



2 Education ministry discovers more cases of forged diplomas



9 Bane of Pakistani politicians: Young voters with smartphones



24 Nine family members among 17 dead in US 'duck boat' tragedy



27 Judo federation scraps events in UAE and Tunisia over Israel



Ghanem: Israeli Jewish state law demands strong rebuttal

Kuwaiti lawmakers call for united stand against Israel

CAIRO: The Israeli Knesset's approval of the "Jewish nation-state" law requires a strong Arab rebuttal to save the Palestinian cause from its current dire situation, said Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem yesterday. Delivering his speech to the 28th session of the Inter-Arab Parliamentary Union, Ghanem affirmed that the Palestinian cause has a geopolitical and security significance, which required utmost attention on part of the Arab countries. He cited the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's speech at the recently-held Istanbul OIC extraordinary summit, which mainly focused on the Palestinian cause and its importance to regional stability and security.

The top Kuwaiti parliamentarian warned of the serious consequences of ignoring the just cause of the Palestinian people, affirming that if the matter was left unsolved, the issue will have an impact on the Arab world. Ghanem called on his Arab brethren to rise above the feelings of loss and desperation, focusing all needed efforts to resolve the dilemmas threatening the Palestinian cause. The Israeli aggressors are keen on pushing Arabs towards mental and moral defeat; however, this should be countered with solidarity and a firm stance to foil Israel's attempts at Arab and Islamic disunity, said Ghanem. He affirmed that Kuwait, along with all Arab and Islamic nations, would find a way to resolve the Palestinian cause once and for all to ensure justice will prevail.

Ghanem later said the vast majority of the global community believes in the righteousness of the Palestinian cause. Speaking to KUNA after the conclusion of the extraordinary session, he said that the meeting was held upon a request by the Kuwaiti parliament in a clear act of solidarity with the Palestinian people. The session reflected a strong Arab stance against Israel's inhumane actions, indicated Ghanem, who stressed that it was important for the international community to hold the Israelis accountable for the violations committed against the Palestinians. Ghanem thanked all those who participated in the meeting, hoping that the message, which was sent to the world, was clear and direct.



CAIRO: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem delivers his speech to the 28th session of the Inter-Arab Parliamentary Union yesterday. — KUNA

Trump slams 'perhaps illegal' Cohen taping

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump yesterday slammed his ex-lawyer Michael Cohen, saying he may have acted illegally in secretly taping their discussion about payments to a former Playboy model over an alleged affair. It was Trump's first direct reaction to a report broken by the New York Times a day earlier which said the FBI had seized the recording during a raid on Cohen's office earlier this year.



Michael Cohen



Donald Trump



Karen McDougal

Cohen has not yet been arrested or charged. "Inconceivable that the government would break into a lawyer's office (early in the morning) - almost unheard of," Trump tweeted. "Even more inconceivable that a lawyer would tape a client - totally unheard of & perhaps illegal. The good news is that your favorite President did nothing wrong!"

Former Playboy model Karen McDougal claims she had a months-long affair with Trump after they met in 2006, shortly after Trump's wife Melania gave birth to their son Barron. She told CNN previously that he tried to pay her for sex. The Wall Street Journal said the Sept 2016 conversation between Trump and Cohen was about buying the rights to McDougal's story, which she had sold a

month earlier to The National Enquirer for \$150,000. The tabloid ultimately sat on the story, preventing it from becoming public. The chairman of its parent company, American Media, is a friend of Trump's. — AFP

Manila mandates \$10K deposit for each helper hired

By A Saleh
KUWAIT: Despite signing a memorandum of agreement between the governments of Kuwait and the Philippines in May, a new problem has arisen on recruiting domestic workers from the Philippines, said Chairman of Domestic Labor Office Owners Khalid Al-Dakhan yesterday, noting that the Philippines authorities recently issued executive decision number 10/2018 concerning the implementation of the agreement, but added a new condition. Dakhan explained that the new condition, which was not included in the original charter signed in May, mandated Kuwaiti domestic labor offices to deposit \$10,000 (around KD 3,000) in insurance in

Khamenei backs remarks to block Gulf oil exports

DUBAI: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei yesterday backed President Hassan Rouhani's suggestion that Iran may block Gulf oil exports if its own exports are stopped and said negotiations with the United States would be an "obvious mistake". Rouhani's apparent threat earlier this month to disrupt oil shipments from neighboring countries came in reaction to looming US sanctions and efforts by Washington to force all countries to stop buying Iranian oil.

Xi ends visit to UAE with raft of deals



ABU DHABI: (From left) Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Chinese President Xi Jinping, UAE's Vice-President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum and Chinese first lady Peng Liyuan are seen at the Presidential Airport on Thursday. — AFP

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates yesterday said it agreed to set up a "comprehensive strategic partnership" with China as President Xi Jinping wrapped up a three-day visit to the Gulf country. "The UAE and China have agreed to enhance cooperation in all fields to higher levels and forge overall strategic partnerships," the official WAM news agency said. It said this would "contribute to cementing and intensifying cooperation, boost joint development and prosperity, which is consistent with the common interest of both countries and their peoples".

China and the UAE had already signed on Friday a raft of economic agreements and in the run-up to Xi's visit they agreed oil and trade deals. Xi met UAE Vice President Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, who is also ruler of Dubai, and Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan during his visit. Abu Dhabi was the Chinese president's first stop on a tour which now takes him to Senegal, Rwanda and South Africa.

Mob kills Muslim transporting cows; WhatsApp limits forwarding in India

NEW DELHI: A Muslim man died early yesterday after he was attacked by vigilantes while transporting cows in western India's Rajasthan state, police said. India has witnessed a spate of lynchings by Hindu extremist "cow vigilantes" targeting Muslims and low-caste Dalits accused of killing cows or eating beef and other mob attacks over child kidnapping rumors.

Continued on Page 24

Continued on Page 24

Local

Higher Education Ministry reports 40 forged diplomas to Public Prosecution

Interior Ministry administrator busted with fake degree

KUWAIT: Minister of Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi announced yesterday that the ministry filed over 40 reports of suspected forged diplomas and turned them to the Public Prosecution to complete the legal procedures. "The initial inspection led to the discovery of a number of forged diplomas which called for an extra effort with the Ministry of Interior to find out who is behind this problem," said Azmi, also Minister of Education. "We are continuing our internal investigation into the matter and the results will be forwarded to the Public Prosecution as the process continues," Azmi added.

In the meantime, a newspaper report published yesterday quoted a security source who said that a number of forgers are expected to be arrested and sent to the public prosecution soon, adding that they would be legally obliged to return money that they have collected for selling forged degrees. "Nobody is above the law as instructed by First Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-

Ahmad Al-Sabah, who gave order to enforce the law regardless of the violator," Al-Anbaa reported, quoting the anonymous source.

Recent case

Furthermore, the source revealed a recent case recently discovered of a Kuwaiti man working as an administrator at the Interior Ministry. The man was reportedly hired after receiving a forged university degree four years ago, and was since promoted to a department's head then became a supervisor, and received salary increases in the process. He reportedly obtained his degree from Egypt, and it was attested by the Ministry of Higher Education at the time. Police arrested the man at his office after obtaining a warrant based on investigation's results which confirmed that his degree was forged.

Meanwhile, another newspaper quoted sources who



Dr Hamed Al-Azmi

revealed that the Ministry of Health is investigating several doctors, pharmacists, nurses and technicians who received their PhDs while working, on suspicions that their degrees could be forged.

Those employees received their degrees from universities in various countries including Pakistan, Philippines and Jordan. Al-Jarida daily reported quoting the anonymous sources, who added that the ministry is coordinating with the higher education ministry to gather data about those involved.

Fake certificates

The fake certificates' issue was discovered when a government body requested verifying the certificate submitted by someone applying for a job in February, Undersecretary of the ministry of higher education Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem said. "The ministry contacted our relevant cultural office and the concerned university denied that the applicant had ever been registered or studied there," he explained, noting that the entire matter was then referred for investigation before referring it to the public prosecution. Mukhaizeem added that the signature of the clerk who was supposed to check the certificate was also forged as someone else signed it while the clerk was on vacation. He also stressed that by checking with the database, it was noticed that such cases are increasing and all endorsements were made using fake signatures.

Impossible to divide expenses between citizens, expats: Minister

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Finance Minister Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf stressed that state budget expenses cannot be divided into expenses on citizens and expatriates because state budgets are allocated for spending on various public services and amenities. Responding to an inquiry by MP Abdulkareem Al-Kandari about how much of the state budget is spent on citizens and how much is spent on expats, Hajraf stressed that article 140 of the constitution states that: "The government draws up the annual budget, comprising the revenue and expenditure of the state, and submits it to the National Assembly for examination and approval at least two months before the end of each current financial year", and that article 141 states that: "(1) The budget shall be discussed in the National Assembly part by part. (2) None of the public revenues may be allocated for a specific purpose except by law".

Hajraf stressed that based on those two articles, budgets are set according to three basic principles - they



Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf

should be annual, unified and general, which makes it impossible to divide expenditure between citizens and expats because general expenditure is spent on public services like electricity, water, fuel, roads, cleaning and other services provided for the entire population. Responding to another inquiry about assessing the biometric access system at state department, Hajraf stressed it is too early to assess the impact of using the system, though primary indicators show a large number of employees' commitment to working hours.

Rent value

Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) announced that the rent value of the projects previously rented on build-operate-transfer (BOT) bases increased from KD 3.6 million to KD 20 million. The authority elaborated that the solid wastes treatment project in Kabd was referred to the Cabinet for final approval pending offering it for bidding. The authority said documents of the labor cities' project in Southern Jahra had been reviewed pending the final report from the project consultant and sending it to the fatwa and legislation department. The authority also said the contract of the project of building highway

rest stops and chalet services centers is being signed between the finance ministry and the investor who won segment A of the project, while the railway project still awaits the finance ministry approval of its cost.

New teachers

Two committees will leave on July 28 for Palestine and Egypt to hire teachers to work at public schools in Kuwait this upcoming academic year, Ministry of Education (MoE) assistant undersecretary for public education Fatima Al-Kandari announced. The committee seeks to hire mathematics teachers from Palestine and male practical studies, craft and fine art teachers as well as female music teachers from Egypt, he explained. Kandari added that the committees sent to Tunisia had already interviewed and signed contracts with 40 male French teachers and 50 female physical education teachers.

Jaber Hospital

The Ministry of Health (MoH) asked the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to provide 5,000 positions to hire medical and administrative staff for Jaber Hospital and a similar number to work in other medical facilities, to which CSC responded that it would be hard to hire these numbers at the time being and only promised to allow hiring rare technical and nursing staff and doctors. Notably, Jaber Hospital is one of the most important projects in Kuwait's development plan with a cost of KD 304 million and a 1,168-bed capacity, of which MoH announced that only 10 percent would be initially opened along with outpatient departments and the casualty department.

MoH to hire Kuwaiti engineers

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Kuwait Society of Engineers (KSE) announced signing an agreement with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to attract more Kuwaiti engineers, including medical equipment engineers, to work in various health facilities. KSE Chairman Faisal Al-Atel signed the agreement with MoH Undersecretary Dr Mustafa Redha. Atel said in a statement that he met Redha, who welcomed the proposal and noted that attracting more Kuwaitis to join MoH will help create job opportunities for scores of Kuwaiti engineers awaiting employment. Atel added that Redha agreed to take part in the four-day Governmental Facilities Management Conference, which KSE plans to hold in November under the auspices of Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah and in collaboration with Kuwait University's civil engineering department.

Beggars arrested

The Public Authority for Manpower's Director Ahmad Moussa said a joint committee inspected various areas around Kuwait, which resulted in arresting seven beggars and referring them to relevant authorities pending deportation. The committee comprises members from the authority, in addition to Kuwait Municipality, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Cigarettes smuggling foiled

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Nuwaiseeb land border customs officers confiscated 1,973 cartons of cigarettes with passengers traveling out of the country. The commerce ministry bans such items from being taken out of the country.

Theft

An Egyptian man asked a friend to transfer KD 1,000 to his children in Egypt, but the friend sent the money to his wife instead. A security source said when the man discovered the money did not reach his children, he called his friend to know the reason, but the friend denied receiving any money. The victim went to the police, and they were able to locate and arrest the suspect, who confessed to taking the money and transferring it to his wife. In another case, a Gulf national told Sulaibiya police that SR 32,000 disappeared from his house. He said someone broke into a safe and took the money. Police are investigating.

Drug possession

Two Ahmadi policemen controlled a citizen after he attempted to prevent them from taking drugs that were on him in Egaila. He was taken to the Drugs Control General Department. The citizen's car was swerving, so he was pulled over and found under the influence of drugs and incoherent. He was removed from the car, then when police were searching it, he attacked them.

Fugitives caught

Farwaniya police arrested a citizen in his sixties wanted over a civil case. The suspect did not pull over when he was asked to do so, so he was chased and stopped and found wanted over a KD 64,000 debt. Meanwhile, Ahmadi detectives arrested a citizen wanted to serve a four-year jail sentence for swindling, who has been at large since 1998. She was sent to concerned authorities.

local spotlight

Forging of a society



By Muna Al-Fuzai

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

The Kuwaiti society has been preoccupied over the past two days with the issue of forged educational certificates that were sold and given to some people by corrupt employees. This is not unusual in any society with corrupt employees and people with money. The suspects are now being transferred to the public prosecution for investigations. But, as usual in Kuwait, this has turned into a media frenzy and fodder for rumors, until people forget about the subject either because it becomes old or repetitive or a new topic arises for another media storm!

Last week people were busy talking about the situation in Iraq that ended up with complete silence, and no one knows what is happening now. Did things calm down, or ended, or what?!

I read an interesting tweet by someone who said Kuwait has become like an imaginary play city - nothing is real, but everyone is happy! It is an unfortunate description of an existing reality and a beautiful country like Kuwait. There are many people like me who are upset by the state of the country and the spread of corruption. It is not just the question of forging a diploma, but the normalization of corruption and forgery. I think frequent talk about the spread of fraud may turn it into a normal practice, and this is dangerous.

At a time when there is great uproar about the falsification of a number of diplomas and their adoption by the government, I hope to see a fuss about the fraud in Kuwaiti nationality and demands to expose all the people who were granted citizenship without a right, and who really stands behind this - officials or influential people. Cleaning up the community should begin to neutralize things in an equal and fair way, especially since this issue is affecting the entire society, its composition and future, as well as security.

This subject is linked to another serious topic of dual loyalties - there are those who have been given nationality without a right and this is an injustice. I believe this is an extremely important issue far beyond a few forged certificates of some people. Another worrying issue is the misuse of social media, especially WhatsApp, for spreading false articles and malicious stories.

For example, a report was spread on WhatsApp by a Kuwaiti woman accusing a Kuwaiti professor and a former government official of obtaining his PhD degree by forgery. This woman used a mobile app to accuse a man without evidence and it is natural that this man will defend himself through a long article on WhatsApp too, until it turns into a personal war. People become busy following this verbal war and forget that there is a bigger issue than these two. I know that this matter may end in court, but there is no winner here.

Fraud affects the entire society, but there are other key issues that need local attention as well, especially from the financial and economic aspect, such as the merger of two local Islamic banks, but such issues are difficult to understand by the public. So social media becomes an arena for talks and rumors with little truth, until people become confused. They do not know what is true and what is fake.

Is there a solution? I am not against freedom of speech, but when society becomes a battlefield with verbal fighting and abuse through social media and mobile apps, it makes me concerned. When I see the words 'fraud' and 'corruption' on a daily basis, I worry not about the day I live, but about the future.

FREE

Subscribe & Read

Kuwait Times



Send "subscribe" by whatsapp to
+965 9 44 88 888

Enjoy the paper
right on your phone

S&P affirms Kuwait's AA sovereign credit rating

'Kuwait holds extremely large net asset positions'

KUWAIT: Standard and Poor's affirmed Friday Kuwait's (AA/A+) long and short-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings, with stable economic outlook. The credit rating agency, in a statement on its website, said it expected Kuwait to continue to hold "extremely large" government and external net asset positions, which would allow authorities to gradually implement reforms.

S&P said stable outlook reflects expectation that Kuwait's public and external balance sheets would remain strong over the next two years, backed by a significant stock of financial assets. "We expect these strengths to offset risks related to volatile oil prices, Kuwait's undiversified economy, and rising geopolitical tensions in the region," it said. It added it could lower ratings if it lower assessment of monetary flexibility in Kuwait, and could also lower ratings if Kuwait's domestic political stability deteriorated, or if geopolitical risks were to significantly escalate. "We could raise the ratings if political reforms enhanced institutional effectiveness and improved long-term economic diversification, although we think such a scenario is unlikely over the forecast horizon," said the agency.

Accumulated buffers

S&P said ratings on Kuwait continue to be supported by sovereign's high levels of accumulated fiscal and external buffers. The ratings are constrained by concentrated nature of economy and regional geopolitical tensions. Kuwait derives around 55 percent of GDP, more than 90 percent of exports, and about 90 percent of fiscal receipts from hydrocarbon products. Given this high reliance on oil sector, S&P view Kuwait's economy as undiversified. The sharp fall in oil prices since 2014 caused some deterioration in Kuwait's income levels as well as in its fiscal and external metrics, similar to other large oil exporters, it

said. However, it added, large fiscal and external assets that were accumulated owing to past oil windfalls have afforded policymakers space to phase in fiscal reforms gradually and counter decline in hydrocarbon sector by increased spending under Kuwait National Development Plan, particularly on infrastructure projects. It forecasted economic activity to pick up over the next four years after contracting in 2017. "We expect rising oil production from the second half of 2018 and public investment to drive real GDP growth of 2.8 percent on average over 2018-2021," it said.

Domestic politics

Although domestic politics remains contentious, with strong parliamentary opposition to fiscal austerity, S&P did not anticipate any significant risk to the management of public finances or the economy. It predicted oil prices of Brent crude to average \$65 per barrel in 2018, before falling to \$60 per barrel in 2019 and \$55 per barrel over 2020-21. Despite higher oil prices of \$55 per barrel in 2017 relative to the previous year, Kuwait experienced a large contraction in real GDP growth of 2.9 percent, said S&P. The decline was mainly due to a five percent decrease in oil production implemented under the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) agreement. "We expect growth to return to positive territory in 2018 on the back of some recovery in oil production expected in the second half of the year ... and steady public spending on infrastructure projects. Higher oil prices in 2018-2019 and the delay of the introduction of value added tax (VAT) will also likely support private and public consumption," it noted. Over the medium term, S&P anticipated Kuwaiti oil output to rise to over three million barrels per day (bpd) by 2020, from around 2.7 million bpd currently, part of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation plans to raise oil

production capacity to four million bpd by 2020. Over the next few years, it expected several projects in power, infrastructure, and housing, currently in various stages of implementation, to be launched and completed.

Fiscal reforms

S&P expects the government of Kuwait to delay some fiscal reforms in light of higher oil prices, particularly the introduction of VAT, leading to continued central government budget deficits. The government plans to meet financing needs by balancing debt issuances and asset drawdown, subject to parliamentary approval. Kuwait still maintains one of the largest pools of liquid external assets of all the sovereigns "we rate, and in a stress scenario, we believe it would be able to defend its currency peg." Lower oil prices since 2014 have caused Kuwait's government balance to remain deep in deficit, having been in surplus in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2014 or fiscal 2013.

During fiscal 2017, S&P estimated the government deficit narrowing to 14.6 percent of GDP, from close to 18 percent in fiscal 2016, owing to higher oil revenues. "We estimate that temporarily higher oil prices in 2018 will support a further reduction in the deficit to 10.6 percent of GDP in fiscal 2018," it added. The government's policy response to lower oil prices has been fairly limited and gradual, given the large fiscal buffers, opposition in parliament, and the political will to maintain the social contract with its population and preserve the welfare state. "We expect reform momentum aimed at diversifying revenues will slow further in the context of higher oil prices during 2018," it warned, citing delay in implementation of VAT from 2019 due to non-parliamentary approval. At the general government level, S&P estimated estimate Kuwait to run a fiscal surplus of eight per-



cent of GDP in 2017-18. "We anticipate that recurrent investment income will allow the general government budget to remain in surplus over the forecast horizon, with the surplus averaging more than 10 percent of GDP over fiscal 2018-2021." The parliament has delayed passing of a new debt law after the previous one expired in October 2017, obstructing any debt issuance thus far in 2018. As a result, the government has resorted to drawing down from the KIA's General Reserve Fund (GRF) to meet its funding needs, said the agency.

Balanced strategy

S&P expects the government to pursue a more balanced financing strategy between new debt and asset drawdown from 2019, subject to parliamentary approval of the debt law. Kuwait issued its first sovereign international bond of \$8 billion in 2017, and will likely continue to tap external bond markets given current favorable rates, particularly compared with external asset returns. It projected total KIA assets to about 3.6 fold of GDP at end of 2018. It

added Kuwait ranked the highest among all the sovereigns rated by S&P Global Ratings in terms of net general government assets. It also estimated Kuwait's net external asset position to remain very strong at more than six times of current account payments over 2018-21, while current account receipts plus usable reserves will cover the country's gross external financing needs over the next four years.

S&P said Kuwait's metrics remained stronger than most peers, including in the GCC. Kuwait's exchange rate is pegged to an undisclosed basket of currencies. This basket is dominated by the US Dollar, the currency in which the majority of Kuwaiti exports are priced and transacted. "Kuwait's regime is somewhat more flexible than the foreign exchange regimes in most other GCC countries, which maintain a peg to the dollar alone. We see evidence of this in the recent hiking cycles by the US Federal Reserve, where the Central Bank of Kuwait decided to leave the key discount rate unchanged and lift only the deposit rate," it said. —KUNA

CONDOLENCES

WITH HEARTS FULL OF SORROW AND SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WILL,

*THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN
AND ALL BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EMPLOYEES OF*

FOUAD ALGHANIM AND SONS GROUP

**OF COMPANIES AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES
OFFER CONDOLENCES ON THE SAD DEMISE OF**

ENG. TAREK ABDUL HAMEED SAYED EISSA

*THE GROUP PRESIDENT FOR ALGHANIM INTERNATIONAL AND CONTRACTING
BUSINESSES OF FOUAD ALGHANIM AND SONS GROUP OF COMPANIES.*

**WE PRAY TO GOD ALMIGHTY TO BLESS HIM WITH MERCY AND TO REST HIS SOUL
IN ETERNAL HEAVEN AND GRANT HIS FAMILY AND BELOVED ONES COMFORT
AND PEACE THROUGH THE DAYS AHEAD.**

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ

Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Traditional Arabic coffee pots arranged on a table at a hotel in Kuwait. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

News in brief

Amir extends condolences to Saudi King

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud on Friday over the passing away of the mother of Prince Juluw Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent similar cables to King Salman. — KUNA

Pompeo thanks Kuwaiti FM

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo spoke on Thursday with Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Kuwait's Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, to thank him for strong bilateral partnership, it was announced Friday. State Department Spokesperson said in a statement that Pompeo "thanked the Foreign Minister for Kuwait's strong partnership and longtime friendship with the United States." Pompeo also "expressed appreciation for Kuwait's continued support for humanitarian causes." They discussed the regional situation, including Iran, and how to further strengthen robust bilateral economic and trade ties," the statement concluded. — KUNA

Kuwait supplies fuel to Iraq

BAGHDAD: The State of Kuwait will provide fuel to out of service power stations in Iraq, the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity said Friday. A ministerial statement said that the leadership of Kuwait issued orders to the Kuwaiti Oil Ministry to supply fuel to the power stations in Iraq. It added that a Kuwaiti tanker — filled with 30,000 cubic meters of fuel — would arrive Saturday in the port of Basra, indicating that the process will repeat in the forthcoming days. Iraq is witnessing a severe shortage of energy supplies, which are much needed in the advent of the summer season's heat waves. The lack of public services and electricity had resulted in mass protests throughout southern Iraqi cities. Protestors are demanding better services and more job opportunities. — KUNA

Roads contracts

KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Hussam Al-Roumi signed on Thursday three contracts worth KD 18.079 million (about \$59.6 million) to enhance and maintenance roads in the governorates of Al-Ahmadi, Hawalli and the Capital. The ministry said that the first contract, worth KD 7.629 million, was signed to develop the roads in Al-Ahmadi governorate, including Al-Eqaila, Al-Dahar, Al-Mangaf and Al-Sabahiya. The second contract, which includes Hawalli governorate areas Hateen and Al-Shuhada, was signed at KD 5.368 million. The third contract was signed for maintenance of the roads and main streets of the capital governorate including Al-Daiya and Al-Khaldiya areas with a total of KD 5.082 million. — KUN

KAF honors National Student Ambassadors who have committed to making communities safe from violence

WASHINGTON: The Kuwait America Foundation (KAF) held a ceremony late Thursday in honor and recognition of the 'Do the Write Thing' Challenge (DWT) National Student Ambassadors who have committed to making communities safe for themselves and future generations against violence. This year, students from across the US demanded that the nation ensures their safety as well as their friends, families, schools, and communities. Through their participation in the Challenge, which theme this year is "hear us", those 49 recognized students shared their compelling stories as they spoke not only of distressing and often tragic situations, but also of hope.

On this occasion, KAF Chairman Dr Hassan Al-Ebraheem said this year "we have witnessed students from across the US demand that their safety, as well as that of their friends, families, schools, and communities, is ensured. They are speaking up, calling on us to listen and to take action to end the violence that they face." He added that through the 'Do the Write Thing' Challenge, "we at the Kuwait America Foundation have been doing just that. For the last 22 years, we have been heeding those calls, seeking to empower youth, through their own words and writings, with the ability to reduce violence and to help create an America in which all children can enjoy safe schools, peaceful neighborhoods, and loving homes." He stressed that "we understood that there was perhaps no better way to address the violence that children were facing than by actually asking them. And more importantly, by listening to them."

"We recognized that their voice was a powerful tool, one that could change the world," he remarked. "Imagine how much we could accomplish, the problems not only solved but also avoided altogether, if we just spoke up. And in turn heard one another." He indicated that this year's writings alone are 90 times the amount received 24 years ago, as the Challenge has grown into over 77,000 students submitting writings from 24 communities across the nation this year.

Furthermore, Dr Ebraheem noted that through the writings of the students "we have heard their voices and been inspired by their spirit of determination: the determination and belief that ordinary people, including them, have the power to create change, and to succeed." Each one of those students has summoned the courage and strength from within, and proven that we each have the power to understand and to triumph over any and all circumstances," he added. He affirmed that a lot has been accom-

NBK staff donate blood

KUWAIT: As part of its social responsibility towards the community, NBK actively organized a Blood Donation Campaign for its staff. NBK staff voluntarily went to the Blood Bank and offered their participation for blood donation. The mobile blood unit of the Blood Bank was available at the Head Office and Arraya building to receive the donations.

NBK goes far beyond banking to serve

the community in myriad ways. The Blood Donation Campaign demonstrates NBK's lasting commitment to the community. This initiative is a commitment towards all patients who are in dire need of blood and is held to support the mobile blood unit of the Blood Bank.

The Blood Bank team commended NBK's initiative and its continuous cooperation in serving the community in the philanthropic field. NBK strongly supports health care awareness. Throughout the years, NBK also organized several annual social awareness programs including dental checkups, blood pressure tests, weight checkups and breast cancer awareness.



WASHINGTON: Participants perform during a ceremony held by the Kuwait America Foundation (KAF) in Washington, DC late Thursday. — KUNA

plished since this program began, where those students are "all a part of the vision we had so many years ago, and that we continue to nourish and grow. I can truly stay that we have impacted the lives of people around the world."

Dr Ebraheem said that the longevity of DWT is a "testament of its success, as it reaches students who live with violence in their lives every day and empowers them, through their own writings, with the ability to reduce violence and to help create an America that is safe for all." A book that contains a compilation of writings by the students has been published and placed in the Library of Congress to recognize the ambassadors and all other students they represent who have accepted the

Challenge to do something to help create a safer, more peaceful society.

The KAF was founded in 1991 with its core mission, inspired by Kuwait's liberation by allied coalition forces in the Gulf War, to express gratitude for American sacrifice and to strengthen ties between the people of the US and Kuwait. Since its inception, KAF has successfully focused its resources on educational and cultural exchange programs for youth and disadvantaged persons, founding and sponsoring the 'Do the Write Thing Challenge' that over the past 23 years has established itself as a successful program aimed at reducing violence in schools and communities across the US. — KUNA



Local

Dust storm hits Kuwait



KUWAIT: Dust covers various areas around Kuwait yesterday. — Photos by Fuoad Al-Shaikh and Joseph Shagra



KUWAIT: Kuwait was hit by a heavy dust storm yesterday, caused by strong winds with speeds exceeding 70 kilometers per hour. The strong winds resulted from the Indian monsoon season which is currently affecting Kuwait, weather forecaster Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi said in a statement yesterday. Powerful northwesterly winds usually reduce visibility in open areas, leading to a seven-

foot rise in sea levels, Qarawi added. Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry had issued severe weather warnings across the country, calling on drivers to take extra precaution due to impaired visibility. In the meantime, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said that operations at Kuwait international airport continued normally despite the current weather conditions. — KUNA



Diving ships reach Khairan despite dusty weather

KUWAIT: As part of the activities of the 30th Pearl Diving Expedition organized by Kuwait Sea Sports Club, participants already started diving Friday morning at the diving area in Khairan. In this regard, KSSC's Heritage Committee's Chairman Ali Al-Qabandi said that all 13 ships that were granted by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and from the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah had safely reached the diving area in Khairan, adding that the young sailors sailed their boats skillfully from KSSC's headquarter in Salmiya to the diving area.



Ali Al-Qabandi

All crews were well-trained and ready for the expedition, he added, noting that actual diving had started Friday morning despite the dusty weather. The expedition, which is organized by KSSC's Marine Heritage Committee in the period of July 19-26, is held under supervision of KSSC's heritage committee supervisor Thamer Al-Sayyar and Bahrain's veteran skipper Abdurrahman Al-Mena'e.

"Diving will be done daily during daytime until Thursday when all ships will sail back to KSSC's beach for the closing ceremony," said Qabandi. Notably, KSSC's media committee plans to organize a cruise for media figures and journalists to the diving area tomorrow, so that they can closely watch the activities. The journey will sail out at 5:30 pm at KSSC headquarters.



KUWAIT: Young divers march towards their boat on the start of the Pearl Diving Expedition on Thursday.



A ship participating in the trip is pictured shortly after setting sail on Thursday.

**THE HIGHEST VALUE ...
ON TOP OF YOUR TRADE-IN CAR**

**GET
KD 2700**

MAZDA CX-9

Information touch screen

Unique modern design

Attractive dashboard with multi function steering wheel

- Free 3rd party insurance
- Free traffic registration

الشركة الكويتية لاستيراد السيارات ذ.م.م.
Kuwait Automotive Imports Co. W.L.L.

Working hours
Saturday to Thursday - 9am to 8pm

Hot Line
1820 888

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube icons
@mazdakwt

Duration from 01/07/2018 till 31/08/2018 2018/1127/4-0
 * Up to 2700 KD on CX9 R * Terms and conditions apply * On limited time



Bane of Pakistani politicians: Voters with smartphones

Modi sails through confidence vote with rival's embrace



GAZA CITY: A picture taken on July 20, 2018 shows a fireball exploding in Gaza City during Israeli bombardment. — AFP

Gaza truce largely holds after Israeli strikes

Sparked by death of an Israeli soldier shot near the border

GAZA CITY: A ceasefire announced by the Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas largely held yesterday after a wave of deadly air strikes across Gaza sparked by the death of an Israeli soldier shot near the border. The soldier's death was the first linked to Gaza violence since a 2014 war and raised fears that Israel's response could spiral into full-out war. But the decision of Hamas, which rules the enclave, to accept a ceasefire and not further retaliate reduced those fears for now.

As has been the case with previous such truces, Israel did not confirm the deal announced by Hamas that went into effect around midnight Friday. There was relative calm yesterday except for one incident, with the Israeli army saying a tank struck a Hamas observation point east of Gaza City in retaliation for an attempted border infiltration in northern Gaza. There were no reports of injuries in that strike and there was no major Israeli bombing campaign overnight or mortar fire from the Palestinian enclave towards Israel.

"With Egyptian and UN efforts, we reached (an agreement) to return to the previous state of calm between the (Israeli) occupation and the Palestinian factions," Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said in a statement early yesterday. A senior Hamas official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFP the deal involved

"the cessation of all forms of military escalation" including Israeli air strikes and Hamas mortars and rockets.

The source said that balloons and kites attached with incendiary devices, which Palestinians have been floating over the border for months to spark fires inside Israel, were not included in the agreement. There was however one reported fire in Israel near the Gaza border yesterday, a fire department spokesman said, although its cause was not immediately clear. Israeli politicians have been calling for a fierce response to the kites and balloons, which have caused damage amounting to millions of shekels (hundreds of thousands of dollars). Israel's army and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office declined to confirm a truce was reached.

Increasing tensions

On Friday, three Hamas militants were killed as air raids sent fireballs exploding into the sky over Gaza, while Israel said rockets had been fired back at its terri-

tory. A fourth Palestinian was shot dead in protests near the border. The United Nations urged all sides to step "back from the brink" of war after months of increasing tensions.

The soldier, shot dead along the border in southern Gaza, was the first to be killed in and around the Palestinian enclave since a 2014 war between Israel and Hamas. Friday's flare-up is the latest as demonstrations and clashes on the frontier since March have seen at least 149 Palestinians killed. In addition to the shooting attack, Israel's army said explosive devices and around seven hand grenades were used, while a number of rock-

ets were launched.

The army said it struck 68 Hamas sites including weapon manufacturing sites, a drone warehouse and a military operations room. It came only a week after the most severe exchange of fire between Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza since the 2014 war. Jason Greenblatt, US President Donald Trump's Middle East

peace envoy, laid the blame for weeks of increasing tensions solely on Hamas. "Hamas works relentlessly to destroy Israeli lives (& Gazans suffer as a result of Hamas)," he tweeted, while offering condolences to the soldier's family.

'Temporary reprieve'

Hamas and Israel have fought three wars since 2008. Israel has tightened its already crippling blockade of Gaza in recent weeks as it seeks to pressure Hamas to end the incendiary kites and balloons. Hugh Lovatt, Israel-Palestine fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations think-tank, told AFP another round of conflict remained highly possible.

"The ceasefire is crucial and shows neither side wants war but it's only a temporary reprieve," he said. "Unless it can be consolidated and translated into a more permanent agreement that includes an easing of Israeli restrictions then we will continue to witness ever more frequent flare ups." Mustafa Al-Sawaf, a political analyst close to Hamas, told AFP that the shooting was seen as a reaction to the killing of a number of Hamas fighters by Israeli strikes in recent days. Hamas, he said, would consider its strategy "successful after this round of confrontation and escalation". — AFP



Three Hamas militants were killed

Rebels reach north Syria after south evacuations

MOREK: Hundreds of rebel fighters and their families arrived yesterday in northwestern Syria after their evacuation from a southern province under a deal with the regime, an AFP correspondent said. Air strikes by regime ally Russia, meanwhile, on a southern jihadist holdout killed six civilians, a Britain-based monitor said. The evacuations from Quneitra province, which borders the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights, came after a Russia-brokered agreement struck earlier this week for rebels to cede the territory to the Syrian regime. Rebel elements who opposed the territorial handover were given the option to leave.

Yesterday afternoon, state news agency SANA said preparations were underway to ferry a second wave of people from Quneitra to the north of Syria. In the morning, a first wave of around 50 buses carrying opposition fighters and their families reached the Morek crossing on the edge of northwestern rebel-held Idlib province, an AFP correspondent at the scene said.

Near the parked buses in Morek, a woman and five children waited by a cluster of small suitcases, the eldest among them carrying bottles of water and a blanket. Men with light



IDLIB: An evacuated Syrian girl from the area of Fuua and Kafraya in the Idlib province, looks out of a broken bus window as it passes the Al-Eis crossing south of Aleppo during the evacuation of several thousand residents from the two pro-regime towns in northern Syria. — AFP

weapons slung on their backs shared a bite to eat and some water as they stood around waiting. Several wore scarves wrapped around their faces.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor said the first convoy to reach Morek transported around 2,800 people. They were

to be transferred to other buses run by local NGOs, before travelling further north to temporary camps in rebel-held areas in Idlib and Aleppo provinces, the Britain-based monitor said. "More than half of the evacuees are women and children," Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman said. — AFP

Some countries deserve sanctions waivers, says Mattis

WASHINGTON: US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Friday spoke in support of waivers for sanctions being imposed against nations buying military gear from Russia. The move comes amid concerns that imposing sanctions, particularly in the case of India and other Asian allies, could threaten friendly relationships that the US has been working to bolster in recent years.

