tumbled over 16 percent to new record lows against the dollar as strains with the United States intensified, but President Recep Tayyip Erdogan defiantly proclaimed Turkey would emerge victorious in an "economic war". Compounding the lira's agony, President Donald Trump said Friday he had doubled steel and aluminum tariffs on Turkey, noting that relations between the NATO allies were "not very good".

The lira's plunge on Friday is one of the most serious economic crises that Erdogan has faced since coming to power in 2003 in the wake of a financial crisis in 2001 that brought the economy to near meltdown. "The plunge in the lira which began in May now looks certain to push the Turkish economy into recession and it may well trigger a banking crisis," said Andrew Kenningham, chief global economist at Capital Economics. The currency turbulence coincides with the most bitter dispute with the United States since the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, which so far shows no sign of abating.

Fears over contagion even pushed global equity markets lower, with some European banks coming under heavy selling pressure due to their exposure to Turkey.

The lira was trading at 6.47 to the dollar at 1900 GMT, a loss on the day of 16.6 percent. Earlier it had fallen as much as 22 percent. "The last time I can remember a currency exploding into a similar acceleration of weakness to what we have seen in the past 24 hours is the Russian ruble crisis that transpired late in 2014," said Jameel Ahmad, head of currency strategy at FXTM. The tumult also affected Wall Street, which

finished the week on a sour note, with the Dow Jones, S&P 500 and Nasdaq all finishing down on Friday.

'National fight'

But Erdogan, who had remained unusually silent until now as the lira crisis mounted, urged Turks to take matters into their own hands. "If you have dollars, euros or gold under your pillow, go to banks to exchange them for Turkish lira. It is a national fight," he said.

"This will be the response to those who have declared an economic war," he said, blaming Turkey's woes on what he described as an "interest rate lobby" seeking to push the country to higher rates.

Erdogan had raised eyebrows Thursday when he appeared to invoke divine intervention, saying: "If they have dollars, we have our people, we have our right and we have Allah!"

Turkey remains at loggerheads with the United States over the detention for the last two years of American pastor Andrew Brunson and a host of other issues.

Trump intensified the alarm on financial markets with his new tweet doubling the tariffs, noting for good measure the lira was sliding "rapidly downward against our very strong

Dollar!". "Our relations with Turkey are not good at this time!" he added. But Erdogan said Turks should not be alarmed by exchange rate movements. "The dollar, the mollar, will not cut our path," said Erdogan, using a figure of speech he repeatedly uses to mock something.

Turkey had alternatives "from Iran, to Russia, to China and some European countries", he added. Erdogan also Friday held telephone talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, discussing economic and trade issues as well as the Syria crisis, the Turkish presidency said. The Turkish foreign ministry hit back at Trump's comments, saying that the "only result will be harming our relationship" and vowing unspecified retaliation. It added that Trump's remarks were "not possible to reconcile with state seriousness".



Turkey faces worst economic crisis since 2003

Markets are deeply concerned over the direction of domestic economic policy under Erdogan with inflation at nearly 16 percent but the central bank reluctant to raise rates in response. UBS chief economist for EMEA emerging markets Gyorgy Kovacs said a giant rate hike of 350-400 basis points would be "consistent with real rate levels that in the past helped to stabilize the currency" but warned a deal to normalize ties with the US may also be needed.

And it remains unclear if the bank would be willing to sharply lift rates, with analysts saying the nominally independent institution is under the influence of Erdogan, who wants low rates to keep growth humming.

After winning a June election with revamped powers, Erdogan tightened his control over the central bank and appointed his son-in-law Berat Albayrak to head a newly-empowered finance ministry.

"President Erdogan's strengthened powers under the new presidential system have made it increasingly uncertain whether policymakers will be able to act to stabilize the economy," said William Jackson, chief emerging markets economist at Capital Economics in London.

Concerns mounted Friday after a report in the Financial Times that the supervisory wing of the European Central Bank had over the last weeks begun to look more closely at euro-zone lenders' exposure to Turkey.

The report said the situation is not yet seen as "critical" but Spain's BBVA, Italy's UniCredit and France's BNP Paribas are regarded as particularly exposed. Albayrak, who formerly served as energy minister, on Friday announced what he described as a "new economic model" for Turkey but he focused on macro-economic issues and steered well clear of tackling the currency crisis. The lira's plunge has featured remarkably little on Turkish television channels and newspapers—most of which after recent ownership changes are loyal to the government—with media focusing instead on recent flooding by the Black Sea. — AFP

Russia tells US curbs on its banks would be act of economic war

MOSCOW: Russia warned the United States on Friday it would regard any US move to curb the activities of its banks as a "declaration of economic war" and would retaliate, as new sanctions took their toll on the ruble and US lawmakers threatened more.

The warning, from Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, reflects Russian fears over the impact of new restrictions on its economy and assets, including the ruble which has lost nearly six percent of its value this week on sanctions jitters. Economists expect the Russian economy to grow by 1.8 percent this year. If new sanctions proposed by the US Congress and the State Department are implemented in full, which

remains uncertain, some economists fear growth could weaken to almost zero.

President Vladimir Putin discussed what the Kremlin called "possible new unfriendly steps by Washington" with his Security Council on Friday.

Moscow's strategy of trying to improve battered US-Russia ties by attempting to build bridges with President Donald Trump is backfiring after US lawmakers launched a new sanctions drive last week because they fear Trump is too soft on Russia.

That in turn has piled pressure on Trump to show he is tough on Russia ahead of mid-term elections. The State Department announced new sanctions on Wednesday, blaming Moscow for the poisoning of a Russian ex-spy in Britain in March. On Friday, the White House strongly condemned the poisoning incident, which a spokesman for Trump's National Security Council called "a reckless display of contempt for the universally held norm against chemical weapons". The new sanctions pushed the ruble to two-year lows and sparked a wider sell-off over fears Russia was locked in a spiral of never-ending sanctions. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei

Lavrov complained about the new sanctions in a phone call on Friday to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Pompeo and Lavrov discussed sanctions and Syria's civil war during the call, State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement. Pompeo reiterated that Washington wanted a better relationship with Moscow and he and Lavrov agreed to future dialogue, she said, without elaborating. Separate US legislation introduced last week in draft form by Republican and Democratic senators, dubbed "the sanctions bill from hell" by one of its backers, proposes curbs on the operations of several state-owned Russian banks in the United States and restrictions on their use of the dollar.

Medvedev, speaking on a trip to Russia's far east, said: "I can say one thing: If some ban on banks' operations or on their use of one or another currency follows, it would be possible to clearly call it a declaration of economic war."

"And it would be necessary, it would be needed to react to this war economically, politically, or, if needed, by other means. And our American friends need to understand this."

Pro-Putin lawmaker Vyacheslav Nikonov who in 2016 prompted the Russian parliament to erupt in applause when he announced Trump had won the White House, called for a tough response. "War is war," Nikonov wrote on Twitter. "We need to rid ourselves of any dependency on our rival as much as possible and stop helping them. Our response must not just be symmetrical but preventative. We need to respond now and toughly."

Retaliatory options

In practice however, there is little Russia can do to hit back at the United States without damaging its own economy. Officials in Moscow have made clear they do not want to get drawn into what they describe as a mutually damaging tit-for-tat sanctions war.

The threat of more US sanctions kept the ruble under pressure on Friday, sending it crashing to its lowest since June 2016 before it recouped some losses. "The Russian currency has been caught in a perfect storm of weakening crude oil prices and the new US sanctions, in addition to the threat of even tougher punitive

measures in the coming months," said Lilit Gevorgyan, economist at IHS Markit.

The Russian central bank said the ruble's fall to multi-month lows on news of new US sanctions was a "natural reaction" and that it had the necessary tools to prevent any threat to financial stability. Central bank data showed on Friday it had started buying less foreign currency on Wednesday, the first day of the ruble's slide, to try to tamp down volatility. Analysts doubt, however, that the authorities will take much action to support the falling ruble, as they decided not to intervene during a similar sell-off in April, which was also driven by US sanctions.

The fate of the US bill that would tighten sanctions much further is not certain. The full US Congress will not be back in Washington until September, and congressional aides said they did not expect the measure to pass in its entirety. While it was difficult to assess so far in advance, they said it was more likely that only some of its provisions would be included as amendments in another piece of legislation, such as a spending bill Congress must pass before Sept. 30 to prevent a government shutdown. — Reuters

Business

WTO rejects most of Russian challenge to EU energy rules

Russian economy picks up on rising oil prices

GENEVA: The World Trade Organization on Friday rejected most of Russia's challenge to European Union energy sector rules barring a single company from controlling both transmission and supply assets. Russia initiated the complex case in 2014, arguing that the EU's bid to create separation between energy producers and energy distributors was discriminatory.

But WTO dispute panel dismissed Russia's claim, finding that the measures were allowed under the 164-member organization's rules.

Moscow had filed the case on behalf of its state energy giant Gazprom, a major supplier of gas to the bloc. The EU has maintained that its "unbundling" rules were a legal attempt to prevent one company from acquiring too much control while ensuring open market competition.

But some, notably in Moscow saw the provisions first adopted in 2009 as a targeted strike to reduce Europe's reliance on Gazprom, which had become a dominant player in the market, especially among former Communist countries.

"This is an important positive outcome for the EU," the European Commission said in a statement welcoming Friday's ruling.

Moscow did secure a partial victory

however, as the panel agreed that certain caps imposed on Russian energy firms by Croatia, Hungary and Lithuania violated WTO rules. Both sides have up to 60 days to appeal. Russia's economy grows further in second quarter.

Growth picks up

Russia's economy saw year-on-year growth of 1.8 percent in the second quarter benefitting from rising oil prices and despite increasingly harsh US sanctions, the national statistics agency Rosstat said.

Russia's economy expanded by 1.3 percent in the first quarter of the year compared to the same period of 2017, after two years of recession in 2015 and 2016. The return to growth seen in 2017 has continued this year despite the announcement in April of new US sanctions over Russia's alleged meddling in 2016 presidential elections won by Donald Trump.

This week Washington has announced further tough sanctions, this time over the nerve agent poisoning in Britain of former Russian double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter.

In addition to these sanctions, which prevent the exports to Russia of certain "national security sensitive" technologies,

the US could also impose a second round of sanctions that would be much broader and that a senior US State Department Official described as "draconian."

Fears over the currency caused the ruble to fall sharply, hitting levels against the dollar not seen for two years on Friday, although the central bank predicted the volatility would be temporary.

Oil and gas prices saw growth at the start of the year and Russia remains highly dependent on exports of its energy resources. The 2014 collapse in oil prices along with Western sanctions over the Ukraine conflict plunged Russia's economy into a prolonged recession that severely hit consumers' purchasing power.

Research consultancy Capital Economics said in a Friday report that "the conditions are in place for the recovery to strengthen in the next few quarters." It predicted that "lower inflation and labor market improvements should boost consumer spending."

Meanwhile "on the production side, we think that the economy will be boosted by an increase in oil output," it predicted, after exporters in June agreed an output rise.

While Russia has emerged from the longest recession seen under President



EU Commissioner Gunther Oettinger

Vladimir Putin's rule, growth is still far from the 4 percent annual target he announced in March, along with a goal to cut the number of those living in poverty by half. The IMF has predicted 1.7 percent growth for Russia over 2018. In May it voiced concern at

Russia's "shrinking" share in the global economy and failure to reach higher income levels. It said the authorities have to introduce structural reforms to address problems such as the ageing population and encourage a stronger private sector. — AFP

US-Mexico NAFTA talks drag on as autos sticking points emerge

WASHINGTON: Talks between the United States and Mexico over the future of the North American Free Trade Agreement were set to drag into next week, as auto industry officials said on Friday that new sticking points had emerged over President Donald Trump's threat to impose steep automotive tariffs. Auto industry officials familiar with the talks said the Trump administration wants the ability to impose national security tariffs on future Mexican production from new auto assembly and parts plants.

These officials said US negotiators had essentially agreed that a new NAFTA trade deal would exempt existing Mexican auto plants from any "Section 232" tariffs that Trump may impose.

But the US negotiators do not want to apply the same guarantees to new Mexican auto plants, the officials said, as the potential threat of 25 percent tariffs would discourage new automotive investment in Mexico to serve the US market. At Trump's direction, the Commerce Department in May launched a probe into whether imports of cars, trucks and auto parts pose a national security risk, invoking the same 1962 trade law used to justify broad tariffs on steel and aluminum-including those imposed on Canada and Mexico.

Administration officials and congressional aides have said the car tariff probe, like the metals tariffs, in part is aimed at winning concessions during ongoing NAFTA renegotiation talks.

Trump late on Friday tweeted that a "deal



WASHINGTON DC: (L-R) Mexican Foreign Minister, Luis Videgaray, and Mexican Economy Minister, Idelfonso Guajardo, leave the United States Trade Representative (USTR) Office building after meeting with US officials resuming negotiations on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), in Washington DC, on Friday. — AFP

with Mexico is coming along nicely. Autoworkers and farmers must be taken care of or there will be no deal," adding that Mexican president-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador "has been an absolute gentleman."

Trump added that Canada "must wait" to rejoin the NAFTA talks. "Their Tariffs and Trade Barriers are far too high. Will tax cars if can't make a deal!" Trump tweeted.

Adam Austen, a spokesman for Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland, who is leading NAFTA trade talks for Canada, said the minister was in regular contact with her Mexican and U.S. counterparts. "We're glad Mexico and the US continue to work out their bilateral issues. It's the only way we'll get to a deal," Austen said.

Issues to work out

Mexican Economy Minister Idelfonso Guajardo

told reporters in Washington on Friday his talks with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer would resume next week, but there were still many bilateral issues to work out before Canada could rejoin the talks. Asked about progress on autos rules of origin, he said: "Nothing is close until everything is close, but there are items in every element that is being discussed."

Guajardo said that once bilateral US-Mexican issues were resolved, Canada could rejoin the talks to work on tri-lateral issues. He said this could take place in "the next few days or weeks."

Industry officials also said the US team had barely moved from its demands last May of a 75 percent overall regional content threshold with 40-45 percent content from high-wage zones-effectively the United States and Canada-with the only substantial change a slightly longer phase-in time. — Reuters

Kazakh leader touts port on China's 'Silk Road'

KURYK, Kazakhstan: Kazakh leader Nursultan Nazarbayev yesterday hailed a newly modernized Caspian Sea port which the ex-Soviet country hopes will link up to China's massive "Belt and Road" infrastructure project. Speaking at the Caspian port of Kuryk, 78-year-old Nazarbayev said Kazakhstan was investing in such transport hubs to benefit from the trillion-dollar project championed by Chinese leader Xi Jinping that aims to be a modern version of the ancient Silk Road trading routes.

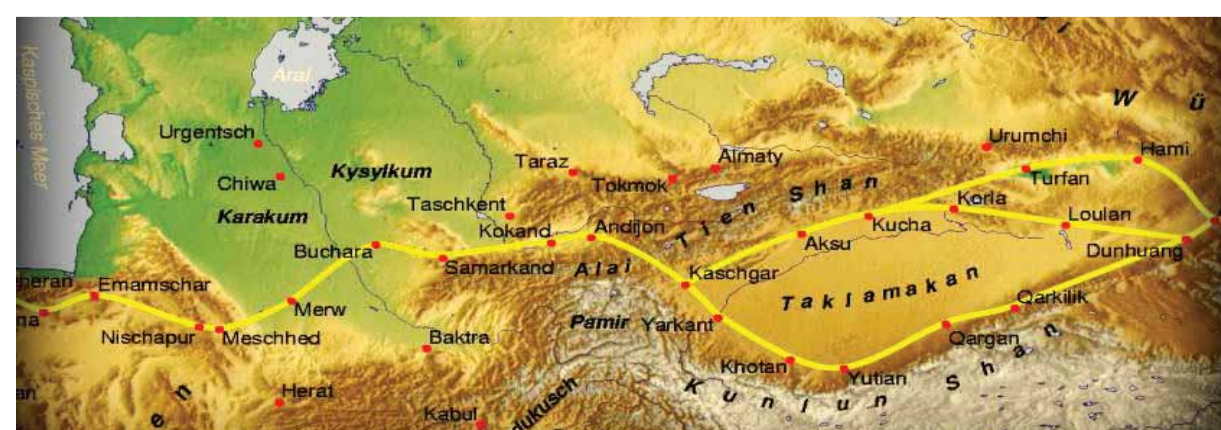
"Investing in transport infrastructure makes our economy more competitive in multiple ways," Nazarbayev said. "We are providing a stimulus to the trade routes of the revived Silk Road," he told businessmen and delegate from nearby countries.

Kazakhstan has tied its economic future to neighboring China by investing heavily in road, rail and port

infrastructure that will facilitate trade going west from China. The Kuryk port is one of two Kazakh ports positioned as hubs for trade between Asia and Europe. The other larger port is Aktau, some 100 kilometers (62 miles) to the north.

Kazakhstan expects 4.5 million tons of goods to pass through Kuryk by the end of 2018, three times more than last year. Growing capacity at the two ports is also important to Kazakhstan's oil industry, although Nazarbayev stressed that diversifying the economy away from crude and other raw commodities was a priority. "We are working on an innovative industrial program that differs from the raw materials (economy), vulnerable to price plunges and volatility," he said.

Nazarbayev was speaking ahead of a landmark summit today on the legal status of the Caspian Sea, following more than two decades of diplomatic wrangling between the bordering countries: Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan. The five countries' leaders are expected to sign a breakthrough agreement on the status of the Caspian Sea, easing regional tensions and potentially facilitating new lucrative oil and gas projects. Nazarbayev said yesterday he expected a "historic decision," Russia's RIA Novosti news agency reported. — AFP



World Bank to issue world's first blockchain bond

WASHINGTON: The World Bank is taking a step into the brave new world of digital finance to sell the first-ever bond to be issued entirely using blockchain technology, the bank announced Friday.

More than just funds, the World Bank aims to gain experience using blockchain—a digital public registry of transactions—that could lead to "a golden future" for financial services for developing nations, a bank official told AFP. The technology is most often associated with cryptocurrencies-like bitcoin—which often raise suspicion about their reliability and volatility, as well as their use for criminal purposes.

But because there as yet is no central bank-backed digital currency in existence, the two-year blockchain bond will rely on real-world money: Australian dollars. The Washington-based development lender aims to raise about Aus\$50 million (about \$36 million), although it could be double that if more investors get involved before the bond is finalized the week of August 20.

"Since our first bond transaction in 1947, innovation and investor satisfaction have been important hallmarks of our success with leveraging capital markets for development," World Bank Treasurer Arunma Oteh said. "Today, we believe that emerging technologies, equally offer transformative, yet prudent possibilities for us to continue to innovate, respond to investor needs and strengthen markets."

The transaction is the brainchild of the World Bank's innovation lab, which has been working on the issue for nearly a year, together with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

The institution also partnered with Microsoft, which will ensure the platform and software are "solid, bug free, and have no vulnerabilities to attack," said Paul Snaithe, manager of the World Bank's Treasury Operations Capital Markets. He said use of blockchain could improve transparency, since it is public, and cut down on transaction time since the bonds eventually will be exchanged instantaneously for cash. For now, though, investors still have to register and all cash will be transmitted separately from the blockchain through "normal channels," the old fashioned way. The two-year life of the blockchain bond will provide "quite a few learning events and opportunities," he said. — AFP

Chinese media keep up drumbeat of criticism of US

SHANGHAI: China's state media continued a barrage of criticism of the United States yesterday as their tit-for-tat trade war escalated, while seeking to reassure readers the Chinese economy remains in strong shape.

Commentaries in the People's Daily, China's top newspaper, likened the United States to a bull in a China shop running roughshod over the rules of global trade and said that China was "still one of the best-performing, most promising and most tenacious economies in the world."

The commentaries come as trade tensions between the two countries intensify. China said this week it would put an additional 25 percent tariffs on \$16 billion worth of US imports in retaliation against levies on Chinese goods imposed by the United States. One commentary accused the United States of "rudely trampling on international trade rules" and not taking into account China's lowering of tariffs and continued opening of its economy, among other things.

"People of insight are soberly aware that so-called 'America first' is actually naked self-interest, a bullying that takes advantage of its own strength, challenges the multilateral unilaterally, and uses might to challenge the rules," it read.