India, the world's top defense importer, has purchased Russian military hardware and expertise for decades, and has been in talks with Moscow to buy S-400 long range surface-to-air missile systems. Last year, US lawmakers, seeking to punish Russia for its efforts to undermine Western democracy, passed the Counter America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, or CAATSA.

"Russia should suffer consequences for its aggressive, destabilizing behavior and its illegal occupation of Ukraine," Mattis said in a statement. "However, as we impose necessary and well-deserved costs for their malign

behavior, providing the Secretary of State with a CAATSA waiver authority is imperative." Under CAATSA, any entity doing business with Russia's state, semi-state and private defense and intelligence sectors could face economic sanctions.

Appropriate CAATSA waivers allow "nations to build a closer security relationship with the US as they continue to transition from reliance on Russian military equipment," said Mattis, who visited India last year. India has increasingly turned to the US and France for arms purchases, but is still reliant on Russian hardware and expertise to maintain its existing arsenal. Mattis said the main question is whether the US wants to strengthen "partners in key regions or leave them with no other option than to turn to Russia." Amid this week's fallout from President Donald Trump's widely criticized performance at the Helsinki summit with President Vladimir Putin, some Democrats called for a tightening of Russia sanctions. — AFP

International

Knife attacker on Germany bus arrested, nine injured

‘The passengers jumped out of the bus and were screaming’

BERLIN: Nine people were injured in an attack by a man wielding a knife on a bus in northern Germany, officials said, although his motive remained unclear. The packed bus was on Friday heading in the direction of Travemuende, a popular beach destination close to the city of Luebeck, when a man pulled the weapon on passengers, Luebeck chief prosecutor Ulla Hingst said.

Regional interior minister for Schleswig-Holstein state, Hans-Joachim Grote, told DPA news agency that six people suffered knife wounds and three others different injuries, while the attacker also punched the bus driver. “Luckily no-one was killed,” Hingst said. “The background to the act as well as exactly how it happened are completely unclear and the objects of our investigation.” The bus driver had immediately stopped the vehicle, allowing passengers to escape.

“The passengers jumped out of the bus and were screaming. It was terrible. Then the injured were brought out. The perpetrator had a kitchen knife,” a witness who lives close to the scene, Lothar H., told local daily Luebecker Nachrichten. Grote said the bus driver had avoided the worst by acting in a “fast and courageous manner”. An unnamed female passenger on the bus said one of those injured had only just given up his seat to an elderly woman, “when the perpetrator stabbed him in the chest”.

A police car which happened to be close by arrived at the scene quickly, allowing officers to detain the assailant, the newspaper reported. Prosecutor Hingst told mass-market daily BILD that the suspected attacker is “a 34-year-old German citizen of Iranian origin”. “We have no indication of political radicalization of any kind,” she said, adding that the suspect had so far not

spoken about the incident. He is due to appear before a judge yesterday.

DPA reported that the man ignited a bag he was carrying with fire accelerants. There was no trace of explosives, the agency added. Police from Schleswig-Holstein said on Twitter that “people were injured. No one was killed. The perpetrator was overpowered and is now in police custody.” While the motive has not yet been established, Germany has been on high alert after several deadly Islamist extremist attacks.

Jihadist attack risk

Security services had long warned of the threat of more violence after several attacks claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group, the bloodiest of which was a truck rampage through a Berlin Christmas market in December 2016 that left 12 people dead. That attacker, Tunisian asylum seeker Anis Amri, hijacked a truck and murdered its Polish driver before killing another 11 people and wounding dozens more by ploughing the heavy vehicle through the festive market in central Berlin. He was shot dead by Italian police in Milan four days later while on the run. Germany has since been targeted again in attacks

with radical Islamist motives.

In July 2017, a 26-year-old Palestinian asylum seeker wielding a knife stormed into a supermarket in the northern port city of Hamburg, killing one person and wounding six others before being detained by passers-by. German prosecutors said the man likely had a “radical Islamist” motive. IS also claimed responsibility for a number of attacks in 2016, including the murder of a teenager in Hamburg, a suicide bombing in the southern city of Ansbach that wounded 15, and an axe attack on a

owner of a cafe in the town.

A peace treaty ended fighting in 2000, but hopes that the frontiers would re-open were scuppered when Ethiopia rejected a UN-backed effort to definitively settle the border question two years later. The road from Zalambessa to Eritrea is blocked by the military, and the once-bustling trade hub where cactuses sprout from conflict-damaged buildings is eerily quiet.

Barred from Eritrea’s ports, Ethiopia shifted its sea trade to neighboring Djibouti, investing heavily in a railway and other infrastructure as it became one of the fastest growing economies in Africa. But facing soaring debt and a foreign exchange shortage, Ethiopia’s new prime minister Abiy Ahmed announced in June that he would privatize key state-owned companies including Ethiopian Airlines and Ethio telecom.

Like slavery

Getachew Teklemariam, a consultant and former Ethiopian government adviser, said that while the economic reforms and warming relations were not necessarily linked, they could both reinvigorate the economy. “The rapprochement relieves resources from the military buildup that has been going on over the years,” Getachew said. Eritrea responded to Ethiopia’s rejection of the UN border settlement with an extensive crackdown on dissent that in turn deterred investment. Repressive policies stifled its emerging entrepreneurial class, dissidents were arrested and an indefinite military service program was mandated that drew comparisons to slavery from the UN. “Eritrea has done almost everything it can to keep foreign investment out,” Kaplan said. Hundreds of thousands of Eritreans have fled abroad, partly to avoid conscription which many migrants say contributes to poverty.

‘Listening to gunfire’

Isaias insisted the mandatory national service was necessary to deter Ethiopian aggression, but has not commented on the scheme’s future since the thaw with Addis Ababa. Kaplan suggested Eritrea may not change its headline policies or become more welcoming to foreigners, but could instead seek investment for two of its most promising sectors—ports and mining.

Getachew added that trade between Ethiopia and



LUBECK: A policeman looks on as a bus, in which a passenger attacked fellow travelers with a knife in the afternoon, is towed away from the crime scene in the evening of July 20. —AFP

train in Bavaria that left five injured.

In June, German police said they foiled what would have been the first biological attack with the arrest of a Tunisian suspected jihadist in possession of the poison ricin and bomb-making material. Germany remains a target for jihadist groups, in particular because of its involvement in the coalition fighting IS in Iraq and Syria, and its deployment in Afghanistan since 2001.

Security services estimate there are around 11,000

Islamist radicals in Germany, some 980 of whom are deemed particularly dangerous and capable of using violence. Around 150 of these potentially dangerous individuals have been detained for various offences. Chancellor Angela Merkel has allowed in more than one million asylum seekers since 2015 — a decision that has driven the rise of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, which charges that the influx spells a heightened security risk. —AFP

Ethiopia hopes Eritrea peace will bring prosperity

ZALAMBESSA: Eighteen years after the guns fell silent following Ethiopia’s bloody border war with Eritrea, the frontier town of Zalambessa is a quiet, rubble-strewn outpost crossed by a road to nowhere. But change could be on the horizon after the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed to re-establish relations, raising hopes that trade will resume and towns like Zalambessa will boom again. “There’s no question,” said Tirhas Gerekidan, a hairdresser in the town. “If the road opens, things will change.” Both small and large businesses in Ethiopia, one of Africa’s fastest-growing economies despite widespread poverty, would be expected to benefit from the border re-opening. But analysts warn that Eritrea, which under President Isaias Afwerki has become one of the world’s most closed societies with an unwelcoming business climate, may not share the economic spoils of the new era of engagement.

“The potential for this accord... to revitalise its economy is huge,” said Seth Kaplan, a professor at Johns Hopkins University in the United States who has studied Eritrea’s economy. “The great unknown is what will Isaias do.” Eritrea, once a province of Ethiopia that incorporated the single nation’s entire coastline, fought a decades-long independence war before voting to leave in 1993. The decision landlocked Africa’s second-most populous country—although Ethiopia continued to export through Eritrean ports until a border dispute erupted into war in 1998.

‘Systematically bulldozed’

Eritrean troops poured south into Zalambessa which is the last Ethiopian town on the main road between the countries’ capitals. Eritrea then “systematically bulldozed” it, the local Catholic bishop wrote in a 2003 letter to the United Nations Secretary General. “There wasn’t anything left. All we found were rocks that weren’t even a meter in size,” said Taema Lemlem, the

Undocumented Mexican kids retrace their parents’ steps

TEOPANTLAN: They know the skyscrapers of Manhattan better than this small village in rural Mexico, but these 18 children are here to meet their extended families and learn about the world their parents left behind. Born in the United States, they have made the trip without their parents, who remain undocumented immigrants and — unlike their US citizen children — cannot travel back to Mexico for fear of being detained and deported by American border authorities. But the children wanted to meet their grandparents and other relatives for the first time back in their parents’ native Teopantlan, a remote village of modest brick houses tucked into the hills of central Mexico. “My little niece, the four-year-old, keeps talking to me in English. But I don’t speak a word of it,” said 57-year-old Maria with a smile after meeting her four nieces. The trip was organized by charitable organizations, which got the parents’ permission to take their children out of the country. After a long and winding trip from the Mexico City airport, some 120 kilometers away, the kids got out of their mini-bus in Teopantlan’s central square.

Beneath a canopy of colorful balloons, excited Mexican-American children met their equally excited Mexican relatives, who were waiting for them with flowers and gifts. “I had seen pictures of them, but it’s nothing like seeing them in real life,” said a beaming Mauro Ramirez, 60. “I’m so emotional I want to cry,” he told AFP.

After the initial embraces, though, the communication problems set in for many. Some of the older villagers only spoke the indigenous Nahuatl language, while some of the children only spoke English. The lapsed years also suddenly made themselves painfully apparent. One grandfather wearing a giant sombrero brought his 15-year-old grandson — a nearly grown adult — a giant children’s stuffed animal. They proceeded to sit down together, side by side, in silence.

‘Mexican there, American here’

Teopantlan, a corn- and sugar cane-farming community, has long been a village of emigrants. “Around 40 percent of our young people emigrate, because there are no jobs here,” said the mayor, Esteban Ramirez



TEOPANTLAN: US-born Mexicans (L-R) Jocelyn, Vanesa and Diana Ramirez speak on the phone with their mother who is in the United States with their cousin Jasmin Perez during a family reunion for 18 US-born Mexican children in their parents’ homeland organized by a Mexican NGO. —AFP

Rosales. He estimates about 2,000 villagers have left over the years, mainly for New York, where they have their own enclave in the borough of Queens.

This is the first time anyone has organized a reunion. “It’s a symbolic event reuniting families in their native community, rather

than in the United States,” said Francisco Romero, one of the organizers. “It gives families an alternative in the current climate of irrational immigration policy in both the United States and Mexico,” he said. The children’s parents joined in as best they could from afar. —AFP

Trump backers seize on case of jailed UK far-right activist

LONDON: Supporters of US President Donald Trump are taking up the cause of a free-speech activist jailed in Britain for contempt of court, raising fears of a far-right revival. Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, widely known by his pseudonym Tommy Robinson, was imprisoned for 13 months earlier this year for live-streaming outside a court in breach of reporting restrictions around a trial.

Robinson is the founder of the English Defence League (EDL), a fringe group protesting perceived threats from Islamic extremism, and he has a string of convictions on charges including assault, fraud and drugs possession. The name he uses is that of a well-known football hooligan. Conspiracy theories about his case have spread wildly on social media, drawing particular attention in the United States among supporters of the so-called “alt-right”.

The campaign spread further after Donald Trump Jr, the US president’s son, retweeted a comment about Robinson. Trump himself drew severe condemnation in November after retweeting three misleading anti-Muslim videos originally posted by Britain First, another far-right group. Steve Bannon, former White House chief strategist, defended Robinson on London’s LBC radio last week, reportedly describing him off-mic as “the backbone” of Britain.

‘Hatred and bigotry’

The new cause celebre of the populist far-right in Britain even breached diplomatic circles after Sam Brownback, Trump’s envoy for international religious freedom, raised the issue with British ambassador Kim Darroch at a June lunch. But anti-racism group Hope Not Hate said the notion that Robinson had been wrongly imprisoned was “incorrect and conspiratorial”, calling him a “violent far-right racist”.

Times newspaper columnist Francis Elliott warned that the Robinson case, allied with disillusionment over Brexit and fear of immigration, could create “a far-right revival”—all “powered by alt-right cash”. Two recent pro-Robinson protests in central London, at which some demonstrators made Nazi salutes, saw violent confrontations with police and counter-demonstrators. US Republican Congressman Paul Gosar came under heavy criticism for speaking at one of the rallies last Saturday during Trump’s visit to Britain.

“It is inexplicable for a sitting US congressman to speak at, let alone attend a rally for someone responsible for spreading as much hate and bigotry as Tommy Robinson, Imraan Siddiqi, executive director of the Arizona branch of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said in a statement. —AFP

International Lending Group
Offering Loans @4% P.A
from 5 Mn-USD to 500 Mn-USD
for LAP, Working Capital, Short term & Long Term Commercial Loans, Acquire New Premises & feasible Projects
✦ No beforehand fee ✦ Moderate Interest
✦ Swift Process ✦ Flexible Repayment Tenure
+91- 9962513116 | ID:minalanfin.crp@gmail.com

International

EU migrant policy suffers blow as Italy, Libya reject proposals

Agreed to set up 'disembarkation platforms' outside the bloc

BRUSSELS: The European Union's migrant strategy suffered a major new setback Friday with Italy refusing to freely accept people rescued at sea and Libya spurning a proposal for asylum processing centers. The salvos follow a fractious EU summit in June which agreed to set up "disembarkation platforms" outside the bloc to process migrants after Italy's new populist government said it was closing its ports.

"Italy does not want to be the only country where migrants saved at sea by its own naval units disembark," Foreign Minister Enzo Moavero Milanesi said in a letter to EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini. The Italian position and its implications were discussed at a meeting on Friday by member states in Brussels where diplomats said countries agreed to a "strategic review" of the EU's own naval operations.

Italy commands the European military operation Sophia launched in June 2015 following a series of deadly shipwrecks in the Mediterranean. "Operation Sophia is maintained," an EU diplomat involved in the talks told AFP on Friday. "The aim remains to reach a consensus on future action within a European framework and in an orderly process," the source added.

Libyan Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj meanwhile rejected the EU proposal for asylum processing centers in his country, saying: "We are strictly against Europe officially placing illegal migrants who are no longer wanted in the EU in our country." Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia were also approached by the EU but have already refused to

host such centers. "We also won't agree on any deals with EU money about taking in more illegal migrants," the Libyan premier told Germany's Bild newspaper. Sarraj said European leaders should instead put pressure on migrants' origin countries to stop them embarking on their journey in the first place.

Most of the migrants are from the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has written to European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker saying his country would no longer take in migrants plucked from the Mediterranean until other member states accepted some of them.

Over the last decade, the Italian coastguard has coordinated the rescue of hundreds of thousands of migrants off the coast of Libya, in many cases pulling

them from the water themselves in treacherous conditions. But as of June, they have been ordered to transfer calls for help and reports of boats in distress to the Libyan capital Tripoli.

'Ad hoc solutions won't work'

Juncker wrote back to Conte saying "these ad hoc solutions will not be feasible in the long term," according to a copy of a letter seen by AFP. But Juncker agreed to try and identify nations that would shelter rescued migrants until a definitive framework was agreed upon as to who would take charge of them. June was the deadliest month in the Mediterranean in recent years with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reporting some 564



Rescued Cameroonian migrant Josepha, 40-years-old, rests on board the Spanish NGO Proactiva Open Arms boat as it sails back to Spain in the Mediterranean Sea. — AFP

deaths or disappearances, despite the fact that overall departures have dropped sharply since the summer of 2017. Under a controversial deal with the EU, Libyan coastguards intercept migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean.

But the UN has slammed the policy as "inhuman," noting that the migrants are simply brought back to "horrific" detention centers in Libya. The European Court of Human

Rights also opposes the repatriation of migrants to Libya on the ground that they could face rights abuse. The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, will discuss in the coming weeks proposals for controlled holding centers for migrants in member states and cooperation in rescue efforts, spokeswoman Natasha Bertaud said earlier this week. — AFP

“ These ad hoc solutions will not be feasible ”

”

After 15 years, thieves behind French heist surface in Serbia

UZICE, Serbia: They believed they were safe but a few blood drops betrayed them: 15 years after a daring robbery at a French jewelry store, the four alleged perpetrators have been found-in Serbia. The Belfort job had all the hallmarks of a "Pink Panther" operation, the modus operandi used by an international jewel thief network of Serbs and Montenegrins responsible for some of the most audacious robberies of the past two decades.

Between 1999 and 2015, these criminals are thought to have carried out at least 380 armed robberies, targeting high-end jewelry stores and snatching 334 million euros (\$391 million) worth of loot, Interpol says. One morning in September 2003, a group of masked men burst into a jewelry shop in Belfort, a town in eastern France just 25 kilometers from the Swiss border.

One pulled a handgun, while the others smashed open the glass cases, snatching 350,000 euros worth of jewelry and watches before fleeing—all within the space of a minute. Police later managed to arrest their Serbian fences, one of whom had a stolen watch on his wrist. But the thieves themselves were never caught. Nor were they identified until 2013 following progress in a forensic investigation into traces of blood on one of the glass cabinets, on a cupboard and on a Cartier box. By analyzing the DNA, they identified two Serb nationals who were unknown in France but wanted in Austria: "Zica" and "Boka", both of them 41 years old. And by crosschecking their phone records, they also found the other two suspected of involvement in the robbery: "Sasa", 37, and "Luka", 48.

'Cult of the criminal'

All four come from Uzice, a once prosperous industrial town some 150 kilometers southwest of Belgrade which has since fallen on hard times. "Most of these criminals originate from Nis, Cacak and Uzice," the town's prosecutor Ljubisa Dragasevic said, explaining that many in this western region end up turning to crime due to problems making ends meet. But there is also "the cult of the criminal within society, the tough guys", he said.

"In such circles, these activities overseas are a matter of prestige. They... see themselves as defenders of poor Serb victims of the West," the prosecutor said. Even though they have been identified, the four remain out of reach for the French justice system because Serbia does not extradite its citizens.

Over the past decade, France and Serbia developed close judicial ties following the 2009 murder of a French football fan in Belgrade, prompting a French judge to demand that the four be summoned to a hearing before a Serbia prosecutor.

Funding a luxury lifestyle

At the hearing in November, all four denied involvement in the robbery. If they were in Belfort at the time, they were there for "techno music parties", one claimed. Another said they were there "to buy second-hand cars". Boka had just been jailed over a fatal car accident, while shortly after the November hearing, Zica and Sasa began serving five years for stealing watches worth almost 950,000 euros from a Hamburg jeweler in 2014.

Several of them are also suspected of involvement in robberies in Switzerland and The Netherlands. Such audacious robberies fund a lavish lifestyle back home, Dragasevic says, explaining that their takings are quickly spent "in bars and restaurants, taking cocaine, paying for prostitutes... buying luxury cars and expensive clothes" and often at expensive tourist sites. "Such a lifestyle requires a lot of money, which they spend quickly and then return to their criminal activities," he added. — AFP

After the fall of Rajoy, Spain conservatives pick a new leader

MADRID: Spain's conservatives pick a new leader yesterday after ex-prime minister Mariano Rajoy was ousted, with his former right-hand woman Soraya Saenz de Santamaria vying against 37-year-old Pablo Casado, who would take the Popular Party (PP) further right. After an acrimonious campaign that saw mystery videos released attacking both candidates in turn, 3,082 delegates will be casting their ballot in Madrid for the successor of Rajoy, who spoke for the last time as PP leader on Friday. In a long, emotional speech, the 63-year-old asked PP members to "be responsible in carrying out your duties".

The delegates have a choice between Saenz de Santamaria, 47, who for six-and-a-half years was deputy prime minister, and Casado, a lawmaker who has promised "hope" with a generational revamp of the party and a step further to the political right. Both were voted through a first round of unprecedented primaries at the PP.

Yesterday's victor could become Spain's next prime minister if the PP wins general elections planned for 2020 at the latest. Saenz de Santamaria is emphasising her considerable experience. She doesn't think the party needs to be revamped and believes she is most capable of defeating Pedro Sanchez, the current Socialist prime minister who ousted Rajoy with a parliamentary no-confidence vote. "I have energy, I want it and I have experience," she told a campaign meeting. "Pedro Sanchez is flying a Boeing 747, and he doesn't even have the experience to pilot a light aircraft," she said of the centre-left opponent.

Re-energize PP

On the other side is Casado, who has criticized his rival's management of the separatist crisis in Catalonia when she was in charge of relations between Madrid and regions. He has taken a hardline stance on Catalonia, calling for the addition of



MADRID: Spanish lawmaker Pablo Casado is congratulated by former Spanish prime minister and outgoing Popular Party (PP) leader Mariano Rajoy (C) after being chosen to be the conservative party's next leader against Soraya Saenz de Santamaria (R) at the end of a party meeting. — AFP

offences such as illegally calling a referendum to the criminal code to boost Spain's legal response to the secession threat.

"Dialogue doesn't work with those who want to break the law," he said this week. Casado is also against depenalising euthanasia as promoted by the Socialist government and wants to lower income and corporation taxes. The winner will have to breathe new life into a party which between 2011 general elections, when Rajoy won an absolute majority, and the last polls in 2016 has lost three million voters. Many have migrated to Ciudadanos, a cen-

tre-right party, angry over the series of corruption scandals that hit the PP in the past years. Jose Pablo Ferrandiz, lead researcher at polling company Metroscopia, believes both Saenz de Santamaria and Casado will find it "very difficult to attract those who went to Ciudadanos". The PP, which still holds most seats in parliament even if it has lost its absolute majority, will have to rapidly prepare for municipal, regional and European elections in May 2019. And then further ahead, the party will be striving to re-take power from the Socialists. — AFP

Macron's security aide scandal deepens with minister under fire

PARIS: The most damaging scandal of Emmanuel Macron's presidency deepened yesterday as his interior minister faces a grilling over his response to a top security aide caught on video striking a young man at a Paris protest in May. Opposition lawmakers have demanded that Macron, who has so far remained silent about the incident, explain the government's response after the videos of aide Alexandre Benalla emerged this week.

Benalla, 26, was initially suspended without pay but on Friday Macron fired his former security aide, who was taken into custody suspected of unlawfully receiving police surveillance footage in a bid to clear his name. Interior Minister Gerard Collomb has been heavily criticised over the affair, with some opposition lawmakers saying his job is on the line after press reports that he knew about Benalla's violence.

Collomb will be publicly questioned on Monday morning by the Law Commission of the National Assembly, the head of the lower house of parliament announced yesterday.

Also yesterday, three police officers were taken into custody suspected of providing the surveillance footage to Benalla. They were accused of "misappropriation of images from a video surveillance system", as well as a "violation of professional secrets", the prosecutor's office said.

The Paris police prefecture said the footage was "improperly disclosed to a third party on the evening of July 18," the same night the newspaper Le Monde published the video that sparked the scandal. That video, shot on a smartphone, showed Benalla wearing a riot police helmet and surrounded by officers, manhandling and striking a protester during a May 1 demonstration. In a second video published by the



PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron waits for the arrival of his Azerbaijan counterpart for a meeting at the Elysee Presidential Palace. — AFP

newspaper late Thursday, Benalla — who has never been a policeman — is also seen violently wrestling a young woman to the ground during scuffles on a square near the Rue Mouffetard, a picturesque street in the fifth arrondissement.

The three senior officers taken into custody, who belong to the Paris department of public order and traffic, include a deputy chief of staff and a commissioner in the fifth arrondissement, as well as the commander in charge of relations between the prefecture and the Elysee Palace, said several sources close to the case. Benalla's home in the southwestern suburbs of Paris was raided yesterday.

Vincent Crase, a security aide for Macron's Republic on the Move party and an associate of Benalla's who also intervened during the May protest, was also taken into custody on Friday. The Paris prosecutor's office said on Saturday that the custody of both Benalla and Crase had been extended by 24 hours. — AFP

Zimbabwe President assures white farmers their land is safe

HARARE: President Emmerson Mnangagwa yesterday assured Zimbabwe's white farmers that their land will not be taken, calling on them to work together with the government ahead of landmark elections on July 30. Under his predecessor Robert Mugabe, white farmers were evicted in favour of landless black people from 2000 by a controversial policy that wrecked agriculture and triggered an economic collapse. But less than two weeks to go before Zimbabwe's first elections since Mugabe's ouster, Mnangagwa moved to quash any fears the practice would be repeated.

"This issue of new (land) invasions is a thing of the past. The rule of law must now apply," Mnangagwa told a group of about 200 white and Asian people gathered in the capital Harare, adding that the "animal farm mentality" was a thing of the past. "I am saying we should cease to talk about who owns the farm in terms of color. It is criminal talking about that. A farmer, black farmer, a white farmer is a Zimbabwean farmer."

Mnangagwa said his government was "racially blind" and needed the expertise of everyone across the economy. Zimbabwe's white population has fallen to less than one percent of the country's 16 million after Mugabe imposed the policy to expropriate farms in 2000. Agricultural output crashed in the aftermath, with investors leaving and mass unemployment forcing millions of Zimbabweans out of the country to seek work. Mnangagwa acknowledged the failure of the land reforms, saying the expertise of white people in the farming sector was still needed and encouraging them to take part in rebuilding Zimbabwe. "We must build the Zimbabwe we want. We want to restore the status of Zimbabwe as a food basket of the region," he said. — AFP

International

The bane of Pakistani politicians: Young voters with smartphones

46 million people below the age of 35 registered to vote in nationwide elections

ISLAMABAD: The crowd of young Pakistanis, many armed with smartphones, surround the politician's car and begin streaming live footage of something extraordinary: angry voters asking their elected representatives what they have done for them lately. A titanic 46 million people below the age of 35 are registered to vote in nationwide elections on July 25 — many of them savvy social media users who are posting videos calling out the powerful.

In one clip, influential politician, landowner and tribal chief Sikandar Hayat Khan Bosan is filmed in his car in the central city of Multan surrounded by young men chanting "thief" and "turncoat". "Where were you during the last five years?" they ask Bosan, complaining over the poor state of roads in the area. An aide can be heard pleading that the leader is feeling unwell.

To be held accountable in such a public manner is virtually unheard of for most Pakistani politicians, especially in rural areas where many of the videos have been filmed. There feudal landowners, village elders and religious leaders have for decades been elected unopposed. Many are known to use their power over residents to bend them to their will.

Dubbed the "electables", these politicians command huge vote banks. Most also take a flexible approach to ideology, and are highly courted by political parties, who view winning their allegiance as a passport to power. But videos like the one of Bosan have gone viral in the weeks leading up to the polls, shared thousands of times in a country of some 207 million people, of whom roughly a quarter use 3G and 4G internet, according to the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority.

They have also made their way on to Pakistan's numerous and raucous television channels, ensuring they are also broadcast to audiences without access to

social media. Analysts are watching closely to see whether these rare moments of accountability might disrupt the way the major political parties have long relied on rural politicians and their huge vote banks as a shortcut to power.

'My vote can bring change'

The videos' popularity is a sign of simmering resentment against corrupt politicians among Pakistan's youth, says Sarwar Bari, an analyst at the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), a democratic watchdog. Historically apathetic, young Pakistanis first emerged as a political force in the 2013 elections, when a generation who grew up idolizing cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan voted for his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party in droves.

Under-35s represent a massive proportion of the total electorate of 106 million voters registered in the 2018 elections. More than 17 million are in the 18-25 age bracket, with a huge chunk set to cast their ballot for the first time. The Asia Foundation noted in a recent report that many

young people are increasingly engaged in the democratic process, particularly through the widespread use of social media.

If so, and as concerns over election rigging mount ahead of the vote, the impact of uncensored content such as the viral videos could become significant, analysts say. "Social media has emerged as a democracy strengthening tool," says Shahzad Ahmed, director of Bytes for All, a digital rights group. Bari, who predicts election turnout will be "massive", says if even half of the young voters who have seen and shared such videos go to the polls "it will strengthen the trust of the people in the democratic system."

Pakistanis only started to receive high-speed mobile data in 2014 and its use has spread at one of the highest rates in Asia. Access for young people to social



ISLAMABAD: In this picture taken on July 12, 2018, students use their mobile phones at a campus in Islamabad. —AFP

media is helping to create a more democratic and participatory form of government, argues Maham Khan, a 21-year-old student of international relations at the Quaid-i-Azam university in Islamabad.

She references protests in Cairo in 2011 which were organised via social media and eventually unseated the then-president Hosni Mubarak. "Basically the youth is actually using social media just like in Egypt, to bring about slow social revolution," she says. But who they will vote for is hard to predict, with vast socioeconomic, religious and ideological differences between this huge population—though jobs and education are among their most unifying demands.

Polls still broadly indicate youth support for PTI and Khan's populist, reformist agenda, though the shine may have gone off the sportsman somewhat—one of the viral videos shows him being whisked away by aides as a similar crowd challenges him in Karachi. Nevertheless, most students who spoke to AFP expressed hope for change after decades of corrupt political dynasties, and Khan—despite widespread claims he is being backed by the powerful military as they seek a pliant government—represents the best chance of that. "As a first time voter myself... I'm very excited and I want to be a part of this process through which my vote can bring change," 23-year-old Rafay Khan Jaboon said. —AFP

Modi sails through confidence vote with rival's embrace

NEW DELHI: India's ruling party sailed through a confidence vote in a theatrical parliamentary session which saw a startled Prime Minister Narendra Modi embraced by his chief political foe. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was in no danger of losing its first confidence motion since taking power four years ago, which was prompted by a minor party walking out of the governing coalition.

After a marathon 12 hours of debate, more than 60 percent of the lower house voted in the BJP's favor, but the vote was overshadowed by the theatrics of bitter Modi rival Rahul Gandhi. The opposition Congress party leader crossed the chamber during debate to give an awkward embrace to a seated and clearly surprised Modi. "You can abuse me and call me names but I don't have any hatred towards you," Gandhi said to cheers from Congress lawmakers just before he hugged his rival.

After gathering his wits, Modi called Gandhi again to shake hands and pat his back, and the opposition leader winked mischievously at Congress colleagues after returning to his seat. Congress later voted against Modi's government despite the brief bonhomie on the parliament floor. The hug has since gone viral on social media and endlessly dissected non-stop on India's cable TV channels and went viral on social media, with some praising Gandhi's apparent gesture of goodwill.

"Earlier opposition parties... always managed to



NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (C) gestures to senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders after arriving for the monsoon session of Parliament. —AFP

transcend rivalry at certain crucial moments," said independent analyst Shiv Vishwanathan in comments to the Hindustan. "Today, Rahul Gandhi captured that history." But Modi was less convinced of Gandhi's sincerity, later telling parliament he was

confused by Gandhi's "childish" behavior. Modi and Gandhi's running war of words has escalated since polls showed a decline in the BJP's popularity, fanning hopes of an opposition comeback in next year's elections after a Congress rout in 2014. —AFP

Hundreds protest in HK against pro-independence party ban

HONG KONG: Hundreds of people protested yesterday in Hong Kong after police sought to ban a pro-independence political party, as Beijing ups pressure on challengers to its territorial sovereignty over the city. Authorities said the Hong Kong National Party (HKNP), a well-known but small group with a core membership of around a dozen, is a potential threat to national security and public safety.

Around 500 protesters from different pro-democracy parties gathered in Hong Kong's Wan Chai district for a march organized by the Civil Human Rights Front (CHRF), a group that does not support independence. They included around 50 supporters of pro-independence groups, who waved flags and banners — including one that read "only two countries have two systems", a reference to the "one country, two systems" arrangement under which Hong Kong is currently governed.

"No matter what political ideology

you have, we need to protect our freedom of speech and freedom of association," said Chung Hon Lam, high school student and convener of pro-independence group Studentlocalism. Lam accused the government of using "national security" as an excuse to target pro-independence parties, and warned it other pro-democracy parties could be targeted too.

The protest came after John Lee, Hong Kong's secretary for security, said he was considering a police request to ban the HKNP. Lee did not elaborate how the party was damaging national security, but said under the city's laws, national security includes safeguarding the "territorial integrity and the independence of the People's Republic of China".

Semi-autonomous Hong Kong enjoys freedoms unseen on the mainland, which are protected by the 50-year handover agreement between Britain and China. But fears are growing that Beijing is trampling the



HONG KONG: Pro-independence protesters march during a demonstration against Article 23 and bans on freedom of association. —AFP

deal. It is the first time such a ban has been sought since Britain handed Hong Kong back to China in 1997, and is the latest move to stifle any calls for independence, which have infuriated Beijing. Britain has voiced concerns over the suppression of political activity in the city. "The UK

does not support Hong Kong independence, but Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy, and its rights and freedoms, are central to its way of life, and it is important they are fully respected," the British foreign office said in a statement on Wednesday. —AFP

Key member resigns from Myanmar advisory panel on Rohingya crisis

YANGON: A key member of an international advisory panel on Myanmar's crisis-hit Rakhine state has resigned, telling AFP yesterday that the Aung San Suu Kyi-appointed board risks becoming "part of the problem" in a conflict that forced 700,000 Rohingya Muslims to flee. Retired Thai lawmaker and ambassador Kobsak Chutikul was secretary for the panel hand-picked by civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi to advise her government on how to handle the aftermath of a military campaign that drove the minority out of the country.

The brutal crackdown started in August last year and left hundreds of Rohingya villages razed to the ground. Refugees to Bangladesh have recounted horrifying testimony of widespread murder, rape and torture in violence the UN and US have branded as ethnic cleansing. Kobsak Chutikul said his position became untenable ahead of a second full meeting of the panel with officials in Myanmar's capital Naypyidaw this week.

"I verbally gave my resignation in a staff meeting last Tuesday (10 July)," he said by phone from Bangkok. The board, he said, risks becoming a "part of the problem". "It lulls authorities into thinking they have done enough to respond to the concerns of the international community, that they've ticked that box," he added. "It becomes dangerous in terms of an illusion that something is being done... that they're going to do something while Rome burns." —AFP

Thousands protest Australia's refugee detention policy

SYDNEY: Thousands of people marched across major Australian cities yesterday calling for an end to Canberra's offshore detention of asylum-seekers. The government sends anyone who tries to enter the country by sea to camps on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island or on Nauru in the Pacific for processing.

Protestors took to the streets to mark the fifth anniversary of the policy's reintroduction, when in 2013 Canberra significantly toughened its stance, signing deals with the Pacific nations and declaring anyone arriving by boat had "no chance" of being settled in Australia. "The policy that was introduced in 2013, to expel people—the 'Fortress Australia' policy that they (the government) put in place—that has to go," rally organizer Ian Rintoul from the Refugee Action Coalition told Sydney protesters. "So we fight to close the detention centers on Manus and Nauru, but we fight in that process to bring them here."

Hundreds marched through Sydney shouting, "Free, free the refugees", with banners stating, "Five years too long, evacuate Manus and Nauru". Joint rallies were held in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra and Perth. Canberra says its policy deters people from embarking on treacherous sea journeys, but rights groups and the United Nations have slammed the wealthy nation for turning its back on vulnerable people, as reports of abuse, suicide and despondency filter out of the camps. —AFP

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

How Congress can limit Trump Russia damage

By Julia Frifield and David Eckels Wade

After Donald Trump appeared to side with Vladimir Putin over the US intelligence community's conclusion that Moscow meddled in the 2016 US election, Congressional Republicans finally spoke out. Days later, with even senior Republican senators apparently eager to accept Trump's claim that he misspoke after his Helsinki meeting with the Russian leader, that initial forceful response has devolved into the foreign policy equivalent of the "thoughts and prayers" offered after school shootings. But Congress need not just be a spectator, cheering or heckling from the stands.

Congress has many tools to limit the damage of Trump's Russia posture; it's overdue to start using them. We know Congress can do more because - over a combined four decades on Capitol Hill and in the State Department - we've been on both the giving and receiving ends of vigorous congressional oversight and activism on foreign policy.

Whether through investigations, appropriations, legislation, resolutions, hearings or official travel, Congress members have a strong hand to play. The Constitution dealt them into the game because its framers knew the stakes. In the words of policy analyst Jonathan Masters, "the periodic tug-of-war between the president and Congress over foreign policy is not a by-product of the Constitution, but rather, one of its core aims." Congress squeezed funding to limit or end controversial military engagements in Vietnam and Central America, and covert operations in Angola.