Another commentary argued that the Chinese economy was stable and was expected to remain so. — 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

Triplex 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

Lexus LC named Coupe of the Year

Annual Driver Power survey weighs opinions of more than 80,000 UK motorists



KUWAIT: Few months after being named Best Manufacturer in the Auto Express 2018 Driver Power customer satisfaction survey, Lexus continues to set the lead with the announcement that the luxury LC coupe has also won the prestigious Coupe of the Year award. The annual Driver Power survey is based

on the opinions of more than 80,000 UK motorists, offering criticism - or praise - in nine categories and 31 different areas.

The emotional designs and high-performance models issued by Lexus in the last few years prefaced a new chapter for the brand, one that begins



now with the arrival of the Lexus LC flagship performance coupe. Lexus owners have already rated the brand strongly across the board, topping the rankings for interior quality, comfort and build quality. But for this award it was the more emotional element of our sleek, concept-like LC that

drew particular praise. The LC has driven home the message that Lexus is one of the most visionary, original and exciting out there. LC has shown these are not just words but a bold vision for the future of Lexus goes beyond concepts and in to showrooms.

Turkish currency's freefall rocks world markets

NEW YORK/LONDON: A plunge in the Turkish lira rocked global equities and emerging markets on Friday and fear of further fallout sent investors scurrying for safety in assets like the yen and US government bonds.

European shares and a gauge of global equity markets closed down more than 1 percent, while Wall Street also fell, though not as much. Germany's DAX index slid 2 percent.

The lira fell as much as 18 percent against the dollar in its worst day since Turkey's financial crisis of 2001. The plunge followed a deepening rift with the United States, worries about its own economy and lack of action from policymakers.

President Tayyip Erdogan told Turks to swap gold and dollars into lira as the currency tumbled after President Donald Trump doubled US tariffs on metals imports from Turkey. Turkey later warned the United States that sanctions and pressure would only serve to harm ties between the two NATO allies, adding Ankara would continue to retaliate as necessary against US tariffs. The lira has fallen more than 40 percent this year, fanning worries about a full-blown economic crisis.

Bank shares across Europe fell and the euro slipped to its lowest since July 2017 as the Financial Times quoted sources as saying the European Central Bank was concerned about European lenders' exposure to Turkey. The country is not a member of the European Union but is economically linked to it.

The dollar rose as exposure to Turkey could impact European banks and spark a domino effect as people begin to pull out of those banks and into US assets, said Gregan Anderson, macroeconomic strategist at brokerage Bulltuck LLC. The flare-up in tensions has made it difficult for global investors to justify remaining in Europe and is negative for emerging markets, he said.

Policy errors created the current situation, with Turkey's central bank decision not to raise rates in their last meeting a key driver, said Charlie Wilson, an emerging markets-focused portfolio manager at Thornburg Investment Management in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

"The lira has been weakening since and it's coming to a head today," Wilson said, adding the downward spiral will continue if Turkey insists on a soft landing. "The only way to correct these policy mistakes is to really make some concrete changes on the fiscal and monetary side."

Shares in France's BNP Paribas, Italy's UniCredit and Spain's BBVA, the banks seen as most exposed to Turkey, fell 3 percent or more. An index of regional banking shares closed down 3.2 percent while the pan-European STOXX 600 index fell 1.07 percent.

The MSCI All-Country World index, which tracks shares in 47 countries, was down 1.22 percent and erased all its gains for the week.

Wall Street also fell. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 196.09 points, or 0.77 percent, to 25,313.14. The S&P 500 lost 20.3 points, or 0.71 percent, to 2,833.28 and the Nasdaq Composite dropped 52.67 points, or 0.67 percent, to 7,839.11.

Investors piled into "safe" government debt, with German yields hitting three-week lows and the yield on the benchmark US 10-year Treasury note falling to 2.8750 percent as investors sought its safety.

The safe-haven Japanese yen hit a one-month high of 113.38 against the dollar, and was last traded at 110.91. The dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a group of six major currencies, breached 96, taking it to its highest level since July 2017. It was last up 0.84 percent at 96.309.

Emerging market stocks lost 1.66 percent, while the Mexican peso, a proxy for emerging market currencies, shed 1.29 percent to the dollar. Adding to emerging market currency woes was the Russian ruble, which weakened to 67.6825 to the dollar. Overnight it had retreated to its lowest since November 2016 on threats of new US sanctions, weakening beyond the psychologically important 65-per-dollar threshold.

Oil prices rose more than 1 percent as US sanctions against Iran looked set to tighten supply, but futures remained lower for the week as investors worried that global trade disputes could slow economic growth and hurt demand for energy. —Reuters

NBK International Economic Update

Trade tensions unabated; GCC outlook improves

KUWAIT: Trade tensions continued unabated and are likely to accelerate. On July 6, the US imposed 25 percent tariffs on hundreds of Chinese products, and is considering another 10 percent duty that may result in \$200 billion in tariffs. China did retaliate with tariffs of its own on some American products. Europe has detailed a plan to slap tariffs on \$300 billion of US products if Trump goes ahead with his plan to hit European cars with punitive tariffs. These tensions have raised risks and rattled markets, with China's stock market and the renminbi coming under severe pressure. China experienced large capital outflows as part of a more generalized phenomenon in emerging markets.

Investors continue to pull out of emerging economies, with outflows accelerating in June, prompted by higher interest rates, a strong US dollar and trade tensions. According to the IIF, the flight to safety from emerging markets increased to \$8.0 billion in June following an exodus of \$6.3 billion in May. These outflows were split evenly between debt markets, which recorded a net loss of \$4.2 billion, and equity markets at \$3.8 billion. Outflows are set to continue in the months ahead with the expected further tightening in the US. Growth in highly indebted emerging markets will take a hit on the back of an appreciating US dollar, and will be compounded by likely further interest rate hikes by the emerging economies as they move to stem the loss of capital.

US good performance

US strong growth momentum continued apace with a steady flow of robust data in the second quarter, following a soft start in the first quarter of the year. Both May and June's economic indicators were good. Inflation logged its sixth straight rise this year, increasing to 2.9 percent in June, while the economy added a more-than-expected 213,000 new jobs. May's figures were also revised higher. Unemployment, however, ticked up slightly from May's 18-year low of 3.8 percent to 4.0 percent in June's as more idled workers rejoined the labor market encouraged by the improved employment prospects. The ISM manufacturing survey registered its second consecutive strong pick-up, reaching 60.2. Business sentiment, however, was down partly on trade tensions, with the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia business outlook survey easing to 19.9 in June from 34.4 in May.

With strong economic performance and inflation approaching its target, the case for an increase in the Fed policy rate has been strengthened. It is now expected that the Fed will hike the rate twice before year-end and possibly three more times in 2019.

In its just-released US consultations report, the IMF called for a faster pace of increase in the rate given the large tax cuts and the increase in spending which would lead to larger budget deficits and higher public debt, which is already judged to be unsustainable.

Monetary policy in the eurozone

Europe has not been performing as well as the US. The second quarter PMI averaged 54.7, the weakest in six quarters, but it improved slightly in June to 54.8, driven by higher new orders and hiring. Meanwhile, economic sentiment eased less than expected and still hovered at levels that bode well for future growth. Nevertheless, headwinds persist, with trade worries and political uncertainties weighing heavily on the Eurozone's outlook. Trump's threat to impose heavy tariffs on car imports could have a severe impact, mainly on Germany's

Turkey's lira crisis: How bad can it get?

ISTANBUL: Three, four, five, six... What next? Turks have over the last half decade counted the rapid depreciation of the Turkish lira on the screens outside doviz (exchange) booths with a mixture of bewilderment, alarm and ironic amusement. The currency had spent much of 2014 hovering at just over two to the dollar but broke through the three mark for the first time after the 2016 failed coup bid and then slid to four earlier this year. But the hemorrhaging reached an unprecedented intensity in the last weeks as Turkey's ties with the United States strained further and markets questioned their trust in Turkish policymakers, pushing the currency to five against the dollar.

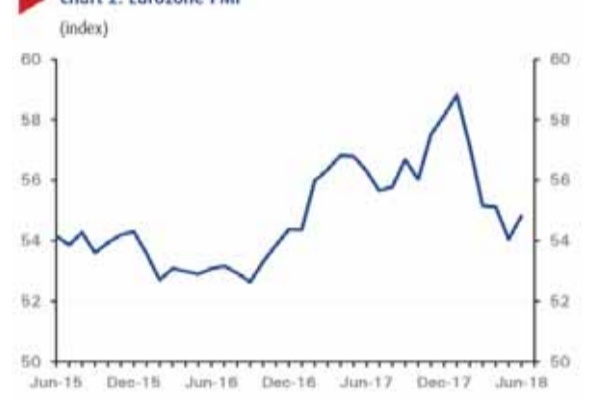
A new bout of selling Friday on increased strains with the US forced the lira over six against the dollar for the first time, with the currency at one point shredding a quarter of its value in a

Chart 1: ISM manufacturing survey (index)



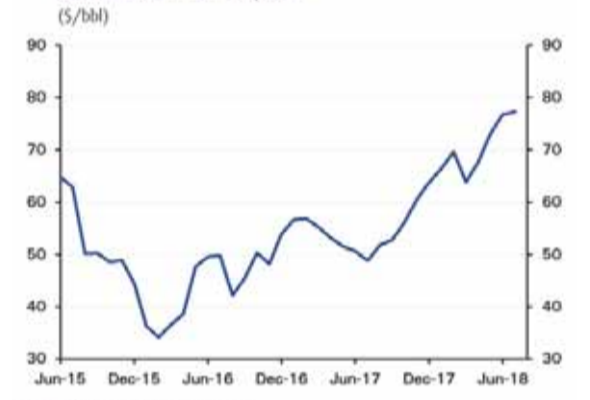
Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream

Chart 2: Eurozone PMI (index)



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream

Chart 3: Brent crude oil price (\$/bbl)



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream

auto industry (one third of total EU cars produced), with the German ZEW survey for economic sentiment retreating significantly to -25 in July, the lowest since 2012. An EU summit over immigration revealed a changing European political landscape that has perhaps cast some doubt on the durability of the Union's status quo and Chancellor Merkel's survival, which was briefly challenged last month by the threat of her interior minister to resign and bring to an end the nascent coalition. However, things are calmer now but still fraught with risks.

June's inflation in the eurozone rose to 2 percent for the first time since 2013 on higher energy prices, but core inflation remained low; this may justify further caution from the ECB going forward. The European Central Bank announced in its June meeting that asset purchases will end in 2018, as expected. However, Draghi later announced that the ECB was not in a rush to raise the policy rate and the next hike was pushed from June to the autumn of 2019.

Oil markets

Oil prices closed in June back up at \$79/bbl for Brent and \$74/bbl for WTI. Oil's rise to near three-and-a-half year highs came despite OPEC+ agreeing to restupply the markets with a nominal 1 mb/d of crude over the next six months to prevent oil prices from spiking amid supply declines in Venezuela, Angola, Libya and potentially Iran once US sanctions kick-in. With spare production capacity among OPEC+ members limited to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Russia, the real output increase could turn out to be less.

Moves by the US to apply the maximum pressure on importers of Iranian crude by pursuing a 'zero-tolerance' policy on sanctions waivers has also buoyed prices amid further production outages in Libya, a refinery closure in Canada and further US crude stockpile drawdowns, which indicate that oil demand continues to be robust. The Trump administration, facing higher rather than lower gasoline prices ahead of the US midterms, has since called for the Saudis to ramp up production to prepare for a more sizeable loss of Iranian crude than had been the case in the previous Obama-era round of sanctions.

However, oil prices dropped by around 5 percent during a single trading day last week in reaction to the resumption of production in a Libyan field, and the possibility of the US allowing sanction waivers to some importers of Iranian crude.

Improved outlook for GCC

The regional outlook is improving amid higher oil prices and regional government's economic stimulus programs. GCC non-oil activity continues to improve, with real GDP data for Q18 showing Saudi Arabia's non-oil sector growing by 1.6 percent y/y in Q18, Kuwait's by 3.1 percent y/y and Qatar's by an impressive 5.0 percent y/y. The UAE, for its part, redoubled its efforts to improve the local business environment and attract FDI. Abu Dhabi in turn announced an economic stimulus package of \$13.6 billion to boost growth.

single day. Economists say that while the government may be tempted to muddle through the current situation in the hope the external and economic background improves, the lira's fall harbors considerable dangers for the economy, in particular the banking system.

'Tight grip on bank'

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's current dash for growth coupled with unorthodox pronouncements on monetary policy - including that lower rates can bring down inflation - have put him on a collision course with markets. The central bank, nominally independent but never defying Erdogan, appears to have abandoned the conventional monetary policy of using rates hikes as a tool to support the currency and bring down inflation.

Erdogan's "tight grip" on the central bank and the fact "higher interest rates do not fit with Turkey's economic growth strategy" meant that the central bank has kept interest rates on hold, Nora Neuteboom, economist at ABN Amro, told AFP.

"Erdogan's aim is to improve the economic position of households," she said, adding the government wanted to "keep the

music playing" even as external and internal imbalances grow.

Japan monetary policy

Export growth rose 8.1 percent y/y in May, amid a pick-up in demand for manufacturing equipment, cars and car parts, while import growth accelerated from 5.9 percent y/y to 14.0 percent y/y on imports of aircraft and higher oil prices. Meanwhile, Japan's trade surplus with the US fell to its lowest level since 2013 due to US aircraft and coal imports. Japan, like China and the EU, albeit to a lesser extent, has come under pressure from the US about unfair trade policies. Inflation in May came in at 0.7 percent y/y, suggesting that monetary policy tightening will not take place soon.

China's renminbi took a tumble in June and into early July, prompting the central bank to intervene to stabilize the market. The Chinese currency witnessed its worst month ever in June after falling by 3.3 percent against the US dollar. Downward pressures on the currency have largely stemmed from a strong US dollar, some looser domestic monetary policy and lingering concerns over a brewing trade war with the US.

'Lost confidence'

After his June 24 election victory, Erdogan put his son-in-law Berat Albayrak in charge of a newly expanded finance ministry while a new presidential system did away with the office of prime minister, whose last incumbent Binali Yildirim had on occasion urged caution in economic policy. The new system also increased Erdogan's control over the central bank, which on July 24 baffled markets by leaving rates unchanged despite inflation that in July came in at 15.85 percent. "The markets have lost confidence in the triumvirate of President Erdogan, his son-in-law as finance minister and the Turkish Central Bank's ability to act as it needs to," said Charles Robertson, global chief economist at Renaissance Capital.

According to the Capital Economics consultancy, the plunge in the lira risks putting further pressure on the banking sector in Turkey due to the scale of the credit boom and one third of bank lending being denominated in foreign currencies. "If some of these vulnerabilities crystallize they could tip the economy into a full blown crisis," said its economist Yasemin Engin. —AFP

Technology & Science

Dual front camera and AI power the next generation super selfies

Breakthrough technology in HUAWEI nova 3 series

DUBAI: A selfie isn't just like any other picture. In a deeper, truer sense though, a selfie is a reflection of a moment in time of one's life journey. In an era when we're constantly being marketed technologies that promise to make our lives easier and save us time by doing the work for us, the selfie is a major contradiction. From angling, adjusting, endless retakes, editing, and filtering - let's face it, taking a perfect selfie is a lot of work!

Each of us is passionate with our own unique talent, energy and beauty, and Artificial intelligence selfie is a meaningful way for us to proactively share that with the world. With an extraordinary new perspective, HUAWEI nova 3 series is set to change the way selfies are taken. The innovative Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered device shows-off dual front-facing cameras with a 24MP primary sensor and a 2MP sensor.

Gone are the days of smartphone makers marketing higher pixel counts and in-built filters to make your selfies stand out. What users really, truly want is a phone that will be intelligent enough to do the work for them. A camera that won't just blur a background but will showcase subject and ambience in perfect harmony to express the true meaning of a person's selfie story.

Unlike other smartphones where the front camera is low-pixelated and only focuses on the subject's face while neglecting the ambience of the background setting, Huawei's AI-powered camera is designed to capture details with the primary lens. The latter will then capture depth to produce stunning, authentic bokeh effects to showcase the best of you and your surroundings. From blue skies to sunny beaches, lush



plants, starry nights, and even the magic of stage lights during performances, the front camera is enabled to recognize more than 200 different scenarios of eight categories.

Beautification algorithms

Most importantly, imagine the time and effort saved from never having to edit and filter a photo again. That's the true purpose an AI powered device after all. Huawei's intuitive devices are powered with AI beautification algorithms that take into consideration how people around the world perceive beauty and apply a different set of adjustments to skin tones and facial details by age and gender to accentuate contours and conceal imperfections.

The third-generation intelligent device also supports real-time High Definition Range (HDR) footage preview and recording, in addition to studio-quality

lighting options. Meanwhile, it accurately maps the five facial features of a subject and develop a 3D model in order to identify areas that require additional lighting or beautification. This would also work well with 3D Qmoji, a fun feature that digitally transposes the face of a user onto a digital avatar.

Huawei has always been committed to unlocking people's potential through technology and more so with the launch of HUAWEI nova 3 and HUAWEI nova 3i, which help consumers capture timeless memories through the most stunning digital record of both face and surroundings with its dual front and rear camera, its AI Beautification algorithms, its high-light sensitivity for HDR pictures, while adding quirky emojis to make it a fun experience. Whether you're an amateur or an expert, the HUAWEI nova 3 series presents itself as an AI-powered camera that helps you customize your selfies to create your own definition of beauty.

For those who see mobile phones as essential tools for self-expression, the sun has set on smartphone selfies. Phones without AI will soon become a thing of the past. Prepare to bid goodbye to the old and get set to upgrade your expression with the dawn of the HUAWEI's nova 3 series, which are making the AI super selfie the new trend.

Tokyo tops list of world's most innovative cities

LONDON: Tokyo topped a list of the world's most innovative cities on Friday, leapfrogging London and New York after embracing the "globe-shaking trends of robotics and 3D manufacturing". The Japanese capital has risen rapidly since entering the top 10 of the Innovation Cities Index three years ago behind Paris, and was one of three Asian cities to feature this year.

"What really surprised us this year was the resurgence of Tokyo, moving up to eclipse rival cities like Boston," said Christopher Hire, director of commercial data provider 2thinknow, which publishes the annual ranking. "They showed clear direction by embracing smart technology change to lead innovation and leadership in what we have identified as the twin long-term globe-shaking trends of robotics and 3D manufacturing."

Singapore, Sydney and Seoul also ranked highly in the index, which judges cities on 162 indicators including web censorship, wealth distribution and the potential for green businesses. San Francisco and New York both made the top five, while smaller US cities such as San Diego, Portland and Oakland featured highly, demonstrating their attractiveness to tech companies priced out of the San Francisco Bay Area.

"We found on a population-adjusted basis many small cities are punching above their weight. It's the year of big cities with physical networks and small cities with digital networks," said Hire in a statement. London ranked second after losing the top spot to Tokyo as Europe lost ground, scoring fewer cities in the top 100 than in previous years. Japan has built a reputation as an early adopter of new technologies. It recently launched facial recognition technology ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and has invested in artificial intelligence for vehicles, hospitals and financial services. —Reuters

Vaccine row erupts in Italy as populist govt seeks to ease rules

ROME: A row is erupting over vaccines in Italy as the country's new populist government fights to roll back a law that bans children from attending school if they haven't received a series of jabs. The law, adopted last year by the centre-left government that was booted out of power in March, made it compulsory for children in pre-school education to be vaccinated against 10 diseases, including measles, tetanus and poliomyelitis. Parents who have not vaccinated their children by the time they reach school age (six years old in Italy) face a fine of up to 500 euros. The new administration — formed of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement and the nationalist League — is leading the charge against the law. Last week, the upper house Senate approved an amendment proposed by Five Star and the League pushing back enforcement of compulsory vaccination for pre-schoolers to the 2019-20 school year, pending a complete revision of the law after the summer recess.

New health minister Giulia Grillo, from Five Star, has drafted a new bill introducing what she calls a "flexible obligation", giving priority to education on the benefits of vaccines, encourages use of compulsory vaccination only over short periods and instances when the coverage rate is too low. Grillo, a doctor, claims there will be guarantees that children who haven't been immunized could be enrolled in classes where the WHO recommended coverage is assured. However she also caused outrage when, in an interview with major daily Corriere Della Sera on Wednesday, she said that it wasn't realistic to "make people believe that no one will die" of measles. —AFP

NASA postpones for 24 hours the launch of historic spaceship to Sun

TAMPA: NASA postponed until today the launch of the first ever spacecraft to fly directly toward the Sun on a mission to plunge into our star's sizzling atmosphere and unlock its mysteries. The reason for the delay was not immediately clear, but was called for after a gaseous helium alarm was sounded in the last moments before liftoff, officials said.