In the mid-1980s, when freshman Senator John Kerry joined Senator Richard Lugar to pass an amendment compelling the Reagan administration to condition aid to the Philippines on free elections, Filipinos ousted autocrat (and client of former Trump aide Paul Manafort) Ferdinand Marcos. Congress imposed sanctions on apartheid-era South Africa over the objections of a reluctant administration. Congress repeatedly pressed the Clinton administration on the Balkans. Lawmakers unilaterally lifted an arms embargo to help Bosnian rebels fighting ethnic cleansing, which both pressured - and gave leverage to - the administration to intervene forcefully.

For years, the legislative handiwork of two Republicans (the so-called Helms-Burton law) tied any president's hands on travel and trade policies with Cuba. The tragedy of the Iraq War, in retrospect, offers a cautionary example of a time where greater congressional leverage might have made a difference.

Republicans, of course, only recently surrendered this critical leverage to the executive branch. In objection to President Barack Obama's nuclear negotiations with Iran, Congress intervened through hearings, attempted appropriations riders, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's controversial joint address to Congress, and even a widely signed letter to Iran's Supreme Leader undermining the White House. After the 2012 Benghazi attack that killed four Americans, including the US ambassador to Libya, senior officials were subpoenaed and even unrelated nominees were held hostage by senators demanding access to documents and witnesses.

Meaningful hearings

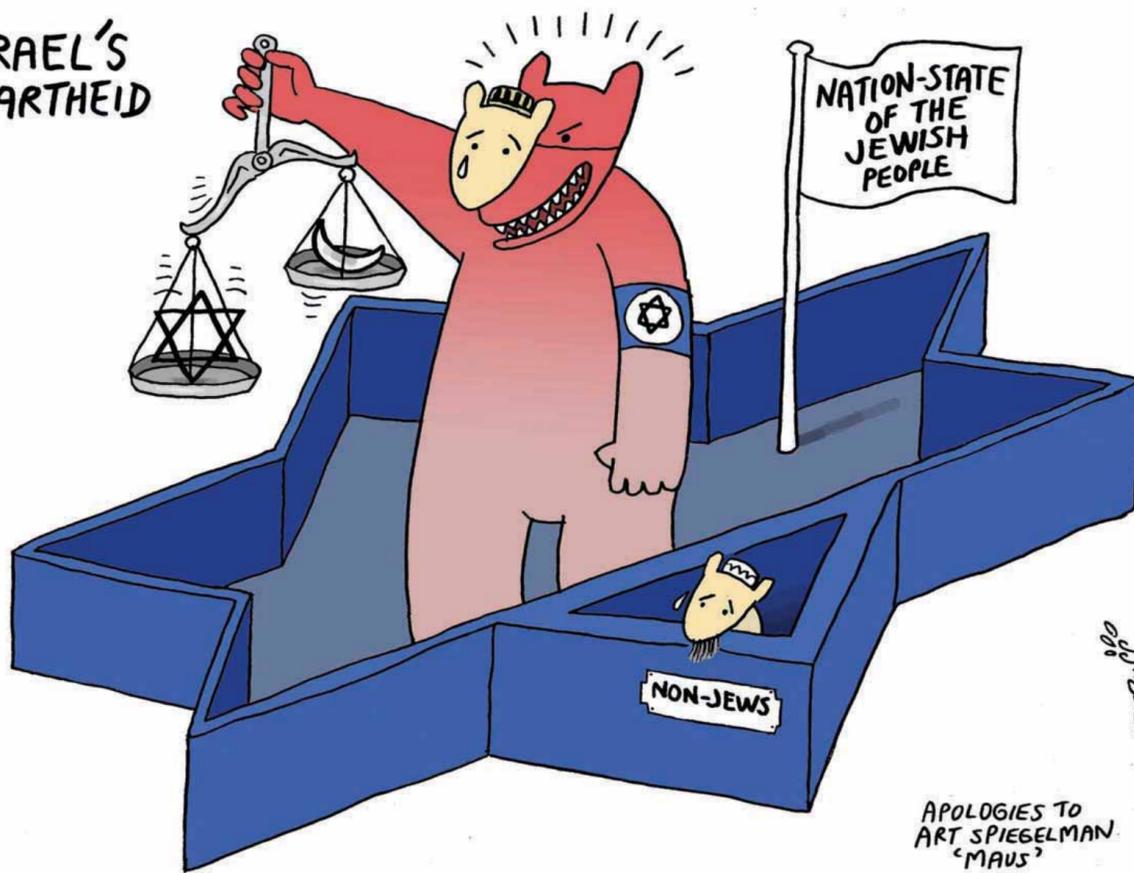
Not every Congressional attempt to shape foreign policy is appropriate. The most effective policies are bipartisan. Much of what we witnessed on Iran and Benghazi was regrettable, embodying hyper partisanship and inviting dysfunction. But at a moment when the president is insulting longtime allies, attacking NATO and shrugging off Russian interference in our electoral process, it's essential that Congress find a strong approach instead of allowing legislative muscles to atrophy.

Meaningful hearings are the first line of defense. Oversight committees should press the administration to detail commitments made to Putin behind closed doors and explain what's being done to prepare against future intrusions in US elections. They should also provide a forum to elevate the importance of our European allies, those the president just labeled a "foe." Where the administration resists providing relevant information, Congress can use its subpoena powers. Congress should deploy its funding powers as well. That means ensuring adequate funding for cybersecurity efforts, particularly with regard to the upcoming elections, or attaching requirements for relevant reporting on elections interference in the funding bills the Senate will pass this August.

Legislating isn't easy, particularly given the threat of a presidential veto. But that is no reason not to try. Additional Russia sanctions, resolutions reaffirming NATO's mutual defense doctrine (Article 5), or passing the bipartisan Senate bill to protect Special Counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation are all ripe for this moment. Senator Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has canceled August recess. Surely there's time to address Russia, and fireproof Mueller's investigation - which remains the fastest and best path to understanding the Russian attack on our democratic process and to preventing its redux. Every confirmation hearing can be transformed into a Russia hearing; many a nominee has been held up over much less and, today, what could matter more?

NOTE: Julia Frifield was an Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs from 2013-2017 and is senior advisor for global affairs at Johns Hopkins University. David Eckels Wade was Chief of Staff to the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Chief of Staff to the US Department of State from 2013-2015 — Reuters

ISRAEL'S APARTHEID



Washington Watch

The 'Jewish nation-state' bill

By Dr James J Zogby

This past week by a vote of 62 to 55, Israel's Knesset passed legislation called "Israel as a Nation-State of the Jewish People." Heralding the passage of the bill, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu described it as "a defining moment in the annals of Zionism and the annals of the state of Israel... We have determined in law the founding principle of our existence. Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people, and respects the rights of all its citizens."

In reaction, Israeli hardliners and their supporters in the US celebrated the legislation as "clarifying", while more liberal voices lamented "the damage the bill does to the 'Zionist vision'". This is one debate where I cannot take the side of the liberals because in reality, the "Jewish Nation-State" bill is in fact "clarifying" as it merely establishes in "Basic Law" practices and policies that Israel has been implementing since its founding.

As I demonstrate in my little book "Palestinians, the invisible Victims: Political Zionism and the Roots of Palestinian Dispossession," even before the founding of the state, the operational goals of Political Zionism have been Jewish exclusivism and Palestinian dispossession. Since its establishment, the government of Israel has passed over 60 laws and implemented policies designed to realize those goals.

After 1949, for example, they demolished 349 Palestinian villages that had belonged to Palestinians who were forced to become refugees. Israel seized their lands, declared that these properties were "state lands" (totaling 93 percent of the land within their new state), and turned them over to quasi-governmental agencies for "Jewish only" development. By law, these lands cannot be transferred to non-Jewish control. In recent years, the Israeli Supreme Court upheld a law that gave Israeli Jewish communities the right to exclude applicants wishing to live there based on their ethnicity or religion.

Israel has operated in a similar way in the occupied West Bank and "East Jerusalem". In these areas, they have built "Jewish only" housing for over 700,000 Jews, while demolishing over 10,000 Palestinian homes and allowing only limited Palestinian development. Additionally, in the occupied lands there are Jewish-only roads, services,

access to water, and now access to the judiciary. Other laws that were passed after the founding of the state welcomed all Jews to immigrate and become citizens of Israel, while at the same time prohibiting Palestinian refugees from returning to their homes or properties. And even now, should a Palestinian citizen of Israel marry someone from outside (including from the West Bank), they are prohibited from bringing their spouse to live with them in Israel.

“ Bill has exposed cruel apartheid system ”

There are still other laws and policies which favor Jewish over Arab Palestinian citizens. There are, for example, "separate but not equal": educational systems, social service benefits, funds for development and infrastructure, and policies regulating political expression.

Discrimination

And there is clear discriminatory intent in the punishments meted out to those who break the law. An Israeli who mercilessly beat an Eritrean refugee was sentenced to 100 days of "community service"; an Israeli soldier who shot to death at point blank range a defenseless Palestinian was sentenced to eight months in prison; while a young Palestinian girl who slapped an Israeli soldier after he had attempted breaking into her home was sentenced to nine months.

Since these policies and laws granting preferential treatment to Jews over Arabs have been in place, some since the founding of the state of Israel, two questions must be asked: why was Netanyahu so determined to pass

this bill now? And why the liberal lament?

The answer to the first can be found in the political psychology of Netanyahu. Like populist nationalists elsewhere, he instinctively understands the racist inclination of his base. In the 1990's he fired them up in opposition to the Oslo Accords promising to end the peace process (the widow of Yitzhak Rabin held Netanyahu responsible for the anti-peace incitement that led to her husband's assassination). When he felt threatened in his last election he warned his supporters that "the Arabs were turning out in droves" to defeat him. And now, facing multiple indictments for various forms of corruption, he has resorted to naked nationalist appeal as a way to mobilize his base and divert attention away from his legal challenges.

At the same time, with US President Donald Trump and the Republican-led Congress under control, Netanyahu feels emboldened. Not only is he confident that he will not face any sanctions from the US, but this "Jewish Nation-State" law, coupled with others being implemented by his government, are paving the way for his eventual annexation of the West Bank.

What is confounding, however, is why liberals are suddenly concerned as Israel has written into law what they have been doing for decades with nary a protest. The explanation for this was best expressed by Israel's President Reuven Rivlin (not a liberal), when he decried the language of the legislation saying that it "could harm the Jewish people worldwide and in Israel, and could even be used as a weapon by our enemies." In other words, "we've been doing all this without anyone noticing for decades, just don't formalize it in clear language. It makes us look bad."

In this regard, the clarity that this "Jewish Nation-State" bill provides may be a blessing. It rips the mask off of the facade behind which Israel has hidden for years. What is exposed is the cruel apartheid system that is being implemented in Israel and the occupied Palestinian lands. The time has come for an end to hypocrisy and moral blindness. Israeli practices must be challenged and people of good will must work together to demand equality, justice, and human rights.

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

Trump could've been dealer of the free world

By John Lloyd

Donald Trump cannot be, and perhaps never wished to be, the leader of the free world, the burden which has fallen on the shoulders of Oval Office occupants since World War Two. America First means America Withdrawn. But he could still have been the dealer of the free world, taking his 1987 book "Trump: The Art of the Deal" and applying to international affairs its precepts on how to get the better of any negotiation. Had he done so with at least an eye to Western as well as American interests, it might have benefited us all. (Trump's co-author, Tony Schwartz, has now taken to TV and Twitter to warn that the president's "continuing meltdown" puts "the republic at enormous risk.")

But it seems Trump doesn't want to be the free world's dealer either. His performance next to a triumphant Vladimir Putin after their July 16 Helsinki meeting shamed all (small "d") democrats. The US president has abased himself before one who has seized part of a neighboring state (Ukraine) while fomenting revolt in another part, helped ensure the victory of authoritarian leader Bashar Al-Assad in Syria's civil war, closed down most independent civil society institutions in Russia, and marginalized all challenges to his cardboard

simulacrum of a "democracy." When a US president so lauds a man like Putin, when he treats a summit - for which preparation should be meticulous and performance expressive of values and differences, seeking compromise only where principled - as a warm buddy-bath of meaningless assurances and compliments, then more than the American republic is at enormous risk. To make it worse, this abasement followed a trip to Europe in which "set out to humiliate the leaders of Western Europe and declare them 'foes'; to fracture long-standing military, economic, and political alliances; and to absolve Russia of its attempts to undermine the 2016 election. He did so clearly, repeatedly, and with conviction."

The effect of Trump's brief stay in Europe was to reveal in startling clarity that "conviction," which seemed to be an intent to render meaningless all existing understandings with major American allies, allowing for no lingering doubts that his skepticism about NATO and his contempt for Europe - and especially Germany - could be simply a matter of mood.

Hapless

America's most intimate allies - the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, the pillars of the so-called Anglosphere - are now in the hapless posture of trying to retain a "special relationship" with a president who has fun insulting them, as he did with Canadian premier Justin Trudeau after refusing to sign the G7 joint statement following the group's meeting in Canada last month, and as he did with British Prime Minister Theresa May, when, as her guest during a visit to the UK, he chided her for

not listening to his advice to leave the European Union and promoted her most prominent critic, the former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, as her successor.

Both Trudeau and May are dependent on the United States: He, as a neighbor whose trade with the colossus to the south accounts for almost 25 percent of Canada's GDP; she, as one desperately seeking partners for a post-Brexit world in which trade with the European Union is likely to sharply diminish. And when the US president returns to the United States, realizes that the storm from within his own party is too great to ignore, then mounts so risible a "correction" - "I said the word 'would' instead of 'wouldn't'" - then we are in a world not just where words lose all meaning. We are in an Alice in Wonderland universe where a Trumpy-Dumpty can say "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less... the question is, which is to be master - that's all."

We are witnessing a sustained attack on an assumed system of liberal values by the figure who most of all has been tapped, in post-war times, to protect them. The US National Defense Strategy rightly saw the world as one where rival powers, led by China, now seek to reduce the West's hegemony over a world where some version of a liberal order - where the rule of international law is observed and trade can be carried out securely - is protected, most of all by the United States.

For the present, the most important question is how far the West will continue to be able to defend and project liberal democratic values. The young almost everywhere have become more cynical

about the value of democracy as a political system, and less hopeful that anything they do might influence public policy, according to research by the political scientists Yascha Mounk and Roberto Stefan Foa. Yet, according to Richard Fontaine and Daniel Twining, writing in Foreign Affairs, Washington is "hardly playing defense" against the offensive by Beijing and Moscow - much less "championing a robust agenda for protecting and enlarging the free world."

Some US presidents have been better than others at making such a robust agenda a central goal of their policy. In recent times, George W. Bush, who himself seemed to favor an "America First" policy when he took over the presidency, opened his second term by promising "to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture."

Barack Obama was no America Firster, but did wish to set limits on the world policeman role, and encouraged allies, especially in Europe, to play a larger part in upholding global liberal values. Both men proclaimed liberty as at the core of their foreign policy aims. The 45th president does not.

Thus, from Donald's adventures in the lands of the Europeans, we must recognize that these values must be fought for without his help - indeed, at times, with his opposition. The rot, like that of a fish, has started at the head. We can only hope it doesn't reach too far before a new head is found.

NOTE: John Lloyd co-founded the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford, where he is senior research fellow — Reuters

Business

SUNDAY, JULY 22, 2018

12 Kuwait's consumer spending rebounds, resumes expansion



13 Farnborough airshow unveils \$192 billion in new orders



14 Boursa Kuwait awarded full membership at FEAS



BUENOS AIRES: People protest against IMF in the framework of the meeting of Group of 20 finance ministers in Buenos Aires, on Friday. Global trade conflicts triggered by the protectionist policies of US President Donald Trump are set to dominate this weekend's meeting of Group of 20 finance ministers in Buenos Aires. — AFP

Gulf Bank records 18% increase in H1 net profit

Bank generates KD 27m in net profit, KD 77m in net interest income for H1 2018

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank K.S.C.P. announced its financial results for the first half of 2018. The Bank recorded a net profit of KD 27 million in the first 6 months of 2018, an increase of 18 percent over the same period in 2017. The Bank generated net interest income of KD 77 million during the first half of 2018, 21 percent above the prior year and operating income of KD 97 million, 8 percent over the same period in 2017. The operating profit before provisions / impairment losses was KD 65 million during the first half of 2018, recording growth of 8 percent, over the same period in 2017.

Total general provisions on the balance sheet were at KD 220 million, representing nearly 36 percent of shareholders' equity as at 30 June 2018, and total assets increased by 4 percent to KD 5.84 billion compared to 30 June 2017. Total equity reported at the end of June of 2018 was KD 600 million.

Commenting on the results, Omar Kutayba Alghanim, Gulf Bank's Chairman said: "We are pleased with our Bank's solid performance for the first half of 2018.

These great results highlight the Bank's progress quarter after quarter, and confirm that we are on the right track in delivering sustainable results." On the inclusion of Gulf Bank to MSCI Frontier Markets Index, Alghanim said: "This is great news to Gulf Bank's shareholders. The inclusion of Gulf Bank shares in the MSCI Frontier Markets Index during its May 2018 semiannual review will attract international investors and support the liquidity and attractiveness of Gulf Bank's shares."

Positive outlook and "A" credit ratings

Gulf Bank continues to be well recognized in terms of its credit worthiness and financial strength internationally as it is now rated "A" by all four leading credit rating agencies with

a recent revision of the Bank's outlook from "Stable" to "Positive" by Moody's Investors Service in May 2018. Alghanim commented on the Bank's credit rating: "I am proud of the recent Moody's upgrade of Gulf Bank's outlook from "Stable" to "Positive" with an affirmation of its "A3" long-term rating. This is a result of Gulf Bank's sustained improvement in its assets quality". In



Omar Kutayba Alghanim

Issuer Default Rating at "A+" with a "Stable" Outlook.

Recognition

During the second quarter of 2018, Gulf Bank was voted 'Best Retail Bank in Kuwait', by The Banker Middle East, the region's leading banking industry magazine, for the 3rd consecutive year. The award recognizes the Bank's outstanding performance in the retail sector and highlights its understanding of customers' needs and its commitment to delivering superior services and products.

Alghanim concluded his remarks by stating: "I would like to thank everyone that contributed to these strong results. I'd also like to thank our shareholders and the



KD 27 MILLION
NET PROFIT

18% increase in the first half of 2018 vs. 2017



Moody's A3 Fitch Ratings A+ S&P Global Ratings A- GI CAPITAL A-

Central Bank of Kuwait for their continued support. I especially want to thank our customers for their loyalty and reiterate our commitment to place them at the center of everything we do."

Trump ups ante ahead of G20 discussions on global trade

BUENOS AIRES: US President Donald Trump's latest attacks on China and the European Union will shape the discourse on global trade conflicts and competitive devaluation as Group of 20 finance ministers meet in Buenos Aires this weekend. Trump's protectionist policies that have seen him slap steep tariffs on steel and aluminum, angering allies such as the EU, Canada and Mexico, already looked set to fashion discussions between finance ministers and central bankers from the world's 20 leading economies during two days of meetings.

That is even more the case after his latest Twitter outburst on Friday saw him accuse the EU and China of "manipulating their currencies and interest rates lower," while he also took aim at the US Federal Reserve for hiking interest rates, complaining that it eroded "our big competitive edge."

China and the US have no plans for bilateral talks, according to US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who has vowed to "respond to concerns on US trade policies" when he meets with fellow ministers.

But China will be a hot topic as Group of Seven ministers hold a one-hour session on the margins of the wider meeting, not least after Trump threatened to crank up punitive tariffs against the country to include the entire \$500 billion in goods the US imports from the Asian powerhouse.

As well as his steel and aluminum duties, and threats to likewise hit foreign car imports with tariffs, Trump has already slapped China with a 25 percent levy on \$34 billion in goods, with another \$16 billion on the way.

'Very serious'

Other than announcing counter-measures, China has kept relatively quiet over Trump's various threats—perhaps safe in the knowledge that his tariffs are a drop in the bucket next to their expected \$2.4 trillion exports for 2018.

But German Chancellor Angela Merkel warned that the EU was "ready" to respond to the US should more excises be forthcoming, describing current trade tensions as "very serious."

International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde, whose press conference will kick off activities on Saturday morning, said earlier this week that increasing trade restrictions pose "the greatest near-term threat" to the world economy, despite projected growth of 3.9 percent through 2019.

She also warned Trump that "the US economy is especially vulnerable" due to "retaliatory measures." IMF economists say that in a worst case scenario \$430 billion—a half point—could be cut off global GDP in 2020 if all tariff threats and retaliation are

implemented. Others are also worried about Trump's measures, including India, which alongside China, Brazil, Russia and South Africa make up the five emerging market BRICS countries, all of which are G20 members.

"All BRICS members have benefitted from globalization. All of them need finance and capital inflows," said Sreeram Chaulia, dean at Delhi's Jindal School of International Affairs. "Trump is trying to put a brake on trade and finance. We rely on international capital movement and inward FDI, Trump wants to stop it."

'History is clear'

The economic problems plaguing a number of emerging markets will occupy ministers, particularly given that host nation Argentina recently secured a \$50 billion IMF loan to try to stabilize its economy, after the peso plunged 35 percent between April and June.

"The situation facing certain emerging markets is more delicate with the rise of the

dollar and the question of capital flows," a French source told AFP.

As well as the dollar, rising oil prices and US interest rates have helped fuel the capital flight from emerging economies such as Brazil and Argentina, with investors taking out \$14 billion between May and June. "The meeting will take place against the backdrop of ongoing financial vulnerabilities in emerging market economies and global trade tensions," said Australian Treasurer Scott Morrison.

He headed to Buenos Aires planning to urge G20 members to keep markets open.

"History is clear: when trade barriers go up, growth and jobs go down," he added. Economist Rubens Barbosa, former Brazilian ambassador to Washington and London, says Brazil will try to defend multilateralism in international trade—notably as upheld by the World Trade Organization. "In Buenos Aires, what will be on the table is protectionism and the strengthening of the WTO from the point of view of emerging countries such as Brazil," he said. — AFP

Business

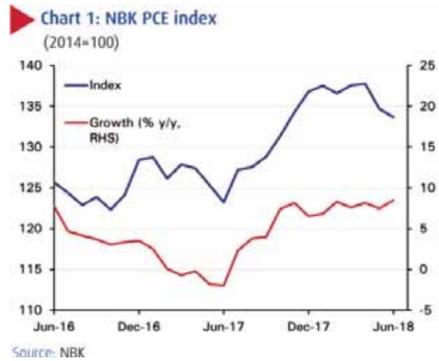
NBK Economic Report

Kuwait's consumer spending rebounds, resumes expansion

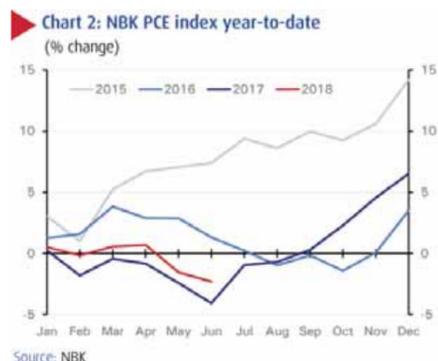
KUWAIT: NBK's consumer spending index increased 8.5 percent y/y in June, supported by a pickup in the consumption of durables and non-durables. The end of Ramadan helped boost spending on those components. Meanwhile, spending on services declined due to an early summer but still maintains robust growth relative to last year. Firmer oil prices, now hovering at three-and-a-half year highs, and improving consumer confidence, which increased at its strongest pace in six years in June, continue to support spending. Momentum may soften due to the summer lull, but is expected to remain robust throughout the rest of 2018.

Spending on durables continued to show strength, recording an increase of 10.8 percent y/y in June. It was supported by a pick-up in the purchases of electronics and luxury goods, which had more-than-offset some mild softness in automotive and furniture sales.

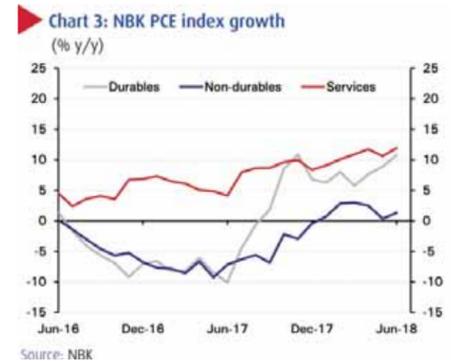
Growth in the consumption of services was impressive at 11.9 percent y/y, and non-durables had a good month, growing by 1.3 percent y/y. With the end of the school year coinciding with the end of the holy month of Ramadan in mid-June, summer travelers



Source: NBK



Source: NBK



Source: NBK

embarked on their vacations earlier than usual. This may have contributed to a 2.6 percent m/m drop in the consumption of other services. Meanwhile, higher spending on clothing and cosmetics supported the rebound in non-durables. The 1.2 percent m/m

improvement could have stemmed from purchases usually associated with the celebration of Eid-Al-fitr.

Consumer spending is projected to remain healthy through 2018. However, uncertainty over the future income and employment prospects of expats - fol-

lowing the state's efforts to increase employment for nationals - may weigh down on consumer spending. Meanwhile, spending by Kuwaiti nationals is expected to remain strong, thanks to low inflation, healthy employment, and higher public spending.

Chinese yuan wilts again, cushioning the blow of Trump tariffs

SHANGHAI: China's yuan slipped again on Friday and was expected to extend its steady decline, providing Beijing with a buffer against punitive US trade tariffs and defying President Donald Trump's warning over the dollar's rise. The yuan is kept in a narrow range each day by Beijing which, while allowing market forces some degree of play, is known to intervene in the past attracting US allegations of currency "manipulation".

After sliding recently to its lowest levels in a year as the Sino-US trade conflict heated up, the yuan fell on Friday past 6.80 to the dollar before recovering to around 6.78 later in the day, according to Bloomberg data. The late rebound triggered market speculation that authorities had intervened to prevent the yuan falling too steeply, but analysts said China seems ok with further depreciation as the trade war rumbles on.

"The (yuan's) slide against the US dollar will substantially cushion the impact on Chinese exporters from the planned next round of US tariffs," Rajiv Biswas, chief Asia economist with IHS Markit, told AFP.

The world's two largest economies face a potential full-blown trade war after the United States earlier this month imposed 25 percent tariffs on \$34 billion of Chinese products, drawing a tit-for-tat response from Beijing.

Washington has since threatened tariffs on another \$200 billion in Chinese exports, prompting Beijing to vow further retaliation.

In excerpts of an interview with US television network CNBC aired Thursday, Trump said a strong dollar "puts us at a disadvantage", adding that the Chinese yuan "has been dropping like a rock".



WASHINGTON: Packs of freshly printed \$20 notes are processed for bundling and packaging at the US Treasury's Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington, DC on Friday. The dollar slid against the euro and pound on Friday as US President Donald Trump adopted an aggressive posture on trade and foreign exchange, stoking talk of a currency war in addition to a trade war. —AFP

Those comments, plus Trump's criticism of Federal Reserve interest rate hikes, caused the dollar to fall back in the US on Thursday. But the yuan resumed its decline on Friday as the People's Bank of China (PBOC), which sets the currency's daily trading band, implemented the sharpest one-day lowering of that range in two years.

It set a central point of 6.7671 per dollar, nearly one percent lower than the previous day. China allows the yuan to move as much as two percent on either side of that daily point.

Jasper Lawler, head of research at London Capital Group, said China's response was "the starting of a cur-

rency war". "It was only a month ago when China denied that they would start a currency war following Trump's action. A lot can change in a month under Trump," he said.

The yuan has fallen about 10 percent since mid-April.

Further fall expected

The yuan's depreciation stems from a confluence of factors including the trade war, expected slower Chinese economic growth, and speculation that Beijing will take fiscal stimulus steps, which tend to pressure a nation's currency. —AFP

GE profits fall as power business struggles

NEW YORK: General Electric reported a drop in second-quarter earnings Friday amid continued headwinds in its power generation division, sending shares sharply lower. The slumping US industrial giant said profits fell to \$615 million, down 29.7 percent from the year-ago levels. Revenues rose 3.5 percent to \$30.1 billion.

GE's valuation has plummeted over the last two years due to weak market conditions in two of its largest divisions, power, and oil and gas. The company was kicked out of the prestigious Dow index in June. In the second quarter, oil and gas saw a jump in revenues as more petroleum companies pursued projects amid rising prices.

GE's aviation and healthcare businesses also had higher year-over-year profits, although profit margins in the aviation division dwindled compared with the prior quarter. But GE's power division continued to languish, with orders, revenues and segment profit all falling. Executives signaled they would need to deepen cost cuts. GE chief executive John Flannery said the company sees the overall market for gas power turbines has shrunk from the level a few years ago and would stay at low levels through 2020.

"We're going to continue to have to take additional costs out," Flannery said. "We can do that. We will do that. But's going to take some time."

Flannery expressed confidence in the power business in the long term and in a strategic reorganization unveiled in June that calls for exiting the healthcare and oil services business. "We are progressing our plans to make GE simpler and stronger," Flannery said. But a note from JPMorgan Chase cited several weak points in the report, including a cut in the company's 2018 outlook for free cash flow, a closely-watched metric that can be tied to shareholder dividends, and the pallid performance in aviation. —AFP

Zimbabwe's Mnangagwa assures white farmers their land is safe

HARARE: President Emmerson Mnangagwa yesterday assured Zimbabwe's white farmers that their land will not be taken, calling on them to work together with the government ahead of landmark elections on July 30.

Under his predecessor Robert Mugabe, white farmers were evicted in favor of landless black people from 2000 by a controversial policy that wrecked agriculture and triggered an economic collapse.

But less than two weeks to go before Zimbabwe's first elections since Mugabe's ouster, Mnangagwa moved to quash any fears the practice would be repeated. "This issue of new (land) invasions is a thing of the past. The rule of law must now apply," Mnangagwa told a group of about 200 white and Asian people gathered in the capital Harare, adding that the "animal farm mentality," was a thing of the past.

"I am saying we should cease to talk about who owns the farm in terms of color. It is criminal talking about that. A farmer, black farmer, a white farmer is a Zimbabwean farmer." Mnangagwa said his government was "racially blind" and needed the expertise of everyone across the economy. Zimbabwe's white population has fallen to less than one percent of the country's 16 million after Mugabe imposed the policy to expropriate farms in 2000. Agricultural output crashed in the aftermath, with investors leaving and mass unemployment forcing millions of Zimbabweans out of the country to seek work.

'A lot of encouragement'

Mnangagwa acknowledged the failure of the land reforms, saying the expertise of white people in the farming sector was still needed and encouraging them to take part in rebuilding Zimbabwe.

"We must build the Zimbabwe we want. We want to restore the status of Zimbabwe as a food basket of the region," he said. "He gave us a lot of encouragement. We came here to ask for options for farming," Louisa Horsely, 51, told AFP. "I wanted to know if my husband's expertise is still needed if he wants to farm and wants to help other people to farm and that is what we are interested in. It sounds (like) he wants us to be part of it."

Tara Chatterton, 39, who runs an auctioning business, said she attended the rally to hear what Mnangagwa's plans were since the military intervention last year that resulted in the removal of Robert Mugabe after nearly four decades. —AFP

Ethiopia's birr black-market evaporates as confidence booms

ADDIS ABABA: A "hard currency amnesty" and reform-driven confidence in Ethiopia's economy, both at home and abroad, have helped close a once yawning gap between the official and black market exchange rates for its birr currency.

As cash - in some cases briefcases full of dollars - pours into banks, local businesses say they are finally feeling relief from a foreign exchange crunch that had seen some segments of the economy grind to a halt. Businesses and analysts in the capital Addis Ababa told Reuters on Friday the birr was trading on the parallel market around 28 to the dollar, close to parity with the official rate and 25 percent firmer than three months ago. "All of a sudden this is happening," said one real estate agent whose business had come to a standstill over the past year because the construction sector could not access dollars to import building materials.

"I'm not sure of the source of the foreign exchange, but psychologically the scarcity mentality has changed overnight," the woman, who asked not to be named, told Reuters. In a televised address earlier this week, 41-year-old reformist Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed called upon those hoarding hard currency to deposit it in banks. The call, which has come to be known locally as a "hard currency amnesty", came with a warning: those who refused would be tracked down. The government this week also opened a diaspora fund bank account and is asking Ethiopians abroad to contribute. And the United Arab Emirates last month agreed to deposit \$1 billion in Ethiopia's central bank.

"Very liquid"

Though it's among Africa's fastest-growing economies, Ethiopia's export sector - mainly garment manufacturing and agricultural produce - has struggled to take off, and the economy is not generating enough dollars to pay for imports. A decade-long infrastructure push aimed at industrializing the overwhelmingly agrarian nation to create jobs has as a side-effect exacerbated the dollar shortage.

Since earlier this year, essential items including insulin, blood pressure medication and infant formula have become scarce. The dollar shortage has also dissuaded international firms from investing out of fear they will struggle to repatriate profits.

That could now change.

Since taking office in April, Abiy has turned politics and the economy on its head in the nation of 100 million people. His moves to liberalize the economy by opening up lucrative state-owned assets to foreign investment have been cheered by his people as well as outside investors keen to enter one of Africa's last untapped markets.

Besides his stated desire to attract foreign capital into one of Africa's most closed states, Abiy has brokered peace with Eritrea, with whom Ethiopia fought a border war two decades ago.

The rapprochement between the neighbors should also allow for better economic relations, which are critical for the economic growth of the two countries, African Development Bank (AfDB) President Akinwumi Adesina said on Friday. "From the African Development Bank, we are looking for how we are going to make investments to support that, so that we can turn the new engagement that they have into one in which they will benefit from dividends of peace between those two countries," Adesina told Reuters in Nairobi.

On Thursday, Abiy's newly appointed central bank governor, Yinager Dessie, pledged to meet the business community regularly and pledged that their main concerns - scant access to credit and foreign exchange - were government priorities.

Businesses in the capital said their letters of credit, which banks had declined to honour for months, were finally being approved. It remains to be seen if the government is now willing to loosen its grip on foreign exchange access and the exchange rate itself.

Some remain skeptical, but at least for now Ethiopians are breathing a sigh of relief.

"This morning I was talking to a manager at Commercial Bank of Ethiopia who told me 'We are very liquid right now. Let me show you an example,'" said Zemedeneh Negatu, chairman of Fairfax, a United States-based, Africa-focused investment firm. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL			
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	
Europe			
British Pound	0.392920	0.406820	
Czech Korune	0.005759	0.015059	
Danish Krone	0.043749	0.048749	
Euro	0.349114	0.362814	
Georgian Lari	0.137750	0.137750	
Hungarian 0.001145	0.001335		
Norwegian Krone	0.033108	0.038308	
Romanian Leu	0.065055	0.081905	
Russian ruble	0.004803	0.004803	
Slovakia	0.009069	0.019069	
Swedish Krona	0.030281	0.035281	
Swiss Franc	0.300111	0.311111	
Australasia			
Australian Dollar	0.217772	0.229772	
New Zealand Dollar	0.200135	0.210635	
America			
Canadian Dollar	0.225983	0.234983	
US Dollars	0.299650	0.304950	
US Dollars Mint	0.300150	0.304950	
Asia			
Bangladesh Taka	0.003105	0.003906	
Chinese Yuan	0.043597	0.047097	
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036952	0.039702	
Indian Rupee	0.003901	0.004673	
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023	
Japanese Yen	0.002641	0.002821	
Korean Won	0.000259	0.000274	
Malaysian Ringgit	0.071479	0.077479	
Nepalese Rupee	0.002626	0.002966	
Pakistan Rupee	0.001805	0.002575	
Philippine Peso	0.005535	0.005835	
Singapore Dollar	0.217831	0.227831	
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001612	0.002192	
Taiwan	0.010423	0.010603	
Thai Baht	0.008782	0.009332	
Arab			
Bahraini Dinar	0.790494	0.806994	
Egyptian Pound	0.014344	0.020062	
Iranian Ryal	0.000084	0.000085	
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197	0.000257	
Jordanian Dinar	0.424119	0.433119	
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000	
Lebanese Pound	0.000156	0.000256	
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020586	0.044586	
Omani Ryal	0.782643	0.788323	
Qatar Ryal	0.079143	0.084083	
Saudi Ryal	0.079913	0.081213	
Syrian Pound	0.001288	0.001508	
Tunisian Dinar	0.111000	0.119000	
Turkish Lira	0.057467	0.067767	
UAE Dirhams	0.081275	0.082975	
Yemeni Ryal	0.000987	0.001067	

Business

Bayan Weekly Market Report

Boursa Kuwait indices remain mixed amid profit-booking

Banking sector merger move pushes bank stocks higher

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week with mixed performance. The Premier Market Index closed at 5,353.02 points, up by 0.16 percent, the Main Market Index decreased by 0.46 percent after closing at 4,952.96 points, and the All-Share Index closed at 5,210.85 points down by 0.05 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover decreased by 19.23 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching around KD 28.94 million, whereas trading volume average was about 125.66 million shares, recording a decrease of 34.23 percent.