Engineers are taking utmost caution with the \$1.5 billion Parker Solar Probe, which Thomas Zurbuchen, head of NASA's science mission directorate, described as one of the agency's most "strategically important missions." The next launch window opens at 3:31 am (0731 GMT) on Sunday, when weather conditions are 60 percent favorable for launch, NASA said.

By coming closer to the Sun than any spacecraft in history, the unmanned probe's main goal is to unveil the secrets of the corona, the unusual atmosphere around the Sun. Not only is the corona about 300 times hotter than the Sun's surface, but it also hurls powerful plasma and energetic particles that can unleash geomagnetic space storms, wreaking havoc on Earth by disrupting the power grid. These solar outbursts are poorly understood, but pack the potential to wipe out power to millions of people.

The probe is protected by an ultra-powerful heat shield that is 4.5 inches (11.43 centimeters) thick. The shield should enable the spacecraft to survive its close shave with the fiery star, coming within 3.83 million miles of the Sun's surface. The heat shield is built to withstand radiation equivalent to up to about 500 times the Sun's radiation on Earth. Even in a

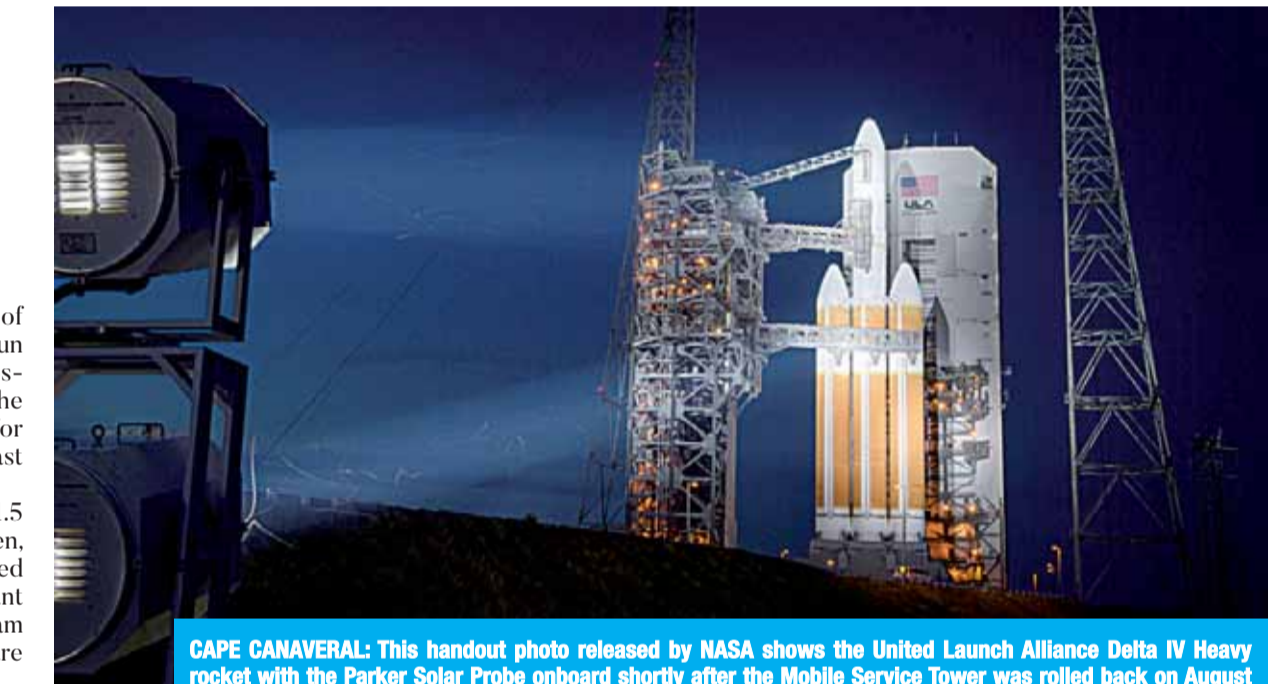
Solar space mission probes secrets of sun's atmosphere

PARIS: The first space mission to brave the Sun's white-hot atmosphere will attempt to decipher some of our neighboring star's deepest secrets. NASA's Parker Solar Probe, set for launch from Florida's Cape Canaveral yesterday, will fly within six million kilometers of the Sun's surface, protected by a carbon-composite shield. Here's a brief description of some of the scientific questions the mission hopes to shed light on and the instruments it will use to do so.

Magnetic fields

How can the Sun's atmosphere, called the corona, reach temperatures exceeding a million degrees Celsius if the star's surface is "only" 6,000 C? "That's the big question: what's heating the solar corona?" said Thierry Dudok de Wit, an astrophysicist at France's National Centre for Scientific Research. One likely suspect is electromagnetic waves.

Energy is stored in magnetic fields, the thinking goes, that are constantly stirring up the visible surface of the Sun, called the photosphere, and releasing energy into the solar atmosphere. The FIELDS instrument — which captures the scale and shape of electric and magnetic field — is designed to help scientists figure out how, when, and where that energy release occurs.



CAPE CANAVERAL: This handout photo released by NASA shows the United Launch Alliance Delta IV Heavy rocket with the Parker Solar Probe onboard shortly after the Mobile Service Tower was rolled back on August 10, 2018, Launch Complex 37. —AFP

region where temperatures can reach more than a million degrees Fahrenheit, the sunlight is expected to heat the shield to just around 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit. If all works as planned, the inside of the spacecraft should stay at just 85 degrees Fahrenheit. "The sun is full of mysteries," said Nicky Fox, project scientist at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab.

91-year-old namesake

The tools on board will measure the expanding corona and continually flowing atmosphere known as the solar wind, which solar physicist Eugene Parker first described in 1958. Parker, now 91, recalled that at first some people did not believe in his theory. But

then, the launch of NASA's Mariner 2 spacecraft in 1962 — becoming the first robotic spacecraft to make a successful planetary encounter — proved them wrong.

"It was just a matter of sitting out the deniers for four years until the Venus Mariner 2 spacecraft showed that, by golly, there was a solar wind," Parker said earlier this week. Parker said he was "impressed" by the Parker Solar Probe, calling it "a very complex machine." According to Zurbuchen, Parker is an "incredible hero of our scientific community. Life is all about these big arcs. Sometimes you just see, like how over a lifetime, things just come together and create these amazing stories, these leaps going forward." —AFP

Solar wind

Another mystery is how solar wind — composed of ionised gases streaming outward from the Sun at 500 kilometers per second (nearly a million miles per hour) — accelerates. Finding out would help scientists forecast major space weather events that can adversely impact Earth's magnetic field and, in some cases, change the orbit of satellites and create electrical disturbances. The solar wind carries a million tons of matter into space every second.

Enter the Solar Wind Electrons Alphas and Protons Investigation (SWEAP), which will count the most abundant particles in the solar wind — electrons, protons and helium ions — and measure their velocity, density and temperature. "This could help us do a much better job of predicting when a disturbance in the solar wind could hit Earth, triggering space weather that could disrupt GPS, radio, radar and the electric grid," said Justin Kaspar, a professor at the University of Michigan and a principle investigator for the Parker Solar Probe.

Particle acceleration

The Integrated Science Investigation of the Sun (ISOIS) harnesses a pair of instruments to measure the full life-cycle of electrons, protons, ions: where they come from, how they accelerate, how they move out of the Sun through interplanetary space. "These are high-energy particles that travel at phenomenal speeds approaching the speed of light," said Dudok de Wit. They reach Earth —



CAPE CANAVERAL: This handout picture released by NASA yesterday, shows NASA Associate Administrator for the Science Mission Directorate Thomas Zurbuchen (L) and President and Chief Executive Officer for United Launch Alliance Tory Bruno shaking hands after viewing the ULA Delta IV Heavy rocket with NASA's Parker Solar onboard at Launch Complex 37. —AFP

150 million kilometers distant — "in 30 to 60 minutes." Earth's magnetic shield protects us from these potentially harmful particles, he noted. "But the day we go to Mars, we'll need to be able to predict solar eruptions of these particles, which can be deadly," he told AFP.

Close up

The Wide-Field Imager for Parker Solar Probe (WISPR) is the only imaging device on board. Never will a camera have come so close to the Sun. WISPR will look at the large-

scale structure of matter spewing outward from the Sun as it approaches the probe, to compliment the detailed physical measurements of other instruments.

NASA scientists know what they are looking for, but have allowed for the element of surprise. "We have ideas about what will be found, but the most important results may well come from observations that are completely unexpected," said Mark Wiedenbeck, a researcher at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and part of the ISOIS team. —AFP

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- ◆ Canadian Board of General Surgery
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- ◆ American Board of Colo - Rectal Surgery
- ◆ American Board of Surgical Critical Care

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What's On

Adventure and style take centre stage in Centrepoint's Back-to-School collection

Centrepoint, the one-stop fashion destination for an aspiring generation of shoppers across the Middle East, has launched its back-to-school collection, making stylish school essentials easily accessible to all. Products in a wide variety of latest colors, materials, patterns and textures are now available at the retailer's stores in leading malls across Kuwait to help children get over their end-of-summer blues.

Celebrating contemporary youth culture through influencing the next generation's unique individual style, Centrepoint - home to household names including Babyshop, Splash, Lifestyle and SHOE-MART- has specially curated a wide range of fun products for boys and girls from 2 to 18 years. Backpacks, clothes, shoes, stationery, water bottles and other accessories, featuring beloved Barbie and Hello Kitty as well as Disney and Marvel characters, among others, promise to make return to the classroom that much easier in 2018.

Simon Cooper, Head of Centrepoint, said: "Centrepoint is proud to introduce the region's most diverse selection of back-to-school products, inspired by current entertainment and fashion trends. In a bid to cater to children of all ages, this year we have included items for even the youngest school-goers. Our three proven concepts under one roof offer a convenient and value-driven retail experience. We are confident that our latest collection will resonate with shoppers across Kuwait."

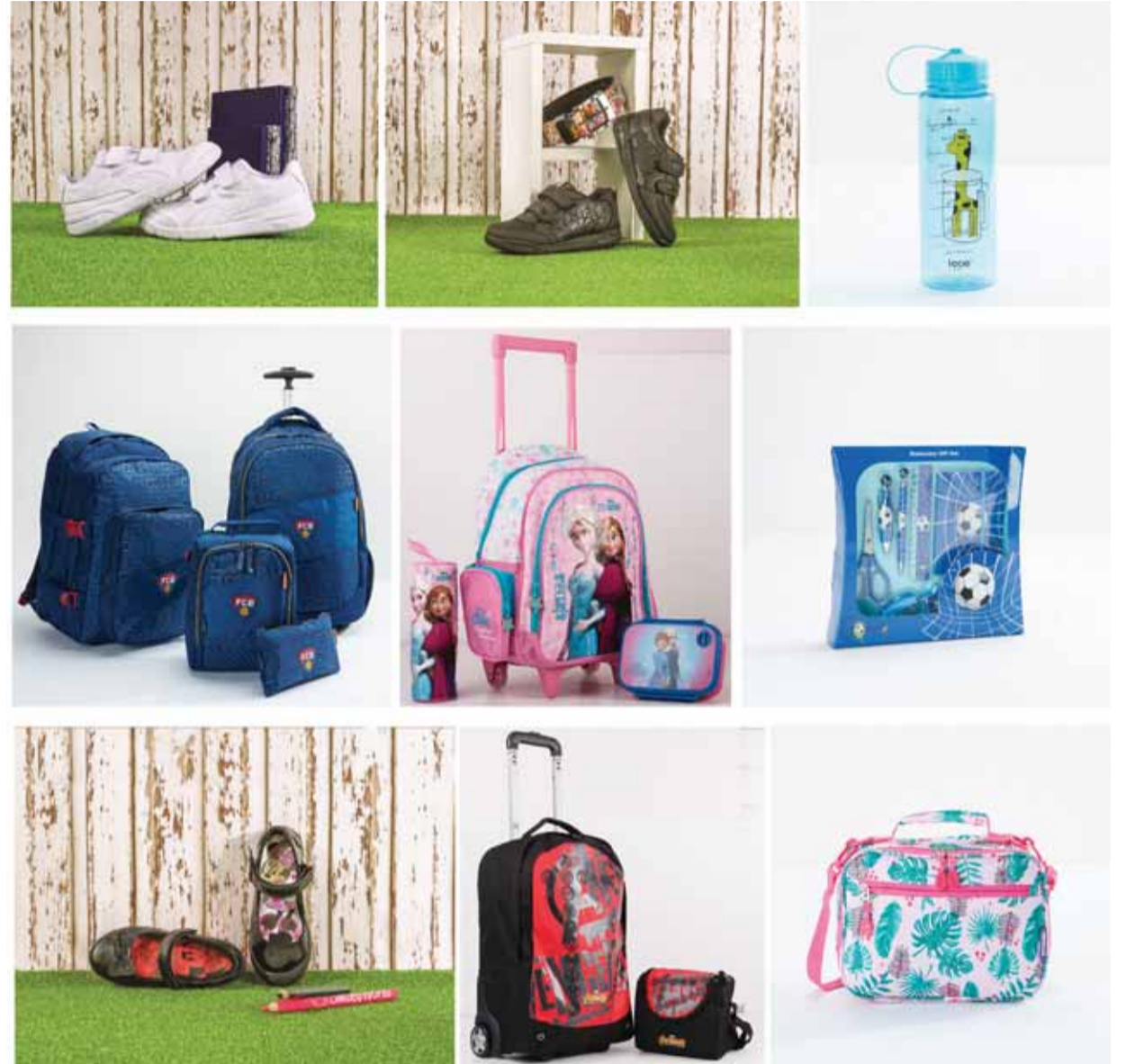
Babyshop's range is ideal for preschool, primary and secondary school children with a love for movies, sports and popular culture. This year's stylish yet functional school bag sets for little fashionistas comprise a trolley bag, backpack, lunch bag, lunch box, pencil case and water bottle, and depict all their favorite heroines. Girls will be delighted to see new characters from Shopkins, Miraculous Ladybug, and My Melody make their debut at Centrepoint. Meanwhile, the boys' collection will transport little men into their own tiny fantasy world. Matching sets sporting the latest characters from

Avengers, The Incredibles and Transformers will thrill daring young school-goers while making learning a true joy. Brands such as Roco, and High Sierra are also making their entrance at the stores this summer, appealing to those with a penchant for modern simplicity.

For trendy teenagers looking to stand out from the crowd, Lifestyle's range of school bags and accessories is the answer. Acid-bright colors, chrome finishes, digital camouflage motifs, exotic native prints, tropical and Western rodeo styles, and varsity-inspired looks take centre stage in this year's back-to-school collection. The assortment includes popular products from coveted brands such as FCB, Franklin & Marshall, Jansport, Pepe Jeans and UEFA Champions League in striking hues and patterns. Doodle-inspired bags, journals, mugs, paper cups and pillows will appeal to the artistic soul.

For essential footwear to complete the perfect school look, SHOEMART's back-to-school collection features a durable and stylish range of basic black and white shoes in addition to colorful sports shoes from Puma, Reebok, Skechers, Kappa and Kangaroos, available in a range of sizes of up to 40 for girls and 44 for boys. Meanwhile, Children as young as two can now choose from shoes in sizes starting from 24 for the first day of pre-school, kids can also flaunt cartoon characters with popular designs, including Marvel's Avengers, Disney's Minnie Mouse, Barbie, and Hello Kitty that take pride of place on shoes and school bags alike.

Furthermore, teenagers can choose from a collection of trendy schoolbags, boasting a variety of shapes and designs, from popular brands like Skechers, presenting a multi-colored line-up fit for young artists in the making, and Kangaroos showcasing an exciting assortment of subtle hues mixed with funky prints, amongst many others. Get your hands on the Back-to-School collection; do visit any of the stores located at Al Rai, Avenues, Salmiya, Fintas, Jahra, Fahaheel, Sulaibhikhat, Kuwait City, Khaitan and Hawally.



ASSP Kuwait Chapter conducted executive committee meeting

American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), Kuwait Chapter is the premier voluntary, non-profit making Health, Safety and Environmental organization, which strives to provide professional guidance, training, consultancy and resources to the industrial and social sectors in the region. American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) members globally showed a great vision in taking the historic step to approve the name change from 1st June 2018 as American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP).

American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP), Kuwait Chapter conduct its first executive committee meeting on 30th July 2018 at Hilton Resort, Kuwait, to discuss the year long activities as per the chapter by laws. Aamir Rasheed, Chapter President welcomed all members to the first EC meeting and thanked everyone for accepting their roles to support ASSP Kuwait Chapter. Engr Fadhel Al Ali, Chairman ASSP Kuwait Chapter emphasized on the team work and planning well in advance. Jahid Thakor, Secretary presented the report of June & July 2018. The



executive committee discussed the annual planner which is inline with chapter's goal of working together for the safer and stronger future.

The following members attended the first EC meeting. Eng Fadhel Al Ali, Chairman, President Aamir Rasheed, Vice President Sunil Sadanandan Secretary Jahid Thakor, Treasurer, Safdar Ali Khan, Rishi D Jayan Sr Executive, Venkata Ramana Pondla Jr Executive, HSE Events Committee Adnan Yousuf, Head of Professional & Career

Development Committee Ehab Said Elsayed, Deputy of Training Ali Arshad, Deputy of Publication Mohammad Yousuff, Head of Web Development Committee Farhan N Ahmad, Head of Outreach & Govt affairs Balvant Singh, Head of WISE Committee Dr Shaikha Alfajjam, Head of Membership Development Committee Abul Elham, Head of Membership Retention Committee Tariq Maqbool. The meeting concluded with the closing address by Sunil Sadan and, Vice President, ASSP Kuwait Chapter.

Congratulations



It was a glorious moment at the Life Abundant International Fountain Church (LAIF) yesterday as families, friends and well-wishers gathered to celebrate the wedding ceremony of Ayo and Israel. The program attracted a lot of dignitaries and Christians from different denominations. We pray that God will guide and protect them as they continue to be a blessing to their family.

GARLICKY CHICKEN THIGHS WITH SCALLION AND LIME

These tangy chicken thighs are a weeknight alternative to a long, weekend braise. They may not fall entirely off the bone, but the quick simmer in a rich, citrusy sauce yields an impossibly tender thigh that you wouldn't get with a simple sear. Serve with rice, whole grains or with hunks of crusty bread for mopping up the leftover sauce.

- Ingredients:**
- 1 1/2 pounds bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
 - Salt and freshly ground pepper
 - 1 tablespoon canola oil
 - 1 bunch scallions
 - 1 head garlic, unpeeled and halved crosswise
 - 2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely grated
 - 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice, plus 1 lime
 - 1 tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce

Preparation:
Season chicken with salt and pepper on both sides. Heat oil in a large Dutch oven or large, high-sided skillet over medium heat. Add chicken, skin-side down and cook, undisturbed, until chicken is crisped and the fat has begun to render, 8 to 10 minutes. Using tongs, carefully flip chicken skin-side

up. Cook until golden brown, 4 to 6 minutes. Meanwhile, thinly slice two scallions; set aside. Add both halves of the head of garlic, cut side down, and remaining whole scallions to the pot and season with salt and pepper, tossing to coat in the chicken fat. Cook until scallions are lightly blistered and browned, about 3 minutes. Add grated garlic and stir a minute or two, but do not brown.



Add lime juice, soy sauce and 1 cup of water. Bring to a simmer and partly cover. Cook until chicken is completely tender and nearly falling apart on the underside and liquid is reduced by three-quarters, 15 to 20 minutes. Discard the halved head of garlic. Scatter sliced scallion over chicken and using a Microplane or zester, zest lime over. Cut lime into quarters and serve alongside.