Boursa Kuwait was subject to profit collection operations during the last week which caused it to lose some of its profits realized in the previous weeks, and pushed its three indices to end the week with mixed closings, in a general quiet performance and relatively slow activity in preparation to establish new stock positions, especially after the listing of Integrated Holding Company's stocks within the Premier Market Index early last week, which is considered the first listing since the new market segmentation, and the disclosure of one local bank that expressed its interest to merge with one of the GCC banks to form a large banking entity, which gave the traders an optimism dose and assisted the Premier Market Index to limit its

profit collection operations, in addition to the quick speculations executed on some small-cap stocks that had a noticeable role in fluctuating the Main Market Index, which was reflected on the market indices' performance and pushed it to end the week's with fluctuation. The Premier Market Index's gains reached by the end of the week around 0.16 percent, while the weekly loss of the Main Market Index and All-Share Index was 0.46 percent and 0.05 percent respectively.

By the end of last week, the number of the companies that disclosed its financial results for the first half of year 2018 reached 20 company, including the companies with different year end, realizing net profit of KD 186.68 million for the second quarter of year 2018, up by 18.42 percent compared to the same companies results for the same period of 2017. The Banks Sector acquired the lion's portion of the same period's profits, whereas 4 banks out of 12 listed banks in the Boursa disclosed its results of KD 151.54 for the second quarter of 2018 and up by 21.22 percent compared to its results for the same period of last year, which was around KD 125.01 million.

Moreover, Boursa Kuwait recorded weekly gains of around KD 11.4 million, as its market cap reached by the end of last week to about KD 28.71 billion, up by

0.04 percent compared to its level in the week before which was KD 28.7 billion approximately. Boursa Kuwait market cap gains since the application of the new market segmentation reached around K.D. 853.9 million, up by 3.07 percent. (Note: The market cap of the listed companies in the market is calculated based on the weighted average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available official financial statements).

Last week witnessed trading over 149 stock out of 175 listed stock in the Market, where prices of 57 stock increased against prices of 78 stock decreased, and prices of 40 stock remained at no change.

Sectors' indices

Seven of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the red zone, four recorded increases, while the Technology sector's index closed with no change from the week before. Last week's highest loser was the Consumer Services sector, as its index declined by 1.76 percent to end the week's activity at 1,075.16 points, The Industrial sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 1.16 percent, closing at 998.76 points, followed by the Basic Materials sector, which index declined by 1.09 percent, closing at 1,085.46 points. On the other hand, Last week's highest

gainer was the Consumer Goods sector, achieving 1.28 percent growth rate as its index closed at 936.57 points. The Banks sector came in the second place, as its index closed at 1,088.96 points recording 0.38 percent increase, followed by Health Care sector, achieving 0.22 percent growth rate as its index closed at 995.60 points

Sectors' activity

The Banks sector dominated a total trade volume of around 255.07 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 40.60 percent of the total market trading volume. The Financial Services sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 24.39 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 153.26 million shares.

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 81.01 million or 55.99 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Industrial sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 37.70 million representing 26.05 percent of the total market trading value.

—Prepared by the Studies & Research Department, Bayan Investment Co.

Farnborough airshow announces \$192bn in orders

LONDON: England's Farnborough airshow this week saw deals worth \$192 billion (164 billion euros), a jump of more than 50 percent compared to 2016, in a sign of "confidence in global trade," organizers said yesterday.

The biannual air industry gathering recorded more than 1,400 commercial aircraft orders, valued at \$154 billion, alongside at least 1,432 deals for engines worth \$21.96 billion. The total is an increase of \$67.5 billion on the last airshow two years ago, with the mile-high rivalry between Boeing and Airbus—who made the majority of plane orders—swelling sales. US aviation giant Boeing announced 676 orders, totaling \$92 billion at list prices, as of Thursday, while its European competitor had unveiled 431 orders worth \$70 billion.

"The major deals announced this week demonstrate how confident the aerospace industry is and the role of Farnborough as an economic barometer," said Farnborough International chief executive Gareth Rogers. The show attracted its most global attendance ever with around 100 countries represented and a record Chinese presence, Farnborough said in a statement.

There was also a near-10 percent rise in trade visitors compared to previous years, with more than 80,000 visitors passing through the gates, it added.

Rival planes

Britain's showy launch of a new fighter jet project at this week's Farnborough Airshow has laid bare political tensions that are threatening to tear Europe apart and deepened skepticism about the future of European



FARNBOROUGH: A visitor photographs the General Electric GE90 engine of a Qatar Airways operated Boeing 777-300Z passenger aircraft Farnborough Airshow, south west of London on Friday. —AFP

defense cooperation.

The new UK program - launched with 2 billion pounds (\$2.6 billion) of seed money just nine months before Britain leaves the European Union - rivals a Franco-German project begun over a year ago that has yet to be funded.

France had hoped to work with Britain on the project, bringing together Europe's two biggest military powers, but turned to Germany after failing to make progress on a Franco-British drone program.

This had got caught up in Britain's political turmoil,

with the government not only at odds with the EU over their future relationship - casting doubt over defense and security cooperation - but also at war with itself. The junior minister responsible for defense procurement became the latest government official to resign this week over Brexit negotiating strategy.

Impatient industry executives say Europe must move quickly, setting aside national employment interests and political divisions, or risk losing out in a global market to bigger players led by the United States, or even China in the future. —Agencies

Wall Street braces for tariff fallout as S&P 500 companies report

SAN FRANCISCO: Tariffs are starting to bite big manufacturers and Wall Street could get another bout of caution and uncertainty from major industrial companies when a swath of reports comes in over the next week. Investors are worried about the impact on earnings should the United States' trade war with China and other major trading partners escalate. Deutsche Bank in June estimated that an escalation of the dispute to include \$200 billion of imports would hit earnings growth by 1-1.5 percent.

"If today's political rhetoric intensifies and translates into actual protectionist policies, it will be a negative for all businesses in the US and abroad, including ours," Hamid Moghadam, chief executive of supply chain management company Prologis, warned on a conference call on Tuesday.

Manufacturers across the country are concerned about Washington's recent trade policies, with some saying that uncertainty related to tariffs was already hitting them, according to anecdotes collected by the US Federal Reserve in its Beige Book, released on Wednesday.

That is starting to show up in early reports by companies. Earnings from Honeywell International, General Electric and Stanley Black & Decker show companies facing higher costs due to already enacted tariffs, and uncertainty about tariffs on as much as \$500 billion in Chinese goods threatened by Trump. —Reuters

Kuwait Times

Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:
+965 248 35 616 / 617
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
ads@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

SAMSUNG
Galaxy S8
SM-G950
64GB 5.8"
LTE

الآن 139
فقط 144
وفر 5,000
SAVE

iPhone 6
32GB 4.7"
LTE

الآن 87
فقط 89
وفر 2,000
SAVE

HUAWEI
Y7 Prime 2018
32GB 5.99"
LTE

السعر 54
فقط 900

Credit: Start from 5KD • Up to 48 month • Instant approval

Shop Online: www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

1809 809

• Kuwait 1 (the New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Kuwait 3 (Souq Sharq) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khalid str.) • Shuwaikh (4th Ring road) • Al-Rai (4th Ring road) • Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya (Behind police Station) • Fahaheel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra (Opp. Main Co-op.) • Airport (Departure Hall)

Business

Boursa Kuwait awarded full membership at FEAS

Another step towards integrating with global financial markets and exchanges

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait has announced yesterday its membership with the Federation of Euro-Asian Stock Exchanges (FEAS), which facilitates its integration with global financial markets and exchanges.

Through this membership, Boursa Kuwait will be a member of a federation that gathers exchanges from Europe, Asia and the Mediterranean and allows Boursa Kuwait to benefit from FEAS scope of activities, which will bring invaluable benefits to its members including awareness sessions, access to research, analysis and data, as well as widening the network.

Commenting on the earned membership, Boursa Kuwait CEO Khaled Abdullrazzaq Al-Khaled stated: "Today's significant announcement gets us a step closer towards fulfilling our key objective to become a leading regional stock exchange, and reflects Boursa Kuwait's commitment to implementing the highest standards of international best practices and its



efforts to establish a sound regulatory and technological infrastructure, to meet global standards, as well as position Boursa Kuwait for future growth." FEAS Chairman Mohamed Farid Saleh stated: "It is our pleasure to announce during FEAS's 25th Extraordinary General Assembly that Boursa

Kuwait's application is approved and awarded full membership. We would like to congratulate Boursa Kuwait for joining FEAS community as a full member. We look forward to beneficial and prosperous collaboration."

Since its establishment in 2014, Boursa Kuwait has been committed to raising the standards of the Kuwaiti capital market, facilitating the development of a sound, internationally recognized, leading regional stock exchange.

The Federation of Euro-Asian Stock Exchanges (FEAS) was established on 16 May 1995 in Istanbul with 12 founding members. During the Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting of the Federation held on May 16, 2017 in Tehran, it was decided to move the Federation's headquarters from Istanbul, Turkey to Yerevan, Armenia. The purpose of the Federation is to contribute to the cooperation, development, support and promotion of capital markets in the Euro-Asian Region (i.e. Europe, Asia and the

Mediterranean Basin).

Boursa Kuwait is a Kuwaiti public shareholding company established in April 2014, with the aim to take over and manage the Kuwait stock Exchange and progressively transition its operations, while delivering on three main fronts: transparency, efficiency and accessibility.

Officially licensed on 4th October, 2016, Boursa Kuwait's mission is to upgrade the exchange infrastructure and business environment to international standards and create a robust, transparent and fair capital market platform that services all relevant asset classes, whilst focusing on clients' interests. Its mission driven strategy focuses on developing the overall market status and addressing market needs through the provision of investment tools, restructuring the market to increase its competitiveness and liquidity, and attracting investments with a view to issue an IPO to Kuwaiti citizens.

NBK continues to reward Al-Shabab customers with exclusive discounts at Eureka

KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait returns once again with exclusive discounts for Al-Shabab customers, giving them more than 50 percent discount on Fitbits' products when making an online purchase using their NBK Al-Shabab Prepaid Card on the website of the electronics store, Eureka.



Amal Al-Duwaisan

The discount was valid for Al-Shabab Prepaid Cardholders, when making online payment through Eureka's website, while NBK customers benefited of a same-day delivery service. Al-Shabab Prepaid Card is available for students who transfer their allowance to NBK.

"Our partnership with a leading electronics store such as Eureka was once again a great success as we ensure at NBK to provide customers with offers and rewards that meet their lifestyle," explained Amal Al-Duwaisan, Senior Manager Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait. "We thank our customers for their continued engagement with NBK and look forward to catering to them with new and exclusive promotions all year-long."

Al-Duwaisan concluded: "We are committed to bringing new offers to our Al-Shabab customers, be it on



electronics, the latest gadgets and other devices, which are always announced on the Bank's social media pages."

Al-Shabab Account offers a range of services and rewards that suit the young generation's needs and lifestyle. The account offers advanced and easy to use services. Al-Shabab account holders receive a free Al-Shabab Prepaid Card when they transfer their student allowances, offering them numerous benefits and rewards designed specifically to meet the needs of Kuwait's young banking clientele. The Al Shabab Prepaid Visa card includes a range of exciting features, as well as the ability to transfer money from the card to the customer's account. Customers may also use the prepaid Visa Card to withdraw cash, without fees, from any NBK ATM. Other benefits include 50 percent discounts on Talabat.com on selected days, exclusive 50 percent discounts on weekend tickets at Cinescape.

NBK's Al-Shabab account is available to customers aged between 15 and 23 years, attending college or university. To open an Al-Shabab account, customers can visit NBK.com or one of NBK's local branches.

KFH announces winners of Al-Rabeh 9th draw

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of two HSE 2018 Range Rover's and 3 KG of Gold biscuits of 24 carat with purity of 999.9 in the 9th draw that took place under the supervision of representatives of the Ministry of Commerce.

The winners are: Nasser Meshary Alsanousy- 2018 HSE Range Rover, Mastoura Khudair Almutairi- 2018 HSE Range Rover, and Esmael

Hameed Allah Aziz Allah- 3 KG of Gold.

Al-Rabeh salary account is an investment savings account based on Mudaraba sharia principle that gives customers annual profit distributions. Customers can open this account at any of KFH branches across Kuwait. It is noteworthy that the account is offered for customers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts with the ability to save and invest. Al-Rabeh account is available for individuals in KD and it requires salary transfer as a prerequisite.

With regards to the prizes campaign terms and conditions, customers will have a chance to win remarkable prizes every three months along the year from KFH once they transfer their salary to "AlRabeh" account. KFH gives away two Range

Rover's 2018 HSE for the first two winners and a 3KG of Gold biscuits of 24 carat with purity of 999.9 for the third winner in draws to be held in the months of January, April, July, and October, providing that customers should have deposited 3 salaries in the three months prior to the draw, yet their minimum monthly balance is not less than KD 50 by the end of each month, bearing in mind that each KD 50 in the account entitles customers to one entry in the draw, thus more money in an account means more chances to win.

KFH is keen on improving its banking products and services in line with customer's requirement in efforts to increase their satisfaction and cater more closely for their needs, yet consolidate Bank's prestigious status and excellence in offering products as per the highest standards of quality.



Baitak staff pose for a group photo after the draw.

Warba Bank announces 5 winners of 'Al-Sunbula' draw

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, Kuwait's best investment bank and corporate consultancy firm, organized in presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and employees of the Bank, the 25th weekly draw for Al-Sunbula Account.

The lucky five winners who received 1,000 KD each are: Ali Molaq Nahar Al-Mutairi, Nawaf Mohsen Omar Al-Otaibi, Abdulhadi Saleh Abdulhadi Al-Ajmi, Eman Mohammad Ramzi Mohammad Ahmad and Rajeh Hadi Sanad Al-Saeedi.

Al-Sunbula Account is the perfect choice for all those who wish to save money and achieve steady incomes while simultaneously have the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year. Due to the high traffic towards this account, for its offerings of unparalleled opportunities, Warba Bank has worked on enhancing the Al-Sunbula account to grant customers more benefits. Such enhancements include increasing the number of winners and the frequency of the draws. Now, on every Thursday the bank draws 5 weekly winners of KD 1,000 each. In addition, the bank continues its monthly draws held on the first Thursday of every month, with cash prizes of KD 30,000 divided amongst 4 winners: two winners of KD 10,000 each, and two winners of KD 5,000.

The new development of Al-Sunbula account raised the total number



of winners to 24, and the total amount of prizes to KD 50K instead of KD 30K. As for the chances for winning, each customer is eligible to enter the draw against every KD 10. It is noteworthy, that Warba Bank has recently launched the Al-Sunbula Fixed Deposit, which provides depositors with high returns reaching up to 3%, as well as monthly profit opportunities in Al-Sunbula Account draws.

Furthermore, Warba Bank has launched its latest Customer Onboarding solution, in line with its ambitious five-year strategy that enables non-Warba Bank customers to request opening the Sunbula account in an easy electronic manner through the Bank's website without having to visit any of the Bank's branches, by following 5 simple steps that might take up to 5 minutes. New customers will be able to request opening the account at anytime, anywhere, and the bank will receive, process and pass the new application for approval through the new and unique automated system used to implement this service. The staff will then contact the client to determine the appropriate time to visit in order to obtain the required signatures, verify the customer's identity, deliver his/her debit card, and activate the account.

Individual customers can open their accounts with a minimum deposit of KD 100, qualifying them to enter the draw.



26 new winners included in Al-Hassad account

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank recently conducted its Al-Hassad Islamic account weekly draw, Kuwait's leading sharia-compliant rewards program that offers a broad range of prizes to the largest number of winners, on the 18th of July 2018. The account provides 26 weekly prizes that are comprised of KD 25,000 as a grand prize and 25 other prizes valued at KD 1,000 each. AUB also offers four quarterly prizes that are valued at KD 250,000 to each winner allowing them to achieve their dreams of travelling, studying abroad, or owning their dream home or car.

On this occasion Ahli United Bank announced, "With this draw, we are adding 26 new winners and prizes to the Al-Hassad Islamic account whereby, the total number of winners annually will include more than

1300. The weekly grand prize winner of KD 25,000 Mansour Ali Al-Ajmi.

25 other winners won prizes of KD 1,000 and are as follows: Ahmad Saud Albarrak, Mohamad Husain Bukhalaf, Humoud Abdullah Al-Hajri, Khaled Humoud Faleh, Naser Eid Al-Ajmi, Sabeekah Abdullah Shabakouh, Najjar Mejeid Alotaibi, Ghazi Sulaiman Al-Mutairi, Israa A H Ramadhan, Aeshah Othman Al-Anjeri, Monirah F E Al Qutafi, Nadeen Hasan Al-Sadeq, Mursheed Falah Al-Azmi, Jamal Hasan Mohammad Al-Fadhalah, Mishari Ibrahim Al-Armali, Akoub Beikzad, Osamah Ahmad Al-Kandari, Khalid Ali Al-Shati, Mohammad Kh A Al-Foudari, Maryam Adel Aljawder, Nabeel A.Hasan Ebrahim Alwanshubbar, Ebrahim Rashid Alabsi, Hasan Hussain Ali and Jassim Ahmed Ali.

Al-Hassad Islamic account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the program's terms and conditions.

Ahli United Bank added, "There are increased opportunities that await our current customers and those who are interested

Trump attacks on Fed raise specter of political meddling

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump on Friday doubled down on his attack on the Federal Reserve for raising interest rates—a shock criticism of the central bank that US presidents traditionally avoid and one economists say is dangerous. He also lambasted China and the European Union for keeping interest rates low and manipulating their currencies to gain a trade advantage. Central banks in all advanced economies and many emerging market countries are kept insulated from political influence and allowed to determine monetary policy independently.

Governments that have violated that independence for short-term economic gain have done so at their peril, including one US president who did so infamously: Richard Nixon.

Trump said the Fed was undermining economic progress by raising the benchmark lending rate. In a pair of tweets, Trump said "China, the European Union and others have been manipulating their currencies and interest rates lower, while the US is raising rates while the dollars gets stronger and stronger with each passing day." That is "taking away our big competitive edge," he said. "As usual, not a level playing field."

After criticizing the Fed in an interview with CNBC on Thursday, Trump was even more harsh on Twitter, saying "Tightening now hurts all that we have done." And he noted the impact of higher rates on debt payments: "Debt coming due & we are raising rates - Really?" "The United States should not be penalized because we are doing so well," he tweeted.

Banana republic

The comments drew alarmed reaction from notable economists and former government officials. "Attacking central bank is one more step in what seems like a presidential strategy of turning the United States into a banana republic," Former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers warned on Twitter. In an interview with CNBC, Summers said pressuring a central bank could "produce

results and looks good for a while but ultimately it leads you into real trouble."

Rising borrowing costs can slow economic growth and generally boost the value of the currency since it attracts more funds into the country in search of higher yields from investments.

Since the United States has recovered faster than other major economies, the Fed is raising rates faster than other central banks as well, making the US a more attractive investment destination. That has caused trillions of dollars to flow out of emerging market economies.

Trump is benefiting from an economy nearing a decade of continued growth, with continued solid job gains and the lowest unemployment rate since 2000, prior to the global financial crisis.

The Fed has raised the benchmark lending rates twice this year, after three increases in 2017, and two more rate hikes are expected this year as the central bank removes stimulus from the economy to keep a lid on inflation. The chance inflation might accelerate has increased after the massive tax cut last year that Trump championed, which has raised the US debt and budget deficit.

Trump said he was unconcerned that his remarks might spark criticism as he was merely stating long-held personal views. "I couldn't care less," he told CNBC. But simply "jawboning" the Fed with such comments, even without overt pressure, in itself undermines confidence of financial markets that policymakers will be able to stay the course and keep prices in check.

The dollar is up from early this year against a basket of currencies but is below the peak hit in December 2016 just after Trump was elected. And his comments sent the dollar down sharply.

The Fed chairman, Trump-appointed Jerome Powell, has repeatedly stressed the commitment to an independent central bank.

Powell said in an interview last week that "nothing has been said to me publicly or privately that gives me any concern about our independence." —AFP

Technology

State-actors likely behind Singapore cyberattack

1.5 m health records stolen from govt database

SINGAPORE: State-actors were likely behind Singapore's biggest ever cyberattack to date, security experts say, citing the scale and sophistication of the hack which hit medical data of about a quarter of the population. The city-state announced Friday that hackers had broken into a government database and stolen the health records of 1.5 million Singaporeans, including Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong who was specifically targeted in the "unprecedented" attack.

Singapore's health minister said the strike was "a deliberate, targeted, and well-planned cyberattack and not the work of casual hackers or criminal gangs". While officials refused to comment on the identity of the hackers citing "operational security", experts said that the complexity of the attack and its focus on high-profile targets like the prime minister pointed to the hand of a state-actor.

"A cyber espionage threat actor could leverage disclosure of sensitive health information... to coerce an individual in (a) position of interest to conduct espionage" on its behalf, said Eric Hoh, Asia-Pacific president of cybersecurity firm FireEye. Hoh told national broadcaster Channel NewsAsia that the attack was an "advanced persistent threat". "The nature of such attacks are that they are conducted by nation states using very advanced tools," he said. "They tend to be well resourced, well-funded and highly sophisticated."

Russia—which is accused of meddling in the US presidential election—China, Iran and North Korea are believed to have the capability to carry out such attacks. Analysts, however, would not be drawn into speculation on who might be behind the hack or why Singapore was targeted. The attack started two weeks after the wealthy city-state hosted the historic

summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Jeff Middleton, chief executive of cybersecurity consultancy Lantium, said healthcare data is of particular interest to hackers because it can be used to blackmail people in positions of power. "A lot of information about a person's health can be gleaned from the medications that they take," Middleton said yesterday. "Any non-public health information could be used for extortion. Russian spy services have a long history of doing this." Medical information, like personal data, can also be easily monetized on criminal forums, said Sanjay Aurora, Asia-Pacific managing director of Darktrace. "Beyond making a quick buck, a more sinister reason to attack would be to cause widespread disruption and systemic damage to the healthcare service—as a fundamental part of critical infrastructure—or to undermine trust in a nation's competency to keep personal data safe," he said.

“A deliberate, targeted, well-planned cyberattack”

Today, cybercriminals are targeting more than just individuals or banks, said Shah Nawaz Backer, regional security specialist at F5 Networks. "Government services, from healthcare to education, are targets that are just as likely, as evidenced by the recent attacks in Singapore," Backer said. "As Singapore embraces the digital revolution, security breaches are bound to happen. Our growing digital footprint is growing every day, and enterprises need to take strict measures to safeguard and protect their data."

Wealthy Singapore is hyper-connected and on a drive to digitize government records and essential services, including medical records which public hospitals



SINGAPORE: In this file photo Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong waits for leaders to gather for a group photograph after delivering his opening address at the 32nd ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Summit in Singapore. —AFP

and clinics can share via a centralized database. But authorities have put the brakes on these plans while they investigate the breach. A former judge will head an inquiry looking into the hack. Singapore officials have cautioned against jumping to conclusions about the attackers. "With regard to the prime minister's data and why he was targeted, I would say that it's perhaps best not to speculate what the attacker had in mind," said David Koh, head of Singapore's Cyber Security Agency. The hackers used a computer infected with malware to

gain access to the database between June 27 and July 4 before administrators spotted "unusual activity", authorities said.

The government says it fends off thousands of cyberattacks every day and has long warned of breaches by actors as varied as high-school students in their bedrooms to nation-states. Earlier this month, US intelligence chief Dan Coats described Russia, China, Iran and North Korea as the "worst offenders" when it came to attacks on American "digital infrastructure". —AFP

'Dangerous complacency' looms over world AIDS meeting

PARIS: Thousands of experts and activists descend on Amsterdam tomorrow to bolster the battle against AIDS amid warnings that "dangerous complacency" may cause a resurgence of the epidemic that has already killed 35 million people. Rather than closing in on the goal of "ending" AIDS, new HIV infections have surged in parts of the world as global attention has dwindled and funding leveled off, say leaders of the anti-AIDS movement.

And they lament that too fine a focus on virus-suppressing treatment has overshadowed basic prevention with the result that HIV is still spreading with ease among the most vulnerable people. "The encouraging reductions in new HIV infections that occurred for about a decade has emboldened some to declare that we are within reach of ending AIDS," said Peter Piot, a veteran virus researcher and founder of the UNAIDS agency.

However, "there is absolutely no evidence to support this conclusion," he insisted, and warned: "the language on ending AIDS has bred a dangerous complacency." This was evident from declining global and domestic funding for HIV eradication and treatment programs. Piot said at the launch this week of a report by the International AIDS Society (IAS) and The Lancet medical journal.

The authors of that report, he said, "are extremely concerned that there is a real risk that the world will declare victory long before our fight against AIDS is over." Rubbing shoulders with celebrity activists such as actress Charlize Theron, Britain's Prince Harry, and singers Elton John and Conchita, more than 15,000 del-

egates are expected in the Dutch capital for the conference, opening tomorrow.

Charlize and Conchita

While high-profile speeches will seek to revive the flagging fight, the five-day event will also present an opportunity for scientists to mull over recent advances and setbacks in the quest for simpler, better anti-HIV drugs. More than three decades of research have yet to yield a cure or vaccine for the AIDS-causing virus that has infected nearly 80 million people since the epidemic burst onto the world scene in the early 1980s.

A UNAIDS report Wednesday said about 36.9 million people last year were living with the virus which, thanks to antiretroviral therapy (ART), is no longer a death sentence. It reported the lowest annual death toll in two decades, and a record number of people on life-saving treatment. But the report also alerted that new HIV infections are rising in about 50 countries, and have more than doubled in eastern Europe and central Asia.

IAS president Linda-Gail Bekker told AFP that there may have been "a strategic mistake on the part of the AIDS gurus" to prioritise treatment at the expense of preventing HIV infection—the only real way to stop the epidemic. "There is no epidemic that we have treated our way out of," she said, citing Ebola and tuberculosis. "Clearly, a vaccine is the holy grail, but we are not there yet."

In the meantime, the world needs a renewed focus on prevention, said Bekker—stressing condom use, expanding the use of virus-suppressing ART as an infection shield, and providing safe, infection-free



ODISHA, India: In this file photograph, Indian sand artist Sudersan Pattnaik gives the final touches to a sand sculpture as a horseman rides by on Golden Sea Beach in Puri, some 65 kms east of Bhubaneswar, on the eve of World AIDS Day. —AFP

needles to drug users. But to do this while also getting treatment to the 15.2 million infected people who do not yet have access, the world needs cash. And this at a time that the US administration under Donald Trump has vowed to cut AIDS spending. A report this week by UNAIDS and the Kaiser Family Foundation, a health policy NGO, found that after two years of declining global funding, donor payments to low- and middle-income countries rose 16 percent to \$8.1 billion last year.

Don't walk away

But it cautioned this was no cause for celebration, as the trend was "not expected to last". The extra money came mainly from a rollover to 2017 of funds the US government—by far the largest funder of AIDS programs—had appropriated but not spent

in previous years. Funding from donor governments "is likely to fall again", said the report. According to UNAIDS, the global effort is short about \$7 billion per year to achieve the goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, by reducing new infections and deaths by 90 percent from 2010.

"The job is not done," stressed Robert Maturu, director of operations at Unitaid, a non-profit body that channels financing for HIV research and development. "We need people to not only continue to fund... but even increase it." Bekker fears that "people have walked away to soon" from the fight. "We're either moving forward in this epidemic, or we're sliding back," she warned. "The minute you take your eye off the ball, infections will resurge and we will see this thing take off again." —AFP

Boost to local economy

"We are delighted we have been selected as a spaceport for vertical launch," said Kirk, adding that the site would also create tourism opportunities. "The local economy will benefit." The space port would employ about 40 staff within three years of operation, but the supply chain around that would support nearer 400 jobs. Satellite uses include navigation, weather forecasting, telecommunications and financial transactions, while they are also vital for defense and energy sectors. The Sutherland facility will cost an estimated £17.3 million to build, including some £10 million from HIE. The port will be well positioned geographically to launch satellite rockets over the North Pole.

'No different than before Brexit'

Prime Minister Theresa May's government is seeking to develop the UK space industry after its role in European space projects was called into question by Brexit. Space is one of Britain's fastest growing sectors and generates more than £13 billion of income per year. "Our ambition to grow the space sector is in no way any different than it was before Brexit," Graham Turnock, head of the UK Space Agency, told AFP on the sidelines of Farnborough.

"We are actually looking to the opportunities for trade deals with the rest of the world after Brexit so we are very positive about that. "We are still aiming to achieve 10 percent of the world space market by 2030. We are very confident that we can do that." He also sought to dispel concerns that Britain's departure from the European Union in 2019 would hurt the industry. "Obviously we are talking to the EU



LONDON: An undated handout picture released by Orbex in London shows an artist's impression of the Orbex launcher lifting off from the Sutherland Spaceport. —AFP

about our future participation in the space programs. "We have said that we'd very much like to continue to participate in Galileo Copernicus, but it takes two sides to want to have that discussion."

Britain wants continued participation in the EU's Galileo satellite navigation system—but Brussels rejects the idea. UK Transport Secretary Chris Grayling meanwhile appeared at Farnborough to champion the space investment. "After pioneering the development of those small satellites over many years, adding our own space ports means we can now move to offering customers a one stop shop in the United Kingdom," Grayling told delegates. —AFP

Space, not Brexit, is final frontier for Scottish outpost

FARNBOROUGH: Never mind Brexit: For a remote peninsula in the Scottish highlands, the buzz is all about hi-tech rocket launchers firing satellites into space. In just three years' time, rockets will send satellites into orbit from the rugged stretch of coastline, under British government plans unveiled this week. The sleepy county of Caithness and Sutherland has been selected as the site of the country's first ever space port, Britain announced at the Farnborough Airshow, a showpiece event for the global aerospace sector. The UK Space Agency awarded a £2.5-million grant towards the construction of a vertical space port facility in Sutherland, which will become operational in 2021. The announcement has boosted hopes for an industry worried about the effects of Britain leaving the European Union and raised spirits in pro-EU Scotland, which was outvoted in the 2016 referendum.

"It is rocket science," Roy Kirk, area manager for Caithness and Sutherland at Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), a development agency for Scotland's devolved government, said in an interview with AFP at Farnborough. The launchers, made by established player Lockheed Martin and startup business Orbex, will stand 17 meters tall and will fire rockets that take just eight minutes to get into orbit.

Kenya to get first deployment of Internet balloons

SAN FRANCISCO: The first commercial deployment for Project Loon—the "balloon-powered Internet" being developed by Google parent Alphabet—is headed for Kenya, the US tech giant said Thursday. In a collaboration with Telkom Kenya, Loon will provide Internet service from high-altitude balloons whose paths across the sky are choreographed to maintain coverage, according to Loon, the newly independent business unit within Alphabet.

Loon-enabled Internet service will be provided to portions of central Kenya starting next year, according to Loon chief executive Alastair Westgarth who said the company's goal was to "connect people everywhere." "We couldn't be more excited to start our journey in Kenya, and we look forward to working with mobile network partners worldwide to deliver on the promise of Loon," Westgarth said in a blog post. Alphabet last week announced it was raising the profile of two "moonshot" projects—Loon and the drone delivery unit known as Wing.

Wing and Loon have been part of the Alphabet "moonshot factory" known as X, creating projects with potential to disrupt new sectors. Loon has been testing a network of balloons, traveling along the edge of space, to expand Internet connectivity to underserved areas and disaster zones. Facebook last month ended its plan to produce a fleet of drones to provide Internet connectivity to remote areas of the globe but said it would continue working on these efforts with various manufacturing partners include Airbus. —AFP

Japan start-up plans 2020 meteor shower

TOKYO: A Japanese start-up developing "shooting stars on demand" says it will be ready to deliver the world's first artificial meteor shower in a spectacular show over Hiroshima in early 2020. ALE, based in Tokyo, is in the final stages of developing two micro-satellites that will release tiny balls that glow brightly as they enter the atmosphere, simulating a meteor shower. The first satellite will hitch a ride into space on a rocket being launched by Japan's space agency by March 2019.

The second will be launched in mid-2019 on a private-sector rocket. "We are targeting the whole world, as our stockpile of shooting stars will be in space and can be delivered across the world," ALE chief executive Lena Okajima told reporters on Wednesday. Each satellite will be able to carry 400 tiny balls whose chemical formula is a closely-guarded secret. Ejected from the satellite, the balls will glow as they plunge through the atmosphere. The 400 balls will be enough for 20-30 events, according to the company, and the satellites will be able to stay in space for around two years. The company is also exploring the possibility of using satellites already in space that are no longer operational to create "giant" shooting stars, officials said. "We are planning to push a used satellite into the atmosphere on a targeted orbit to create a giant artificial shooting star," ALE chief engineer Ko Kamachi, adding that the idea was still in the basic research phase.

ALE's two satellites will start orbiting the Earth by February 2020, preparing for the world's first delivery of artificial shooting stars in spring 2020, over the western Japan city of Hiroshima. The satellites can be used separately or in tandem, and will be programmed to eject the balls at the right location, speed and direction to put on a show for viewers on the ground. —AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

DR. MOHAMMAD AL HAJRY
Canadian Board of Otolaryngology
Head & Neck Surgery and Facial Plastics.
Fellow of Royal College of Surgeons-Canada
A rare Subspecialty in Microscopic Ear Surgery, Cochlear implant & Ear diseases

- ◆ Diagnosis/ Treatment of General Ears, Nose, and Throat conditions in adults & pediatrics
- ◆ Minimally invasive Endoscopic sinus surgery including Balloon sinuplasty
- ◆ Minimally invasive Microscopic & Endoscopic Ear surgery
- ◆ Diagnosis & treatment of Otolaryngology and Audiology (Hearing loss, Tinnitus & balance disorders)
- ◆ Facial Plastic and reconstructive surgeries (Rhinoplasty, Otoplasty, Fillers & Botox injections)
- ◆ Diagnosis & treatment of snoring & obstructive sleep apnea in clinic without surgery
- ◆ Diagnosis & Treatment of voice and swallowing disorders
- ◆ Diagnosis & Treatment of Head and Neck benign & malignant tumors.

Salmiya, Belajat Street, Tel: 1881122
@Malhajry

DR. FAHAD S BUHAIMED
Consultant Cosmetic Dermatologist & Hair Transplant, NY

ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

- o Dermatology board certified.
- o Fellowship training program in cosmetic dermatology and hair transplant, New York, USA.
- o Member of American cosmetic dermatology society.
- o Referee reviewer of International Journal of Dermatology.

SPECIALIZED IN:

- o Dermatology & Cosmetic Treatments.
- o Laser Treatments.
- o Hair Transplant & Restoration.
- o Body & Face Contouring.
- o Injectable Fillers & Botox.

SHARQ, Ahmad Aljaber st., Building B8, Floor 13.
Tel.: (+965) 22060777
@Drbuhaimed, @Renovabb, @dardanabb
Email: drbuhaimed@beautybeyond.com.kw
www.beautybeyond.com.kw

Global Medical Center Welcomes
Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader
Consultant vascular and general surgery

All general and specialized surgeries such as:

- All critical and non-critical arteries and veins surgeries
- All methods of treating varicose
- Special department for care of injured diabetic foot
- Carrying out delicate procedures such as removing the extra rib
- Treating excess perspiration
- AV connection for dialysis

**Global Medical Center, Bneid Al-Qar
Bour Saeed Street, Block-1, Building-128.**
Telephone: 1871111 @globalmedcenter
www.globalmed-center.com

Dr. Ahmad Alaeddine
Head of Cardiology departmenta at Dar Al Shifa hospital

- ◆ Consultant Interventional and conventional cardiologist.
- ◆ Specialised in the Diagnosis and treatment of all adult cardiac diseases, including those cases that need urgent intervention in Cath lab (primary angioplasty).

**مستشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555**
@daralshifa

DR KHALED ALMERRI
Consultant interventional Cardiology
Department: Heart & Vascular Center

Specialized in:

- 1-Diagnosis and therapeutic cardiac catheterization (Angiography and Angioplasty). Aortic valve implantation.
- 2- Diagnosis and treatment of coronary artery diseases
- 3- Diagnosis and treatment of heart failure, cardiomyopathies and valvular diseases.
- 4-Diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- 5- Diagnosis and treatment of syncope, palpitations and cardiac arrhythmias.
- 6- Non-invasive diagnostic procedures echocardiography, exercise stress test, and 24 hour blood pressure and Holter monitoring

alsalam.int.hospital

Know your Doctor
Otorhinolaryngology (E.N.T)
Dr Hamoud Abdullah Alarouj
ENT Specialist

- ◆ Laryngology Fellowship - Canada
- ◆ Fellow of the European Board Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the British Laryngological Association
- ◆ Member of the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the European Laryngological Society

Specialized in:

- ◆ Management of benign and malignant vocal cord lesions.
- ◆ Vocal cord augmentation.
- ◆ Treatment of spasmodic dysphonia.
- ◆ Adenotonsillectomy using latest techniques.
- ◆ Thyroid surgery.
- ◆ Surgery for the deviated nasal septum.
- ◆ Endoscopic sinus surgery.
- ◆ Treatment of allergic rhinitis.
- ◆ Treatment of snoring.
- ◆ Treatment of vertigo.

alsalam.int.hospital

INTERNATIONAL CLINIC
American Board Certified in General Surgery
Member of the Society of American Gastrointestinal & Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES)
Higher specialization in Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary surgery & Organ Transplantation
Member of many prestigious surgical societies.

- ◆ Day case surgeries
- ◆ Minor surgeries (lipoma, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
- ◆ Diagnosis, treatment and follow up of all surgical emergencies
- ◆ Hemorrhoids, fistula & anal fissure surgeries
- ◆ Surgery for morbid obesity (sleeve, gastric bypass)
- ◆ Breast surgeries
- ◆ Hernia repair
- ◆ Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
- ◆ Surgery for reflux disease
- ◆ Cholecystectomy & laparoscopic appendectomy
- ◆ Liver, pancreas & bile ducts surgeries

Dr. Hani Haider
General Surgery Consultant
http://www.international-clinic.com
Tel: 1886677 ic_kwt

Scope of Clinical Practice:

- ◆ General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- ◆ Single Port Surgery
- ◆ Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, Including Colorectal Cancer
- ◆ Surgical Treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abscess
- ◆ Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- ◆ VAAFT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Fistuloscope)
- ◆ Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- ◆ Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery
- ◆ Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- ◆ Laparoscopic mini bypass
- ◆ Transanal minimally invasive surgery

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

- ◆ American Board of General Surgery
- ◆ Fellow of American College of Surgery
- ◆ Canadian Board of General Surgery
- ◆ Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians & Surgeons of Canada
- ◆ American Board of Colo - Rectal Surgery
- ◆ American Board of Surgical Critical Care

Dr. Abdullah Al Haddad
Surgery Department
Consultant General Surgery, Laparoscopic & Colo - Rectal Surgeon

**مستشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555**
@daralshifa
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

Consultant Pediatrician-Canadian & American Board in Pediatrics-Canadian Board in Pediatric Emergency

Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368
Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St.1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B

DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED
Consultant of General Surgery
Laposcopic and Bariatric Surgery

Academic Certificates - Training

- ◆ Kuwait Board of General Surgery.
- ◆ (IFSO) member .
- ◆ Faculty member of (BEST).
- ◆ Member of Kuwait Surgical Association.

Scope of clinical Practice.

- ◆ Bariatric surgeries.
- ◆ Gallbladder stones surgeries.
- ◆ Abdominal wall and hernia surgeries.
- ◆ G.I. surgeries.
- ◆ Thyroid and para - thyroid surgeries.
- ◆ Anal surgeries.

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228 Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Clover Center Mazaya Building

What's On

Flowhouse at AquaPark: A must-visit summer destination



By Janeen Reyna Lucban

Al-Jazeera Entertainment Enterprises' new water park Flowhouse in Aquapark opened its doors in 2016 and has become a must-visit destination for people in Kuwait. It is a place with a lot of fun and excitement, and is open from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm daily. Visitors have to pay KD 4.750 to enter Aquapark and another KD 5 to enter Flowhouse for the whole day.

Rides in Flowhouse include Flow Rider, Clear Lounge and Wave Pool. It also has its own cafeteria. Flow Rider is a brand new surfing ride. It is very thrilling because you surf in the pool and not in the sea.

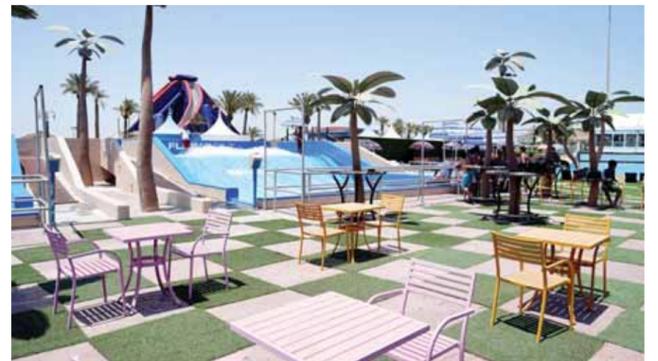
"This is one of the safest surfing machines

in the world. It cost us KD 2 million for two pools," Al-Jazeera Entertainment Enterprises' General Manager Mohammed Khoursheed said. There are two methods of pool surfing - one is on the 'kneeboard', where you sit on your knees while surfing. The other is by standing while surfing. This new technology is not just for entertainment, but also for education.

Flowhouse has also introduced the Clear Lounge concept. "The first Clear Lounge was launched in Mexico and Kuwait is the second country in the world to introduce this unique technology in Flowhouse at Aquapark. It is a 10 x 3 m pool that can accommodate 10 people for 15 minutes," Managing Director Hamad Al-Khonaini said. As you enter the pool, a high-

tech Sea TREK helmet will be placed on your shoulders. The helmet keeps your face dry and provides you oxygen with a refreshing scent of your choice (cherry, strawberry or orange.) Once you enter the underwater lounge, you can play various games such as jenga puzzles, use whiteboards to write or draw messages to your friends, and a lot more. A certified diver from The Divers Association will accompany you underwater during your dive.

The idea of the Clear Lounge is taken from a lounge where you spend your time drinking coffee. In the Clear Lounge, you inhale flavored oxygen while underwater. Flowhouse at Aquapark is the place to be if you want to enjoy your day in this scorching heat. It is a good place to go with family and friends.



LuLu Hypermarket launches ASEAN Fest 2018



LuLu Hypermarket, the leading regional retailer, launched ASEAN Fest 2018 with a grand ceremony at its Al-Rai outlet on July 18, 2018. The event was inaugurated by diplomats from several ASEAN embassies in Kuwait in the presence of top LuLu management and staff, as well as a large gathering of shoppers and well-wishers.

Attending the inauguration ceremony were the Ambassador of Vietnam Trinh Trim Manh, the Ambassador of Thailand Dusit Manapan, the Ambassador of Brunei HJ Ahmed HJ Jumat, the Charge D'Affaires at the Philippine Embassy Mohammad

Noordin PN Lomondot, and the Charge D'Affaires at the Indonesian Embassy Tatng Budi Utama Razak.

A traditional cultural program involving artists from the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries was held on the occasion to highlight the rich and colorful culture and tradition of the countries that comprise the 10-nation bloc.

The 11-day festival, which is slated to end on 28 July, is being held across all LuLu Hypermarket outlets in Kuwait and offers special prices on a wide range of products imported from select ASEAN countries, including Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines,

Malaysia and Indonesia.

Among the food products available at special prices during the ASEAN Fest are offerings from leading South East Asian brands such as Mama Sita's, Datu Puti, 555, Silver Swan, Skyflakes, Blue Elephant, Rukkun, Kokola, UFC, Jack 'n Jill.

The latest ASEAN Fest promotion from LuLu Hypermarket is yet another engaging event that allows the brand to interact with its multi-national customers and respond to their changing tastes and interests, while providing them with quality products at competitive prices.



CBK announces summer training program

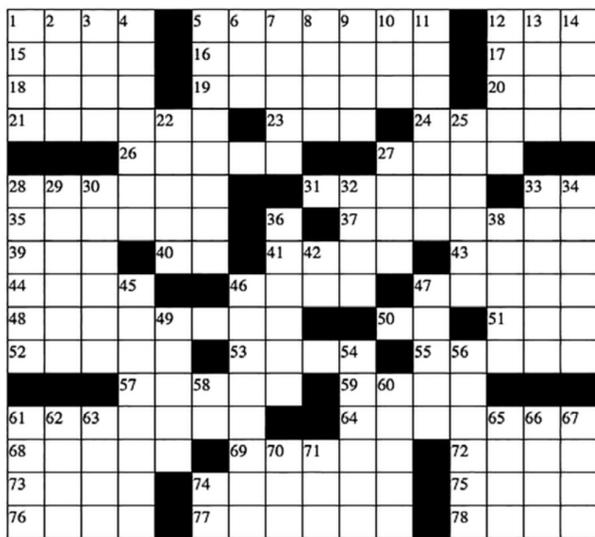
The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced launching its summer training program for CBK employees' children and relatives aged between 16 and 22. In this regard, CBK's acting human resources manager Sadeq Abdullah said that CBK organizes this summer program annually to help employees' children and relatives make use of their summer vacations, and attain enough information about banking at the same time. Abdullah added that during the program, trainees are distributed to various CBK branches where they are theoretically and practically trained on handling clients' requests and other banking skills.



Sadeq Abdullah

Stars

CROSSWORD 1965



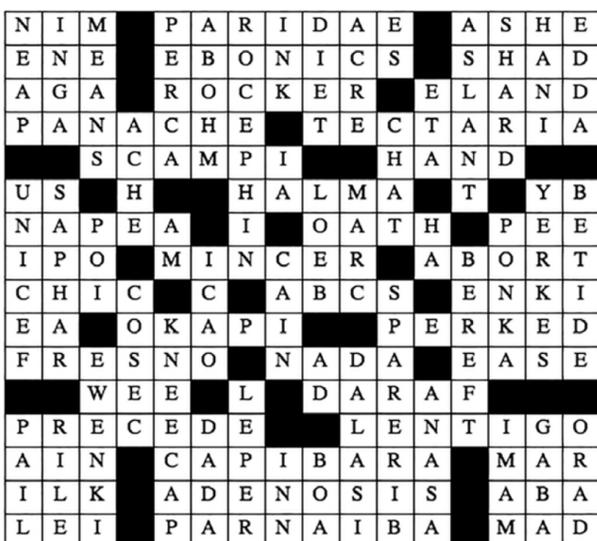
ACROSS

1. Not agitated.
5. Type genus of the Camelidae.
12. Electronic equipment that provides visual images of varying electrical quantities.
15. The dynasty that ruled much of Manchuria and northeastern China from 947 to 1125.
16. A stone pillar having a rectangular cross section tapering towards a pyramidal top.
17. An accidental happening.
18. (Norse mythology) Ruler of the Aesir.
19. A man who serves as a sailor.
20. The compass point midway between northeast and east.
21. Leave a camp.
23. Someone who is morally reprehensible.
24. The dialect of Ancient Greek spoken in Thessaly and Boeotia and Aeolis.
26. A large gathering of people intended to arouse enthusiasm.
28. Of or relating to the songbirds n.
31. A Bantu language spoken by the Chaga people in northern Tanzania.
35. A town in central Belgium.
37. A unit of inductance equal to one billionth of a henry.
39. The sixth day of the week.
40. The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
41. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
43. A lawman concerned with narcotics violations.
44. A metrical unit with unstressed-stressed syllables.
48. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
50. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
51. Type genus of the family Myacidae.
52. The cardinal number that is the sum of five and one.
53. (New Testament) The sages who visited Jesus and Mary and Joseph shortly after Jesus was born.
55. A lepton of very great mass.
57. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
59. A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
61. Someone who dwells in a cave.
64. The capital of Emilia-Romagna.
68. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
69. A member of a Turkic people of Chinese Turkestan and neighboring areas (formerly of Mongolia and eastern Turkestan).
72. Any division of quantity accepted as a standard of measurement or exchange.
73. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
74. Informal terms for a mother.
75. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
76. Wild or seedling sweet cherry used as stock for grafting.
77. Type genus of the Alaudidae.
78. An open vessel with a handle and a spout for pouring.

DOWN

1. A compact mass.
2. An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
3. Concerning those not members of the clergy.
4. An artificial language.
5. Having every necessary or normal part or component or step.
6. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
7. Leniency and compassion shown toward offenders by a person or agency charged with administering justice.
8. English essayist (1775-1834).
9. Swedish soprano who toured the United States under the management of P. T. Barnum (1820-1887).
10. The act of using.
11. Utter a harsh abrupt scream.
12. A Hindu disciple of a swami.
13. (the feminine of raja) A Hindu princess or the wife of a raja.
14. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
22. A large and imposing house.
25. A chronic disease of the nose characterized by a foul-smelling nasal discharge and atrophy of nasal structures.
27. An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
29. A long brightly colored shawl.
30. The highest point of anything conceived of as growing or developing or unfolding.
32. One who works hard at boring tasks.
33. (southwestern United States) A stream or brook.
34. An Anatolian language.
36. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
38. (Sumerian) Goddess personifying the primeval sea.
42. An artificial language for international use that rejects rejects all existing words and is based instead on an abstract analysis of ideas.
45. A railroad employee responsible for a train's brakes.
46. Requiring two hands or designed for two people.
47. Relating to or accompanying birth.
49. Swelling from excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue.
54. (followed by 'with') Deeply filled or permeated.
56. Call forth.
58. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
60. The large trunk artery that carries blood from the left ventricle of the heart to branch arteries.
62. A fit of shivering.
63. A Spanish unit of length (about a yard) having different values in different localities.
65. Bite or chew on with the teeth.
66. Denoting a quantity consisting of one more than eight and one less than ten.
67. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
70. One of the most common of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
71. Large African antelope having a head with horns like an ox and a long tufted tail.

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You seem to be desiring a change in your world. You desire to not only change your views on life but change the way you live it. The unique and different ways of people start to appeal to you. This is a wakeup call for you and helps you realize your way is not necessarily always the right way nor the only way. You find this a great day of mental clarity as you face it with an open mind your own thoughts become very clear and you find yourself extremely productive and eager to be surrounded with your peers. This is a wonderful time for you to make any decisions you have been putting off. Aries. Enjoy this day and all it brings your way!



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Family seems to be where your focus is. You desire a strong foundation and have been working hard to establish this in your world. You may find someone younger seeking advice and looking to you for assistance. You will be able to guide them with ease. Helping others brings great satisfaction to you and in a way will fulfill the need to be needed you have been desiring. It is a great time to sit and have a meaningful conversation with a loved one. Taurus, you will be able to relate your ideas with ease and grace and this conversation will be very beneficial to your relationship. Today will find you very successful when organizing the actions of those around you.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your marriage or partnership or lack thereof seem to be a major focus for you. You feel the need to be needed and need to be loved. You want someone by your side and someone to share your life with. You crave a beautiful relationship and the word soulmate takes on great meaning for you. You desire someone you can share your deepest thoughts and dreams with and someone to always be there to love and support you. You find all these feelings beautiful and desire this type of harmony in your life.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may find yourself wanting to broaden your horizons. You know this is a big world and your life is contained in a tiny square of it. It may be time to take a step out of that box and find what the world has to offer you. You could find it difficult to communicate with others today because you trust your mind is a million miles away. Curiosity has taken a hold on you and you can't seem to stay focused on the here and now. You may find this evening that a good book may be just what you need to find this escape you have been searching for. A good time for rest and relaxation is in order for you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leave the major decisions for later, frustration and other obstacles may seem to be in your way today. You seem to find yourself wanting to be more social. A desire to hit the town. You find pleasure in surrounding yourself with friends. Choose your company wisely as you could find yourself in conflict with someone close to you. You seem to know what to say and when to say it. Others are seeking your company, and this would be a great time to spend time with your siblings or neighbors. Today is a great day for an escape. Take in a movie or curl up with a book. This may just what you need to rest your mind and start tomorrow with a new outlook on life.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Today you may find relaxing is easier said than done. This is a time you are faced with turmoil and the last thing you think you are capable of doing is relaxing. Sit back and take a deep breath. This will pass and rather than taking action you need to let this one go and let it pass. Patience and sensitivity need to be emotions you are focusing on. Sometimes by focusing on the needs of others rather than your own you will be able to find clarity and make sense of your own situation. You may want to try a new approach when dealing with others and may find this works very well for you today. You seem talkative and high energy as you may be feeding off of the stress of your own situation. Turn a negative into a positive.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may find that if the world around you in everything in it is all working in your favor. This is a wonderful time in your life. You are full of joy and happiness and it seems everything is going your way. You may feel as if you're on top of the world and no accomplishment is out of reach for you. You're optimistic and faithful. You feel as if all of your hard work is finally being rewarded. This is a great time to get your affairs in order and organize all that is in your world. You seem to have a great appreciation of all the finer things in life and this is a great time to make new purchases and select new items to decorate your home.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may be feeling a need to put a much greater focus on family life. Know that the seeds you plant today have great impact on your future. You may be feeling very nurturing when it comes to your love ones. Today is a great day to set the groundwork for tomorrow. You are looking for and desiring stability in the future. Your actions of today are leading you straight towards your goals. Scorpio, stability, structure, and growth are very important to you and to your future.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You know all is well in your world whenever you are able to see the beauty in all that surrounds you. A greater appreciation for all that surrounds you is coming over you now. You are not only drawn to beauty in nature but also in the people that surround you. You are able to see the best in everyone. An ability to work with others and help them recognize and accentuate these traits is a great talent you possess. Be cautious to not overindulge or overspend at this time. It seems as if you want everything you see. After all, you are all about the beauty. This could be a blessing and a curse. Protect your heart.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

The desire to feel good about yourself and focus on your health may really be the driving force behind some changes that you are about to make. This may be just the time to join the gym, start meal planning, or find yourself a walking partner. You know to be the best you can be that you must first start with your own well-being. This is a step in the right direction for you and not only will you benefit from the physical health, but this will also bring about a big emotional change in you. You may find this is a period where others are drawn to you. You may find that the self-discipline you are exhibiting is a key factor in your peers wanting to join in and follow your lead.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may be feeling a strong desire for change, a need for something new and different. It may be time to throw out the old and start fresh. Let your creative side be your guide. Step above and beyond the boundaries you have allowed yourself to become so comfortable with and let your hair down. You may find those close to you are drawn to the new and different version of you and find great ease when communicating with them. This could be a great time to study and take some time to broaden your intellectual horizons. Reach out to a love one whether by a phone call or possibly a letter. You may find they are very open to what you have to say and old barriers between you have since dissolved.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Many people say they need to take time to find themselves. You found yourself long ago. You know who you are, what you want, and have everything in place to make things happen. Today is a great day and you should feel much support from those around you. You may spend some time to day getting to really know some of the people you spend the most time with. Deep probing conversations and really getting past the outer walls will help you build the stronger relationships you desire with these friends. You have always been a people person but today is really a great day of communication for you.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Transportation

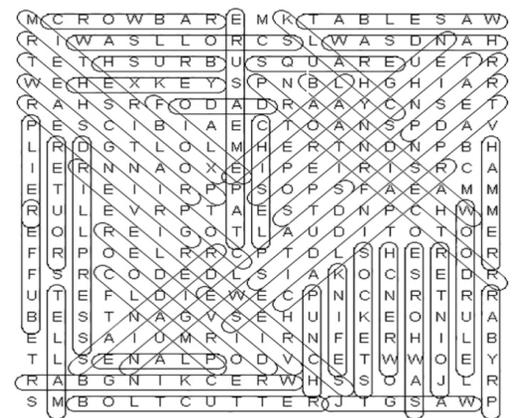
Find and circle all of the transportation words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters will reveal an additional method of transportation.



- | | | | |
|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
| AIRPLANE | FERRY | RICKSHAW | SNOWMOBILE |
| BICYCLE | GONDOLA | ROCKET | SUBMARINE |
| BLIMP | HORSE | ROLLER BLADES | TRAIN |
| BOAT | JET | SCOOTER | TRAM |
| CAMEL | MOPED | SHIP | TRUCK |
| CANOE | MOTORCYCLE | SKATEBOARD | VAN |
| CARRIAGE | PARACHUTE | SKIS | WAGON |
| ELEVATOR | RAFT | SLED | YACHT |
| ESCALATOR | | | |

Friday's Solution

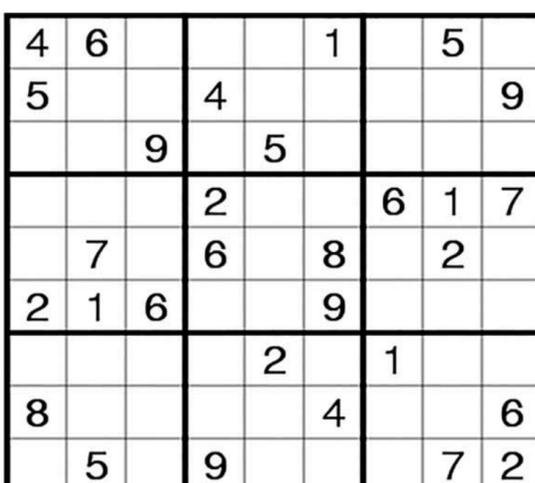
Tools



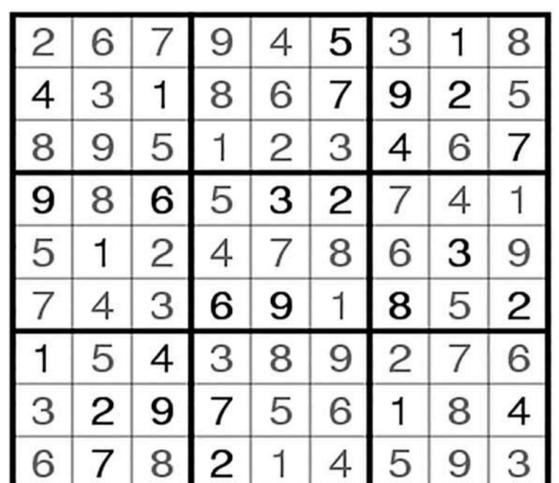
- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| BAND SAW | FILE | POLISHER | SPRAY GUN |
| BOLT CUTTER | GRINDER | PROTRACTOR | SQUARE |
| BRUSH | HAMMER | PUNCH | STAPLE GUN |
| BUFFER | HAND SAW | PRY BAR | STUD FINDER |
| CALIPER | HEX KEY | RASP | TABLE SAW |
| CHALK | JIG SAW | RATCHET | TAPE MEASURE |
| CHISEL | JOINTER | ROUTER | TAPS AND DIES |
| CLAMP | KNIFE | SANDER | TINSNIPS |
| COPING SAW | LATHE | SAWHORSE | VICE |
| CROWBAR | MALLET | SCREWDRIVER | WOOD RULE |
| DADO | MITER BOX | SCROLL SAW | WRECKING BAR |
| DIVIDER | PLANE | SOCKETS | WRENCH |
| DRILL PRESS | PLIER | | |

The hidden sentence is: MEN HAVE BECOME THE TOOLS OF THEIR TOOLS

Daily SuDoku

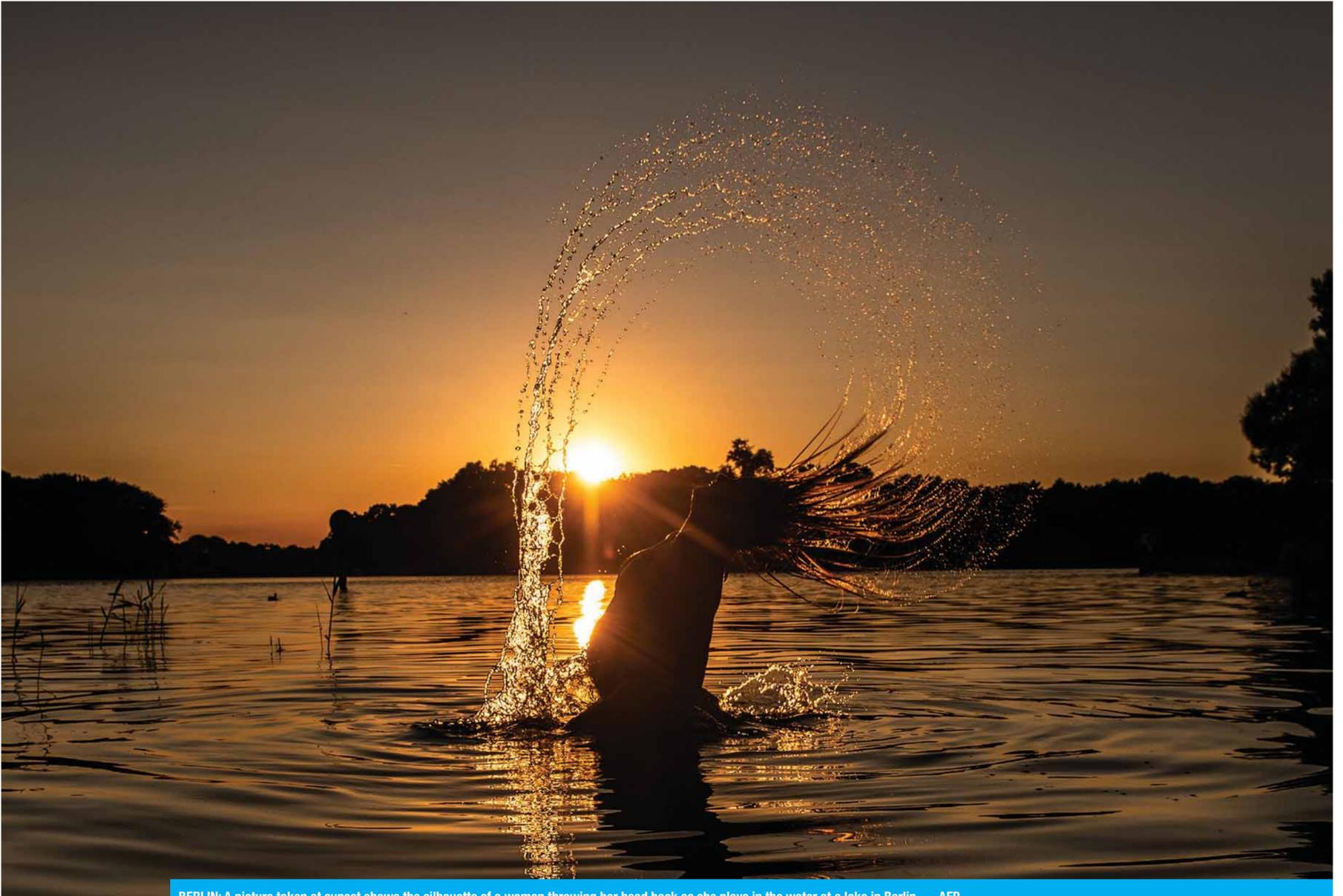


Friday's Solution



Lifestyle

SUNDAY, JULY 22, 2018



BERLIN: A picture taken at sunset shows the silhouette of a woman throwing her head back as she plays in the water at a lake in Berlin. — AFP

Thais turn to art, T-shirts to mark cave rescue of lucky 13

Memorabilia featuring a young Thai soccer team and their coach rescued from a flooded cave is flying off the shelves, said Suwit Jaipom, who heads an art gallery in the northern province of Chiang Rai, where the boys live. The 12 boys, aged 11 to 16, and their 25-year-old coach, who went missing on June 23 while exploring a cave complex, were rescued last week during a perilous three-day mission by foreign and Thai divers that gripped viewers around the world.

"There is quite some demand for memorabilia," Suwit, the president of Art Bridge Chiang Rai, which began taking orders last week for T-shirts featuring the team, told Reuters. "The fastest product we could make is the T-shirts." The gallery has produced 2,000 T-shirts that also carry the word "HERO" emblazoned in red, in memory of Samarn Kunan, a volunteer diver who died on July 6, after losing consciousness during a mission to place oxygen tanks deep inside the cave.

With each T-shirt sold for 200 baht, net profit

from the sales will come to 200,000 baht, and is destined for charitable activities, added Suwit, who is also an artist. But there are no plans to sell more T-shirts or ask the boys to model the garment, he said. "If we push further, it will be commercial, which I don't want to happen," said Suwit. "People who buy it just want to show support for the heroes," he said. The group, whom Thais view as national treasures, were discharged from hospital on Wednesday and are recovering at home, where they are expected to remain for around a month.

No copyright issues have arisen so far, said Suwit, adding that he did not seek permission from the boys or their families. Reuters could not reach the provincial governor, who is helping to represent the boys' interests, to seek comment. A canvas on display outside the gallery commemorates the dramatic rescue mission that drew in hundreds of participants, including divers from around the world.



Suwit hopes the 13-meter-long painting, which features the rescuers, including the British divers who first found the boys, will be a "chronicle of history." "This is so everyone can know and appreciate what happened here and not forget it so easily." There are few signs of cave memorabilia fever in Bangkok, the capital, but people hope the boys' good fortune will rub off on them, with some buying national lottery tickets featuring numbers associated with the rescue, such as the "lucky" 13.—Reuters

Suwit Jaipom, President of Art Bridge Chiang Rai gallery, talks about Samarn Kunan, left, a former Thai navy SEAL who died during a rescue mission to save 12 soccer boys and their coach.

"Show support for the heroes"



Artists paint as they work on 'The Heroes' giant painting project, in Art Bride gallery, Chiang Rai, Thailand. — Reuters photos

Lifestyle | Music & Movies

Gabriel Garzon-Montano, finding escape in magical funk

Gabriel Garzon-Montano's career trajectory a few years ago sounded, to his friends at least, to be the envy of a musician on the make. Still in his mid-20s, the Brooklyn-born singer and multi-instrumentalist driven by the sensibilities of old-school R&B was tapped as Lenny Kravitz's opening act

ride almost." Acknowledging that playing as an opening act is a rite of passage, Garzon-Montano said he nonetheless felt ignored, his set on less than half the volume of Kravitz's as crowds trickled in "who paid the babysitter to go see the greatest-hits show."

Around the same time his phone kept ringing as friends heard his voice on Drake's song "Jungle." Drake properly secured rights to the sample. But he credited Garzon-Montano only by his initials, leaving the emerging artist embittered. "It was like 'Groundhog Day,'" he told AFP. "Everybody was like, 'Congratulations, everything is going so well,' and I was saying, well, actually this experience has been really horrifying for me."

Fighting insecurities with magical realism

Garzon-Montano, the son of a Colombian father and a French mother, channeled his insecurities into his latest song, "Golden Wings." Returning to his raw, early '70s-style production, Garzon-Montano builds the track off a hard and clean funk rhythm, layering it with a trippy organ and his suave, polyharmonic vocals. The song reflects poetically on striving higher—"Golden wings upon my feet / On clouds I dance."

Speaking with rapid-fire eloquence even as he meticulously rolled a joint before a show, Garzon-Montano said of the song: "Anybody who is having a rough, uninspired day, you can remember that you can make more out of life." "It's kind of like a song to remind you of your magic. Basically, you create your life." His lyrics are full of bright colors and dreamy metaphors. On his 2017 album "Jardin," he sang about wistfully picking sour mangoes off a tree and of biting into a "peach bite melody."

The trilingual singer, who has written almost exclusively in English but plans to expand into Spanish and French, credits his Colombian side for the aura of magical realism in his words. But even more than from novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the singer takes inspiration from his uncle, Jaime Garzon, Colombia's leading satirical journalist who was shot dead by suspected right-wing paramilitaries in 1999.

"A bit of my Colombian identity is wrapped up in having this legacy of total compassion and excellence in human rights advocacy and commitment to people," Garzon-Montano said. "It

ognizable in Garzon-Montano. "I realized that this is Stevie Wonder happening before my eyes. I would cry about it. For so long I felt that I had missed the era I was supposed to be in," he said.

As he looks to the next stage of his career, Garzon-Montano, who plays all the instruments in the studio, is fine-tuning his voice—and his look. Playing a recent show in Central Park, Garzon-Montano strutted on stage in an open-chest peach suit. By the end of the concert he had cast away the jacket, revealing his ripped abs as he hovered sensually over the microphone.

"Someone once said, 'you don't look at all like



In this file photo US musician Gabriel Garzon-Montano performs during a summer stage concert in Central Park in New York City. — AFP

on a tour of Europe and Drake sampled him on one of the hip-hop superstar's number-one albums. Instead, Garzon-Montano, a perfectionist who struggles to determine when his music is good enough for release, was crushed inside.

"I felt like he had just mopped the European floor with me," Garzon-Montano said of Kravitz. "I just felt like I was going along for this shaming

"This experience has been really horrifying"

just really highlights how mediocre it would be to be in this for myself and just be another artist" rather than looking more deeply, he said.

Finding idol and look

His late mother spent 10 years playing in the ensemble of pre-eminent living US composer Philip Glass, nurturing in Garzon-Montano a discerning musical ear from an early age. After a youthful dalliance with the aggression of Nirvana, he found his musical hero in D'Angelo, the elusive R&B sensation whose influence is instantly rec-

your music sounds," Garzon-Montano said, explaining he had never made a conscious fashion decision when he sported jeans and a T-shirt. "Creating clothing is art, just as much as music is," he said. "To realize you're entering a multidisciplinary field is to really do this so-called pop music correctly and give people the experience they deserve." — AFP

Film Review

CARTOON 'TEEN TITANS' GOOF ACROSS DC UNIVERSE

When it comes to superhero movies, there's a perception that you've got to choose between DC's gritty, dour offerings or Marvel's winking humor. But five cartoon wannabe heroes armed with fart jokes are trying to change that. Warner Bros. has elevated its "B?" level DC superheroes in Team Titans Go! from basic cable to the big screen in hopes they can do what so many of its A-list films cannot — add a dose of surreal and goofy humor to its universe. Think of it like "Deadpool" for the middle school set.



"Teen Titans GO! to the Movies" might be aimed at fans of the manic and underrated Cartoon Network show but any parent who tags along will likely chortle as the film gleefully skewers the world of superheroes and the film industry itself. Jokes take on "Apocalypse Now," "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" and "The Lion King." There's a scene when Shia LaBeouf gets beaten up and an appearance by Stan Lee, the Marvel icon, who, yes, makes fun of himself in a cameo in a DC film.

This is a film that adores mocking itself: One of the original songs features Michael Bolton singing the exquisitely cheesy "Upbeat Inspirational Song About Life" that features colorful unicorns, dolphins and jet skis. The film's central premise is mocking the endless supply of tights-and-cape wearing flicks out there. The Teen Titans — Robin, Starfire, Beast Boy, Cyborg and Raven — want one, too, but they're not considered famous enough to warrant their own franchise. So they band together to force Hollywood to take them seriously. "Having a movie is the only way to be seen as a real hero," intones Robin.

They decide they need an arch-nemesis to legitimize

them and find one in Slade (a sort of DC version of Deadpool, which proves a rich vein of jokes). Part of the reason they decide on Slade is his name is "fun to say in a dramatic way." He's voiced by Will Arnett, who played Batman in the two "LEGO" movies, and is happy to break the fourth wall: "Don't you know anything about arch-villains?" he asks when he seems to be defeated. "We always have a back-up plan."

Some of the other guest voices include talk show host Jimmy Kimmel as Batman, singer Halsey as Wonder Woman, rapper Lil Yachty as Green Lantern, actor Wil Wheaton as Flash, comedian Patton Oswalt as Atom, and actress Kristen Bell, as a film mogul. You'll also get to hear Nicolas Cage voice Superman — a role he famously almost played in a live action film in the late 1990s. But most of the celebs have very few lines so don't go just for the guests.

Do go for the world created by the writers and directors Aaron Horvath, Michael Jelenic and Peter Rida Michail, who have been collaborating on this screwball world since 2013, going from mocking Napoleon Bonaparte to the film "A Few Good Men." Their transition to the big screen is admirable — taking a 22-minute TV show into an hour and a half movie can't be easy — but it never lags.

The filmmakers are brimming with ideas, from explosive diarrhea jokes to time-travel montages accompanied by Huey Lewis & The News' "Back in Time." They also supply some of the songs (but might not win any lyrical awards for rhyming "booty" with "movie"). And they're also not afraid to bite the hand that feeds them — much of the shenanigans take place on the Warner Bros. back lot.

"Teen Titans GO! to the Movies" is the sort of silly film you and your kids can both enjoy, a slice of pure escapism fare in these divisive days. It's decidedly not political. (One note: Robin is notoriously sensitive about his baby hands. That is NOT a Trump thing — it predates jokes about our commander in chief's small hands.)