BLUEBERRY JAM SLICES



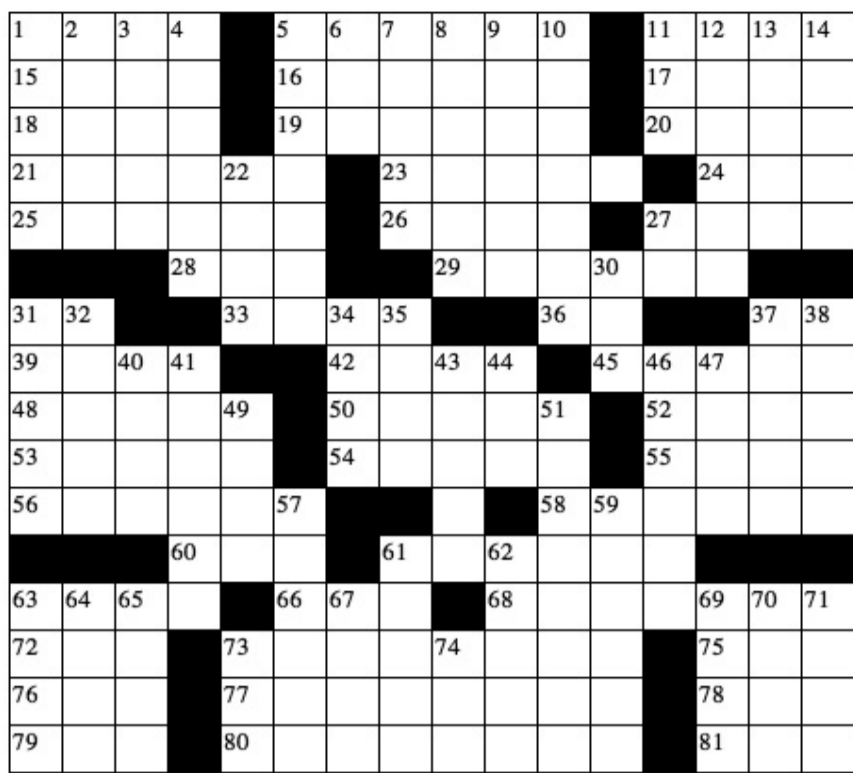
- Ingredients:**
- 3 cups plain flour or 420 g
 - 1 cup butter or 200 g, chopped
 - 1 cup icing sugar or 140 g
 - 1 tin Nestle Cream Original or 170 g
 - 1 cup blueberry jam or 250 g

Method:
Add flour, butter and icing sugar in a bowl then rub in all ingredients until mixture is fine and crumbled. Add Nestle Cream and work the mixture until smooth.

Divide the dough into half, roll out 1 portion of pastry on baking paper and refrigerate for 15 minutes. Press the remaining portion into a 28cm x 20cm shallow baking tin then spread blueberry jam evenly over pastry. Cut rolled chilled pastry with a sharp knife then arrange on top of fruit in a diagonal lattice pattern. Bake in 180°C preheated oven for 30-35 minutes or until golden. Cool in tin then cut into squares or fingers. Dust with icing sugar and serve.

Stars

CROSSWORD 1983



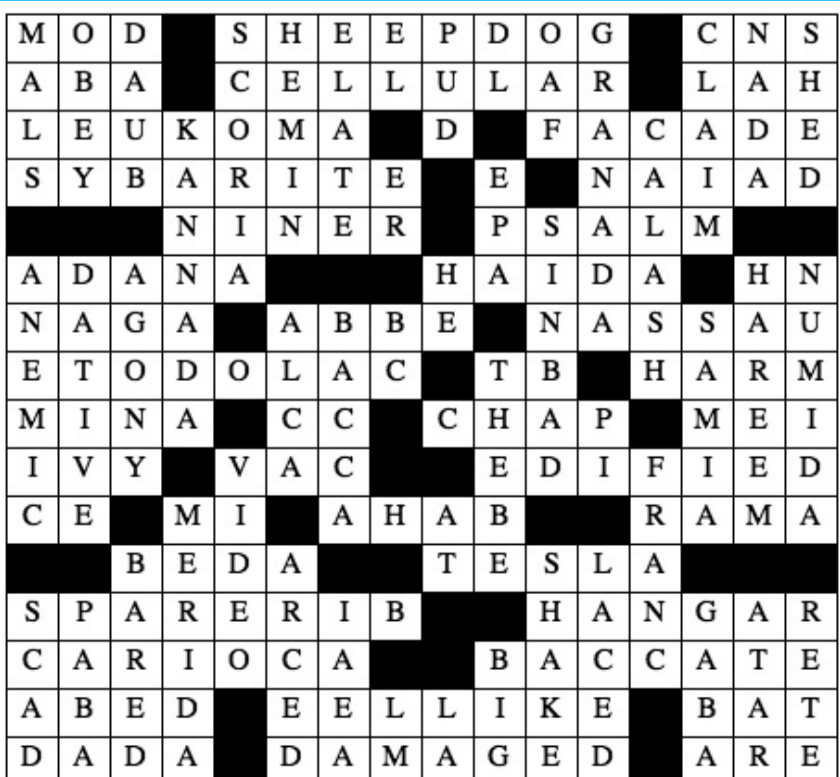
ACROSS

- Trailing grass native to Europe now cosmopolitan in warm regions.
- A university town in east central Maine on the Penobscot River north of Bangor.
- Flexible twig of a willow tree.
- Any cognitive content held as true.
- Having no cogency or legal force.
- Japanese ornamental tree with fragrant white or pink blossoms and small yellow fruits.
- A kind of heavy jacket ('windcheater' is a British term).
- Nicaraguan statesman (born in 1945).
- (Old Testament) A son of Jacob and forefather of one of the tribes of Israel.
- A lever that is operated with the foot.
- A period of time spent sleeping.
- (of farmland) Capable of being farmed productively.
- English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
- A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- United States baseball player (born 1925).
- Similar or related in quality or character.
- An informal term for a father.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- A river that rises in central Germany and flows north to join the Elbe River.
- (informal) Exceptionally good.
- Trees of chiefly South America.
- Division of a usually pinnately divided leaf.
- An open box attached to a long pole handle.
- A small bottle that contains a drug (especially a sealed sterile container for injection by needle).
- The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
- Having been read.
- Someone who plays a musical instrument (as a profession).
- A cardinal number represented as 1 followed by 100 zeros (ten raised to the power of a hundred).
- Of or concerning Qatar.
- A Dravidian language spoken by the Gond people in south central India.
- The visual percept of a region.
- King of Saudi Arabia since 1982 (born in 1922).
- (of persons) Highest in rank or authority or office.
- A bluish shade of green.
- A Hindu prince or king in India.
- A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
- A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
- American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
- Electronic warfare undertaken under direct control of an operational commander to locate sources of radiated electromagnetic energy for the purpose of immediate threat recognition.

DOWN

- Relieve from military service.

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You are focused and determined to take care of business. You will not let anything, nor anyone stand in your way. You want to get things accomplished and crave organization. You may feel as though there is a place for everyone and everything in your life and you are determined to make sure they are in it. You have zero tolerance for anything or anyone that does not conform to your way of thinking. This could be a very productive time in your life. You will be able to move mountains if you maintain this level of organization and determination. Your health becomes an additional focus for you as you need to be at your best to accomplish all you have set as goals for yourself. This is a great time and you are making good decisions.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This a great period of mental activity for you. Your communication levels are heightened. It seems as though you have so many ideas to share and you are able to fascinate everyone with what you have to say. You are smart as a fox and you feel empowered by the fact others are taking note of this. In general this a time you feel great and feel as if you are at your intellectual best. You not only feel great about who you are, you feel wonderful about where you are in life. Things seem to be going your way. Happiness is a wonderful emotion. Enjoy this time in your life.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

It seems as if those around you have let down their guard. You may find those close to you truly letting you in and openly sharing more than usual. It seems you have earned the trust of many. You may be seen as someone trustworthy and caring. At every turn you feel there is someone seeking your advice or sharing a story. Do not take on the emotions of others. You are wise and will be able to give great advice, but be careful to not become too involved in the drama. You may have an opportunity today to air out your differences with an old friend. Bury the hatchet and be thankful for a new beginning. Gemini. This friendship could be very beneficial to you in the future.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

It may be time to reorganize and restructure your world. You may find you have a new attitude and this gives you a new outlook on life. Happiness is what you seek. A true need to be free from want. You are a hard worker and will find your efforts are not going unnoticed. This is a time to be more conservative. Be sure and focus on the security of your future. The only person you can depend on taking care of you is YOU. Cancer. Keep your thoughts, energy, and focus positive and you will move mountains. This is a great time in your life, enjoy.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

If you take a bottle of soda and shake it up, it will inevitably explode! Your home life seems as if someone has been shaking the bottle. You are on the brink of a blow up concerning your home and family life. It seems the more you do, the more others expect. You may find others having expectations of you that are not humanly possible to achieve. Keep your cool and do only what you can do. Avoid conflict, as this may be your breaking point. Always remember you can not take back words after they are spoken. Leo. Bite your tongue.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may find yourself at odds with those around you today. You could encounter obstacles and other bumps in the road that slow your progress and cause you to have to sit back and reevaluate your choices and decisions. You may find you feel you are being deceived or misled by someone who has authority over you. You may feel as if the actions you are being asked to take in the workplace go against your values. This is a time to sit back and watch, rather than speak and a time to put deep thought into your decisions before you act. This may leave you in a disapproving mood and your day overall could bring a level of frustration that leaves you feeling defeated. Chin up, Virgo, things will be back to normal soon.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You know if needed you could sell ice to an eskimo. You are persuasive and have a gift when it comes to sales. You know how to wheel and deal. You would make a great car salesperson. You know what to say and when to say it. Some may see this as a manipulative trait. Not everyone appreciates this quality you possess. Using this talent in a positive manner will always be rewarding. Do the right thing and you may find yourself in a very profitable situation today.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

You may be experiencing a time of drastic change in your world. Renovations to your home, buying or selling real estate, or new furnishings may be something you are dealing with now. You will have to work hard to keep a balance between change and continuity. Change like this can be shocking and hard to adjust to. You may find yourself in the middle of a bit of drama. You may find yourself working hard to resolve conflict. You could be faced with having to handle someone who has opposing views, and different opinions from yourself. This is a time of decision. Changes have to be made. Get the facts, Scorpio. Make sure you have all of the facts before you make any decisions. Actions have consequences and the right decision needs to be made.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

With a little planning you can turn a forgettable day into unforgettable moments. Remind yourself today that you have a precious life. You are fortunate to be alive. Of course, there is some darkness out there. But your unique light can overcome the dark. Special moments almost always involve other people, so you can contribute to making someone else's day memorable.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Whether a surprise is good or bad today depends on how you choose to look at life. You can always choose to look at things with a positive attitude. Assume things will turn out in your favor and make them happen. Hard work and determination have always been two of the great qualities you possess. You are able to make anything you attempt to do look easy. Others are often envious of your talent. Be sure and keep your workday stress free today. You can use humor to accomplish this, Capricorn. You are known for that great sense of humor.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Today finds you a wizard of words. Through your words you may be able to bring a group together. You are persuasive and captivating. Poetry and art would be wonderful outlets for self-expression now. You may feel as you are walking in a dream. An almost trance-like feeling comes over you. This is a good evening to find an escape, a good book or staying in and watching a movie would be a great way to spend your evening. Even if a long bath is the route you choose find a way to have a relaxing evening.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

What do you want out of life? Now is the perfect time to set your goals. Now is the time to act and decide. You may have a very narrow window of opportunity to make some big changes. It seems as if your goals may jeopardize your sense of security. Weigh the options and act now. Risk can sometimes bring great reward.

Wordsearch Puzzle

70's Songs

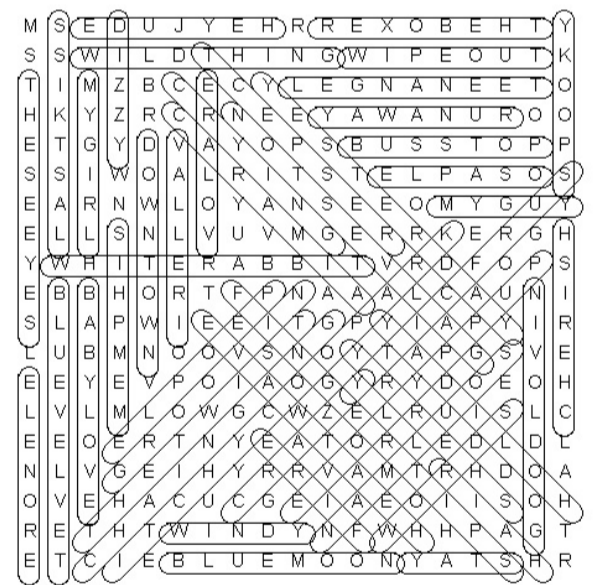
Find and circle all of these songs from the 1970's that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional song from the 70's.



- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| ANGIE | FAME | LOVIN' YOU | RICH GIRL |
| BABE | FREE BIRD | LOWDOWN | ROXANNE |
| BAD BLOOD | GREASE | MACARTHUR PARK | SAD EYES |
| BETH | HEART OF GLASS | MAGGIE MAY | SIR DUKE |
| BROWN SUGAR | HOT STUFF | MISS YOU | STAYIN' ALIVE |
| CAR WASH | HOTEL CALIFORNIA | MONEY | SUPERSTITION |
| CONVOY | ISLAND GIRL | NIGHT MOVES | THE JOKER |
| CRACKLIN' ROSIE | JIVE TALKIN' | OHIO | TRAGEDY |
| CROCODILE ROCK | LAYLA | POP MUZIK | VENUS |
| DANCING QUEEN | LE FREAK | RHIANNON | WATERLOO |
| DREAMING | LOLA | RHINESTONE COWBOY | YOUR SONG |
| DREAMS | | | |

Friday's Solution

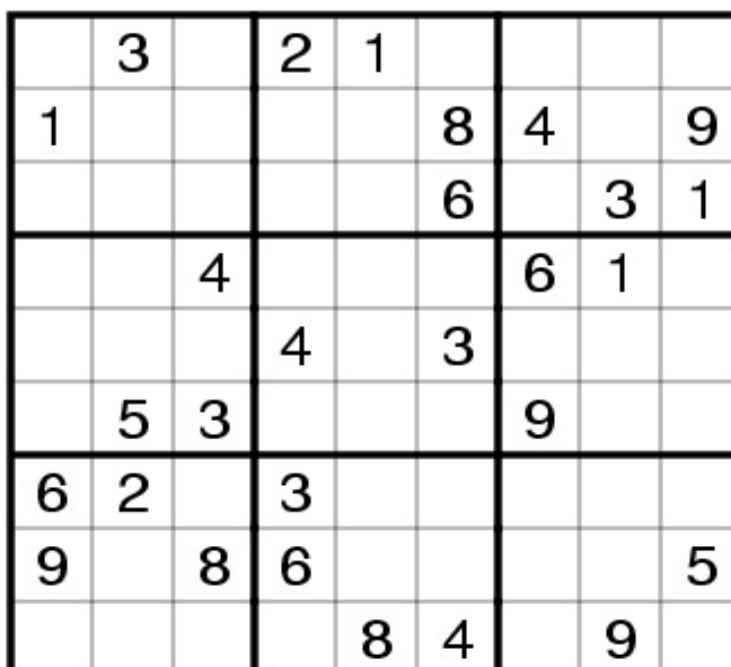
60's Songs



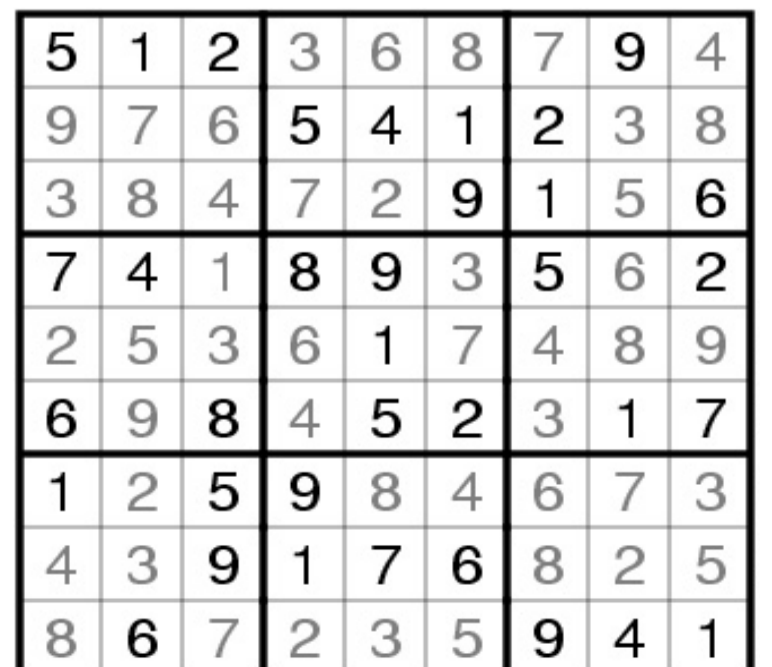
- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| BABY LOVE | ELENORE | MEMPHIS | TEEN ANGEL |
| BLUE MOON | FINGERTIPS | MY GIRL | THE BOXER |
| BLUE VELVET | FIRE | MY GUY | THE TWIST |
| BUS STOP | GALVESTON | PEOPLE | THESE EYES |
| CARA MIA | GOOD LOVIN' | PUPPY LOVE | VALLERI |
| CHAIN GANG | GROOVIN' | VOLARE | |
| CHERISH | HAIR | RUNAWAY | WHITE RABBIT |
| CRAZY | HEATWAVE | SHERRY | WILD THING |
| CRYING | HEY JUDE | SOUL MAN | WINDY |
| DIZZY | HOLIDAY | SPOOKY | WIPEOUT |
| DOWNTOWN | ITCHYCOO PARK | STAY | WORDS |
| EL PASO | LAST KISS | SURF CITY | YESTERDAY |

The hidden song is: MRS. BROWN YOU'VE GOT A LOVELY DAUGHTER

Daily SuDoku



Friday's Solution



Lifestyle

SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 2018



English contemporary artist Lucy Sparrow mops the floor beside her latest art installation titled 'Sparrow Mart Supermarket', an entire supermarket with the products made from felt material, currently on display at the Standard Hotel in downtown Los Angeles on August 10, 2018. — AFP

Lebanese diva breaks taboo with clip announcing cancer fight

It was an unusual way to reveal a struggle against cancer, particularly in a part of the world where the illness is still largely considered a private matter and taboo. But a video clip released on Twitter is how Lebanese singer Elissa chose to share the news with her fans and millions of followers on social media. "You are the reason I am strong and healthy ... you are my strength. And this story is a thank you," she posted, along with the song uploaded on YouTube entitled: "For all those who love me."

The video clip begins with a woman inside an MRI machine and someone saying 'It's an early stage of breast cancer,' and goes on to show the 45-year-old singer in various situations at a hospital, with doctors and surrounded by friends. It features a voiceover of Elissa speaking about her battle.

The response was overwhelming from fans, celebrities and politicians across the Arab world who posted, tweeted and retweeted messages of support. The video clip has garnered more than seven million views from fans and supporters since it was posted on Tuesday.

The clip and outpouring of support were all the more striking because cancer in most of the Arab world, and particularly breast cancer among women, is rarely discussed in public, and cancer patients often struggle in solitude. Some among the older generation continue to refer to cancer as "that disease," without mentioning it by name.

Elissa declined a request for comment through her agent, who said the singer was not giving interviews. Elissa, whose real name is Elissar Khoury, is among the best known and

highest-selling female artists in the Arab world and received several music awards in her career, mostly for Arabic pop songs delivered in the Lebanese or Egyptian dialect. She was diagnosed with the illness in December 2017 but kept it secret, even after she collapsed on stage during a live performance in Dubai in February this year. She later tweeted to her fans that she was healthy, adding: "Nothing serious don't worry!"



Photo shows Lebanese diva Elissa, whose real name is Elissar Khoury, one of the best known and highest-selling female artists in the Arab world, poses for photographers, in Beirut, Lebanon. — AP

The collapse is featured in the seven-minute video released on Tuesday. "I do my radiotherapy session, I go to the studio, I finish another session, I rest for two hours and go to the studio again," Elissa says in the video clip, describing how she kept up her work during her treatment.

The song has a feel-good catchy tune with a refrain that says: "Yalla, yalla yalla (come on!), let's sing and be happy, let's make up for time lost, come on let's live," alternating between scenes at a hospital and Elissa singing and dancing on stage. Fans across the Arab world posted supportive messages, describing her as a super hero and a model of strength. They included the Lebanese foreign minister who tweeted that Elissa should be an inspiration for all women with cancer not to give up.