The kids will come away with life lessons — friendship is more important than fame, teamwork is always worth the effort — and the adults will laugh about watching Green Lantern admit that "we don't talk about" the disastrous "Green Lantern" movie — in a DC flick, at that. "Teen Titans GO! to the Movies," a Warner Bros. Pictures release, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association of America for "action and rude humor." — AP

Taylor Swift cast in movie version of 'Cats'

Taylor Swift has been cast in a big screen version of the stage musical "Cats," in what will be the pop singer's biggest movie role so far, entertainment publications Variety and the Hollywood Reporter said on Friday. The 28-year-old "Look What You Made Me Do" singer will join Oscar-winning singer and actress Jennifer Hudson, talk show host James Corden and veteran British actor Ian McKellen in the movie, the publications said.

Composer Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Cats," based on a book of poems by T.S. Eliot, was first staged in London in 1981 and has been produced around the world. The movie version is a production of Working Title Films, which did not return requests for comment on the reports. Swift, a 10-time Grammy winner whose "Reputation" album was the biggest seller

of 2017 in the United States, made her film acting debut in the 2010 romantic comedy "Valentine's Day."

The Hollywood Reporter, citing sources close to the production, said Hudson was expected to play Grizabella, whose character sings the show's famous "Memory" ballad. Swift is being eyed as the flirtatious red cat Bombalurina, while McKellen will play the elderly feline leader Old Deuteronomy, the Hollywood Reporter said. Britain's Tom Hooper, whose past credits include Oscar best picture "The King's Speech" and musical "Les Misérables," will direct the movie, which is due to begin shooting in Britain in November, Variety said. — Reuters



In this file photo characters from Sesame Street Live appear on the street by Madison Square Garden to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the live touring stage shows based on the PBS television series in New York. — AP

Big move for Big Bird: Sesame Street is entering classrooms

Sesame Street is taking its beloved, critically acclaimed brand of educational television into the highly profitable world of classroom curriculum — a move that experts say could open the door for other companies to move into the sensitive learning space with possible influence on children. Sesame Workshop, the company behind Big Bird and Elmo, and McGraw-Hill Education, a billion-dollar-for-profit company known for school textbooks, announced their partnership Thursday. Both declined to disclose the financial terms for their new line of classroom instructional materials.

"Sesame Workshop probably can be trusted to do this in an ethical way, but the door opens for other companies to do it in a less ethical way," said Heather Kirkorian, a University of Wisconsin professor who studies the effects of media in young children. The TV program and Sesame Workshop's other educational pursuits have long been lauded for their record of helping kids learn, portraying diverse characters and offering sensitivity in addressing childhood experiences.

The new classroom materials include videos featuring social-emotional and literacy lessons delivered by its famous characters and meant to be used at "circle time," when young children typically gather to sing songs or hear stories. They also are offering resources for teachers and parents to help reinforce the lessons.

The instructional materials are on the market for children in preschool through fifth grade, and they are expected to be used in classrooms as early as fall 2019. Educators now have access to review the materials, but they haven't been piloted in a classroom yet. They must be approved by school principals and administrators.

Children first

Dr. David Hill of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which urges parents to be cautious and selective about screen time for children, said that by age 3, kids can learn from a limited viewing of high-quality TV programs like Sesame Street but that little research exists on such regular media use in the classroom.

Hill, a pediatrician, said a young child's brain cannot distinguish between programming and advertising, which could raise questions about the precedent that Sesame Street is setting. "When you introduce a commercial influence on a nonprofit endeavor, I think everyone naturally has some concerns about the tension that ensues," Hill said. Sesame Workshop is a nonprofit and would have to invest its revenue back into its educational mission.

"With a proven whole-child curriculum that serves as a framework for everything we do, Sesame Workshop has put children first for nearly fifty years," said Akimi Gibson, company vice president. A much-discussed study in 2015 indicated that preschoolers exposed to the show gained immense benefits, which were compared to that of the Head Start program for low-income children, though the authors of that study later rebuked the idea that the show alone could or should replace any actual school program.

The researchers declined to comment on Sesame Street's latest classroom endeavor.

Sesame Street has been a household brand since debuting in 1969 on public television. In recent years, it lost federal funding to produce the show and has partnered with HBO. Its name recognition is so high that it is equally known for its broad array of licensed merchandise, from bibs and backpacks to toys and games. It has also achieved cult status for its celebrity appearances and satirizing humor that serves as a hook for parents. — AP

CBS announces four-part series of short 'Star Trek' episodes

CBs Corp's next voyage into the "Star Trek" universe will come in the form of a four-part series of 10-to-15-minute episodes released starting this fall on the CBS All Access streaming service, the network said on Friday. "Star Trek: Short Treks" will be released monthly, and each episode will tell a separate, closed-ended story, CBS said in a statement. The network announced the series at San Diego Comic-Con, a convention for fans of science fiction and pop culture.

CBS said "The Office" actor Rainn Wilson will play con artist Harry Mudd in one episode. Another installment will focus on a man who finds himself the only human on board a deserted ship. Each of the "Short Treks" episodes will reveal clues about the story unfolding on "Star Trek: Discovery," a series that is heading into its second season, co-creator and executive producer Alex Kurtzman said.

The original "Star Trek" debuted in 1966 as a US television series depicting the adventures of the Starship Enterprise. It was created by the late Gene Roddenberry and featured characters including Captain James T. Kirk, played by William Shatner, and Vulcan officer Mr. Spock, played by the late Leonard Nimoy. The franchise has persisted through several movies and TV shows. CBS announced in June that it would further expand the "Star Trek" franchise with new series, mini-series and animation under a production deal with Kurtzman. — Reuters

Lifestyle | Comic-Con

Comic-Con laments departure of 'Walking Dead' star

The world's largest fan convention bid a poignant farewell to the star of the most successful show in cable TV history on Friday as zombies took over San Diego Comic-Con. An extensive line-up of stars descended on the city's sprawling convention center to whet appetites for AMC's "The Walking Dead" and its sister show "Fear the Walking Dead." The departure of British actor Andrew Lincoln, who has appeared as Sheriff Rick Grimes in almost every episode since the 2010 pilot, has been an open secret since May, confirmed inad-

portrayed in "The Walking Dead" has proved uniquely resonant. Dwarfing competition like HBO's "Game of Thrones" in the US, it has the highest total viewership in cable history and, crucially, the highest audience of 18-49s for any kind of US television between 2013 and 2017.

Tensions rising

The show centers on Lincoln's Grimes, who wakes up in a hospital bed after getting shot, only to find he is alone in a world of vicious, flesh-eating reanimated corpses-known as "walkers" on the

peaceful times as the leader of a sprawling settlement of survivors-but with tensions rising among his lieutenants. "Fear the Walking Dead" kicked off the two-hour zombocalypse earlier with a presentation that critics agreed seemed to be drawing a line under all storylines past and presenting an almost entirely new show.

Fermentation process

Aired since 2015, "FtWD" doesn't get the history-making numbers of the main show-but is still one of the top-rated US cable series with just under two million viewers per episode. "Fear" shocked its legion of ardent fans by presaging its parent show and killing its protagonist-Kim Dickens's Madison Clark-just before the halfway break of season four. The remaining cast-including established stars Colman Domingo, Alycia Debnam-Carey, Danay Garcia and newcomers Lennie James, Garret Dillahunt, Maggie Grace and Jenna Elfman-spoke passionately about their work.

But it wasn't long before the conversation with journalists descended into a conversation about whether zombies were able to "poop," as well as snarling and shuffling. The tone was lowered as Gimple mentioned in passing that James's character Morgan, a crossover from the main show, is seen on the toilet in an upcoming episode and was asked if zombies "poop." "What did I say? It's going to be the next thing people want to know! It's exactly what I said!" grandstanded a faux-exasperated James.

"I think there's a fermentation process that could result in projectiles," offered a wry Gimple, clearly amused by the prospect. Grace, most



This file photo shows British actor Andrew Lincoln arrives for 'The Walking Dead' photo call at Comic-Con International 2018 in San Diego, California. — AFP photos

"THIS WILL BE MY LAST SEASON"

vertently by executive producer Robert Kirkman. But the official announcement was reserved for Comic-Con, an annual pop culture celebration that attracts more than 100,000 devotees to southern California, many in elaborate costumes, every July. "There seems to be an elephant in the room. This will be my last season playing the part of Rick Grimes," Lincoln, 44, told the packed 6,500-seat Hall H, prompting a dismayed murmur that spread throughout the arena. "I love this show. It means everything to me. I love the people who make this show. I promise not to cry. I've done enough crying on screen," Lincoln promised. Based on a comic book of the same name by a trio of writers including one of the show's executive producers Robert Kirkman, the post-apocalyptic zombie-ridden vision of the United States

show. "I got kind of choked up. It's been nine years of coming here," Lincoln told reporters after what will be his last sojourn to San Diego on behalf of "The Walking Dead." "I love this place and I love seeing the fans, and you've been such a vital part of this experience. But my relationship with Mr Grimes is far from over." It was unclear if he was talking about the current shoot for his final episodes, the possibility of appearing in one of the franchise's numerous side projects, or something else entirely. The ninth season, coming in October, takes place two years after the "All Out War" saga of the previous two, with story editor Angela Kang taking over from veteran showrunner Scott Gimple. AMC dropped a trailer lasting almost six minutes at Comic-Con which shows Rick in more



Cosplayers pose for a picture at Comic Con in San Diego.



FOX SHOWCASES BIGGER, BADDER ALIENS IN 'THE PREDATOR'

Fox kicked off San Diego Comic-Con on Thursday with world premiere footage of its action horror retreat "The Predator," showcasing a new supercharged alien hunter. The movie, due out on September 14, will reacquaint audiences with the deadly extraterrestrial made famous in the 1987 blockbuster starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. Shane Black's modern take on the cult series-five films in total, including two crossover releases with the Alien franchise-sees the universe's most lethal hunters returning smarter and deadlier thanks to genetic modifications. "There's a faction on Predator home-world that's been bested not once, but twice, by earthlings," said Black. "They send their champions to earth, and they don't come home. They don't like that. So we figured they want to punch back." The new cast is a diverse ensemble featuring Boyd Holbrook, Jacob Tremblay, Keegan-

Michael Key, Olivia Munn, Sterling K. Brown, Allie Allen and Jake Busey. The Hall H crowd at Comic-Con was treated to detailed footage including a look at Munn's government scientist in a hotel room with a group of ex-soldiers who've just got away from one of the alien hunters. Another clip shows a Predator almost getting the better of Munn, Tremblay ("Room"), and Boyd Holbrook ("Narcos") before getting taken out and beheaded by a bigger, previously unseen "Ultimate Predator." Black described the latest aliens as "completely savage, brutal creatures," adding that their genetic augmentation would not only affect their size but improve their bloodcurdlingly efficient killing style. Previous installments have taken place in jungles and built-up cities but the suburbs are the theater of war in "The Predator." Black said he hoped his version would be a "Dirty Half Dozen" and paid homage to the 1987 original movie, describing it as "a piece of perfect pop art." "(It was) the alien craze of the 1980s and the Rambo craze, put together. And it had a wink to it, because you had these muscular guys with weapons that were absolutely ridiculous."—AFP

Jodie Whittaker gives 'Doctor Who' the female touch

British actress Jodie Whittaker was unveiled Thursday as the first woman to play "Doctor Who," telling fans of the cult BBC series she felt the weight of history-but that gender should be irrelevant. The 36-year-old, who rose to fame in award-winning British drama "Broadchurch," takes over from Scottish actor Peter Capaldi as the 13th incarnation of the Time Lord. "I knew, obviously, being the first female it was going to have some extra responsibility thrown in," she told 6,500 fans at the annual Comic-Con convention in San Diego, which hosted the cast's first news conference together. "It's incredibly inclusive and it also feels, knowing that the fans are all over the world, like there's this huge Whovian family that you want to be a part of because it's so supportive and inclusive, and fun." Fans were treated last year to a brief glimpse of Whittaker, walking towards the Tardis in a forest, in a clip shown after the Wimbledon tennis final on BBC television. At Comic-Con, which attracts 130,000 movie, TV and comics fans from around the world, BBC America dropped the first full trailer which opened with Whittaker's startled expression. "All of this is new to me," she says, presumably after just regenerating. "New faces, new worlds. New times. So if I asked really, really nicely, would you be my new best friends?" There were glimpses of the Doctor with her new sonic screwdriver, some impressive-looking shots of alien worlds and the first look at her three new companions.



British actress Jodie Whittaker arrives for the photo call of 'Doctor Who.'

bought was just the Doctor-but it was new, it was fresh," said Chibnall. "It was very funny, very emotional. It's really exciting as a showrunner when you see them audition and you want to write instantly, and it suggests scenes. That's what happened really- she just nailed it." The show is aired around the world, and marked its 50th anniversary four years ago with a special episode screened simultaneously in nearly 100 countries. "The thing about this role, which is why it's so amazing for any actor to play, is that essentially gender is irrelevant and that's completely liberating," Whittaker told the audience. "As a woman who isn't a genre, is just a woman, I have never approached a role thinking, 'Oh, how do women do this?' I've just done it from my perspective."

Best so far

It was a big day for iconic television shows, with AMC's "Better Call Saul" making its debut at Comic-Con and generating buzz with a new character from sleazy attorney Saul Goodman's "Breaking Bad" days. "BCS" is a prequel show to the iconic series which introduced fans to Saul (Bob Odenkirk) in its second season, in 2009. When Saul thinks he's about to be bumped off by Walt (Bryan Cranston) and Jesse (Aaron Paul), he demands to know if it was someone called Lalo that sent them. While many fans may never have contemplated the line again, the specter of Lalo returned to San Diego as the cast hit the stage. Co-creator Peter Gould screened that original Lalo mention from "Breaking Bad" to jog everyone's memory, along with the first image of actor Tony Dalton ("Sens8") as the character. —AFP

'Harry Potter' star Tom Felton in new YouTube show

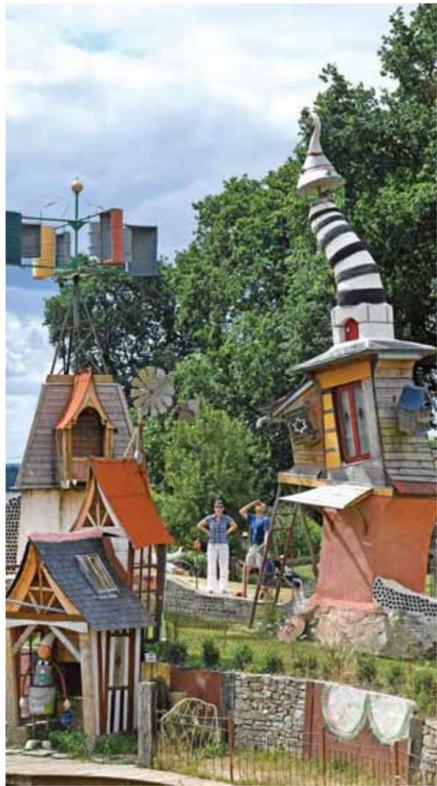
YouTube has offered the first glimpse of its new sci-fi thriller series fronted by "Harry Potter" star Tom Felton-revealing it is an "Alien"-like horror story on an isolated ship. "Resident Evil" director Paul W S Anderson is to helm "Origin," which brings together an international roster of talent alongside Felton, the boy wizard's conniving nemesis Draco Malfoy in all eight "Harry Potter" movies. A teaser trailer for the 10-episode show made by Left Bank Pictures and Sony Pictures Television screened at a panel at San Diego Comic-Con given by the creators and cast on Thursday. The show follows a group of outsiders who find themselves abandoned on a ship bound for a distant land. They have to work together for survival but quickly realize one of them is far from who they claim to be. Felton, who also appeared in "Rise of the Planet of the Apes," will be joined in the show by fellow Potter alumnus Natalia Tena, as well as Sen Mitsuji, Nora Arnezeder, Nina Wadia, Adelayo Adedayo and Wil Coban. The show will air on YouTube Premium, a subscription service that offers access to the company's original content. YouTube, which started in 2005 as a video-sharing network-still its main function-also announced a second season of the critically acclaimed supernatural thriller "Impulse." Since its debut on June 6, the first episode has generated around eight million views. Season two of the 10-episode, hour-long series will premiere on YouTube Premium in 2019. Season one starred Maddie Hasson as Henrietta "Henry" Cole, a rebellious 16-year-old girl who always felt different from her peers and longed to escape her small town. During a traumatic event, Henry discovers she has the ability to teleport and her newfound power makes her the focus of those who want to control her. Meanwhile Netflix, the world's leading video streaming service, announced its own new original show, separate from the festivities in San Diego. "The One," which will run for six one-hour episodes, is an adaptation of the Mexican show "Nino Santo," moved to Brazil, created and written by Pedro Peirano and Mauricio Katz. —AFP



(Left to right) Sterling K. Brown, Olivia Munn, Thomas Jane, Keegan-Michael Key, and Trevante Rhodes speak onstage during the 20th Century Fox's 'The Predator' panel.



These pictures show iron sculptures from the 'Universe of the scrap merchant's poet' site, in Lizio, western France. — AFP photos



General view of site 'Universe of the scrap merchant's poet.'

POETRY IN MOTION: ENTER THE WORLD OF THE 'SCRAP METAL POET'

With its fairytale towers, quirky animated sculptures, fantastical constructions and musical fountains, the inventive world crafted out of discarded junk by the man known as the "Scrap Metal Poet" is tucked away deep in the northwestern French countryside. "It's an extraordinary place in my imagination," says its creator Robert Coudray, who has let his imagination run wild for nearly three decades, turning his ideas into reality.

Now to the sounds of chiming bells and flowing water, visitors can wander around his little timeless world of scrap creations, peering inside some of the 15 towers and admiring some 70 figures that move, laid out over a hectare (2.5 acres) of land in the village of Lizio. Coudray, 65, said it all began out of boredom. "One day, I was bored so I started to make cabins, little cabins... and since I was bored, I made them bent," says the sculptor, whose previous jobs ranged from stonemason to farmer.

Next he began creating sculptures and fountains that move and come alive. To build them he scours junkyards for his main materials, scrap metal and wood, and lets his imagination soar in his workshop. "I love everything which is not normal, everything that is quirky," he says. And each year his world grows, for he says he's not done yet. "I have a vision of where I want to go and that's going to take another 15 to 20 years," he says.

Though located off the usual tourist route in Brittany, Coudray attracts around 35,000 visitors every year, both youngsters and those young at heart. As one visitor put it: "It's enchanting, it's as if we rediscover the spirit of childhood through all he has done."—AFP



Founder Robert Coudray poses on the site of 'Universe of the scrap merchant's poet.'

BURBERRY BURNS MILLIONS IN UNSOLD PRODUCTS TO PROTECT BRAND

Luxury British fashion house Burberry destroyed tens of millions of dollars worth of its fashion and cosmetic products over the past year to protect its brand. The company burned unsold clothes, accessories and perfume worth £28.6 million, according to its annual report, in a practice now common across the industry to guard

against counterfeiting. Retailers describe it as a measure to protect intellectual property and prevent products being stolen or sold at discounted prices.

"Burberry has careful processes in place to minimize the amount of excess stock we produce," the company said in a statement. "On the occasions when disposal of products is necessary, we do so in a responsible manner and we continue to seek ways to reduce and revalue our waste." Among the products destroyed were £10.4 million worth of beauty items, which Burberry said was a one-off related to a license it agreed with beauty company Coty last year.

The firm—which announced a slight rise in annual profits in May to £294 million—has said it takes its environmental obligations seriously and harnesses the energy from burning the items. It also pointed to partnerships with organiza-

tions such as the Ellen MacArthur Foundation that work to reduce waste in the industry. But news of its destruction policy drew flak in Britain.

Lawmaker Tim Farron, environment spokesman for the opposition Liberal Democrat party, said: "It is outrageous that Burberry think setting fire to their unsold stock is an acceptable solution." Noting recycling was "far better for the environment", he added: "As a leading British fashion brand they should be leading the way in sustainable fashion."—AFP

Robin Williams possessions up for auction in New York

Art work, film memorabilia and personal items owned by the late actor Robin Williams will go under the hammer in New York this October, more than four years after his death, Sotheby's announced Friday. The Oscar-winner, movie veteran, stand-up comedian and television star was one of Hollywood's most popular entertainers whose tragic death in August 2014 triggered an outpouring of emotion the world over.

Items owned by Williams and his second wife, film producer and philanthropist Marsha Garces Williams, will go on sale on October 4 with proceeds going to charities they championed, Sotheby's said. The dedicated sale will include autographed scripts, awards, props, street art by Banksy, more than 40 watches, bicycles and sports memorabilia, furniture and art, the auction house said.

Lots include a Hogwarts school robe worn by Daniel Radcliffe in the 2001 movie "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," valued between \$10,000 to \$15,000, and Williams's Hollywood Walk of Fame award valued at \$3,000 to \$5,000. The collection will go on public view at Sotheby's on September 29 and the organizations to benefit include The Juilliard School in New York, the Wounded Warrior Project and the Challenged Athletes Foundation.

Williams won an Oscar in 1998 for "Good Will Hunting." A father of three, he was known for high-energy, rapid-fire improvisation and clowning, and starred in hit films such as "Good Morning, Vietnam" and "Mrs Doubtfire." Marsha was his second wife. The couple were married from 1989 to 2010, and had two children together.

Williams committed suicide aged 63. His widow and third wife, Susan Schneider, later revealed that he had been suffering from Lewy body dementia, a neurodegenerative disease that alters mood, movement and provokes hallucinations.—AFP

Masham Steam Rally



Exhibitors display their steam engines to the public in the main ring of the annual Masham Steam Rally in the village of Masham, near Ripon, northern England. The two-day Steam Rally, which has been taking place since 1965, celebrates the history of Yorkshire's farming community and features vintage tractors, vehicles and steam engines used in farming and haulage. — AFP photos

TV

OMN MOVIES ACTION

00:00 Under Siege 2
01:50 XXX: Return Of Xander Cage
04:00 Kung Fu Yoga
06:15 Hidalgo
08:45 XXX: Return Of Xander Cage
10:45 One Good Cop
12:35 Rumble
14:15 Hidalgo
16:35 Resident Evil: Vendetta
18:15 Allegiant
20:20 The Viral Factor
22:25 Death Warrant

OMN MOVIES THRILLER

00:40 Virtual Revolution
02:25 The Rainmaker
04:40 Desiree
06:10 Mine
08:00 Every Secret Thing
09:35 Desiree
11:05 Mine
12:55 Bermuda Tentacles
14:50 The Last King
16:50 A.I. Artificial Intelligence
19:15 The Boy
20:55 Betrayed
23:05 Chrysalis

OMN MOVIES HD FIRST

OSN Movies First HD
00:55 Shepherds And Butchers
02:55 Monster Family
04:45 Wild Oats
06:30 LALA Land
08:45 Pirates Of The Caribbean: Salazar's Revenge
10:55 Columbus
12:40 Heartbeats
14:30 Hidden Figures
16:40 Gifted
18:25 Spider-Man: Homecoming
20:40 Rings
22:25 All Nighter
23:55 Berlin Syndrome

OMN MOVIES COMEDY HD

00:00 Fired Up!
01:45 We're No Angels
03:45 Hearts Of Spring
05:30 The Brady Bunch
07:15 Roxanne
09:30 Hearts Of Spring
11:15 The Brady Bunch
13:00 Roxanne
15:00 Shelby: The Dog Who Saved Christmas
16:45 Are We Done Yet?
18:30 Step Dogs
20:00 The Lookout
22:00 Mean Machine
23:45 Nina Forever

OMN MOVIES KIDS

00:05 Operation: Neighborhood Watch
01:45 Rock Dog
03:25 The Emperor's Secret
05:00 Capture The Flag
06:40 Jake And The Giants
08:10 Zodiac: The Race Begins
09:50 Felix The Toy Rabbit And The Time Machine
11:20 The Happy Cricket
12:50 The Emperor's Secret
14:25 Capture The Flag
16:05 DinoFroz - An Island In The Sky
17:25 Bling
18:55 Last Wizard
20:15 The Apple & The Worm
21:40 DinoFroz - An Island In The Sky
23:00 Zodiac: The Race Begins

OMN MOVIES HD

02:25 The Fountain
04:10 Jem And The Holograms
06:10 The Choice
08:00 Dead Poets Society
10:15 Fences
12:35 The Challenger
14:20 My All American
16:20 The Legend Of Tarzan
18:15 The Guill Trip
20:00 Gattaca
22:00 Runner Runner
23:45 P.S. I Love You

OMN MOVIES HD

00:45 Four Rooms
02:25 Ultimate Countdown
08:40 Days Of Our Lives 12
09:20 Days Of Our Lives 12
10:00 Neighbours S1
10:30 Daddy Day Care
12:00 Days Of Our Lives 12
12:45 Neighbours S1
13:15 Stealing Chanel
14:55 Irreconcilable Differences (1984)
16:45 Days Of Our Lives 12
17:25 Neighbours S1
17:55 I Killed My Bf: The Babysitter
19:20 The Fifth Monkey
21:00 Awakenings
23:00 Hancock

OMN MOVIES HD

01:30 The Blair Witch Project
03:00 Godsend
04:45 Clown
06:30 The Way Back
09:00 The Wedding Planner
10:45 On The Road
13:00 Stomp The Yard
15:00 The Blair Witch Project
16:30 Mariah Mundi And The Midas Box
18:15 Strange Magic
20:00 Amelie
22:00 Breakfast Of Champions
23:45 The Quiet American

SUNDANCE TV

01:20 The Mend
03:10 Nola
04:50 Movie Talk Legends - Jack Lemmon
05:25 The Horse Boy
07:00 Bible Quiz
08:20 Indie Game: The Movie
10:05 24 X 36: The Movie About Movie Posters

11:30 Orion: The Man Who Would Be King
13:00 United
14:40 Behind The Sun
16:10 24 X 36: The Movie About Movie Posters
17:30 Hollywood's Best Film Directors
18:00 Orion: The Man Who Would Be King
19:30 Close Up With THR
20:30 Movie Talk Legends - Sidney Poitier
21:00 Babylon
22:00 Janet King
23:00 Hap And Leonard: The Two-Bear Mambo

00:05 Friday Night Dinner
00:30 Doctor Foster
01:25 Death In Paradise
02:20 Father Brown
03:10 Friday Night Dinner
03:35 Doctor Foster
04:35 Holly City
05:30 EastEnders
06:00 EastEnders
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Doctor Who
07:50 Stella
08:40 Stella
09:30 Stella
10:20 EastEnders
10:50 EastEnders
11:20 Doctor Who
12:10 Death In Paradise
13:10 The Coroner
14:00 Father Brown
14:50 EastEnders
15:20 Death In Paradise
16:20 The Coroner
17:05 Doctor Who
18:00 EastEnders
18:30 EastEnders
19:00 Death In Paradise
20:00 Doctor Foster
21:00 The Split
22:00 Father Brown
22:50 EastEnders
23:20 Friday Night Dinner
23:45 The Collection

BBC FIRST

00:05 Friday Night Dinner
00:30 Doctor Foster
01:25 Death In Paradise
02:20 Father Brown
03:10 Friday Night Dinner
03:35 Doctor Foster
04:35 Holly City
05:30 EastEnders
06:00 EastEnders
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Doctor Who
07:50 Stella
08:40 Stella
09:30 Stella
10:20 EastEnders
10:50 EastEnders
11:20 Doctor Who
12:10 Death In Paradise
13:10 The Coroner
14:00 Father Brown
14:50 EastEnders
15:20 Death In Paradise
16:20 The Coroner
17:05 Doctor Who
18:00 EastEnders
18:30 EastEnders
19:00 Death In Paradise
20:00 Doctor Foster
21:00 The Split
22:00 Father Brown
22:50 EastEnders
23:20 Friday Night Dinner
23:45 The Collection

00:05 Friday Night Dinner
00:30 Doctor Foster
01:25 Death In Paradise
02:20 Father Brown
03:10 Friday Night Dinner
03:35 Doctor Foster
04:35 Holly City
05:30 EastEnders
06:00 EastEnders
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Doctor Who
07:50 Stella
08:40 Stella
09:30 Stella
10:20 EastEnders
10:50 EastEnders
11:20 Doctor Who
12:10 Death In Paradise
13:10 The Coroner
14:00 Father Brown
14:50 EastEnders
15:20 Death In Paradise
16:20 The Coroner
17:05 Doctor Who
18:00 EastEnders
18:30 EastEnders
19:00 Death In Paradise
20:00 Doctor Foster
21:00 The Split
22:00 Father Brown
22:50 EastEnders
23:20 Friday Night Dinner
23:45 The Collection

00:05 Friday Night Dinner
00:30 Doctor Foster
01:25 Death In Paradise
02:20 Father Brown
03:10 Friday Night Dinner
03:35 Doctor Foster
04:35 Holly City
05:30 EastEnders
06:00 EastEnders
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Doctor Who
07:50 Stella
08:40 Stella
09:30 Stella
10:20 EastEnders
10:50 EastEnders
11:20 Doctor Who
12:10 Death In Paradise
13:10 The Coroner
14:00 Father Brown
14:50 EastEnders
15:20 Death In Paradise
16:20 The Coroner
17:05 Doctor Who
18:00 EastEnders
18:30 EastEnders
19:00 Death In Paradise
20:00 Doctor Foster
21:00 The Split
22:00 Father Brown
22:50 EastEnders
23:20 Friday Night Dinner
23:45 The Collection

00:05 Friday Night Dinner
00:30 Doctor Foster
01:25 Death In Paradise
02:20 Father Brown
03:10 Friday Night Dinner
03:35 Doctor Foster
04:35 Holly City
05:30 EastEnders
06:00 EastEnders
06:30 EastEnders
07:00 Doctor Who
07:50 Stella
08:40 Stella
09:30 Stella
10:20 EastEnders
10:50 EastEnders
11:20 Doctor Who
12:10 Death In Paradise
13:10 The Coroner
14:00 Father Brown
14:50 EastEnders
15:20 Death In Paradise
16:20 The Coroner
17:05 Doctor Who
18:00 EastEnders
18:30 EastEnders
19:00 Death In Paradise
20:00 Doctor Foster
21:00 The Split
22:00 Father Brown
22:50 EastEnders
23:20 Friday Night Dinner
23:45 The Collection

OMN FIRST HD Home of HBO

00:30 Last Week Tonight With John Oliver
01:10 Regarding Susan Sontag
03:00 Lucky Louie
03:35 Last Week Tonight With John Oliver
04:15 Love Child
05:30 A Match Made In Heaven
07:05 Superheroes
08:35 The Second Civil War
10:20 Pu-239
12:15 The Cherokee Kid
13:50 Meet The Donors: Does Money Talk
15:00 In The Gloaming
16:10 The Sunset Limited
17:45 Project Greenlight
18:25 Silicon Valley
19:00 Lucifer
20:00 John From Cincinnati
21:00 Grace
22:00 Robin Williams: Come Inside My Mind

COMEDY CENTRAL

00:05 Another Period
00:30 Another Period
00:55 The Daily Show - Global Edition
01:20 Comedy Central Stand Up Presents
01:45 Comedy Central Stand Up Presents
02:10 John Oliver's New York Stand Up Show
03:00 The Daily Show - Global Edition
03:25 Inside Amy Schumer
03:50 Tosh.0
04:15 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
05:05 Bondi Ink
05:55 Disaster Date
06:20 Ridiculousness
06:50 Lip Sync Battle
07:15 Lip Sync Battle
07:40 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
08:30 Disaster Date
08:55 Impractical Jokers
09:20 Ridiculousness
09:45 Impractical Jokers VIII - Anatomy Of A Challenge
10:10 Bondi Ink
11:00 IdiotSitter
11:25 Impractical Jokers
11:50 The It Crowd
12:14 The It Crowd
12:40 Impractical Jokers VIII - Anatomy Of A Challenge
13:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
13:55 Friends
14:20 Friends
14:45 The It Crowd
15:09 The It Crowd
15:35 IdiotSitter
16:00 Lip Sync Battle
16:30 Lip Sync Battle
16:55 Friends
17:20 Friends
17:45 I Used To Be Fat
18:35 Impractical Jokers VIII - Anatomy Of A Challenge
19:00 The It Crowd
19:24 The It Crowd
19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
20:12 Friends
20:35 Friends
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Roy Wood Jr.: Father Figure
22:25 John Oliver's New York Stand Up Show
23:15 The Meltdown With Jonah And Kumail
23:40 Roy Wood Jr.: Father Figure

OMN SERIES HD COMEDY

00:15 The Middle
00:40 The Middle
01:05 The Drew Carey Show
01:30 The Drew Carey Show
01:55 The Mick
02:20 Ghosted
02:45 Us And Them
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers
04:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
05:40 Ghosted
06:05 The Michael J. Fox Show
06:30 Grown-ish
06:55 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
09:50 Modern Family
10:15 American Housewife
10:40 Ghosted
11:05 The Michael J. Fox Show
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:20 Grown-ish
12:45 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
13:10 The Middle
13:35 The Middle
14:00 The Drew Carey Show
14:25 The Drew Carey Show
14:50 Ghosted
15:15 Modern Family
15:40 American Housewife
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 Grown-ish
17:30 Great News
18:00 The Middle
18:30 The Middle
19:00 The Drew Carey Show
19:30 The Drew Carey Show
20:00 Modern Family
20:30 American Housewife
21:00 Kevin Can Wait

OMN SERIES HD COMEDY

00:05 Seraph Of The End: Vampire Reign
00:30 Drone Wars
01:50 Earthbound
03:30 Smallville
04:20 Smallville
05:10 Smallville
06:00 Halo: The Fall Of Reach
07:15 Smallville
08:15 Smallville
09:15 Stargate SG-1
10:10 Stargate SG-1
11:00 Flight Of The Navigator
12:40 Dark Matter
13:30 Face Off
14:20 Doomsday Device
15:55 Smallville
16:50 Smallville
17:40 Dark Matter
18:30 The Flash
19:20 Stargate SG-1
20:10 Stargate SG-1
21:00 The Flash
22:50 Colony
23:00 Highlander II: The Quickenig

OMN SERIES HD COMEDY

00:15 The Middle
00:40 The Middle
01:05 The Drew Carey Show
01:30 The Drew Carey Show
01:55 The Mick
02:20 Ghosted
02:45 Us And Them
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers
04:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
05:40 Ghosted
06:05 The Michael J. Fox Show
06:30 Grown-ish
06:55 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
09:50 Modern Family
10:15 American Housewife
10:40 Ghosted
11:05 The Michael J. Fox Show
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:20 Grown-ish
12:45 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
13:10 The Middle
13:35 The Middle
14:00 The Drew Carey Show
14:25 The Drew Carey Show
14:50 Ghosted
15:15 Modern Family
15:40 American Housewife
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 Grown-ish
17:30 Great News
18:00 The Middle
18:30 The Middle
19:00 The Drew Carey Show
19:30 The Drew Carey Show
20:00 Modern Family
20:30 American Housewife
21:00 Kevin Can Wait

OMN SERIES HD COMEDY

00:15 The Middle
00:40 The Middle
01:05 The Drew Carey Show
01:30 The Drew Carey Show
01:55 The Mick
02:20 Ghosted
02:45 Us And Them
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers
04:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
05:40 Ghosted
06:05 The Michael J. Fox Show
06:30 Grown-ish
06:55 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
09:50 Modern Family
10:15 American Housewife
10:40 Ghosted
11:05 The Michael J. Fox Show
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:20 Grown-ish
12:45 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
13:10 The Middle
13:35 The Middle
14:00 The Drew Carey Show
14:25 The Drew Carey Show
14:50 Ghosted
15:15 Modern Family
15:40 American Housewife
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 Grown-ish
17:30 Great News
18:00 The Middle
18:30 The Middle
19:00 The Drew Carey Show
19:30 The Drew Carey Show
20:00 Modern Family
20:30 American Housewife
21:00 Kevin Can Wait

OMN SERIES HD COMEDY

00:05 Are You Fitter Than A Pensioner?
01:05 Are You Fitter Than A Pensioner?

21:30 Kevin Can Wait
22:00 Saturday Night Live
23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers

OMN SERIES HD FIRST

00:40 Chicago Fire
01:30 Chicago P.D.
02:20 Trust
03:20 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit
04:10 Grey's Anatomy
05:00 Switched At Birth
06:00 Good Morning America - The Weekend
07:00 The View
08:00 Chicago P.D.
09:00 The Good Doctor
10:00 Grey's Anatomy
11:00 Supernatural
12:00 Chicago Fire
13:00 The View
14:00 Switched At Birth
15:00 Live Good Morning America - The Weekend
16:00 Grey's Anatomy
17:00 The Good Doctor
18:00 Supernatural
19:00 Reverie
20:00 For The People
21:00 The Fosters
22:00 The Americans
23:00 Star
23:50 The Good Doctor

00:40 Chicago Fire
01:30 Chicago P.D.
02:20 Trust
03:20 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit
04:10 Grey's Anatomy
05:00 Switched At Birth
06:00 Good Morning America - The Weekend
07:00 The View
08:00 Chicago P.D.
09:00 The Good Doctor
10:00 Grey's Anatomy
11:00 Supernatural
12:00 Chicago Fire
13:00 The View
14:00 Switched At Birth
15:00 Live Good Morning America - The Weekend
16:00 Grey's Anatomy
17:00 The Good Doctor
18:00 Supernatural
19:00 Reverie
20:00 For The People
21:00 The Fosters
22:00 The Americans
23:00 Star
23:50 The Good Doctor

00:40 Chicago Fire
01:30 Chicago P.D.
02:20 Trust
03:20 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit
04:10 Grey's Anatomy
05:00 Switched At Birth
06:00 Good Morning America - The Weekend
07:00 The View
08:00 Chicago P.D.
09:00 The Good Doctor
10:00 Grey's Anatomy
11:00 Supernatural
12:00 Chicago Fire
13:00 The View
14:00 Switched At Birth
15:00 Live Good Morning America - The Weekend
16:00 Grey's Anatomy
17:00 The Good Doctor
18:00 Supernatural
19:00 Reverie
20:00 For The People
21:00 The Fosters
22:00 The Americans
23:00 Star
23:50 The Good Doctor

OMN FIRST HD Home of HBO

00:30 Last Week Tonight With John Oliver
01:10 Regarding Susan Sontag
03:00 Lucky Louie
03:35 Last Week Tonight With John Oliver
04:15 Love Child
05:30 A Match Made In Heaven
07:05 Superheroes
08:35 The Second Civil War
10:20 Pu-239
12:15 The Cherokee Kid
13:50 Meet The Donors: Does Money Talk
15:00 In The Gloaming
16:10 The Sunset Limited
17:45 Project Greenlight
18:25 Silicon Valley
19:00 Lucifer
20:00 John From Cincinnati
21:00 Grace
22:00 Robin Williams: Come Inside My Mind

OMN SERIES HD

00:00 Trust
01:00 Star
01:50 The Good Doctor
02:40 Chicago Fire
03:30 Chicago P.D.
04:20 Trust
05:20 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit
06:10 Grey's Anatomy
07:00 Switched At Birth
08:00 Good Morning America - The Weekend
09:00 The View
10:00 Chicago P.D.
11:00 The Good Doctor
12:00 Grey's Anatomy
13:00 Supernatural
14:00 Chicago Fire
15:00 The View
16:00 Switched At Birth
17:00 Good Morning America - The Weekend
18:00 Grey's Anatomy
19:00 The Good Doctor
20:00 Supernatural
21:00 Reverie
22:00 For The People
23:00 The Fosters

OMN SERIES HD

00:00 Marcia Clark Investigates
01:55 Nightmare In Suburbia
02:50 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
03:45 Homicide: Hours To Kill
05:15 Cold Case Files
07:00 It Takes A Killer
07:20 Homicide Hunter
08:55 Jo Frost On Britain's Killer Kids
10:30 The Body Detective
11:25 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
13:15 Homicide: Hours To Kill
15:05 Cold Case Files
17:00 It Takes A Killer
19:00 Homicide Hunter
19:00 It Takes A Killer
23:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill

Syfy HD

00:05 Seraph Of The End: Vampire Reign
00:30 Drone Wars
01:50 Earthbound
03:30 Smallville
04:20 Smallville
05:10 Smallville
06:00 Halo: The Fall Of Reach
07:15 Smallville
08:15 Smallville
09:15 Stargate SG-1
10:10 Stargate SG-1
11:00 Flight Of The Navigator
12:40 Dark Matter
13:30 Face Off
14:20 Doomsday Device
15:55 Smallville
16:50 Smallville
17:40 Dark Matter
18:30 The Flash
19:20 Stargate SG-1
20:10 Stargate SG-1
21:00 The Flash
22:50 Colony
23:00 Highlander II: The Quickenig

STAR WORLD HD

01:00 The Fashion Fund
02:00 Grey's Anatomy
03:00 Vanity
04:00 America's Got Talent
05:22 Mistresses
06:03 Project Runway
07:00 Mistresses
08:00 Mistresses
09:00 Vanity
09:30 Vanity
10:00 America's Got Talent
11:22 Mistresses
12:04 Fashion StartUp
13:00 Fashion StartUp
14:00 Grey's Anatomy
15:00 Vanity
15:30 Vanity
16:00 Project Runway
16:59 Mistresses
18:00 Say Yes To The Dress: Atlanta
18:30 Say Yes To The Dress: Atlanta
19:00 Say Yes To The Dress: Atlanta
19:30 Say Yes To The Dress: Atlanta
20:00 Grey's Anatomy
20:59 Married At First Sight: The First Year
22:00 Project Runway
23:00 Mistresses

STAR WORLD HD

01:00 The Fashion Fund
02:00 Grey's Anatomy
03:00 Vanity
04:00 America's Got Talent
05:22 Mistresses
06:03 Project Runway
07:00 Mistresses
08:00 Mistresses
09:00 Vanity
09:30 Vanity
10:00 America's Got Talent
11:22 Mistresses
12:04 Fashion StartUp
13:00 Fashion StartUp
14:00 Grey's Anatomy
15:00 Vanity
15:30 Vanity
16:00 Project Runway
16:59 Mistresses
18:00 Say Yes To The Dress: Atlanta
18:30 Say Yes To The Dress: Atlanta
19:00 Say Yes To The Dress: Atlanta
19:30 Say Yes To The Dress: Atlanta
20:00 Grey's Anatomy
20:59 Married At First Sight: The First Year
22:00 Project Runway
23:00 Mistresses

TLC

00:20 Are You Fitter Than A Pensioner?
01:05 Are You Fitter Than A Pensioner?

01:50 Seeking Sister Wife
02:35 Counting On
03:20 Say Yes To The Dress UK
03:42 Say Yes To The Dress UK
04:05 90 Day Fianc?: Happily Ever After?
04:50 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
05:35 Cake Boss
06:00 Say Yes To The Dress UK
06:22 Say Yes To The Dress UK
06:45 The Undateables
07:30 Little People, Big World
08:15 Kitchen Boss
08:37 Kitchen Boss
09:00 Cake Boss
09:25 Toddlers & Tiaras
10:10 Say Yes To The Dress UK
10:32 Say Yes To The Dress UK
10:55 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
11:40 Little People, Big World
12:25 Hodges Half Dozen
13:10 The Undateables
13:55 Toddlers & Tiaras
14:45 Kitchen Boss
15:10 Kitchen Boss
15:35 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
16:25 Cake Boss
16:50 Cake Boss
17:15 The Undateables
18:05 Say Yes To The Dress UK
18:30 Say Yes To The Dress UK
18:55 Kitchen Boss
19:20 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
20:10 Cake Boss
20:35 Cake Boss
21:00 Cake Boss
21:25 Cake Boss
21:50 Hodges Half Dozen
22:40 7 Little Johnstons
23:30 90 Days To Wed
23:30 90 Days To Wed: Before The 90 Days

OMN SERIES HD FIRST

01:50 Seeking Sister Wife
02:35 Counting On
03:20 Say Yes To The Dress UK
03:42 Say Yes To The Dress UK
04:05 90 Day Fianc?: Happily Ever After?
04:50 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
05:35 Cake Boss
06:00 Say Yes To The Dress UK
06:22 Say Yes To The Dress UK
06:45 The Undateables
07:30 Little People, Big World
08:15 Kitchen Boss
08:37 Kitchen Boss
09:00 Cake Boss
09:25 Toddlers & Tiaras
10:10 Say Yes To The Dress UK
10:32 Say Yes To The Dress UK
10:55 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
11:40 Little People, Big World
12:25 Hodges Half Dozen
13:10 The Undateables
13:55 Toddlers & Tiaras
14:45 Kitchen Boss
15:10 Kitchen Boss
15:35 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
16:25 Cake Boss
16:50 Cake Boss
17:15 The Undateables
18:05 Say Yes To The Dress UK
18:30 Say Yes To The Dress UK
18:55 Kitchen Boss
19:20 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
20:10 Cake Boss
20:35 Cake Boss
21:00 Cake Boss
21:25 Cake Boss
21:50 Hodges Half Dozen
22:40 7 Little Johnstons
23:30 90 Days To Wed
23:30 90 Days To Wed: Before The 90 Days

01:50 Seeking Sister Wife
02:35 Counting On
03:20 Say Yes To The Dress UK
03:42 Say Yes To The Dress UK
04:05 90 Day Fianc?: Happily Ever After?
04:50 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
05:35 Cake Boss
06:00 Say Yes To The Dress UK
06:22 Say Yes To The Dress UK
06:45 The Undateables
07:30 Little People, Big World
08:15 Kitchen Boss
08:37 Kitchen Boss
09:00 Cake Boss
09:25 Toddlers & Tiaras
10:10 Say Yes To The Dress UK
10:32 Say Yes To The Dress UK
10:55 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
11:40 Little People, Big World
12:25 Hodges Half Dozen
13:10 The Undateables
13:55 Toddlers & Tiaras
14:45 Kitchen Boss
15:10 Kitchen Boss
15:35 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
16:25 Cake Boss
16:50 Cake Boss
17:15 The Undateables
18:05 Say Yes To The Dress UK
18:30 Say Yes To The Dress UK
18:55 Kitchen Boss
19:20 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
20:10 Cake Boss
20:35 Cake Boss
21:00 Cake Boss
21:25 Cake Boss
21:50 Hodges Half Dozen
22:40 7 Little Johnstons
23:30 90 Days To Wed
23:30 90 Days To Wed: Before The 90 Days

OMN FIRST HD Home of HBO

00:30 Last Week Tonight With John Oliver
01:10 Regarding Susan Sontag
03:00 Lucky Louie
03:35 Last Week Tonight With John Oliver
04:15 Love Child
05:30 A Match Made In Heaven
07:05 Superheroes
08:35 The Second Civil War
10:20 Pu-239
12:15 The Cherokee Kid
13:50 Meet The Donors: Does Money Talk
15:00 In The Gloaming
16:10 The Sunset Limited
17:45 Project Greenlight
18:25 Silicon Valley
19:00 Lucifer
20:00 John From Cincinnati
21:00 Grace
22:00 Robin Williams: Come Inside My Mind

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:45 I'm Alive
01:40 Monsters Inside Me
02:35 Monsters Inside Me
03:25 Lone Star Law
04:15 North Woods Law
05:02 Untamed & Uncut
06:36 Escape To Chimp Eden
07:25 North Woods Law
08:15 Pit Bulls & Parolees
13:45 Monsters Inside Me
14:40 I'm Alive
18:20 Pit Bulls & Parolees
19:15 Shark Attack File 2
20:10 Wild Dog Island
21:50 Island Of The Mega Shark
22:00 Ninja Sharks
22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees
23:50 North Woods Law

crime investigation network

00:00 Marcia Clark Investigates
01:55 Nightmare In Suburbia
02:50 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
03:45 Homicide: Hours To Kill
05:15 Cold Case Files
07:00 It Takes A Killer
07:20 Homicide Hunter
08:55 Jo Frost On Britain's Killer Kids
10:30 The Body Detective
11:25 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
13:15 Homicide: Hours To Kill
15:05 Cold Case Files
17:00 It Takes A Killer
19:00 Homicide Hunter
19:00 It Takes A Killer
23:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill

Discovery Family

00:30 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
01:20 How It's Made
03:50 Kids Do The Craziest Things
04:15 Kids Do The Craziest Things
04:40 Destroyed In Seconds
06:20 How It's Made
06:40 How It's Made
07:00 Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life
07:50 The Lion Queen
08:40 How It's Made
12:50 Tanked
17:00 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
17:50 How It's Made
18:15 How It's Made
18:40 The Next Great Magician
19:30 Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life
20:20 Deadliest Snakes Of South Africa
21:10 World's Scariest
22:00 Curiosity: Nefertiti - Mummy Queen Mystery
22:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor

Discovery Science

00:30 Shark Men
01:30 Unlikely Animal Friends
02:30 Wild Australia
03:30 Mexico Untamed
04:30 Australia's Deadly Monsters
05:30 Savage Kingdom
06:30 Monster Fish
07:30 Monster Fish
08:30 Snakes In The City
09:30 Secret Life Of Predators
11:30 Unlikely Animal Friends
13:30 Mexico Untamed
14:30 Australia's Deadly Monsters
15:30 Savage Kingdom
16:30 World's Deadliest Compilations
17:30 Monster Fish
18:30 Blood Rivals: Lion vs. Buffalo
19:30 Savage Kingdom
20:30 World's Deadliest Compilations
21:30 Monster Fish
22:30 Blood Rivals: Lion vs. Buffalo
23:30 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet

Discovery Science

00:30 Smash Lab
03:48 How Do They Do It?
05:00 Food Factory USA
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:26 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
11:26 Food Factory USA
13:26 How Do They Do It?
15:26 Smash Lab
19:30 Strip The Cosmos
22:00 You Have Been Warned
22:50 NASA's Unexplained Files
23:40 NASA's Unexplained Files

Discovery Science

00:45 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
01:10 Glamour Puds
01:40 Miguel's Feasts
02:05 The Food Files
02:35 Living Free With Kimi Werner
03:30 Building Wild
04:25 What's For Sale With A View
04:50 What's For Sale?
05:20 What's For Sale?
05:45 Places We Go
06:15 Andy And Ben Eat Australia

15:3

Nine family members among 17 dead in US 'duck boat' tragedy



BRANSON, Missouri: A family of mourners stops to place a flower on a World War II DUKW boat used by Ride The Ducks tours Friday. — AFP

CHICAGO: Nine members of one family were among 17 people killed when an amphibious US tourist boat capsized during a sudden storm on a Missouri lake, a tragedy which raised renewed questions yesterday about the safety of the craft known as "duck" boats. The hybrid vessels, with wheels allowing them to drive on city roads but which can also travel on water, are popular with tourists in many cities.

The accident occurred Thursday night in full view of witnesses, at least one of whom captured video of the vessel bobbing in rough waters on Table Rock Lake near the city of Branson, a vacation destination popular for its theaters and country music. "My heart is very heavy. Out of 11 of us there's only two that's surviving, that's me and my nephew" Tia Coleman, her voice breaking, told Fox59 from her hospital bed. "I lost all of my children. I lost my husband. I lost my mother-in-law and my father-in-law," along with other relatives, she told the Indianapolis TV station.

Coleman said the boat's captain had told passengers earlier in their trip that they "won't need" life-jackets. "He said it when we were in the water," she

told Fox59. "When it was time to grab them, it was too late and I believe that a lot of people could have been spared." She added that the water "didn't look ominous at the very first."

'Let me die'

Coleman told CNN affiliate KOLR of her own near-death by drowning: "I was yelling, I was screaming, and finally I said, 'Lord, just let me die, let me die.' She eventually floated to the surface. Early Saturday, the Stone County Sheriff's Office confirmed to AFP the identity of the 17 victims - nine of whom had the name Coleman. They ranged in age from one-year-old Arya Coleman to the oldest victim Ervin Coleman, 76. Five of the dead were aged 15 or younger.

Police said 31 people were aboard the vessel, which was covered by a canopy and was seen struggling to reach shore against strong winds before it succumbed to the waves and began to sink. The dead included the boat's driver, according to the sheriff's office. The other crewmember, who survived, was in charge when the craft took to the water, US media reported. Several

people were injured.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has taken over the investigation, which follows previous fatal accidents involving duck boats. In 2002 the agency recommended that amphibious vehicles provide "reserve buoyancy" such as through watertight compartmentalization, to keep them afloat in the event of flooding. The advisory followed the 1999 sinking of the *Miss Majestic*, a former US Army landing vehicle, with the loss of 13 lives in Hot Springs, Arkansas, because of "inadequate maintenance."

Until reserve buoyancy retrofits were completed, the NTSB urged other safety measures including the removal of canopies, or installation of canopies that would not restrict passenger escape. It also found that, at that time, the US Coast Guard lacked uniform, nationwide inspection policies for duck boats.

'Death traps'

In 2011 the NTSB ruled that "omissions" by a duck boat operator contributed to an accident in which two duck passengers died when a tugboat operator became

distracted and the barge he was towing hit the duck vessel, sinking it near Philadelphia in 2010. "Duck boats are death traps," the Chicago Tribune on Friday quoted Andrew Duffy, a lawyer whose Philadelphia firm handled litigation related to fatal duck boat accidents. "They're not fit for water or land because they are half car and half boat."

Thursday's incident occurred during heavy winds as a storm moved over the man-made lake in southern Missouri. The duck boat was one of two in the water at the time but the other safely reached shore. Among the unanswered questions were whether the boat crew was aware of weather warnings, and whether passengers were wearing life vests. "From what I understand, there was lifejackets in the duck (boat)," Stone County Sheriff Doug Rader said.

The vessel was owned by Ripley Entertainment company, whose "Ride the Ducks" website yesterday said the business is closed "while we support the investigation". "Words cannot convey how profoundly our hearts are breaking," it said. "The safety of our guests and employees is our number one priority." — AFP

Xi ends visit to UAE with raft of...

Continued from Page 1

On Thursday, the UAE's state-owned DP World announced an agreement between the two countries to build a new trade zone in Dubai as part of that project.

Khamenei backs remarks to block...

Continued from Page 1

the US pullout from the accord. "Negotiations with the Europeans should not be stopped, but we should not be just waiting for the European package, but instead we should follow up on necessary activities inside the country (against US sanctions)," Khamenei said.

France said earlier this month that it was unlikely European powers would be able to put together an economic package for Iran that would salvage its nuclear deal before November. Iran's oil exports could fall by as

A strategic cooperation framework between state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC) and China National Petroleum Company was among the deals signed on Friday, the UAE company said. On Thursday ADNOC announced it had awarded two contracts worth \$1.6 billion to BGP Inc, a subsidiary of CNPC, for a seismic survey in the emirate. The survey will search for oil and gas in onshore and offshore sites covering an area of 53,000 sq km. China is the United Arab Emirates' top trading partner and the UAE is also one of the top 15 crude suppliers to China. — AFP

much as two-thirds by the end of the year because of new US sanctions, putting oil markets under huge strain amid supply outages elsewhere in the world.

Washington initially planned to totally shut Iran out of global oil markets after Trump abandoned the deal that limited Iran's nuclear ambitions, demanding all other countries to stop buying its crude by November. But it has since somewhat eased its stance, saying that it may grant sanction waivers to some allies that are particularly reliant on Iranian supplies. "The US seeks the return of the situation and their status before the (1979 Islamic) revolution in Iran," said Khamenei. "They are against the nuclear potential and the power of its (Iran's) enrichment, and its presence in the region." Iran was a close ally of the United States up until the revolution. — Agencies

return home before concluding the contract, not getting paid or any other complaint. Dakhnan added that according to the condition, the insurance deposit will be increased to \$50,000 per worker in the event of repeated complaints against any office.

Notably, the Indian government last year rescinded a 2014 condition mandating every employer in Kuwait wishing to employ an Indian female domestic worker to provide a bank guarantee of \$2,500 (KD 720) after tensions with the Kuwaiti government over this clause.

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a perennial concern. An unprecedented degree of outrage has swept over the wider Arab region in the wake of recent developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the US' recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. More recently, the Israeli parliament adopted a "Jewish-nation state" law declaring that only Jews have the right of self-determination in the country, drawing the ire of the Palestinians and many Arab nations who have described it as explicitly racist. — KUNA

Mob kills Muslim transporting cows...

Continued from Page 1

"Two main suspects are known anti-social elements and we are questioning them for more details on the incident," Shyam Singh, assistant superintendent of Alwar police, told AFP. "The cows are with the police and the victim's body has been sent for post-mortem," he added.

Cows are considered sacred in Hindu-majority India, where squads of vigilantes roam highways inspecting livestock trucks. Slaughtering cows is illegal in many Indian states and some also require a licence for transporting them across state borders. Another Muslim man was killed in Alwar last April when vigilantes attacked his cattle truck passing on the highway. Critics say the vigilantes have been emboldened by the election in 2014 of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party.

Meanwhile, WhatsApp announced limits on Friday on the forwarding of messages by its 200 million Indian users in an effort to stop the spate of horrific lynchings and to assuage government threats of legal action in its biggest market. More than 20 people have been butchered by crazed mobs in the past two months across India after being accused of child kidnapping and other crimes in viral messages circulated wildly on WhatsApp.

Late Thursday India's government, scrambling to find a response, threatened to take WhatsApp to court, saying the "medium" for spreading malicious rumors "cannot evade responsibility and accountability". "If (WhatsApp) remain mute spectators they are liable to be treated as abettors and thereafter face consequent legal action," the information technology ministry said.

The Facebook-owned firm responded on Friday with an announcement it will test limiting the ability to forward messages and cap at five the number of contacts or groups that messages can be forwarded to. In addition, it said it will remove the "quick forward button" next to media messages, making sending on messages more cumbersome. "We believe that these changes - which we'll continue to evaluate - will help keep WhatsApp the way it was designed to be: a private messaging app," a statement said. Worldwide, the company will limit the number of forwards to 20 other

groups, a spokesman said.

Under pressure from Modi's government, the firm had already announced new features to help users identify messages that have been forwarded. It bought full-page adverts in Indian newspapers with tips on how to spot misinformation. The ministry also called on WhatsApp to enable the "traceability" of messages when an official request is made. But the platform on Friday said its messages would stay "end-to-end encrypted".

Lynchings are nothing new in India, but the spread of smartphones - there are a billion plus handsets, and data is cheap - to even the most remote corners has enabled rumors to be shared at lightning speed. In India people forward on WhatsApp more messages, photos, and videos, than any other country in the world, the company says. The latest incident last Friday saw a 27-year-old software engineer beaten to death by a crowd of more than 2,000 people in the southern state of Karnataka after he and his friends offered chocolates to local children.

Indian authorities have launched awareness campaigns and patrols and imposed internet blackouts in some areas but the impact has been limited. One official "rumor buster" was himself beaten to death in the north-east in June. In China WhatsApp is subject to major disruption, prompting people to use the home-grown WeChat. But elsewhere in Asia and beyond, WhatsApp and other tech firms have come under fire for the spread of "fake news".

Major media organizations, often in partnership with big technology and social media corporations, have stepped up fact-checking and other steps to support credible journalism. Internet firms, after initial reluctance to define themselves as "media", have stepped up efforts to identify false news and to "curate" stories from "trusted" news sources. In Pakistan, WhatsApp this week began a week-long publicity campaign offering tips to spot fake news ahead of elections on July 25.

In India the firm is in discussions with the government on how to tackle spam messages ahead of upcoming elections and bringing in a fake news verification model similar to one used recently in Mexico, the Economic Times reported on Friday. Last week the Supreme Court told the government to enact new legislation and commentator and former magazine editor Paranjay Guha Thakurta told AFP that just criticizing WhatsApp was insufficient. "You can shoot the messenger but the primary responsibility lies with the government to take action against the perpetrators," he said. — AFP

Ghanem: Israeli Jewish state...

Continued from Page 1

rights of the Palestinian people. Ruwaci echoed HHI the Amir's remarks in Istanbul, in which he referred to

Sports

Crusaders crush Sharks, Waratahs reel in Highlanders to reach semis

Stingy Crusaders start and finish well to devour Sharks

SYDNEY: The defending champions Canterbury Crusaders demolished the Coastal Sharks as the NSW Waratahs staged a second-half comeback to reel in the Otago Highlanders and reach the Super Rugby semi-finals yesterday. The Crusaders, in search of a ninth Super crown, underscored their status as competition favorites with a 40-10 thumping of South Africa's Sharks in Christchurch. The Waratahs, trailing 23-6 at half-time, stormed home to down the Highlanders 30-23 in Sydney and face either the Golden Lions or Argentina's Jaguares in the last four. Skipper Bernard Foley scored 25 points from two tries, three conversions and three penalties as the Waratahs shifted the game's momentum with three tries in the space of seven second-half minutes.

The Crusaders scored five tries and a fortress-like defense restricted the Sharks to only one try to extend their current winning streak to 13 and they have now not lost at home to an overseas side since the opening round of 2015. The Crusaders will host the Wellington Hurricanes next weekend in the semi-finals after the 'Canes snatched a 32-31 win over the Waikato Chiefs in the first quarter-final on Friday. In the clash of the top and bottom qualifiers into the top eight, the Sharks felt they still had a chance when they trailed by only 13 points with 25 minutes to play before the Crusaders ran in two late tries from long range.

But despite the razzle dazzle, rival captains Sam Whitelock and Ruan Botha agreed the Crusaders defence was a key difference. "We always knew they

would be big, strong and they carried very, very direct. I was just happy the boys stepped up, stayed nice and composed when it was quite tight in the middle," Crusaders skipper Whitelock said. Botha said the South Africans knew it would be a tough encounter. "Hats off to them, their defense was strong and with their attacking play they just kept on running into holes, turning our backs and putting themselves into space."

The Highlanders looked headed for victory after an impressive opening half with tries by winger Waisake Naholo and centre Rob Thompson and fly-half Lima Sopoaga kicking three penalties and two conversions. But Naholo's yellow card for a high tackle on prop Sekope Kepu in the 52nd minute swung the match with the Waratahs scoring 21 points to take the lead while he

was off the field. Kurtley Beale set up Foley's first try with an inside ball and then made a break to send Israel Folau racing over.

Foley scored again off a Folau break and Foley's penalty with nine minutes left kept the Waratahs seven points in front to the final whistle. "The guys responded after half-time and showed belief in what we have done all year, it's a helluva story," Foley said. "To play in front of our home crowd in what could possibly be our last game in this stadium (going to be demolished and rebuilt), that's a special win for us." Highlanders captain Ben Smith was devastated by his team's second-half collapse. "That second half was not a good reflection of where we are at as a team, it's a tough pill to swallow, we're really gutted," he said.—AFP

Africa 'bucket list' ski resort dreams of Olympic racers

MALUTI MOUNTAINS: Nestled high in the mountains of Lesotho, skiers and snowboarders from around the world rub shoulders at Africa's leading ski resort, which is cultivating a loyal clientele despite its diminutive size and remote location. Since 2002, Afriski in northeastern Lesotho has also become a hub for the country's young winter sports enthusiasts to hone their skills and maybe one day compete for gold at the Winter Olympics.

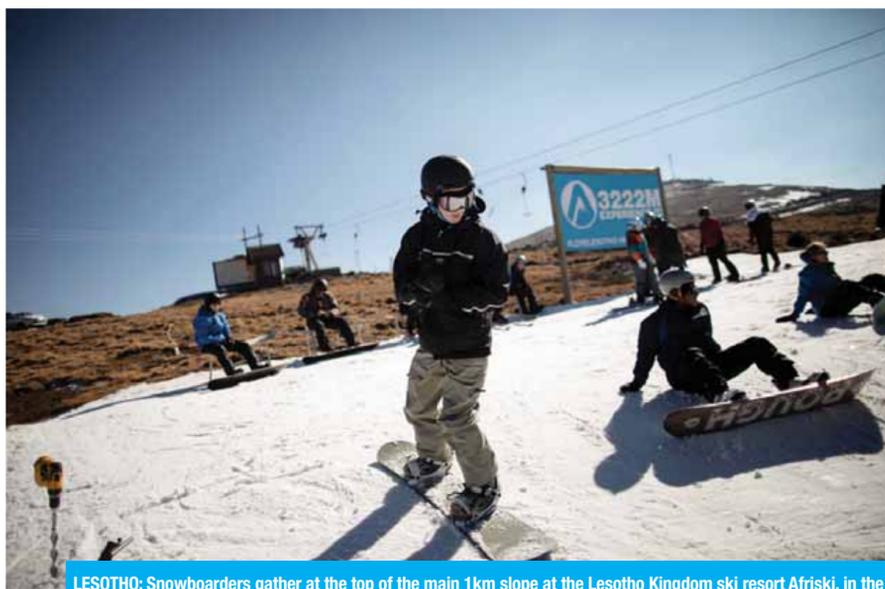
"Afriski was always a unique option as a destination," said resort snowmaker Martin Schultz, 35, who comes from South African surfing hub Jeffreys Bay but swapped his surfboard for a snowboard to take to the slopes. "It's been a nice progress—nice amounts of terrain we've been able to open up," he added, wearing stylish wrap-around blue mirrored sunglasses and a lemon yellow crash helmet. Schultz is responsible for maintaining the quality and consistency of the artificial snow on the slopes, used by the 12,000 visitors who travel to the resort in the Maluti Mountains every season.

"We use high-pressure air, high-pressure water and a certain temperature and humidity," he said, of the resort's state-of-the-art snowmaking equipment, used when snow is not falling naturally. Afriski's main kilometre-long piste is a strip of brilliant white snow between brown grassy ridges and dotted with artificial snowmakers, although, on average, its three slopes are covered with natural snow for several weeks a year.

'Lesotho at the Olympics?'

Both expert and novice skiers go down the pristine slope from a height of 3,222 metres (10,570 feet) to the compact alpine-style resort below. There, visitors drink Gluehwein and listen to chart music in sub-zero temperatures. "Ready? Go!" shouts one ski instructor, from the United States, as she loads her young charge onto the lift, while more experienced snowboarders spin and flip on ramps nearby. Schultz, who worked as a ski instructor at resorts across Europe before spending nine seasons at Afriski, hopes the resort will help the tiny kingdom one day win medals at the Winter Olympics.

"One of Afriski's biggest priorities is to try and expand the skiing community in Lesotho and we have kids' programs that generate a lot of interest from the local communities," he said, of the resort which employs 240 staff, three-quarters of whom are locals. "Some of our kids like Thabang Mabari, the son of one of the guys who works here, has been skiing for about five years and he's brilliant. There's a



LESOTHO: Snowboarders gather at the top of the main 1km slope at the Lesotho Kingdom ski resort Afriski, in the Maluti Mountains. —AFP

good future for kids like that," he said. "Hopefully in the future we can aim to get those kids to an Olympian standard so they can actually fly the Lesotho flag at the Olympics."

Ten-year-old Thabang's mother, Mathabang Mabari, who also works at the resort, told AFP that he had started skiing at the age of three. "It's something he liked a lot. Of course it's in his blood to compete, of all the other kids of people who work here, he was the first to ski and teach the others," said Mabari, 36, who is from the nearby village of Moteng. Outside, slender-framed Thabang glides down the slope with ease dressed in yellow boots, a black puffer jacket and red snow trousers. Despite some promising youngsters, southern Africa has yet to make a mark at the Winter Olympics.

'Huge potential'

South African alpine skier Sive Speelman qualified for the Sochi games in 2014 - but was blocked from attending by his own Games Committee who said he was too slow. His dream to be his country's first black contender in his discipline was also thwarted at this year's tournament in South Korea and he was instead a technical assistant to South Africa's solitary winter games participant, Connor Wilson.

Lesotho has never put a Winter Olympian forward. Afriski is Lesotho's sole ski resort—the only other one in sub-Saharan Africa is Tiffindell in South Africa which has two runs and relies on artificial snow.

"Afriski has been a great help in my training. I don't think I would have got to the Winter Olympics without them," said Wilson, 21, who was training at Afriski for a fortnight. "There's huge potential here. I always join in with the (local kids') training... they're copying what I'm doing and they are always interested. "One day hopefully, they will go to the Winter Olympics for Lesotho."

Ski in Africa

Despite its small size and relatively limited facilities, Afriski still sees itself as a destination firmly on the global winter sports circuit. It even pays homage to its European competitors, naming its chalets after renowned ski centers like France's "Meribel" and "Courchevel". French ski and snowboard instructor Thomas Frontoni, 23, said that he would recommend skiing in southern Africa to Europeans despite the relatively short piste. "Try it—it's always beautiful, perfect views, friendly people. Southern Africa is cheap for European guys," said Frontoni, originally from Nice. A full-day "snowpass", which gives access to all the pistes and lifts, costs \$34 (29 euros). "It's a small resort... but I think if a French or European skier came here they'd have a good time. "I have seen lots of South African pupils, Argentine pupils, Canadian pupils." "They don't come here because it's a kilometer of skiing, they don't come here because it's massive mountains," added Schultz. "They come here to ski in Africa, because it's on their bucket list." —AFP

Doubters wrong, says Thomas; Sky are '100 % clean'

VALENCE: Yellow jersey holder Geraint Thomas hit back at the doubters on Friday by claiming Team Sky are racing "100 percent" clean at the Tour de France. Thomas, a former Olympic champion in track cycling, was dramatically booed off the podium after claiming his second successive stage win in the high Alps to reinforce his overall lead. It compounded a bitter-sweet day for the British outfit, who saw team leader and four-time champion Chris Froome spat at and pushed heavily by one of the many over-enthusiastic fans who line the 13.8km route to the summit.

Team Sky's dominance of the race has caused the doubters to compare their performances to those of US Postal, the team once led by series drugs cheat Lance Armstrong. Armstrong, who won the Tour a record seven times, saw all his cycling results erased when he finally admitted he had taken performance-enhancing drugs throughout his career. But Thomas, who has a real chance of upstaging Froome to win the yellow jersey if the Kenyan-born champion fails to step up in the crucial, third week, said the doubters are wrong.

"I 100 percent believe in myself and the team, that we do everything in the right way, along with the majority of the peloton as well," said Thomas. "I can't say 100 percent for the peloton, but 99% I'm sure that everyone's doing it the right way, working hard. "I think it's great for the sport. You look at all the anti-doping and all the tests and that type of stuff, and then you look at other sports. "Cycling's leading the way by a million miles, so I have every confidence in the sport at the moment."

At the end of the mainly flat 13th stage Friday, won by Slovakian fast man Peter Sagan of the Bora team, Thomas looked sheepish as he stepped on to the podium to be presented with the yellow jersey. In comparison to Thursday, there were practically no boos or whistling, incidents that were condemned earlier by race director Christian Prudhomme.

"All I can do is renew calls for calm, for good sense and for serenity with regard to the riders on the Tour de France," Prudhomme said. "Don't whistle and, obviously, don't touch the riders. Even if it's just an over-friendly backslap." Welshman Thomas, who took a 1min 39sec lead over Froome into yesterday's undulating stage to Mende, said he is prepared for the flak. "Obviously, you'd prefer everyone to cheer you, but I can't affect that," he said. "I'd rather be on the podium getting booed than sat on the bus and being cheered." —AFP

Sri Lanka building domineering lead over in 2nd Test

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka surged to 151 for 3 in their second innings yesterday—a 365-run overall lead—as they sought a whitewash triumph over South Africa in their two-Test

series. After their spinners had skittled out South Africa for just 124 in their first innings, Sri Lankan opener Danushka Gunathilaka and Dimuth Karunaratne put on a quickfire 91 to set the foundation for another strong score on the Colombo pitch.

Gunathilaka was Sri Lanka's primary aggressor, hitting six fours and two sixes in his 61 off 68 balls after tea on the second day. Keshav Maharaj struck twice to remove Gunathilaka and Dhananjaya da Silva, for a duck, but Karunaratne progressed smoothly at the other end to reach 59 while Angelo Mathews had 12. The hosts built up their domineering lead at the end of a day in which their 10th wicket pair added valuable runs to build a first innings of



COLOMBO: South African cricketer Quinton de Kock (center back) watches as Angelo Mathews (2nd right) and Dhananjaya De Silva (left) drop a catch as wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella (right) looks on during the second day of the second Test match between Sri Lanka and South Africa yesterday. — AFP

338. South Africa were then routed by Sri Lanka's spinners with Akila Dananjaya taking five for 52.

Dhananjaya and Rangana Herath frustrated South Africa through the morning session as they added 61 runs to the overnight total. Left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj eventually dismissed Herath to end the innings, and complete a haul of nine for 129 — the second-best for a South Africa bowler and the best since the country made a post-apartheid return to Tests in 1991. But Sri Lanka's 338 was always going to be a challenge and Dananjaya, Herath and Dilruwan Perera then tore through the South African batting, already exposed by their defeat in the first Test in Galle.

Dhananjaya took his second five-wicket haul in Tests while Herath and Perera shared the remaining five South African wickets. Stand-in captain Suranga Lakmal was not required to deliver a single ball. Only South Africa captain Faf du Plessis and wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock showed

resistance, making 48 off 51 balls and 32 off 31 respectively. South Africa lasted only 34.5 overs, after Sri Lanka had batted for 104.1 overs in their first innings. Dananjaya, left out for the first Test at Galle, struck with his second ball of the match, having Dean Elgar caught at gully with a turning off-break.