Elissa, who is scheduled to perform in Beirut on Friday night, ended the video with the words: "I've recovered. I've beaten the illness, and I won. ... Early detection of breast cancer can save your life. Don't ignore it, face it. ... Do it not only for yourself, but for your loved ones." — AP

SARAJEVO FILM FEST HONORS TURKISH PALME D'OR WINNER

Turkish director and Cannes Palme d'Or winner Nuri Bilge Ceylan on Friday received an outstanding contribution award at the opening of the Sarajevo film festival. "This is great honor for me, really, and I accept it with my heart," the director said after receiving the "Heart of Sarajevo" award. Ceylan scooped the top prize at the Cannes film festival in 2014 for his epic drama "Winter Sleep". His latest feature, "The Wild Pear Tree", was also selected to compete for the Palme d'Or at Cannes. The Sarajevo film festival, now in its 24th year, will also celebrate Ceylan's talent as a stills photographer with an exhibition of his work in the Bosnian capital.

The festival kicked off on Friday night with an open-air screening of "Cold War" by Oscar winner Pawel Pawlikowski, who took home the prize for best director at this year's Cannes festival. Pawlikowski also won the best foreign language movie

Oscar for "Ida" in 2015. More than 200 films from 56 countries will be shown during the eight-day festival which highlights work from southeastern Europe. This year's Sarajevo jury will be led by renowned Iranian director Asghar Farhadi.

Established as an "act of resistance" during the 1992-1995 inter-ethnic war in Bosnia, the Sarajevo film festival regularly attracts big names. Past guests include Robert De Niro, Angelina Jolie, Brad Pitt, Juliette Binoche, Jeremy Irons and John Cleese. However, its main goal is to promote cinema from the region. "We are happy that directors from southeast Europe choose the Sarajevo Festival for the premier screening of their movies, therefore opening the doors to other big festivals," its director Miro Purivatra said ahead of the festival. — AFP



In this file photo Turkish film director Nuri Bilge Ceylan poses in Paris. — AFP



Warner Bros World

Abu Dhabi opens on Yas Island



His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during the Grand Opening of Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi.

Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, yesterday inaugurated Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, the world's first-ever Warner Bros. branded indoor theme park developed by Miral, Abu Dhabi's creator of destinations, in partnership with Warner Bros. Entertainment, with an investment of \$1 billion.

Their Highnesses attended the official inauguration ceremony, which took place in the Warner Bros. Plaza at Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi. The ceremony included the first screening of the Warner Bros. Cinema Spectacular, a captivating show that brings Warner Bros.' unparalleled film library to life. Guests were also treated to a series of festive celebrations incorporating the park's beloved characters.

Sheikh Zayed bin Ahmed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Sheikh Saif and Sheikh Ahmed bin Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan then took the stage alongside some of the park's iconic DC and Warner Bros. Animation characters to

press a button marking the official opening of the highly anticipated theme park, which is expected to draw in thousands of guests including residents and tourists of all ages.

Following the opening ceremony His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid and His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed toured the park, which officially opens to the public on 25th of July. The opening of the Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi marks the latest addition to Yas Island's offering of world-class tourism and entertainment attractions, and serves to strengthen the island's position as a leading leisure and entertainment destination in Abu Dhabi, further enhancing UAE's distinguished position on the world map.

During the tour, their Highnesses were briefed on the many elements which help bring the park's immersive environments to life across its six lands. From the meticulously curated musical arrangements to the faithfully created landscapes, each land is uniquely designed to truly immerse guests in the places they've seen in movies, comic books and on TV.

Their Highnesses also learned of the different stages of development which the park

underwent as well as its adherence to the internationally recognized best practices and rigorous health and safety standards to ensure the wellbeing of its guests. During the tour, their Highnesses also visited the park's wide array of facilities and state-of-the-art attractions.

"It is with great pride that we open Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi on Yas Island today. This is a milestone moment for us as we continue to cement Abu Dhabi's positioning as one of the world's leading family and tourism destinations. I am confident that the addition of this theme park to our already rich portfolio will further enhance Yas Island's offering," said H.E. Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of Miral.

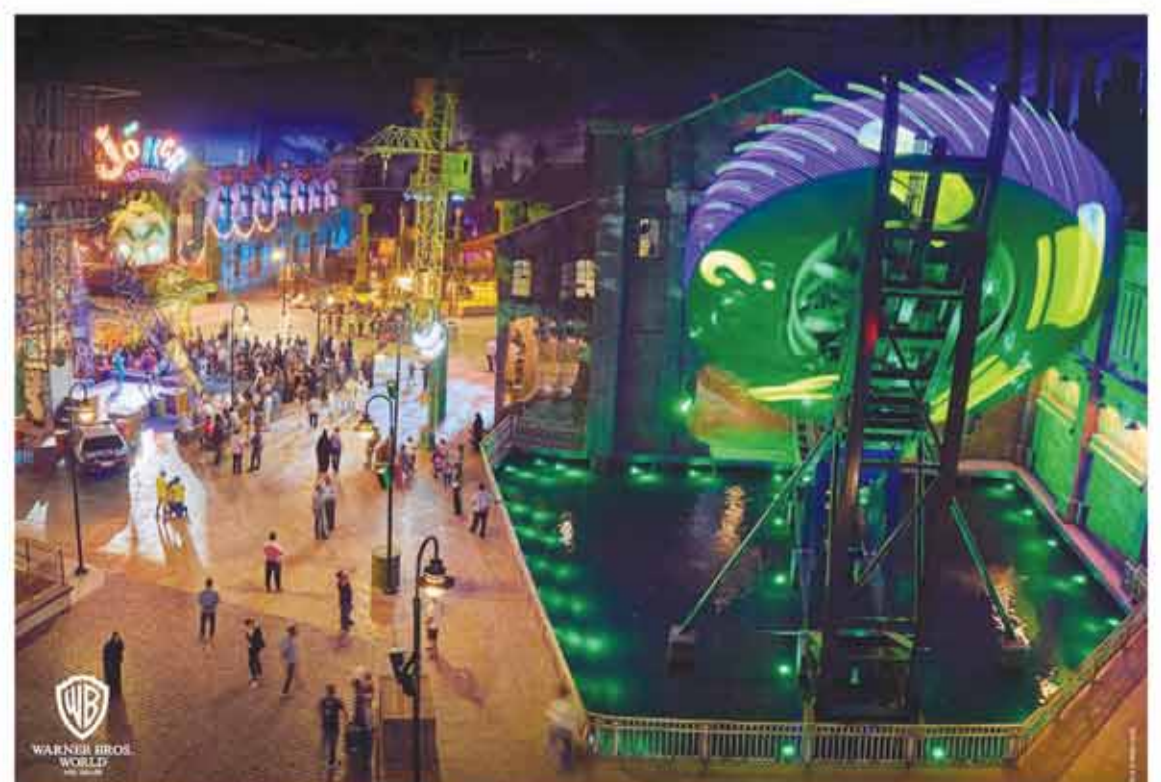
"We're delighted that our partnership with Warner Bros. has resulted in us delivering our promise of creating an attraction that will amaze and entertain both the young, and the young at heart," added H.E. Al Mubarak.

Filled to the brim with endless family fun and adventures, the park transports guests to six expertly designed lands, including DC's Metropolis and Gotham City, as well as Cartoon Junction, Bedrock, Dynamite Gulch and Warner

Bros. Plaza. Home to a total of 29 exhilarating rides, interactive family-friendly attractions and unique live entertainment shows, the park will offer an incredible range of themed experiences. Guests will also enjoy authentically themed dining experiences, from grab-and-go eateries to full-service sit-down restaurants and cafes, as well as custom designed shops featuring bespoke Warner Bros. merchandise inspired by fan-favorite characters, some of which has been developed exclusively for the park.

"Warner Bros. has an almost-100-year legacy of producing and distributing high-quality entertainment to global audiences, and this world-class attraction continues that tradition in grand style," said Kevin Tsujihara, Chairman and CEO, Warner Bros. "Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi literally brings our characters to life and provides fans a truly unique immersive entertainment experience. We couldn't have better partners than our colleagues at Miral, and we look forward to continuing our longstanding relationship," he continued.

The world-class theme park brings to life fan-favorite DC Super Heroes like Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman, alongside beloved Warner Bros. Animation characters



Lifestyle | Features

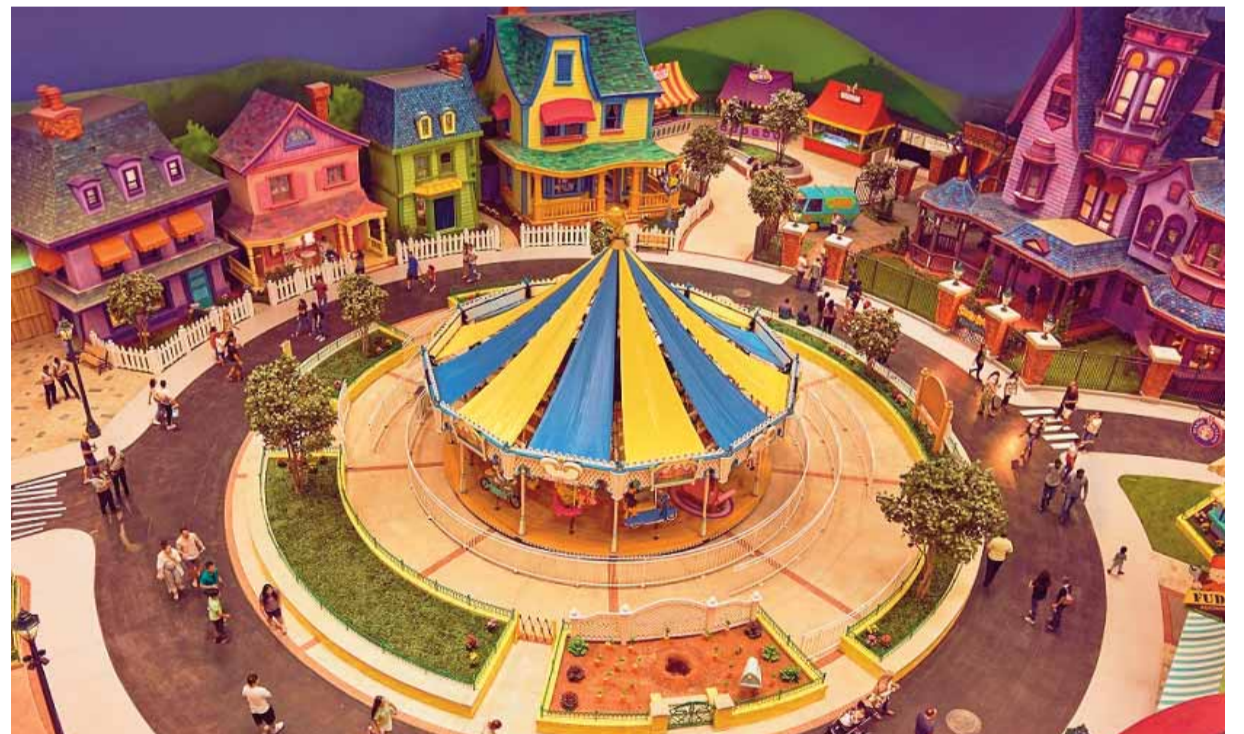


from Looney Tunes and Hanna-Barbera like Tom and Jerry, Scooby-Doo and The Flintstones, using state-of-the-art technology to create truly immersive environments and unforgettable experiences.

The excitement begins in Warner Bros. Plaza, where guests can meander the streets of the art deco themed portal to the various lands of Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi. Guests can enjoy the gleaming urban landscape of Metropolis, where they can revel in the heroic optimism of the Justice League – whose members include Wonder Woman, Green Lantern and The Flash. They can then make their way to the dark alleys of Gotham City where devious masterminds such as The Joker, and Harley Quinn wreak havoc only to be thwarted by Batman. In contrast, bright blue skies and fluffy white clouds will surround the guests in Cartoon Junction where childhood favorite characters come to life. Guests will then leave the colorful houses behind for the lofty dunes of Dynamite Gulch packed full of animated antics and mad mishaps. And finally, guests can rewind all the way to the modern Stone Age in Bedrock with the lovable cave-families – The Flintstones and The Rubbles.

Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi is the latest addition to Yas Island's immersive theme parks including Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi and the upcoming attraction, CLYMB. These are complemented by: Yas Marina Circuit – one of the most technologically-advanced Formula 1® circuits in the world; Yas Marina – a vibrant venue offering dining, fitness and leisure facilities; Yas Mall – the largest shopping mall in Abu Dhabi with 400 retail stores; Yas Beach; and, Yas Links Abu Dhabi – the 46th golf course in the world, as well as seven sophisticated hotels ranging from 3 to 5 stars.

To purchase tickets or learn more about Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, visit www.wbworld.com and join the conversation on social using the hashtag #WBWorld.



Lifestyle | Features



This picture shows Australian-born singer Lisa Gerrard (center) with Bulgaria's Grammy-winning folk choir "The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices" performing on stage during a concert in Varna. — AFP photos



Photos show Bulgaria's Grammy-winning folk choir "The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices" singers preparing backstage for their concert in Varna.

BULGARIA'S FAMED ALL-FEMALE FOLK CHOIR BACK WITH A MODERN TWIST

Thirty years ago an all-female folk choir set up in Bulgaria became the darling of Western audiences with its tradition-steeped a cappella singing, before the fall of communism threatened its survival. With fans like George Harrison, David Bowie and Kate Bush, The Mystery Of The Bulgarian Voices ensemble conquered the international charts during the Cold War at a time when world music was beginning to gain popularity. Now the Grammy-winning choir from Sofia is back, with their embroidered blouses and floral hair styles plus a contemporary twist, having teamed up with Australian-born Lisa Gerrard of the music group, Dead Can Dance.

“This genuine open singing that comes from the throat, the larynx, is not something that you can teach, you must be born with this”

of the two dozen women, aged 20 to 70, in the choir have inherited their singing skills from their parents. “My mother Nadezhda Hvojneva was a soloist for the choir for 40 years, and we used to perform side by side,” singer Elichka Krastanova, 50, told AFP.

Originally their songs would have been sung in rural parts of Bulgaria during weddings or on religious holidays and as people worked in the fields. In the 1950s, encouraged by the communist regime which propagated working-class and peasant culture, composers did more popular arrangements of these traditional songs and the best performers were drafted into state choirs. And in 1952, the all-women choir was founded as The State Radio and Television Female Vocal Choir.

It remained largely unknown abroad, despite a Swiss ethnomusicologist, Marcel Cellier, in 1975 releasing an album featuring them and other Bulgarian folk music compositions entitled “Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares” (The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices). It was not until 1986 that the choir rose to international fame, when the album was edited and re-issued by the British cult record label 4AD, which has released albums by bands such as the Cocteau Twins and Bauhaus.

Turbulent transition

Their second album, released in 1987, went on to win a Grammy Award in 1990, and the Bulgarian women, in their kaleidoscopic attire, started touring the world to sell-out crowds, releasing two more albums in 1989 and 1998. Captivated by the purity and originality of their sound, fans included David Bowie and his wife Iman, who had one of the choir's songs “Kalimankou Denkou” played during their 1992 wedding. But the end of communism brought turbulent times for the choir, leading to their sacking by the state broadcaster in 1997. The singers were forced to take other jobs, most as music teachers, to make ends meet.

“We survived only thanks to the many invitations for concerts that came from abroad and the necessity to keep up our level and not disappoint the audience,” choir master Hristova said. But there was no money for new songs and arrangements, let alone recordings. Hristova also struggled to recruit younger singers, who could still sing the traditional harmonies.



Embracing the future

Finally, the independent Schubert Music Publishing company provided the means to record their new album, described by producer Boyana Bouunkova as “a bolder and quite experimental mix of styles”. “Every singer must, from time to time, leave their comfort zone and indulge in such adventures, to try all kinds of things with their voice because it is a limitless capacity,” said Gerrard's co-soloist Gergana Dimitrova, 43, whose parents are also folk singers. Apart from the collaboration with Gerrard, composer Petar Dundakov has added other contemporary elements—an acoustic accompaniment of various stringed instruments and beatboxer Alexander Deyanov, known as SkilleR, who performs his form of vocal percussion.

“I believe that folklore is not a mix of costumes, dances and melodies that must be kept in the ethnographic museum, but something that must encounter modernity, and this encounter is its only way of developing,” Dundakov said. “Superb! Far beyond my expectations,” spectator Peshka Dobreva, 70, told AFP, after a performance in the Black Sea city of Varna in mid-June, which ended with standing ovations and five encores. Another audience member, Desislava Hristova, 35, said she loved the “cocktail of styles”. “This was our mission during all these years—to keep the tradition alive so that now we are able to present it to a younger audience that knows very little about it,” Hristova said. — AFP

Photo shows Bulgaria's Grammy-winning folk choir “The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices” performing on stage during a concert in Varna.



Photo shows Bulgaria's Grammy-winning folk choir “The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices” performing on stage during a concert in Varna.

The choir's new album—its first studio production in two decades—in collaboration with Gerrard was released in May in Bulgaria and deemed by Rolling Stone magazine's online edition as among the “10 New Albums to Stream Now”. Gerrard said her task on the album, entitled “BooCheeMish”—after a local shrub that blossoms between rocks—was “to bring them (the choir) into the moment without corrupting their tradition”. A longtime fan, Gerrard recalled her first encounter with the choir's music 38 years ago, telling AFP: “There was something unique and full of light that these women were doing, which is what I wanted from the work.”

Singing that ‘can’t be taught’

The choir's signature vocal style is made up of powerful layered polyphonic harmonies, created by different combinations of voices, a sound once described as something between a call to prayer and The Beach Boys. “This genuine open singing that comes from the throat, the larynx, is not something that you can teach, you must be born with this,” longstanding choir master Dora Hristova said. Many

Drill music deaths reveal hard truths of London streets

The sparse beats and raw lyrics of drill music have served as the soundtrack to an unprecedented surge in knife crime on the streets of London this year—and police are accusing the genre of fuelling the violence. But defenders of drill, a form of hip hop, argue it is an expression of the nihilistic hopelessness of inner-city life, not a cause of the gang wars that have killed and maimed dozens of young black men this year. The genre is hugely popular, with millions listening on social media to crews like Moscow17, which has lost two of its members just this year.

Sidique Kamara, better known as “Incognito”, 23, was stabbed to death last week on the same south London street where another crew member was shot dead a few months before. The group had been trading insults and threats with rival crews through a series of music videos. The case of Moscow17 and others have led police to

order dozens of videos to be taken off the internet. Metropolitan Police chief Cressida Dick says drill's dark lyrics have had the “terrible effect” of glamorizing violence, but industry insiders reject this.

“There was crime before drill music came to the UK,” SK, head of the Finesse Foreva record label that is home to major drill artists, told AFP. “In school we study Shakespeare, he glorifies violence, but you are not going to take an axe and chop someone's head off,” he said. Finesse Foreva co-chief TK added that the music had been “scapegoated”, and was distracting from the socioeconomic problems that lead to high-risk lifestyles.

‘Prison or the grave’

Drill originated in Chicago in the early 2010s, with lyrics documenting life in the city's violent neighborhoods. The style was soon adopted by young artists in Britain, particularly in the public housing estates of south London. Social media provided the platform for artists to highlight the challenges and temptations of life on London's streets, but has also been blamed for escalating tensions between rival crews. At the recent trial of the 1011 gang—who have more than 10 million views on their YouTube channel—for planning an attack on a rival crew, one member told the court that their violent lyrics were “not really me”, but were instead “what our fans want”.

The trial raised questions over whether young fans



In this file photo combination created on August 9, 2018 from undated handout pictures released by the British Metropolitan Police Service in London on June 11, 2018, shows Jordan Bedeau, Isaac Marshall, Yonas Girma, Micah Bedeau and Rhys Herbert. Five members of the 1011 gang - based in Ladbroke Grove, west London - who glorified violence in their drill music videos have been locked up after being caught with baseball bats and machetes, weapons the police believed they would use to attack a rival gang. Yonas Girma, Micah Bedeau, Isaac Marshall, Jordan Bedeau and Rhys Herbert, were caught by police following a two-year investigation into their music and social media accounts. — AFP

from more comfortable backgrounds were egging on artists into destructive behavior through social media. “It's definitely a factor,” said Craig Pinkney, a criminologist and youth worker from University College Birmingham. “Often times we see the disagreements that are taking place, and then the audience are differentiating who they believe is the most credible person based on viewership, based on the number of likes.”

The gang expert said that culture's romanticisation of violence was partly to blame, but drill's young audience

may lack the maturity to draw the line between art and reality. With youth-led social media increasingly driving mainstream culture, Pinkney fears that the problem will only become more widespread. “Young people know that the industry is prepared to pay for individuals talking about chaos and bloodshed,” he said. “What they are talking about is going to put them in two places, in prison or the grave.”—AFP

Classifieds

Sunday, August 12, 2018

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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 35 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind to variable wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 11/08/2018 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	46 °C	35 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	47 °C	31 °C			
ABDALY	47 °C	30 °C			
BUBYAN	-- °C	-- °C			
JAHRA	48 °C	33 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	44 °C	30 °C			
SALMIYAH	42 °C	35 °C			
AHMADI	41 °C	35 °C			
NUWAISIB	44 °C	32 °C			
WAFRA	47 °C	31 °C			
SALMY	44 °C	28 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST							
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed	
			MAX.	MIN.			
Sunday	08/12	Very hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas	47 °C	31 °C	NW	12 - 40 km/h	
Monday	08/13	Very hot and rising dust	47 °C	33 °C	NW	25 - 50 km/h	
Tuesday	08/14	Hot and rising dust	46 °C	34 °C	NW	20 - 50 km/h	
Wednesday	08/15	Hot	46 °C	33 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h	

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:49
Sunrise	05:14
Zuhr	11:53
Asr	15:29
Sunset	18:32
Isha	19:56

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	46 °C
MIN. Temp.	32 °C
MAX. RH	24 %
MIN. RH	09 %
MAX. Wind	N 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

NEW MEDICAL DAY CASE CENTER (KUWAIT)

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 (Radiologist, Refractive, Retinal & Squint surgeon)
 Registrar (General Ophthalmology & plastic)
 Cardiology specialist
 Laboratory specialist and technician
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 Orthoptist, Optometrist
 CSSD technician
 Biomedical engineer

Nursing Staff
 OT nurses
 OPD nurses, cardiology and diabetic nurse
 Fascial Aesthetician staff
 Dietitian

Requirement
 - Theatre nurses minimum 5 year, other staff and nurses 3-5 year experience.
 - Transferable visa, Knowledgeable in Microsoft office
 - Staff must be holding appropriate degree and qualification

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 Secretary, Receptionist,
 Patient Representative
 PR officer, Maintenance Supervisor
 Marketing & sales assistant
 IT technician
 Concierge, Call Centre Officer
 Store in Charge

Pharmacy
 (Pharmacist, Pharmacy technician)

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

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Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

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

I, Celine Peter Caido D/O Charles Pereira holder of Indian Passport No: S5770664 & Civil ID No: 259102400921 has changed my name to Celine Christina Pereira hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5412) 8-8-2018

Career Opportunities for Teachers at Private American School in Kuwait for the 2018-19 Academic Year

Positions include:

Department	Positions
Kindergarten Department	KG Teacher
Elementary Department	Vice Principal
	Elementary Teacher
	Curriculum Coordinator
Middle and High School	Dean of Students
	Science Teacher
	Math Teacher
	English Teacher
	French Teacher
	Social Studies Teacher
	Computer Teacher

Please put job you apply for in subject head
 Interested applicants may send cover letter and resume to: recruitment@abs.edu.kw

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

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Flight Schedule

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
Arrival Flights on Sunday 12/8/2018				Departure Flights on Sunday 12/8/2018			
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
KAC	504	Beirut	00:50	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:15
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	KAC	417	Doha	00:25
KAC	102	London	00:50	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	MSC	406	Sohag	00:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	MSR	2615	Sohag	00:30
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	677	Dubai	01:30
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	THY	773	Istanbul	01:45
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	363	Colombo	01:50
JZR	267	Beirut	02:10	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	JZR	502	Luxor	01:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:15
AEE	956	ATH	02:25	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55
THY	768	Istanbul	02:40	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10
WAN	714	AGP	02:45	AEE	957	ATH	03:15
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	JZR	142	Doha	03:20
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	THY	769	Istanbul	03:35
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	WAN	341	Sohag	04:00
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:25
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00
JZR	551	Alexandria	04:05	JAI	1077	Mumbai	05:10
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	QTR	1072	Doha	05:15
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	KAC	902	Baku	05:30
THY	1414	TZV	05:05	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:35
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	103	London	05:45
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	FDB	070	Dubai	06:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:20	JZR	786	Riyadh	06:05
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30
QTR	8511	Doha	05:30	JZR	786	Riyadh	06:05
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	KAC	153	Istanbul	07:00
BAW	157	London	06:10	RJA	649	Amman	07:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	QTR	8512	Doha	07:00
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	JZR	164	Dubai	07:15
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	RBG	550	Alexandria	07:30
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	KAC	171	Frankfurt	07:55
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	JZR	238	Amman	08:00
MSR	2616	Sohag	07:05	JZR	778	Jeddah	08:00
KAC	358	Kochi	07:35	MSR	2617	Cairo	08:05
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	WAN	713	AGP	08:10
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	BAW	156	London	08:20
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	165	Rome	08:25
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:00	KAC	177	Vienna	08:30
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00
WAN	352	Luxor	08:30	KAC	117	SNN/New York	09:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:05
IRC	528	Ahwaz	09:00	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	ABY	561	Amman	09:40
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	JZR	126	Sharjah	09:40
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	JZR	534	Cairo	09:45
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:45
IAW	157	Al Najaf	10:00	KAC	741	Dammam	09:45
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
WAN	342	Sohag	10:15	JZR	482	Istanbul	09:55
SAW	703	Damascus	10:30	KAC	101	London	10:00
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	IRC	529	Ahwaz	10:00
JZR	903	Baku	11:10	KAC	617	Doha	10:10
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	WAN	873	Istanbul	10:15
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:20	JZR	750	Madinah	10:15
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:25
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	KAC	1905	Jeddah	10:40
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	QTR	1071	Doha	10:40
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
JZR	239	Amman	13:00	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	IAW	158	Al Najaf	11:00
JZR	531	Asyut	13:10	JZR	124	Bahrain	11:20
RJA	644	Amman	13:20	SAW	704	Damascus	11:30



A Pakistani man creates a pattern design on a camel's skin at a market ahead of Eid al-Adha in Karachi yesterday. Muslims around the world will mark Eid al-Adha, the biggest holiday of the Islamic calendar, by slaughtering sheep, goats, cows and camels to commemorate Prophet Abraham's (PBUH) willingness to sacrifice his son Ismail (PBUH) on God's command. — AFP

Monsanto owners call weed killer 'safe' after jury orders big payout

BERLIN: Monsanto's German owners insisted yesterday that the weed killer Roundup was "safe", rejecting a California jury's decision to order the chemical giant to pay nearly \$290 million for failing to warn a dying groundskeeper that the product might cause cancer. While observers predicted thousands of potential future claims against the company in the wake of Monsanto's defeat, Bayer - which recently acquired the US giant - said the California ruling went against scientific evidence.

"On the basis of scientific conclusions, the views of worldwide regulatory authorities and the decades-long practical experience with glyphosate use, Bayer is convinced that glyphosate is safe and does not cause cancer," the company said in a statement. It said other court proceedings with other juries might "arrive at different conclusions" than the jury which ruled in the California

lawsuit, the first to accuse glyphosate of causing cancer.

Jurors unanimously found that Monsanto - which vowed to appeal - acted with "malice" and that its weed killers Roundup and the professional grade version RangerPro contributed "substantially" to Dewayne Johnson's terminal illness. Johnson, diagnosed in 2014 with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma - a cancer that affects white blood cells - says he repeatedly used a professional form of Roundup while working at a school in Benicia, California. "The cause is way bigger than me. Hopefully this thing will get the attention it needs," Johnson, 46, said after the verdict. Johnson wept openly, as did some jurors, when he met with the panel later.

The lawsuit built on 2015 findings by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, part of the UN World Health Organization, which classified Roundup's main ingredient glyphosate as a probable

carcinogen, causing the state of California to follow suit. "We are sympathetic to Mr Johnson and his family," Monsanto said in a statement, but promised to "continue to vigorously defend this product". "The jury got it wrong," Monsanto vice president Scott Partridge told reporters. But Johnson's attorney Brent Wisner said the verdict "shows the evidence is overwhelming" that the product poses danger. "When you are right, it is really easy to win," he said.

Wisner called the ruling the "tip of the spear" of litigation likely to come. "The jury sent a message to the Monsanto boardroom that they have to change the way they do business," said Robert F Kennedy Jr - an environmental lawyer, son of the late US senator and a member of Johnson's legal team. "You not only see many people injured, you see the corruption of public officials, the capture of agencies that are supposed to protect us

from pollution and the falsification of science," he said. Partridge, meanwhile, announced that Monsanto had no intention of settling the slew of similar cases in the legal queue. "It is the most widely used and most widely studied herbicide in the world," Partridge said.

Roundup is Monsanto's leading product. "The Johnson vs Monsanto verdict is a win for all of humanity and all life on earth," said Zen Honeycutt, founding executive director of non-profit group Moms Across America. In France, a leading anti-Monsanto campaigner told AFP that the California ruling would strengthen the resolve of those doing battle with the agrochemicals giant across the world. "I was thinking of them and I said to myself that this ruling will help them and give them lots of hope," said Paul Francois, author of "A farmer against Monsanto" ("Un paysan contre Monsanto"). — AFP

Mechanic steals, crashes plane from...

Continued from Page 1

He estimated that the plane, at its lowest point, was no more than 30 m above the water. Then the pilot pulled the plane "pretty much straight up. And kind of at an angle. And almost stalled the aircraft. Somehow he got it leveled back off. And then made his way down toward the island," Waldron said he had been prepared to "run and take cover". He briefly turned away, then turned back and saw the explosion as the plane crashed.

In a conversation with the control tower, the pilot, who identified himself only as "Rich", came across as excitable, confused, and even apologetic. "Congratulations, you did it," the control tower tells him, according to an audio feed

aired on CNN. "Let's turn around the air and land it and not hurt anybody on the ground." "I don't know, man," the pilot answers. "I don't want to. I was kind of hoping that was going to be it, you know."

During the conversation, he says he had put some fuel in the plane "to go check out the Olympics" - the Olympic Mountains which lie about 160 km away. But he later worried he was running low, saying the fuel had burned "quite a bit faster than I expected". The control tower then pushes him to land at a nearby military base. "I wouldn't want to do that. They probably have anti-aircraft," he responds. "This is probably jail time for life, huh?" he later says, according to a recording published by the Seattle Times. "I've got a lot of people that care about me. It's going to disappoint them to hear that I did this," he said. "I would like to apologize to each and every one of them. Just a broken guy, got a few screws loose, I guess. Never really knew it until now." — AFP

tions after Trump abandoned the 2015 nuclear deal. Erdogan had on Friday held a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin to discuss economic and trade issues as well as the Syria crisis. The latest escalation between Ankara and Washington was denounced by the Turkish press, with pro-government daily Sabah saying "the currency attack" was no different from the attempted coup of July 2016.

Although the pastor's arrest has soured already-fragile ties with Washington, Erdogan said there would be no letup in Brunson's case, vowing: "We have not made concessions on justice so far, and we will never make any." Erdogan also appeared to allude to a 'deadline' for handing over Brunson, although he did not name the United States as having set any such deadline or say precisely when it might have expired. "(They are) threatening, saying you will send (him) until 6 pm ... This is not some random country. This is Turkey," he said.

In a separate opinion piece in the pro-government newspaper Daily Sabah, Erdogan's spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said Turkey's efforts to solve the crisis with diplomatic methods have been dismissed by the Trump administration, warning that Washington might completely lose Ankara as an ally. "The US runs the risk of losing Turkey as a whole. The entire Turkish public is against US policies that disregard Turkey's legitimate security demands. Threats, sanctions and bullying against Turkey will not work," he said. — Agencies

Blast kills Jordan policeman...

Continued from Page 1

The Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the Jordanian king. A source at the Kuwaiti foreign ministry said Kuwait vehemently condemns the blast targeting the Jordanian joint forces. Kuwait stands side by side with Jordan and even backs all measures it is taking in order to maintain

and safeguard its security and stability, the source said in a press statement yesterday. The source reaffirmed the country's principled and unwavering stance that decries all manifestations of violence and terrorism, while offering sincere condolences to the victims' families and wishing a swift recovery of those wounded in the attack.

Jordan has played a key role in the US-led coalition fighting IS in neighboring Syria and Iraq, using its air force and allowing coalition forces to use its bases. The kingdom was hit by a string of attacks in 2016, including a suicide bombing in June that killed seven guards near the border with Syria that was claimed by IS. Months later in December a shooting rampage, also claimed by IS, killed 10 people including a Canadian tourist. — Agencies

China delays razing mosque...

Continued from Page 1

food to those in Weizhou, locals said. Hundreds of security forces had at one point been brought in on civilian buses to secure a perimeter around the area, not allowing outsiders in. Internet and 4G cellphone service had been cut off to the area, resuming only some 14 km away from Weizhou - though residents could still make phone calls.

Yesterday evening, a few dozen people sat on folded stools or leaned against their motorbikes in another neighborhood away from the mosque, watching a movie projected onto a cement wall near a petrol station. Police cars occasionally drove past, lights flashing, but it was otherwise peaceful. "They told us the Internet was down because of recent rains, but does that really make sense?" said a young man straddling his bike. "They're afraid of us spreading videos," he said.

The mosque was rebuilt over the past two years, according to government documents, but the licensing process was not carefully managed and several officials received a "serious warning" from a local disciplinary committee. In the process, the facade was changed from its previous Chinese style - featuring sweeping tiled roofs similar to a Buddhist temple - to what is often described in China as an "Arab" design, with domes and crescents.

Concerns have been growing in Weizhou since the circulation of a government order last week demanding

the mosque's demolition on the grounds that it had been rebuilt without the proper permits. The document said that if the building was not demolished by Friday, Aug 10, the government would tear it down, locals said. Residents were frustrated because officials had shown support for the construction until now. Calls to the local county government and the regional Islamic association yesterday went unanswered. The words "Weizhou mosque" appeared to be censored on China's Twitter-like Weibo platform when AFP tried to search for them.

Islam is one of five officially recognized religions in China, home to some 23 million Muslims. Pressure has been building on the community in recent months as the Communist party moves to tighten the reins on religious expression. China's top leaders recently called for the "Sinicization" of religious practice - bringing it in line with "traditional" Chinese values and culture - and new regulations on religious affairs came into effect in February, sparking concern among rights groups.

The measures increased state supervision of religion in a bid to "block extremism", and in areas with significant Muslim populations, authorities have removed Islamic symbols, such as crescents, from public spaces. In the far western region of Xinjiang, things have gone much further, with Muslims being harshly punished for violating regulations banning beards and burqas, and even for the possession of unauthorized Qurans.

Concerns about the mosque standoff in Weizhou appeared to be spreading yesterday, as Muslims in other regions expressed solidarity with the protesters. "We are quietly waiting to see that the problem is satisfactorily resolved," said one open letter posted on Weibo by a mosque in Shanxi province. If it is not, "we reserve the legal right to go to Ningxia or call on the central government to petition". — AFP

Erdogan vows to defy US 'threats'...

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"Before it is too late, Washington must give up the misguided notion that our relationship can be asymmetrical and come to terms with the fact that Turkey has alternatives. Failure to reverse this trend of unilateralism and disrespect will require us to start looking for new friends and allies," Erdogan added. In Rize, Erdogan said the US would pay a price by challenging Turkey for the sake of "petty calculations", denouncing Washington for declaring "economic war on the entire world" and holding countries "for ransom through sanction threats".

Writing on Twitter, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also accused Washington of an "addiction to sanctions and bullying". Trump's "jubilation in inflicting economic hardship on its NATO ally Turkey is shameful," he wrote. "The US has to rehabilitate its addiction to sanctions (and) bullying or the entire world will unite - beyond verbal condemnations - to force it to," he warned.

Iran has also suffered a major tumbling of its currency this year partly over the reimposition of US sanc-

Sports

Yankees' Tanaka has an off night as Rangers Guzman hits 3 home runs

McCutchen sparks Giants to slugfest win over Pirates

NEW YORK: Ronald Guzman became the youngest player since Mickey Mantle to homer three times at any version of Yankee Stadium, and the Texas Rangers beat the New York Yankees 12-7 on Friday night. The 23-year-old Guzman recorded the first three-homer game in the regular season by a Ranger since Adrian Beltre on Aug. 22, 2012. He matched the feat achieved by a 23-year-old Mantle on May 13, 1955, against the Detroit Tigers and hit two homers off Masahiro Tanaka (9-3). Guzman is also the first rookie to ever have a three-homer game against the Yankees. Guzman now has 12 homers this season: six are against the Yankees. Texas won for the 10th time in 14 games.

GIANTS 13, PIRATES 10

Andrew McCutchen hit Clay Holmes' third pitch of the game for a home run, triggering a 16-hit attack that sent San Francisco past visiting Pittsburgh. Buster Posey and Alen Hanson combined for seven hits and six RBIs for the Giants, who evened the four-game series with National League wild-card implications at a game apiece after the Pirates had taken the opener 10-5 on Thursday night. The Giants scored three runs in the first inning, four in the third and three more in the fourth to build a 10-2 lead and held on despite getting out-hit by the Pirates 17-16.

RED SOX 19, ORIOLES 12

Xander Bogaerts and Andrew Benintendi each hit three-run homers, and Boston rallied from an early five-run deficit to defeat host Baltimore in a slugfest. Bogaerts' homer gave Boston a 3-0 lead in the first against Dylan Bundy. Benintendi hit a three-run blast off Donnie Hart in the seventh to put Boston in front 14-10. Bogaerts drove in four runs while Benintendi knocked in three, as the Red Sox improved to 11-2 versus the Orioles this season. Baltimore had used back-to-back four-run frames in the second and third for an 8-3 lead before Boston battled back.

ROCKIES 5, DODGERS 4

Ryan McMahon came off the bench and hit a two-run homer, DJ LeMahieu also homered and Colorado edged Los Angeles in Denver. Chris Iannetta had two hits and Jake McGee (2-4) got the win in relief for Colorado, which snapped a three-game losing streak. Adam Ottavino pitched the ninth to get his fifth save in eight opportunities. The news wasn't all good for the Rockies. All-Star third baseman and MVP candidate Nolan Arenado left the game in the fifth inning with a right shoulder injury. Arenado tweaked his shoulder on a relay throw to first on a double-play ball in the third inning. Manager Bud Black said on the broadcast that the move was precautionary.

CUBS 3, NATIONALS 2

Anthony Rizzo drew a bases-loaded walk in the bottom of the seventh inning to force in the tiebreaking run and give Chicago a victory over visiting Washington. The Cubs finished with just four hits. But they drew six walks, and that helped them as Rizzo walked three times, scored once and drove in the deciding run on a free pass. In the seventh inning, with the game tied at 2, the Cubs loaded the bases with three singles against Sammy Solis (1-2) and Greg Holland. Rizzo walked on four pitches for the winning run.

BRAVES 10, BREWERS 1

Kevin Gausman allowed only one run over eight innings to win his first start at home since being acquired at the trade deadline as Atlanta overpowered Milwaukee. Gausman (1-0 with Atlanta, 6-9 overall) allowed one run on six hits and struck out eight, two shy of his career best. Gausman looked more at ease than in his first start with the Braves, when he allowed three runs in five innings against the Mets. The Braves accumulated 13 hits, with third baseman Johan Camargo going 4-for-5 with two doubles and left fielder Ronald Acuna Jr. going 3-for-5. Center fielder Ender Inciarte had two hits and drove in four runs, and right fielder Nick Markakis had two hits, both doubles, and drove in three.

PADRES 2, PHILLIES 0

Jacob Nix held Philadelphia scoreless over six innings in his major league debut and catcher Austin Hedges hit his fifth homer in a span of 12 games as host San Diego claimed victory. Nix and relievers Matt Strahm, Craig Stammen and Kirby Yates combined on an eight-hit shutout-only the Padres' third shutout of the season. Yates earned his fourth save, retiring the final three hitters after giving up back-to-back singles to Odubel Herrera and Maikel Franco to open the ninth. Nix, a 2015 third-round draft pick, gave up four hits and two walks with four strikeouts while throwing 88 pitches. He worked out of jams in the first and second innings before retiring 13 of the last 14 Phillies he faced.

MARINERS 5, ASTROS 2

Nelson Cruz hit a two-run double with the bases loaded to key a three-run eighth inning as Seattle rallied past host Houston. Cruz drove home Mitch Haniger and Denard Span with his double to left-center field off Astros reliever Ryan Pressly. Haniger and Span reached in succession with one out against Astros starter Gerrit Cole before Cruz rallied from an 0-2 count to snap a 2-all deadlock. Kyle Seager followed with a run-scoring groundout to score Jean Segura, who was hit by the first pitch Pressly threw upon entering the game. Cole (10-5) suffered the loss in a third consecutive start.

ANGELS 4, ATHLETICS 3

Home runs by Kole Calhoun and Justin Upton were enough to help lift Los Angeles to victory over visiting Oakland. Calhoun hit a two-run homer in the third inning and Upton a two-run homer in the sixth, allowing the Angels to overcome an early 3-0 deficit. Angels starter Felix Pena gave up three runs in the first inning on a solo homer by Matt Chapman and a two-run homer by Khris Davis, but allowed nothing more until being replaced with two out in the sixth. Jim Johnson (4-2) made just four pitches to get the final out of the sixth inning and pick up the win.

CARDINALS 7, ROYALS 0

Matt Carpenter hit his National League-leading 32nd home run during a five-run second inning as St. Louis blanked host Kansas City. Carpenter has homered in three straight games-his third homer streak of at least three games since July 14, a span of just 24 games. He homered in six straight games from July 14-21, during which he hit eight round-trippers, and he



NEW YORK: Ronald Guzman #67 of the Texas Rangers at bat against the New York Yankees during their game at Yankee Stadium on Friday in New York City. — AFP

homered in three consecutive contests from Aug 3-5. Austin Gomber (2-0), making his third big league start, cruised to the win after allowing four hits and one walk while striking out three over five innings.

WHITE SOX 1, INDIANS 0

Daniel Palka hit a walk-off home run in the bottom of the ninth inning to lift host Chicago over Cleveland. Palka drove his 18th homer of the season over the left field wall on a 1-2 count. It marked the White Sox's second walk-off shot of the season, following Trayce Thompson's game-winning blast May 3 against the Minnesota Twins. Indians designated hitter Edwin Encarnacion left the game early because of what the team described as left arm discomfort. He drew a walk in the first inning and swiped second base as part of a double steal in which Francisco Lindor took third.

REDS 3, DIAMONDBACKS 0

Two runs scored on Billy Hamilton's seventh-inning bunt single, helping Cincinnati build upon a narrow lead en route to victory over visiting Arizona. Reds right-hander Anthony DeSclafani (6-3) pitched seven shutout innings. Raisel Iglesias pitched around a Paul Goldschmidt double in the ninth to record his 22nd save. Diamondbacks right-hander Clay Buchholz (5-2) was pulled after seven innings, having allowed three runs (two earned) and eight hits. He walked two and struck out four.

METS 6, MARLINS 2

Zack Wheeler won his fifth straight decision, leading New York to victory at Miami. Wheeler (7-6) allowed four hits, one walk and two runs in seven innings, striking out eight. Miguel Rojas' two-run

homer in the seventh snapped Wheeler's streak of 23 2/3 scoreless innings. Miami didn't get its first hit until Martin Prado singled leading off the fifth. Marlins catcher J.T. Realmuto doubled in the sixth, snapping his 0-for-23 hitless skid. Jose Urena (3-12) took the loss, allowing eight hits—all singles—one walk and four runs in 5 1/3 innings.

TIGERS 5, TWINS 3

Niko Goodrum and Jose Iglesias each blasted two-run homers, and Detroit bounced back from an 0-6 road trip to down visiting Minnesota. Goodrum's 11th homer and Iglesias' fifth allowed Jordan Zimmermann (5-4) to snap a personal four-game losing streak. Zimmermann allowed two unearned runs while giving up eight hits in 6 1/3 innings. Shane Greene gave up a ninth-inning run but collected his 24th save. Jorge Polanco and Logan Forsythe each had two hits and a run scored for the Twins. Ervin Santana (0-1), making his fourth appearance this season, gave up five runs on three hits in six innings.

RAYS 7, BLUE JAYS 0

Blake Snell pitched a perfect five innings before being removed. Michael Perez hit a two-run homer and Ji-Man Choi added a solo shot as Tampa Bay blanked host Toronto. Snell (13-5) had six strikeouts without allowing a base runner before being replaced by right-hander Jake Faria to start the sixth. The southpaw was making his second start since a stint on the disabled list with shoulder fatigue. Joey Wendle had three RBIs with a sacrifice fly and a double for the Rays, who are 6-1 against the Blue Jays this season after taking the opener of a three-game series. — Reuters



EAST RUTHERFORD: Trenton Cannon #40 of the New York Jets carries the ball as J.T. Jones #55 of the Atlanta Falcons defends in the second quarter during a preseason game at MetLife Stadium on Friday in East Rutherford, New Jersey. — AFP

Bridgewater, Darnold sharp for NY Jets

NEW YORK: The New York Jets' preseason home opener, a 17-0 home win over the Atlanta Falcons on Friday, spiced up the already intriguing quarterback situation, as rookie Sam Darnold and veteran Teddy Bridgewater each threw for almost 100 yards and a touchdown in limited playing time. Darnold, the third overall pick who didn't sign with the team until late last month, is trying to show that he is ready to step in. He completed 13 of 18 passes for 96 yards. Bridgewater, the former Minnesota Vikings starting quarterback, is trying to rebound after missing almost two seasons with a torn ACL and a dislocated kneecap. He connected on 7 of 8 passes for 85 yards.

Running back Isaiah Crowell caught a 16-yard touchdown pass from Bridgewater with 4:38 left in the first quarter, and wide receiver Charles Johnson grabbed a 14-yard pass from Darnold with 46 seconds to go before half-

time. Falcons starting quarterback Matt Ryan played one series, but star wide receiver Julio Jones and running back Devonta Freeman did not take the field. Kurt Benkert, a rookie out of Virginia, completed 9 of 17 passes for 125 yards for the Falcons, and veteran Matt Schaub completed all nine of his passes for 54 yards.

Raiders 16, Lions 10

Quarterback Connor Cook threw for 141 yards and a 7-yard second-quarter touchdown to wide receiver Ryan Switzer as host Oakland defeated Detroit. Rookie running back Chris Warren piled up 86 yards on 13 carries in coach Jon Gruden's return to the Raiders sideline. With Matt Stafford not playing the opener for the Lions, Jake Rudock and Matt Cassel, in his 14th season, posted similar numbers. Rudock completed 12 of 19 passes for 84 yards, and Cassel was 10-of-18 for 81 yards. Kerryon Johnson led Detroit running backs with 34 yards on seven carries, although the rookie from Auburn also had a nifty 57-yard run called back for a holding penalty. Running back Ameer Abdullah scored the Lions' only touchdown on a 1-yard run. Before the game, Raiders running back Marshawn Lynch, who had a 60-yard touchdown in the first series nullified by a penalty, remained seated on the bench for the national anthem, surrounded by his teammates, who were standing. — Reuters

LeBron James to make Lakers home debut against Rockets

LOS ANGELES: LeBron James will make his Los Angeles Lakers' home debut on October 20 against the Houston Rockets at Staples Center arena, the National Basketball Association announced on Friday.

The four-time league MVP James, who left the Cleveland Cavaliers last month to sign with the Lakers, and his new teammates travel to Portland on the 18th for their regular season debut contest.

The announcement comes two days after the league

released their abbreviated schedule for its 73rd season. On Wednesday, the league announced that for the 20th straight year, the Lakers will play on Christmas Day, travelling to face the defending champion Golden State Warriors.

James returns to Cleveland for his lone game against the Cavaliers on November 21. The Lakers will play on national television 35 times. James, who signed a four-year, \$153 million contract with the Lakers in July, faced the Warriors in each of the past four NBA finals as a member of Cavaliers.

The Lakers' longest road trip of the season is a five-game, 12-day stretch from February 1-12 when the Grammy Awards are held at Staples Center. They'll play 13 back-to-back sets. In other key contests, Toronto Raptors Kawhi Leonard will make his return to San Antonio on January 3. The Spurs dealt Leonard to the Raptors in the offseason for DeMar DeRozan. DeRozan returns with his new team to Toronto on February 22. The league will stage its earliest opening to a season since the 1980-81 campaign began on October 10. —AFP



LeBron James

Sports

Rafael Nadal stays on track in Toronto with win over Cilic

Tsitsipas stuns Zverev to reach Toronto semi-finals

TORONTO: Rafael Nadal recovered from a slow start, overcoming Marin Cilic 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 as the Spaniard's chase for a long-sought ATP Masters title on hardcourt heated up on Friday. The world number one reached the semi-finals in Toronto and will next face Russian Karen Khachanov, who beat Robin Haase 6-3, 6-1.

Nadal last won a title at this level on cement in 2013. "It was a very important match for me," Nadal said. "Being in semi-finals is great news at the start of the hard court season. And winning three good matches in the first Master 1000, it's so important for me."

"He played unstoppable in the first set. I resisted, I played with the right tactic. I tried to find my solutions - but it was so difficult." Stefanos Tsitsipas saved two match points to beat defending champion Alexander Zverev in their quarter-final contest 3-6, 7-6 (13/11), 6-4. The Greek teenager, who turns 20 on Sunday's final day, defeated his third straight top 10 opponent at the tournament after knocking out Dominic Thiem in the second round and 13-time major winner Novak Djokovic in the third. Tsitsipas is the youngest player to post three top 10 wins at a single tournament since the 19-year-old Nadal at Monte Carlo in 2006. Tsitsipas will next face Wimbledon runner-up Kevin Anderson, who beat Grigor Dimitrov 6-2, 6-2.

"I'm confused now, is this real?" 27th-ranked Tsitsipas said after completing his prestige hat-trick of upsets. Nadal got caught on the back foot in the first set against Cilic, who took the opener on his fourth chance. Nadal struck back in the second with a concluding break to square the match before taking victory with a break in the final game on his third match

point after more than two hours.

Tsitsipas rallied from a set and 5-2 down to turn the tables on Zverev, who had been bidding for a fourth Masters 1000 title. Tsitsipas broke in the ninth game of the second on the way into a tiebreaker, where he calmly converted on his fifth set point after saving two match points for the second-seeded Zverev.

Tsitsipas then salvaged four break points for 2-1 in the third, he traded breaks with the German and saved another trio of break points for a 5-4 lead. He completed the victory after nearly two and a half hours on Zverev's sixth double-fault.

"This shows that with dedication and work, dreams do come true," Tsitsipas said. "I can see that it's real-it's happening. I don't know what happened (in the second set), I just broke him (for 4-5). All along I could feel the crowd support, I knew I was still in the match."

CANADIAN REMATCH

Anderson's sweep past reigning ATP World Tour Finals champion Dimitrov was a rematch of their 2014 quarter-final duel in Canada when Dimitrov claimed one of his six wins against the South African. "It definitely was a great match today. I felt I played really well right from the beginning," Anderson said.

"Right from the first point till the last, I felt I was in a really good frame of mind, playing the kind of tennis that I knew I wanted to be playing and needed to be playing." "Getting off the court pretty comfortably definitely is a really good feeling." The big South African rolled into the semis in just 66 minutes, breaking four times while managing only a modest 11 aces. — AFP



TORONTO: Rafael Nadal of Spain plays a shot against Marin Cilic of Croatia during a quarter final match on Day 5 of the Rogers Cup at Aviva Centre on August 10, 2018 in Toronto, Canada. — AFP

Halep topples Garcia in straight sets to reach Montreal semis

MONTREAL: World number one Simona Halep punched her ticket to the semi-finals of the WTA Canada tournament for the fourth straight year, cruising past France's Caroline Garcia 7-5, 6-1 on Friday. The 26-year-old Halep battled through a difficult first set, then easily won the second in a rematch of last year's quarter-final contest with Garcia which was also won by the Romanian.

"The first set was really tough," Halep said. "I just didn't give up at all in the first set. After I took it, I felt more confident. I felt that I'm moving better, I'm playing better, stronger. [Garcia] went a little bit down with energy after she lost that set."

The top-seeded Halep hammered 19 winners and won 77 percent of points on her first serve in the 88-minute contest. Garcia started quickly but could not keep her unforced errors in check, finishing with a total of 31. She earned her only career win over Halep in five previous meetings in the 2017 WTA Beijing final.

Halep moves on to the final four where she will face Aussie Ashleigh Barty, who ousted giantkiller Kiki Bertens of the Netherlands in straight sets 6-3, 6-1. Halep, the 2016 tournament champion, was playing her third match in the past two days after earning two wins on Thursday over Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova and 38-year-old Venus Williams.

After the match Halep slammed the WTA about her scheduling, saying she regularly has less time to recover from matches than her opponents. "I am very upset about it," said Halep, who is first up on the Montreal courts on Saturday. "I talked to my team about this and all of them are upset... I never complained about the schedule, but today was enough."

On Friday, Halep broke Garcia in the fifth game of the second set for a 4-1 lead and had no trouble icing the win from there. World number 16 Barty reached the semi-finals by reeling off nine of the last 10 games against Bertens.

"I never played against [Barty], so I don't really know what to expect," said Halep. "But I know she's very talented. I just have to talk to my coach tomorrow before the match, trying to stay stronger on my legs, and trying to be with the energy at the highest level."

Barty was the more composed player in difficult, windy conditions as Bertens, who had seen off ninth seed Karolina Pliskova and eighth-seeded Petra Kvitova in her previous two matches, was undone by 31 unforced errors in the 55-minute quarter-final.

Barty has reached the semi-finals on her Montreal debut having made the last 16 when the event was held in Toronto last year. "It was really tricky conditions and we were both struggling a little," Barty said.

"I'm very happy to come through and get a little bit better during the match." US Open champion Sloane Stephens was just as ruthless as Barty in her quarter-final as the third-seeded American made the semi-finals for the second straight year, seeing off Anastasiya Sevastova of Latvia 6-2, 6-2.

"I've been playing well and it's a good start here to the US Open Series. I'm happy to be back in North America and playing on hard courts, and I'm hoping for some more good results," said Stephens. Stephens will face defending champion Elina Svitolina, who came back from a 0-4 deficit in the first set to eliminate Elise Mertens 7-5, 6-3. — AFP

Tour de France winner Ullrich admitted to psychiatric hospital

BERLIN: Germany's Tour de France champion Jan Ullrich was admitted to a psychiatric hospital on Friday after his brief detention for allegedly assaulting a prostitute. The 44-year-old former cycling star was earlier Friday released on bail pending an investigation for possible attempted manslaughter. But once free, Ullrich suffered a panic attack, reported the DPA news agency.

"Jan Ullrich was admitted to a psychiatric hospital on Friday night where his state of health is being assessed by specialists," a Frankfurt police spokesperson told AFP yesterday.

"Due to his mental and physical state there was no other choice" but to transport him to a psychiatric unit by ambulance, the spokesperson said.

Friday's incidents arose after the 1997 Tour de France champion had called on the services of a prostitute at the five-star Villa Kennedy Hotel in Frankfurt, Bild daily reported. But he then "attacked the 31-year-old escort lady in one of the hotel rooms after a dispute," prosecutors and police said in a joint statement.

He put up a struggle as officers arrived to detain him, they said, noting that "the accused was likely under the influence of alcohol and drugs".

"The accused is under investigation for attempted manslaughter and grievous bodily harm. Investigations are not over," they said, adding that the woman has given "extensive details on the attacks" while Ullrich has exerted his right to remain silent.

Ullrich's run-in with the law came just a week after his 24-hour detention in Spain, where he had sought to force his way into the Mallorca home of his neighbour, German actor Til Schweiger, and threatened him.

Ullrich's latest woes came just hours after he arrived back in Germany to seek therapy for his drink and drug habit following last week's scandal in Mallorca.

The former cyclist's dramatic fall from grace came two decades after he became the only German to have won the Tour de France, in 1997. Born in former communist East Germany, Ullrich racked up his triumphs after reunification, turning him into a national hero.

He later also won Olympic gold in Sydney in 2000, but failed to replicate his victory at the gruelling French race, finishing for several years behind US cyclist Lance Armstrong. Like Armstrong, who was subsequently stripped of all his seven Tour de France wins over doping, Ullrich was embroiled in allegations that he used performance boosting substances.

The German was excluded from the 2006 Tour de France over his links to the Operation Puerto scandal

that centred on disgraced doctor Eufemiano Fuentes, who gave performance-enhancing blood transfusions to top cyclists. After retiring from cycling in 2007, Ullrich finally came clean in 2013 about his doping past. Since then, he has been struggling with drinking problems. In 2014, he injured two people in a car crash in Switzerland, and was charged with drink driving. He was convicted three years later over the case by a Swiss court. Sentenced to 21 months in prison, Ullrich was able to convert that into a suspended sentence of four years plus a fine of 10,000 euros (\$11,460).

His addiction led to his separation from his wife Sara at the end of 2017, media reported, noting that she has since moved with their three sons to the Allgaeu region of southern Germany. Ullrich has a 15-year-old daughter from a previous relationship, with Gaby Weiss.

Going into rehab had been a condition for him to be able to see his children again, Ullrich had said. Amid his latest woes, his former rival turned friend Armstrong offered his support earlier this week, according to Bild.

Ullrich's lawyer Wolfgang Hoppe told the newspaper that Armstrong said he was "ready to immediately get into a plane with his doctor and come to Europe" to help the German.

Armstrong "said that the cycling community must hold together. But that what's most important is that Jan first allows himself to be helped," said Hoppe, recounting a telephone conversation with the disgraced US cyclist. — AFP



BERLIN: Spain's Maria Perez celebrates as she crosses the finish line to win the women's 20km walk final race during the European Athletics Championships in Berlin yesterday. — AFP

Spain's Martin and Perez win walks after delayed start

BERLIN: Spain celebrated a double triumph as Alvaro Martin and Maria Perez struck gold in the 20km walk races at the European Championships yesterday. The pair won their titles after a trying morning for organisers when investigation of a suspected gas leak forced them to delay the start of the women's race on the city centre course by nearly two hours.

They then had to face the logistical headache of staging both races at the same time on a tight circuit but the congested joint race passed off without problem as a large, enthusiastic crowd cheered the Spanish success. Martin, a 24-year-old from Llerena, enjoyed the first major title of his career, making his move to victory on the penultimate of the 20 one-kilometre loops and ensuring a Spanish one-two with Diego Garcia Carrera finishing runner-up. Martin clocked a season's best one

hour 20 minutes 42 seconds, six seconds clear of Garcia Carrera, while Vasily Mizinov won the bronze two seconds further back. In the continued absence of a Russian team because of the IAAF-imposed doping ban on the national federation, Mizinov was one of the Russians cleared by their doping review board to compete as an Authorised Neutral Athlete.

Like Martin, who took off his cap and waved to the crowd before the end, the diminutive 22-year-old Perez won with enough to spare to ensure the last of her 20 circuits was effectively a lap of honour.

Yet her victory was even more emphatic as she won the women's race by nearly half a minute in a championship best 1:26:36. Perez, a silver medallist in the European Under-23 championships only last year, graduated to her first senior international title after hauling back a break from Czech Anezka Drahotova.

She then forged away herself mid-race with Drahotova taking the silver in 1:27:03, while Antonella Palmisano, of Italy, won the bronze in 1:27:30.

Before the start there had been confusion for the athletes before organisers explained that the fire brigade had been called in to check the smell of gas in the vicinity of the course as a matter of standard safety procedure. — Reuters

Kenya crush Tunisia to inch closer to World Cup place

NAIROBI: Kenya ran in eleven tries to crush Tunisia 67-0 in their penultimate game of the 2019 World Cup qualifying tournament yesterday.

Debutant Willy Ambaka made a perfect transition from sevens to the traditional form of the game when he put Kenya ahead with the first try after only four minutes of play.

The winger picked up a loose ball in the middle of the Tunisian defence to open the scoring for the Simbas, who are set play Namibia in the tournament decider in Windhoek next week.

After a scrappy opening 20 minutes, punctuated by handling errors and poor passes, Kenya outclassed an injury-weakened Tunisian side, which is taking part in the tournament for the first time.

Tries from skipper Davis Chenge, Andrew Chogo, Jacob Ojee, Elkean Musonye and Darwin Mukidza and five conversions from the golden boot of Mukidza combined to give the home side a commanding 40-0 half-time lead.

Martin Owilah scored the seventh try straight from the kick-off to stretch the Kenyan lead, before the home side were reduced to 14 men after Hillary Mwanjilwa was yellow-carded.

Tunisia also had two players sent to the sin bin and could not resist the Kenyan pressure. Owilah, who earned the man-of-the-match accolade for his performance, and Ambaka both added tries to complete the rout.

Kenya picked up the maximum five points to stay second in the final African qualifying group on 17 point, three behind Namibia. The winner gains an automatic place in the tournament in Japan, the second-place team plays a repechage Kenyan coach Ian Snook said he planned to make a few changes to the team for the final match in Windhoek.

"The result against Tunisia was good. But we need a lot of things to be fixed before we play Namibia. Tactically there be changes to the team," said Snook. — AFP

Sports

Mourinho hails Pogba performance as Man Utd make winning start

Lukaku and Vardy started on the bench after World Cup exertions

MANCHESTER: Jose Mourinho hailed captain Paul Pogba's willingness to put his body on the line to lead Manchester United to a winning start in the Premier League with a 2-1 victory over Leicester City on Friday. Less than a month since Pogba scored in the World Cup final to help France lift the trophy, he was thrown straight into action by Mourinho despite just returning to pre-season training this week.

Pogba's third-minute spot-kick settled the hosts' nerves as United allayed some of the doom and gloom predicted by Mourinho after failing to land a series of targets before Thursday's transfer deadline.

Luke Shaw sealed the points seven minutes from time before Jamie Vardy headed home a consolation for the visitors. After a week in which Pogba has been linked with a move away from Old Trafford, with Barcelona's interest piqued by the Frenchman's frosty relationship with Mourinho after he was repeatedly dropped last season, the Portuguese showed his faith in the midfielder by surprisingly handing him the armband. "Pogba was a monster," said Mourinho. "We thought maximum (he could play) 60 minutes, but he managed 80." On top of his transfer troubles, Mourinho had a host of injuries and players lacking match sharpness after the World Cup to contend with.

"Paul was fantastic, his contribution was amazing but the fuel was disappearing. We were in trouble," added Mourinho. "I don't remember in my career to be in so much in trouble to make my changes because I wanted to make five or six and I could only make three."

The hosts got a much-needed lift after just two minutes when Daniel Amartey was harshly adjudged by referee Andre Mariner to have handled Alexis Sanchez's shot. Pogba resisted the pleas of Sanchez to take the spot-kick

and after a prolonged stuttering run up, dispatched his shot into the top corner giving Kasper Schmeichel no chance to repeat his penalty saving heroics at the World Cup for Denmark.

"We don't have a penalty taker, it's how we feel and I decided to take it. Maybe on the next game I leave it to Alexis," said Pogba. "I didn't have any pre-season games, I came back on Monday so it was very hard for the legs." Mourinho was particularly annoyed to miss out on a series of centre-back targets, including Leicester's Harry Maguire who shone for England in Russia. "It will be a difficult season for everybody, not just for us," said Mourinho. "I had my plans for many months and I find myself with the market closed in a situation I did not think I would be in." However, he can still rely on one of the world's best goalkeepers as David de Gea put his poor World Cup showing behind him with a fine save to prevent James Maddison levelling. Both sides' top scorers from last season, Romelu Lukaku and Vardy, started on the bench after their World Cup exertions and were introduced for the final quarter. Vardy nearly made a vital contribution as provider when he outmuscled Shaw and picked out Gray in the middle who was denied by another fine save by De Gea.

Shaw, who himself has suffered plenty of criticism from Mourinho in the past two seasons, then appeared to make the game safe when he fired low into the far corner to spark wild celebrations from his manager. "Even if I forget the goal, it was a complete performance," said Mourinho of the left-back's display. Vardy pulled a goal back deep into stoppage time when he stooped to head in after Ricardo Pereira's cross came back off the post and United were forced to see out a nervy final few minutes to get off to a winning start. — AFP



MANCHESTER: Manchester United's French midfielder Paul Pogba (L) vies with Leicester City's Portuguese defender Ricardo Pereira during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Leicester City at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on Friday. — AFP

Ronaldo set to begin Juve adventure

ROME: Juventus fans will get their first glimpse of superstar summer signing Cristiano Ronaldo in rarified surroundings today, when he makes his debut for the Italian champions at the foot of the Alps a week before the start of the new Serie A season.

Ronaldo, who signed for Juventus from European champions Real Madrid in a shock 100 million euro (\$117 million) deal exactly a month ago, will wear the Juventus kit for the first time in the club's traditional pre-season friendly between Juve's first XI and a "B" team in Villar Perosa, a small town 40 kilometres (25 miles) west of Turin.

Set in a valley at the foot of the Italian Alps, Villar Perosa (population: roughly 4,100) is the home of the family estate and summer retreat of the powerful Agnelli, who, apart from a brief period around the Second World War, have run Juventus since 1923 and established the traditional alpine curtain raiser.

Members of the industrial dynasty-founders of Fiat car manufacturers and often called the "Italian Kennedys" have lived at "The Castle" in Villar Perosa since the 19th century, while deceased former club chairman Gianni Agnelli was town mayor between 1945 and 1980.

Used to imposing arenas such as the Camp Nou, Old Trafford and the Bernabeu, current Ballon d'Or holder Ronaldo will take his first steps in black and white stripes at the town's compact ground, named after notoriously brutal Italy centre-back Gaetano Scirea.

There should be more fans at the match than the entire population of Villar Perosa, with the 5,000 tickets available long-since sold out and even more supporters desperate to try and catch a glimpse of their new idol.

Such is the enthusiasm for Ronaldo's debut, that special security measures have been drafted in the town for the match, including a complete ban on the sale of

alcohol from yesterday. Ronaldo's arrival had sparked rumours that the match would be moved to the Allianz Stadium such was the enthusiasm from fans after his signing, but the club decided to stick with the traditional bucolic setting. That could mean Ronaldo gets even more up close and personal with Juve fans. Established custom dictates that five minutes after half-time fans invade the pitch, bringing the game to a halt as fans charge after and greet their heroes. Ronaldo joined the team for training on Wednesday with Juventus two important players lighter after their return from the International Champions Cup in the United States. The 33-year-old's arrival pushed striker Gonzalo Higuain to rivals AC Milan, and the Argentine was joined by the impressive Mattia Caldara, who has established himself as one of Serie A's best defenders since breaking through at Atalanta two years ago.

Caldara arrived at Juve in early July only to be swapped last week with Leonardo Bonucci, who returned to Turin after just one unconvincing season with Milan. The decision to deprive themselves of a proven Serie A goalscorer and in particular to swap Caldara, 24, for 31-year-old Bonucci has left some question marks over Juventus despite Ronaldo's proven prowess.

His domestic form—despite scoring 26 goals in La Liga—was below the almost superhuman levels that had characterised his time in Spain as Madrid finished third behind local rivals Atletico and a whole 17 points behind champions Barcelona. However Juve's closest recent challengers—Napoli and Roma—have sold important players this summer, and Napoli have to adapt to new coach Carlo Ancelotti following talismanic Maurizio Sarri's departure and subsequent move to Chelsea.

Juventus have signed Ronaldo not to cement their domestic dominance, after winning seven straight league titles, but to boost their international profile and bag their first Champions League triumph in over two decades.

Last season, Ronaldo was his usual dominant self in Europe as he smashed 15 goals to top the Champions League scoring charts and fired Real Madrid to continental glory for the third straight year. Interest in Juve and in Italian football has spiked following Ronaldo's arrival. July visits to the club museum shot up 15 per-



Cristiano Ronaldo

cent compared to last year, and were nearly a third more than in 2016, and the over 29,000 season tickets available to fans have been sold despite a deeply unpopular 30 percent price bump announced before Ronaldo's arrival.

ESPN have snatched the rights to broadcast Serie A in the United States from BeIN Sports (although the league has not said how much the network will pay) and World Cup Golden Ball winner Luka Modric is also pondering a move to join former teammate Ronaldo in Italy—at Juve's arch rivals Inter Milan. — AFP

Barcelona kick off in Spanish Supercup with Messi as captain

TANGIERS: Barcelona kick off a new season and a new era when they take on Sevilla in the Spanish Supercup in Morocco today with Lionel Messi newly installed as club captain.

Messi has occasionally worn the armband before when Andres Iniesta, who replaced Xavi as skipper in 2015, missed a game. The Argentine has also led his country, with only mixed results.

With Iniesta moving to Japan, Messi takes the job full time starting in Tangiers after Sergi Roberto captained an inexperienced Barca squad during the club's recent tour of the United States.

Messi can eclipse Iniesta in another way in the Supercup, as both have won a club-record 32 trophies with Barca and victory today would break the tie. The match marks a break with tradition. Since its return in 1982, the competition has been played over two legs with each team hosting one game.

This season, with Sevilla in the Europa League and Barcelona keen to play in the lucrative International Champions Cup exhibition tournament in the United States, the Spanish football authorities switched to a single-game format.

They also moved the match across this Straits of Gibraltar to Morocco, where Spanish football is keenly followed. Sevilla, who therefore lost an attractive home game against one of Europe's most glamorous teams, protested to no avail. This week the Spanish football authorities made another ruling that helped Barcelona, announcing that the normal restrictions on non-EU players in Spanish games would not apply. One of Barca's South Americans, Brazilian Philippe Coutinho, obtained his Portuguese passport on Friday, but the decision means that coach Ernesto Valverde can play three recent major signings Chilean Arturo Vidal and Brazilians Malcolm and Arthur together. Barcelona could also give a debut to Clement Lenglet, a French defender they bought from Sunday's opponent, Sevilla. The game pits Barca, who won the Spanish double, against the club they thrashed 5-0 in the final of the Copa del Rey and who finished a distant seventh in La Liga.

Barcelona follow today's game with a home friendly against Boca Juniors on Wednesday before kicking off the defence of their Spanish league title at home to Alaves next Saturday evening. Sevilla played on Thursday, beating Zalgiris Vilnius 1-0 at home in a third qualifying round first-leg game. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the second Test between England and India at Lord's yesterday:

India 1st Innings 107 (J Anderson 5-20)

England 1st Innings

A. Cook c Karthik b Sharma	21
K. Jennings lbw b Shami	11
J. Root lbw b Shami	19
O. Pope lbw b Pandya	28
J. Bairstow c Karthik b Pandya	93
J. Buttler lbw b Shami	24
C. Woakes not out	120
S. Curran not out	22
Extras (b7, lb10, nb1, w1)	19
Total (6 wkts, 81 overs, 365 mins)	357
To bat: A Rashid, S Broad, J Anderson.	

Fall of wickets: 1-28 (Jennings), 2-32 (Cook), 3-77 (Pope), 4-89 (Root), 5-131 (Buttler), 6-320 (Bairstow).
Bowling: Sharma 19-3-88-1; Shami 19-4-74-3 (Inb); Yadav 9-1-44-0; Pandya 17-0-66-2 (1w); Ashwin 17-1-68-0.

India: Murali Vijay, KL Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli (capt), Ajinkya Rahane, Hardik Pandya, Dinesh Karthik (wkt), Ravichandran Ashwin, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Ishant Sharma.

England lead by 250 runs at third day

LONDON: England were 357 for six in reply to India's first innings 107, a lead of 250 runs, when bad light forced an early close on the third day of the second Test at Lord's yesterday.

Chris Woakes was 120 not out, his maiden Test century. Together with Jonny Bairstow (93) he shared a partnership of 189, an England sixth-wicket record in Test matches against India, surpassing the 171 put on by Ian Botham and Bob Taylor at Bombay (Mumbai) in 1980.

Woakes, in his 25th match at this level, went past his previous Test best of 66, made against Sri Lanka at Lord's two years ago, before completing a 129-ball hundred, including 15 fours, with a pulled three off Hardik Pandya.

His innings meant Woakes had his name on the three Lord's honours boards that record centuries, five-wicket innings returns and 10-wicket match hauls in Tests at the 'home of cricket'. Woakes took six for 70 and five for 32 in a match return of 11 for 102 against Pakistan at Lord's in 2016.

Sam Curran was 22 not out. England had collapsed to 98 for four at lunch, with India paceman Mohammad Shami doing the bulk of the damage on his way to stumps figures of three for 74 in 19 overs. England lead this five-match series 1-0 after a 31-run win in the first Test at Edgbaston last week. — AFP



LONDON: England's batsman Chris Woakes (C) runs down the pitch to score his century on the third day of the second Test cricket match between England and India at Lord's Cricket Ground in London yesterday. — AFP

Live		Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE			
Liverpool v West Ham United	beIN SPORTS HD 2		15:30
Southampton v Burnley	beIN SPORTS HD 8		15:30
Arsenal v Manchester City	beIN SPORTS HD 2		18:00
SPANISH SUPER CUP 2018			
Sevilla v Barcelona	beIN SPORTS		23:00
GERMANY SUPER CUP 2018			
Eintracht Frankfurt v Bayern Munich	beIN SPORTS HD 5		21:30
FRENCH LEAGUE			
Olympique Lyonnais v Amiens	beIN SPORTS HD 6		16:00
Girondins de Bordeaux v Strasbourg	beIN SPORTS HD 6		18:00
Paris Saint-Germain v Caen	beIN SPORTS HD 6		22:00

25 Yankees' Tanaka has an off night as Rangers Guzman hits 3 home runs



26 Rafael Nadal stays on track in Toronto with win over Cilic



27 England lead by 250 runs at third day



Chelsea, Spurs off to winning starts

Pochettino salutes Spurs' returning World Cup stars



Huddersfield: Chelsea's Spanish defender Marcos Alonso (C) vies with Huddersfield Town's Beninese striker Steve Mounie (R) during the English Premier League football match between Huddersfield Town and Chelsea at the John Smith's stadium in Huddersfield, northern England yesterday. — AFP

LONDON: Chelsea manager Maurizio Sarri got off to a winning Premier League start as new signing Jorginho slotted home coolly from the penalty spot in a 3-0 win at Huddersfield yesterday. Tottenham also made light of discontent over their lack of summer transfer activity by resisting a late Newcastle onslaught to win 2-1 at St. James's Park thanks to goals from Jan Vertonghen and Dele Alli.

Watford, Bournemouth and Crystal Palace also picked up 2-0 wins on the opening weekend of the season. Chelsea have endured a turbulent pre-season with Sarri sworn in to replace fellow Italian Antonio Conte less than a month before the campaign got underway.

The Londoners also smashed their transfer record and set a new world record fee for a goalkeeper in splashing 80 million euros (£72 million, \$92 million) on Kepa Arrizabalaga this week after Thibaut Courtois departed for Real Madrid.

But the young Basque 'keeper was rarely troubled in

recording a clean sheet as the visitors' greater quality told at the John Smith's Stadium after a slow start. Crucially Chelsea have held onto Eden Hazard, but while the Belgian was only deemed fit enough for a place on the bench following his World Cup exertions, N'Golo Kante was thrown straight into the side after starring in Russia for world champions France.

Kante has been deployed in a more advanced role due to Jorginho's arrival and was on the end of Willian's cross to open the scoring 11 minutes before half-time. Moments later Marcos Alonso was upended inside the area and Jorginho cheekily slotted home after a hop in his run up wrong-footed Ben Hamer.

Hazard was introduced for the final 15 minutes and looked keen to make up for lost time as he teed up Pedro Rodriguez to round off the scoring.

POCHETTINO PLEADS FOR UNITY

Tottenham have had a much quieter summer after

becoming the first Premier League side since the transfer window was introduced in 2003 to not make a single signing. Supporters' groups have demanded answers from chairman Daniel Levy after paying increased season ticket prices for a first season in the club's new stadium.

But manager Mauricio Pochettino has insisted his happy just to have retained a host of players who excelled at the World Cup and it was two of them who handed Spurs all three points at Newcastle.

Vertonghen and Alli struck either side of Jose's equaliser for the Magpies with all three goals coming in the first 18 minutes. "It is important to be strong from the beginning and have belief and convey a positive message," Pochettino said.

"It is important the fans know the players need their help." Harry Kane was one of Tottenham's many World Cup stars to start despite having just a few days' pre-season training in their legs. The Golden Boot winner

was unable to break his hex of failing to score in August and, like the rest of his side looked far from his best, but Pochettino was impressed by his side's commitment and energy levels.

"I am so proud of the performance in the circumstances," added Pochettino. "We can do better, of course, and be more consistent but it was a massive challenge to connect everything and prepare in the few days we had."

Promoted Fulham earned rave reviews for their summer business, outspending Manchester United and Manchester City, in signing 12 new players. But there was no instant return on that investment as Jeffrey Schlupp and Wilfried Zaha scored either side of half-time to give Palace a 2-0 win at Craven Cottage.

Roberto Pereyra scored twice as Watford were too good for Brighton. Bournemouth were also comfortable victors over promoted Cardiff thanks to goals from Ryan Fraser and Callum Wilson. — AFP

Ledecky returns to form, Ikee shines for hosts Japan

TOKYO: Katie Ledecky claimed her second gold of the 2018 Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in the women's 400 metres freestyle yesterday while Rikako Ikee cemented her place as the rising star of Japanese swimming.

American Ledecky dominated the 400 metres to win in a time of 3:58:50, the sixth fastest swim in history, and provide the perfect response to her disappointing bronze in the 200 metres.

The five-times Olympic gold medalist was never threatened by 17-year-old Australian Ariarne Titmus, who went under four minutes for the first time to claim silver. American Leah Grace was third in a repeat of the podium from Thursday's 800 metres. "It is exciting for me to see that (Titmus going under four minutes)," said Ledecky, who won five golds at the 2014 Pan Pacs aged just 17.

"I was the only one to go under four minutes in a textile suit for a few years now and so it is exciting for me to see how I put the standard out there and there are a lot of girls chasing that."

In 18-year-old Ikee, Japan may have found their swimming talisman for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics following her domination of the women's 100 metres butterfly. After claiming two silver medals on the first two days of competition, Ikee went one step further as she broke the championship record she set in the morning's heats to win gold in 56:08 seconds.

American Kelsi Dahlia and Australia's Emma McKeon took silver and bronze, but the race was all about Ikee as the teenager thrilled an expectant home crowd with a stunning performance that threatened Sarah Sjoestoen's world record of 55:48 seconds.

"My speed is improving because I am gaining more strength and power," said Ikee, who added that she was aiming to go under 56 seconds soon. "It was so important to win this global competition. I always want to improve my personal best but this time it was special because I won a gold."

Compatriot Yui Ohashi also set a championship record as she secured Japan's sec-

ond gold of the night in the women's 200 metres individual medley. Ohashi, the world silver medallist, came into the race as favourite and won in 2:08:16 to break the meet record set by compatriot Miho Teramura in the heats.

Teramura came third in the final with Canada's Sydney Pickrem taking silver. Four-times Olympic medallist Kosuke Hagino couldn't follow suit in the men's event as American Chase Kalisz's superior breaststroke proved crucial.

Mitchell Larkin of Australia surged in the final stretch to out-touch Hagino and claim silver with the Japanese in third. There was further success for the United States in the men's 100 metres butterfly, with Calae Dressel setting a championship record of 50:75, bettering Michael Phelps's time set in 2010, to claim gold. The seven-times world champion powered to victory to secure his first Pan Pacs gold medal, beating compatriot John Conger into second. There was an Australia one-two in the men's 400 freestyle, as Jack McLoughlin led from halfway and held off a late challenge from compatriot Mack Horton to take gold.

Australia also won the women's 4x100 metres freestyle relay, anchored by a strong swim from Cate Campbell, to better their



TOKYO: (From L) Silver medallist US swimmer Kelsi Dahlia, gold medallist Japan's swimmer Rikako Ikee and bronze medallist Australia's swimmer Emma McKeon pose on the podium of the 100m butterfly women final of the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships 2018 in Tokyo, yesterday. — AFP

own championship record 3:31:58 set four years ago on the Gold Coast. The U.S. thought they had won the final event of the day, the men's 4x100 metres freestyle, but were disqualified for swimming out of

order. The US team set a new championship record time but were disqualified to hand Brazil their first gold of the meet. Australia were bumped up to second and the Japanese quartet took bronze. —Reuters