He got Theunis de Bruyn edging behind in the next over, and Perera picked up the South Africa middle order to finish on four for 40. The only batsman to put any pressure on Sri Lanka was du Plessis, who attacked the spinners after lunch, sweeping with abandon as he struck eight fours and a six. Du Plessis and Hashim Amla put on the best partnership of 55, but Perera dismissed them both within four overs of each other. Despite de Kock's aggressive innings, the remainder of South Africa's batting were easy meat when Dananjaya came back. Du Plessis left the field at the end of the day with a worried look on his face.—AFP

SCOREBOARD

COLOMBO: Scores on the second day of the 2nd Test between Sri Lanka and South Africa in Colombo yesterday:

Sri Lanka 1st innings (overnight 277-9)		F. du Plessis c Dickwella b Perera		48
D. Gunathilaka c Rabada b Maharaj	57	T. Bavuma c Mendis b Perera		11
D. Karunaratne c de Kock b Maharaj	53	Q. de Kock lbw Dananjaya		32
D. de Silva lbw Maharaj	60	K. Maharaj c Karunaratne b Dananjaya		2
K. Mendis c Rabada b Maharaj	21	K. Rabada c Mathews b Perera		1
A. Mathews c du Plessis b Maharaj	10	D. Steyn lbw Dananjaya		0
R. Herath c Elgar b Maharaj	22	L. Ngidi not out		0
N. Dickwella c du Plessis b Maharaj	5	Extras (Inb)		1
D. Perera c Ngidi b Maharaj	17	Total (All out, 104.1 overs)		124
A. Dananjaya not out	43	Fall of wickets: 1-4 (Elgar), 2-8 (de Bruyn), 3-15 (Markram), 4-70 (Amla), 5-85 (du Plessis), 6-114 (Bavuma), 7-119 (Maharaj), 8-124 (de Kock), 9-124 (Steyn), 10-124 (Rabada)		
S. Lakmal c Markram b Maharaj	0	Bowling: Perera 12.5-1-40-4, Dananjaya 13-2-52-5, Herath 9-1-32-1		
R. Herath c Elgar b Maharaj	35			
Extras (4b, 2lb, 8w, 1nb)	15			
Total (All out, 104.1 overs)	338			
Fall of wickets: 1-116 (Karunaratne), 2-117 (Gunathilaka), 3-153 (Mendis), 4-169 (Mathews), 5-223 (Silva), 6-238 (Dickwella), 7-247 (de Silva), 8-264 (Perera), -264 (Lakmal), 10-338 (Herath)				
Bowling: Steyn 17-3-60-0, Rabada 20-3-55-1, Ngidi 14.2-1-54-0, Maharaj 41.1-10-129-9, Markram 8.4-1-24-0, Elgar 3-1-10-0.				
South Africa 1st innings		Sri Lanka 2nd innings		
A. Markram lbw Herath	7	D. Gunathilaka c Elgar b Maharaj		61
D. Elgar c de Silva b Dananjaya	0	D. Karunaratne not out		59
T. de Bruyn c Dickwella b Dananjaya	3	D. de Silva lbw Maharaj		0
H. Amla c Mendis b Perera	19	K. Mendis run out (Markram)		18
		A. Mathews not out		12
		Extras: (1 nb)		1
		Total (3 wickets, 34 overs)		151
		Fall of wickets: 1-91 (Gunathilaka), 2-102 (de Silva), 3-136 (Mendis)		
		Bowling: Maharaj 17-0-90-2, Rabada 4-0-22-0, Markram 3-1-9-0, de Bruyn 3-0-13-0, Steyn 4-1-11-0, Ngidi 2-1-4-0, 1-0-2-0.		

Sports

World Cup fever still raging in Rohingya refugee camps

Rohingya boys parade a miniature replica of World Cup

KUTUPALONG: The World Cup may be over but passion for the game burns bright in the world's largest refugee camp, where Brazil and Argentina flags still flutter alongside the red and green of Bangladesh, which hosts nearly a million Rohingya Muslims forced out of Myanmar. For many young refugees in Bangladesh's southeast this World Cup was their first, and the excitement of last Sunday's final shows no sign of abating any time soon.

Rohingya boys paraded a miniature replica of the World Cup through the dirt alleyways of the refugee camp, the smallest football fans staring dewy-eyed at the modest golden trophy as if it were the real thing. "My favorite was Argentina. I watched the final. It was between Croatia and France, and France won," said six-year-old Mohammad Reza, proudly sporting the blue-and-white jersey of firm local favourite Lionel Messi.

One of the youngest boys jostling for a glimpse of the miniature cup in its small glass case was five-year-old Nurul Afsar in his Brazil top.

"My favorite player is Neymar," he said shyly, clutching a rubber football. Many fans crowded around one television to watch the final, said 18-year-old Nurul Absar, pointing to a tarpaulin shack just beyond a dirt clearing where football fans had

congregated for an afternoon's play. Dozens of barefoot boys played under threatening monsoon clouds, dodging muddy potholes to shoot at a goal demarcated with twigs. An errant strike sent a ball soaring into the huts surrounding the pitch, as a referee blew his whistle at older players contesting the main match.

Apart from the odd Spanish flag or top European club jersey, football loyalties in the remote but overcrowded Kutupalong camp are mainly divided—fiercely—between Brazil and Argentina, mirroring a somewhat peculiar obsession among football fans across Bangladesh. The South American rivalry has been traced back to broadcasts of the 1986 World Cup, when Diego Maradona's brilliance helped Argentina win the trophy—and legions of fans in Bangladesh, where Brazilian legend Pele was already a household name. Among the many boys of all ages giving their name as Neymar, one stood out: with his hair bleached in the superstar's signature style, Jahangir Alam bore the closest resemblance to the Brazilian striker, at least in this corner of the camp. "I like Neymar a lot. That's why I got this hairstyle like him. I enjoyed the tournament," the 17-year-old said, juggling a football in his Brazil jersey.—AFP



UKHIA: Rohingya refugee children play football at the Kutupalong refugee camp in Ukhiya. — AFP

Briefs

Wealthy Qatar clubs fined

LAUSANNE: Two clubs from gas-rich Qatar, the 2022 World Cup hosts, were amongst six fined by FIFA for non-payment of salaries to players and were warned they face a transfer ban as a consequence. Al Arabi Sports Club were fined 30,000 Swiss francs (25,800 euros) and given a final deadline of 90 days to pay the outstanding amounts. The club will face an automatic deduction of six points and the automatic imposition of a transfer ban for two entire and consecutive registration periods if they fail to meet the final deadline. Al Kharaitiyat of Qatar were fined 25,000 Swiss francs and 60-day deadline. — AFP

Tokyo unveil ticket prices

TOKYO: Tokyo Olympic organizers have unveiled ticket prices for the 2020 Games ranging from 2020 yen (\$18) up to \$2,760, largely in line with prices at the London Olympics in 2012. More than half the tickets on sale will cost less than 8,000 yen (\$71), according to the organizers. Tickets for the opening ceremony are priced between 12,000 yen (\$110) and 300,000 yen (\$2,670), but sporting events will be much cheaper. For those, tickets will start at the symbolic price point of 2,020 yen, but only for group sales, with the cheapest individual tickets on sale for 2,500 yen or just over \$22. While fluctuating exchange rates make comparisons with previous Olympic ticket prices complicated, the Tokyo prices are roughly in line with those for the London Olympics, but more expensive than in Rio in 2016. — AFP

Rose runs riot at Open

CARNOUSTIE: Justin Rose took full advantage of serene early conditions at Carnoustie yesterday to shoot a superb 64 and rocket up the leaderboard at the British Open. The Englishman's seven-under-par round was capped with birdies at the 17th and 18th, the latter after a stunning approach, as he equaled the lowest round in an Open on the Scottish links. It was not quite good enough to trouble Tommy Fleetwood's overall course record of 63, set last year, but Rose is now four under par for the tournament and finds himself in the clubhouse just two shots adrift of overnight leaders Zach Johnson and Kevin Kisner. — AFP

Villa land investment boost

LONDON: Aston Villa will receive "significant investment" from Egyptian billionaire Nassef Sawiris and American tycoon Wes Edens as the Championship club try to secure their financial status after missing out on promotion to the Premier League. Villa owner Tony Xia spent the close-season searching for fresh investment to plug a reported £40 million deficit after Villa were beaten by Fulham in the Championship play-off final last season. He had entered talks to hand over some of his control of Villa to Sawiris and Edens' company NSW in exchange for a cash injection. Those discussions have concluded with Chinese businessman Xia now Villa's co-chairman under a joint-ownership arrangement. — AFP

Galle stadium faces axe

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's picturesque Galle cricket stadium could be demolished because its pavilion stand violated heritage laws protecting a 17th century Dutch fort, the government said Friday. Cultural Affairs Minister Wijeyadasa Rajapakse told parliament the fort risked losing UNESCO World Heritage status because of unauthorized construction, including the 500-seat pavilion. "We have to decide if we want to remain in the World Heritage list or keep the pavilion," Rajapakse said. The Galle stadium is one of the most renowned in the world because of its setting. Rajapakse noted however that the government plans to build another stadium in Galle, 115 kilometers (72 miles) south of Colombo. "We could have another cricket grounds in Galle soon," he added. — AFP

Feeling the heat: Tokyo prepares for sweltering Olympics

TOKYO: A heatwave in Japan that has killed more than a dozen people is reviving concerns about the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, which will be held during the country's notoriously sweltering summer. While the Games have been held in places that are hotter or more humid than Tokyo, including Athens and Beijing, Japan's sweaty summers offer both blistering heat and smothering humidity in a particularly unpleasant, and sometimes deadly, combination. Olympic officials and Tokyo's local government are touting measures from solar-blocking paint on roads to mobile misting stations to tackle the heat.

But some experts fear the efforts are insufficient, in a country where summer heat kills hundreds of people and hospitalizes tens of thousands each year. The Games will be held from July 24-August 9, a period where temperatures can hit 37 degrees Celsius and humidity rises to over 80 percent. "Compared to past Olympics, it's fair to say that this will be the most severe Games, as far as heat conditions go," said Makoto Yokohari, a professor of urban engineering at the University of Tokyo. The International Olympic Committee has approved moving the marathon start to 7:00am, with the men's competitive walking beginning even earlier. And Tetsuo Egawa, senior director of operation strategy planning for Tokyo 2020's organizing committee, is working on other ways to beat the heat. "The sports that tend to raise the most concern are the non-stadium ones," he told AFP, citing the marathon, sailing and canoeing, and golf as examples where "special measures" will be needed. The

main concern is heatstroke, particularly among spectators unused to hot weather who will spend hours outdoors watching events or queuing. "We will have tents covering queues at security gates... (and) we are aiming to limit lines to 20 minutes long," Egawa said.

Solar-blocking paint

Large fans will cool people down and the new national stadium has been constructed to encourage air flow. Medical tents and rest areas will be air-conditioned. Stress can increase the risk of heatstroke, so organizers will try to keep spectators relaxed even in queues. "There may be small shows and entertainment... maybe shows that involve spraying mist on people," Egawa said. Summer heat is hardly new for Tokyo, which experiences the "heat island" effect where urban areas are much warmer than surrounding regions, for reasons including blocked airflow and lack of greenery. Local officials say Tokyo's temperature has risen by three degrees Celsius in the last century, far more than the global rise of 0.7-0.8 degrees.

Tokyo officials have been working on the problem for years, but efforts are ramping up ahead of the Games. One project aims to repopulate a Japanese tradition: "uchimizu", or the sprinkling of water on the street to bring temperatures down. Another measure is solar-blocking "paint", which will cover the entire marathon route, though only on the road, not pavements where spectators will stand. Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) officials say the coating can reduce temperatures at road level by up to eight degrees Celsius. In other places they are laying road surface that can absorb rain water, which evaporates when temperatures rise and cools the air.

'Dangerous conditions'

"We take heat mitigation very seriously," said Susumu Matsushima, an official with the TMG's road management bureau. He said 116 kilometers of road have already been treated, most of it with the solar-blocking coating. "If you touch (the road) you can really feel the difference, especially



TOKYO: Logos for the upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games are displayed at a subway station in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

on a sunny day." But not everyone is convinced, with some noting that when Tokyo last hosted the Olympics, in 1964, the Games were held in October to avoid the heat. Yokohari has studied the marathon route and warns that "athletes will run in very dangerous conditions," particularly in the last quarter of the race when they pass Tokyo's Imperial Palace. "I believe athletes will feel significant damage to their bodies in this phase," he told AFP. "There is absolutely no shade."

While the marathon will start early, Yokohari would prefer to see the route itself altered so runners are in the shade in later stages. He says plans to put in trees for shade are impractical with only two years to go, and even proposes moving the marathon to somewhere cooler in northern Japan. "Unfortunately, the sense of urgency I feel is not shared by people concerned," he said. "Tokyo residents may say 'oh we know and are used to the heat'... but how many of us in Tokyo spend hours outdoors in the peak of August heat?" — AFP



DAEJEON: North Korea's Kim Song I (left) serves the ball as teammate South Korea's Suh Hyo-won looks during the women's doubles preliminary round match at the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) World Tour Platinum Korea Open in Daejeon. — AFP

Joint inter-Korea team wins mixed doubles at Open

SEOUL: A joint table tennis team from the two Koreas yesterday won the final in mixed doubles at the Korea Open, claiming the first gold in the latest installment of sporting diplomacy on the peninsula. Jang Woo-jin, a male player from the South, and Cha Hyo Sim, a female player from the North, defeated China 3-1 at the mixed doubles final at the international tournament held in the South's city of Daejeon.

It was the first gold medal won by an inter-Korea sports team in nearly three decades after a women's joint table tennis team scored a shock victory over reigning champion China in the world championship in Japan in 1991. The Chinese pair of Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha won the first set 11-5 before the Korean team thrashed them 11-3, 11-4 and 11-8 in consecutive sets as some South Korean fans chanted in unison "We are one!"

"I really wanted to win this game... and the cheers from the crowd gave me goosebumps," Jang told reporters after the game. The "I saw Hyo Sim crying during the ceremony

and it broke my heart that we have to say goodbye soon," he said. All civilian communication between the two countries—which remain technically at war after the 1950-53 Korean War ended with an armistice instead of a peace treaty—is banned. But North Korea's decision to participate in the Winter Olympics in the South last February triggered an ongoing rapprochement between the two nations.

Athletes from the two Koreas marched together behind a unification flag at the Games' opening ceremony, while the South's President Moon Jae-in seized the opportunity to broker talks between Pyongyang and Washington. Moon also held a summit with the North's leader Kim Jong Un in April, during which the two men vowed to strengthen cooperation in sports. The two Koreas have often used sports to break ice on the volatile inter-Korea relations-by forming joint teams for international competitions from soccer to ice hockey.

Eight female and eight male table tennis players from the North, including Kim Song I—a bronze medalist at women's singles at the 2016 Rio Summer Games—competed in the Korea Open, some jointly with Seoul's players. Four joint teams—men's and women's doubles as well as two mixed doubles—were formed. The men's doubles team won bronze on Friday. The two Koreas also recently announced they would field joint teams in three sports—canoeing, rowing and women's basketball—at next month's Asian Games to be held in Indonesia. — AFP

Fiji and New Zealand impress; Aussies crash out at Sevens World

SAN FRANCISCO: Defending champions New Zealand and Olympic gold medalists Fiji launched their World Cup Sevens campaigns with comfortable victories here Friday as Australia crashed out, New Zealand, bidding to become the first team in history to claim back-to-back World Cup Sevens crowns, overpowered Russia 29-5 to book their place in the quarter-finals at AT&T Park, home of baseball's San Francisco Giants. Fiji, the 2016 Olympic champions, meanwhile survived an early scare against a Japan side bristling with Fiji-born talent to win 35-10.

The Fijians, roared on by a vocal contingent of fans, held their nerve after trailing 7-5 at half-time to stretch away after the restart, with France-based stars Leone Nakarawa and Semi Radradra both impressing from the bench. The Fijians will now play Argentina in Saturday's quarter-finals for a place in the last four. Fiji coach Gareth Baber was satisfied at how his team had coped with the pressure of the tournament's new straight knockout format. In contrast to previous years, where teams played group games before the knockout stage, this year's event is a single elimination tournament.

"You just want to win every game," Baber told AFP. "I was pleased with the concentration levels, the focus that we had to control the game and get what we needed out of it in the second half. "Obviously there was a couple of errors from Japan at the end but it was a very good test." Baber also paid tribute to the way that Radradra, Nakarawa and other recent additions to the Fiji squad had fitted in. "They're winners. And they've come into a group of boys that are also winners," Baber said. But while Fiji and New Zealand both came through their first round tests, there was disappointment for Australia who tumbled out to France. France's Tavite Veredamu—a soldier in the French Foreign Legion who was drafted into France's sevens squad last year—scored twice in a pulsating 22-17 victory. "It's just unbelievable," Veredamu told AFP. — AFP

Sports

New Chelsea star Jorginho vows to turn on the style at Chelsea

Chelsea prepare for life under new manager Sarri

LONDON: New Chelsea star Jorginho boasted that he would bring a fresh style of play to the English Premier League. The Italy midfielder, who followed new Blues boss Maurizio Sarri from Napoli, also hailed the manager's ability to squeeze the best out of his players. "My style of play is not something that is seen in England," the 26-year-old told the club's website. "I really hope that it is a good fit for the game over here and I will certainly be doing everything I can to make sure it works out. "I like playing just outside of my own penalty box: the player who receives the ball and organizes the game."

As the Chelsea squad landed in Australia to start their pre-season tour, Brazilian-born Jorginho said Sarri's knowledge of the game had contributed significantly to his development as a player during three seasons together at Napoli. Chelsea named Sarri as their new manager yesterday. He was still under contract at Napoli despite Carlo Ancelotti becoming their new coach in May. Jorginho swiftly followed Sarri to Stamford Bridge and hopes the success that the pair enjoyed together in Serie A can be replicated in England.

"When we were together at Napoli, it was a case of me taking on his mentality and putting that together with the characteristics I have as a footballer," Jorginho said. "I have the right characteristics as a footballer for

the type of football that he likes to play, and the type of football that he teaches and passes on to his team." The midfielder also acknowledged Sarri's understanding of the game and ability to get his tactics across to his players. "When the weekend comes around and you have a game, you start that game knowing how every situation is going to pan out on the field offensively and defensively, and that is something that really helps you in your work," he said.

Life under new manager

Chelsea players have backed new manager Maurizio Sarri's plan for a more fluid and attacking brand of football starting with Monday's pre-season friendly against Perth Glory in Australia. Sarri, who was appointed on a three-year deal following Antonio Conte's sacking last week, said he didn't know what to expect from his new side in their first outing under him. "We started only four days ago. So I hope to do the best. But I don't know how it is our best at the moment," Sarri told reporters in Perth on Friday. Sarri has vowed to bring flowing football to Chelsea, and that's music to the ears of Spanish international midfielder Cesc Fabregas. "It's a way of football that I believe in, that I really like, that I grew up in this system," Fabregas said. "For the type of player like myself, we can take a lot of advantage." — Agencies



TOKYO: This general view shows the construction site for the new National Stadium - venue for the upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, in Tokyo. — AFP

Ex-Socceroo Tim Cahill looks to US, coaching career

SYDNEY: Australia's all-time leading goal-scorer Tim Cahill said Friday he intends to continue playing at club level and is also interested in a coaching career following his retirement from international football. Cahill, who scored 50 times in 107 appearances for Australia including five times at the World Cup-announced his retirement earlier this week, ending a storied playing career with the Socceroos. Cahill, 38, said he intended to live with his family in the United States, heightening speculation that he might seek to play in the Major League Soccer (MLS).

"International retirement is done, but as for domestic, there could be an opportunity but it is still something I have time to decide," Cahill told a media conference in Sydney. He ruled out returning to Australia's A-League, where he last played with Melbourne City.

"My A-League experience was fantastic... I felt like

I had a successful time here. But to live in America and to try and play in the A-League I feel like would be impossible," he said. Cahill spent three seasons with the New York Red Bulls from 2012-15 and played largely off the substitutes' bench last season during spells with City and English Championship side Millwall.

Cahill said he would be open to a collaboration with governing body Football Federation Australia, serving as an "ambassador" to the A-League and beginning a potential career in coaching. "Looking to the future, I'm interested in coaching. I'm going to spend some time here in Australia and meet with some partners," he said. "I'll fly to UK and start my UEFA B (coaching) license and then I'll open the door for offers to play football." Cahill added that he was not bitter over playing only a minor role at his final World Cup in Russia, where the Socceroos were winless.

He said while he had done everything possible to be ready for the tournament, there was no bad blood towards Dutch coach Bert van Marwijk and team management. "I think for me, when you're 38 years old and you've already been at three World Cups... one thing I've learned is especially when you play for your country, is that you're there for your country," Cahill said. "I knew I'd get my time. That's what I was preparing for in the 44 days leading up to it." Cahill said he got his



SYDNEY: Australian football player Tim Cahill speaks during a press conference announcing his retirement from international football, in Sydney. —AFP

chance to play, against Peru. "Frustration is a word that's used because people would have liked to see me play more but for me, it was an honor to be part of a fourth World Cup campaign," he added.—AFP

Judo federation scraps events in UAE and Tunisia over Israel

GENEVA: The International Judo Federation on Friday suspended planned competitions in Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates after the hosts failed to confirm that Israeli athletes would receive equal treatment. The IJF had asked judo officials in both Muslim majority nations to provide written guarantees that the Israeli national anthem and flag could be included in the events.

"As no positive answer was received to date, although past the given deadline, the International Judo Federation's Executive Committee decided to suspend both the Abu Dhabi Grand Slam and the Tunis Grand Prix until governmental guarantee is given to ensure free and equal participation of all nations at the said events," an IJF statement said. The federation "is aware that the situation and incidents registered are due to a complex and complicated political and historical context, but we strongly believe that politics should not have any interference in sports," it added.

It underscored that the decision was in line with the federation's anti-discrimination rules. Israel minister for culture and sport Miri Regev welcomed the decision to scrap the events, accusing the UAE and Tunisia of playing "an ugly game...and showing prejudice". "I welcome IJF President, Mr Marius Vizer, for his justified and courageous decision to cancel the competitions in both Abu Dhabi and Tunisia due to their outrageous decision to draw a distinction between national teams that will be 'allowed' to fly their flags and to sound their national anthems and others which will not," said Regev.

"International competitions should not ban any state. Tunisia and Abu Dhabi play an ugly game and show their prejudice. Mr Vizer's justified and brave decision should set an example to all international sports leaders." The Abu Dhabi event had been scheduled to run from October 25 to 27, while the Tunis Grand Prix has in recent years been scheduled in January. At last year's Abu Dhabi Grand Slam, Israeli gold medalist Tal Flicker sang his own anthem privately after winning. The Israeli federation was reportedly aware ahead of the event that there would be no formal recognition of the Jewish state during the competition. — AFP

AC Milan back in Europa as court overturns ban

LAUSANNE: The world's top sports court on Friday overturned a European ban imposed on AC Milan for violating UEFA's financial fair play rules, calling the punishment "not proportionate." UEFA banned Milan from playing in next season's Europa League citing the club's failure to meet the "break-even requirement," which bars clubs from taking on debt to fund daily operations.

But the Court of Arbitration for Sport ruled that "some important elements have not been properly assessed," by UEFA judges. The court agreed with UEFA's assessment that the club was in breach of break-even rules but found that the "current financial situation of the club was now better following the recent change in the club's ownership." "The decision... to exclude AC Milan from the UEFA Club Competition was not proportionate," a CAS statement said.

CAS referred the case back to UEFA as requested by AC Milan, whose executives argued their appeal at the Lausanne-based court on Thursday. The court "considers that the (UEFA's) Adjudicatory Chamber is in a better position than the CAS Panel to issue a new proportionate disciplinary measure on the basis of the current financial situation of the club," the statement said. AC Milan have spent a troubled 15 months since they were bought by Chinese businessman Li Yonghong from Silvio Berlusconi in April 2017. The takeover was partly funded by a high-interest loan of 300 million euros (\$348 million) from American hedge fund Elliott Management.

When Milan failed to make a repayment at the start of July, Elliott moved to take over, a process which is due to be ratified by club shareholders on July 21. The Chinese owners spent more than 200 million euros on players last summer and that, combined with the terms of the Elliott loan, triggered the interest of UEFA. At the end of June, UEFA ruled that Milan were in breach of "the break-even requirement." AC Milan's managing director Marco Fassone has blamed the club's woes on Berlusconi. But the Chinese ownership of the club was also clouded by questions over the source of Li's wealth. In October The New York Times claimed that "virtually nobody" in China had ever heard of him.

Elliott, now in full control, has pledged to inject 50 million euros (\$59 million) to bring financial stability to the seven-time European champions. "Elliott is pleased that we were able to support AC Milan at the CAS and that our intervention was able to achieve a positive result for the club," the group said in a statement. "Playing in Europe is part of the heritage of AC Milan and to have been excluded would have been a shame." —AFP



PARIS: France's midfielder Paul Pogba (left) speaks next to French President Emmanuel Macron (center) and France's coach Didier Deschamps (2nd left) during a reception at the Elysee Presidential Palace in Paris, after French players won the Russia 2018 World Cup final football match.— AFP

Multi-racial French champions draw praise, controversy

PARIS: Former US President Barack Obama chose celebrations to mark the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth to laud the benefits of diversity by holding up France's World Cup success by way of example. When France won their first World Cup in 1998 on home soil much was made of their "Black-Blanc-Beur" (black-white-Arab) multi-racial mix and, once again, Les Bleus' multi-cultural heritage has not gone unnoticed with their second triumph, this time in Russia.

Obama noted in Johannesburg that embracing diversity "delivers practical benefits since it ensures that a society can draw upon the energy and skills of all... people." "And if you doubt that, just ask the French football team that just won the World Cup—because not all these folks look like Gauls to me, they are French, they are French," he opined. France's win over Croatia was the culmination of a campaign that saw coach Didier Deschamps, their skipper 20 years ago, draw on a phalanx of players of African heritage.

Of the 23 players in the French squad, 14 are of Arab or African descent including two of their final goalscorers—Paul Pogba's parents hailing from Guinea while Kylian Mbappe's parents are Cameroonian and Algerian. However, after the final won 4-2 by France, former Croatian star and coach Igor Stimac caused a storm with a now deleted post to Facebook which asked: "Who exactly are we playing against in the finals," referring to players of African descent in the French squad. He then elaborated to Turkish news agency Anadolu that "we are facing the French Republic and the African continent,"

hence 11 opponents drawn from a continent of around a billion people whereas "we are four million."

African origin

The day after the final Italian daily Corriere della Sera said: "France (are) full of African champions mixed in with very good white players" who had beaten "a team only of whites (hailing from) the crossroads of three schools of football—the German, the Slavic and the Italian." Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro saluted a "victory for Africa" and demanded an end to "racism towards African people in Europe." In Africa itself, some observers labelled France the "sixth African team" at the World Cup.

An editorial Tuesday by pro-government Gabonese daily l'Union noted that "all French-speaking Africa celebrated the victory of Les Bleus as if it were its own in that the red, white and blue team owed it to its players of African origin." "It is true they contributed but that would be to forget that these boys who are products of diversity are above all French." Twenty years on from France's maiden triumph, which some politicians sought to show as a victory for racial integration in the country, "mentalities have evolved and, in spite of the difficulties which endure, the process of having populations of immigrant origin put down roots is continuing apace," says Yvan Gastaut, a specialist in the links between immigration and sport at the University of Nice Sophia-Antipolis.

Values of the republic

He praised French football authorities for aiding the process by "highlighting the values of the republic. More than integration, it is the notion of fraternity, lying at the heart of the republican motto, which stands out with this team," he concludes. Benjamin Mendy, a French-born squad member with Senegalese roots, rejected the African label for the team. Seeing a tweet with flags of countries of origin beside the names of players with African roots, he replaced them all with French flags adding the word "fixed." —AFP

IOC 'sends a signal', nominating young Afghanistan woman

LAUSANNE: The International Olympic Committee yesterday named a young Afghan woman, Samira Asghari, among nine candidates for membership of the body in a move to boost women's rights. Thomas Bach, the IOC president, said the nomination of the 24-year-old Asghari, who played basketball for her country and has taken on a series of administrative roles, sent a message.

"She's a young woman of Afghanistan who is very active in promoting the right to play sport for women in Afghanistan, you all know it's not an easy task," Bach told a press conference. "With this nomination we wanted to send a signal not only to men and women in Afghanistan but also in all these countries where women are facing serious obstacles to do sport". Five of the nine candidates due to be voted in in October are "Individual Members" proposed by a special committee, three of those are women.

The other four represent either National Olympic Committees (NOCs) or international sports federations (IFs) which are entitled to representation. All four are men. Missing, for a second year, are FIFA president Gianni Infantino and IAAF head Sebastian Coe. The two other women are Daina Gudzinaviciute, president of the Lithuanian Olympic Committee, and Felcite Rwemarik, vice president of the Rwanda's Olympic committee. —AFP

25 Sri Lanka build domineering lead over S Africa in 2nd Test



26 Feeling the heat: Tokyo prepares for sweltering Summer Olympics



27 Multi-racial French champions draw praise and controversy



Carpenter makes history; Cardinals rout Cubs

Carpenter erupts for historic 3 homers, 2 doubles



CHICAGO: Matt Carpenter #13 of the St Louis Cardinals leaps in the air to celebrate his three run home run against the Chicago Cubs during the sixth inning with Marcell Ozuna #23 at Wrigley Field on July 20, 2018. — AFP

CHICAGO: Matt Carpenter hit three home runs and drove in seven runs to back five strong innings of pitching from Jack Flaherty as the St Louis Cardinals powered their way past the host Chicago Cubs 18-5 on Friday afternoon at Wrigley Field. Carpenter also slugged two doubles as part of his 5-for-5 performance, becoming the second player ever to hit three homers and two doubles in the same game. The Cubs' Kris Bryant first accomplished the feat in 2016. Carpenter tied the major league record with five extra-base hits in a game, and he's the first player to record the feat in the first six innings of a game. He was replaced defensively in the bottom of the sixth with the Cardinals leading 15-1. In an effort to conserve his bullpen for a doubleheader Saturday, Cubs manager Joe Maddon used three position players to pitch the final 3 1/3 innings. Infielder Tommy La Stella (three hits, one run) came to the mound first, followed by catcher Victor Caratini (two hits, two runs) and outfielder Ian Happ (one hit, no runs).

Dodgers 6, Brewers 4

Manny Machado went 2-for-3 with two walks in his team debut, and Los Angeles held on for a win at Milwaukee. Machado, who wore No. 8 and played shortstop, singled in the first inning, walked in the third and fifth and singled in the seventh. The Dodgers acquired the four-time All-Star on Wednesday for five prospects. Enrique Hernandez clubbed a three-run homer for the Dodgers. Christian Yelich went 3-for-5 with two doubles and three RBIs for Milwaukee, which has lost seven straight.

Astros 3, Angels 1

Dallas Keuchel flirted with a no-hitter before settling for a two-hit performance over 7 2/3 innings in Houston's victory over host Los Angeles. Keuchel (8-8) did not allow a hit until Justin Upton singled off the glove of shortstop Marwin Gonzalez with two out in the seventh inning. The Angels scored a run in the eighth inning off Keuchel on a sacrifice fly by Jabari Blash. Hector Rondon pitched the ninth inning for his ninth save of the season. Josh Reddick led the Astros offensively with two hits, including an RBI triple.

Mets 7, Yankees 5

Yoenis Cespedes homered and reached base three times as the New York Mets held on for a victory over the New York Yankees at Yankee Stadium. Cespedes was activated from the disabled list before the game after

missing over two months with a right hip flexor strain. He started at designated hitter and batted second, hitting a fastball off the middle of the left field pole in the third inning for his ninth homer of the season. Noah Syndergaard (6-1) lasted five innings in his second start back from the disabled list. He held the Yankees to one run on eight hits, but his velocity appeared to dip in the last two innings. Syndergaard said afterward he had "dead arm," but he expects to make his next start.

Red Sox 1, Tigers 0

David Price and three relievers silenced Detroit, and visiting Boston made a first-inning run stand up in a shutout win. Price (11-6) allowed four hits and a walk while striking out five in 6 1/3 innings. Craig Kimbrel pitched the ninth for his 31st save. Steve Pearce had two hits and drove in the game's lone run while Andrew Benintendi added two hits and scored the run. Red Sox second baseman Brock Holt left the game in the fourth inning with a knee contusion.

Pirates 12, Reds 1

Sean Rodriguez, just off the disabled list, homered and drove in four runs, Starling Marte hit a grand slam and Corey Dickerson also homered as red-hot Pittsburgh won its seventh straight by beating host Cincinnati. Heavy rain delayed the start of the game by almost three hours. Marte doubled in the third inning to extend his hitting streak to 13 games, matching his career best, before crushing a pitch 421 feet to right-center in the eighth inning for the second slam of his career.

Braves 8, Nationals 5

Freddie Freeman drove in three runs while Ronald Acuna Jr and Charlie Culberson both homered as Atlanta defeated host Washington. Freeman (2-for-5) knocked in one run on a grounder and two more on a double. Culberson pinch-hit for Ozzie Albies in the third-Atlanta took him out as a precaution due to right hamstring tightness—and later hit a solo homer. Washington starter Stephen Strasburg (6-7) returned from the disabled list (right shoulder inflammation) to pitch for the first time since June 8. However, the veteran right-hander struggled on his 30th birthday, giving up six runs on eight hits in 4 2/3 innings. After Strasburg was pulled, he was greeted at the dugout by Max Scherzer, where the two exchanged words before both heading down the tunnel toward the locker room.

Phillies 11, Padres 5

Carlos Santana homered and five Philadelphia relievers combined to toss 5 2/3 scoreless innings in a win over visiting San Diego. Phillies starter Jake Arrieta struggled mightily as he lasted only 3 1/3 innings while giving up six hits and five runs (four earned). Austin Davis (1-0) earned his first career win with 1 2/3 innings of scoreless relief. Freddy Galvis, playing against his former team for the first time, had three hits and two RBIs while Wil Myers added two hits, an RBI and run scored for the Padres.

Rockies 11, Diamondbacks 10

Pinch hitter Raimel Tapia hit his first career grand slam to cap a six-run seventh inning and Nolan Arenado hit his 24th and 25th homers to move into a tie for the National League lead as Colorado topped host Arizona in a slugfest. Arenado had two-run homers in the first and fifth innings for the Rockies, who have won six straight and 14 of their last 17 to get within a half-game of the Diamondbacks for second place in the NL West. AJ Pollock set a career-high with five hits and scored three runs. Ketel Marte had a career-high four RBIs and David Peralta had four hits and scored three runs for Arizona, which has lost 11 of 17.

Blue Jays 8, Orioles 7 (10 innings)

Aledmys Diaz had four hits, including the game-winning single in the bottom of the 10th inning, and Toronto defeated visiting Baltimore. After the Orioles tied the game with a three-run ninth, the Blue Jays won the game in the 10th against rookie left-hander Paul Fry (0-1). Russell Martin hit a two-out infield single on a grounder to shortstop. Randal Grichuk walked and Diaz, who also had a solo homer in the game, singled on a grounder that found a hole through the left side of the infield as Martin ran home.

Indians 9, Rangers 8 (11 innings)

Edwin Encarnacion hit an RBI single in the top of the 11th inning to snap a tie and lift new-look Cleveland to a win at Texas. Brad Hand and Austin Cimber, added in a trade with the Padres on Thursday, made their debuts and appeared as if they would bridge the Indians to a routine win when they combined to allow a run over 1 2/3 innings in setting up closer Cody Allen. But after retiring the first two batters of the ninth, Allen gave up mammoth homers to Robinson Chirinos and Joey Gallo on consecutive pitches. Jose Ramirez hit his major-league-leading 30th

homer in the contest. The Rangers' Shin-Soo Choo reached base for the 52nd consecutive game, the longest such streak in the majors since Kevin Millar hit that mark in 2007.

Mariners 3, White Sox 1

Wade LeBlanc allowed one run on four hits in 7 1/3 innings and Nelson Cruz drove in two runs as Seattle snapped a four-game losing streak with a victory against visiting Chicago. LeBlanc (6-1) walked one batter and struck out 10, tying his career high set on Sept 23, 2011, while a member of the Padres. Edwin Diaz worked the ninth for his major-league-leading 37th save of the season.

Marlins 6, Rays 5

Derek Dietrich pulled two homers to right field and piled up four RBIs to lead Miami to a win at Tampa Bay. Tampa Bay rallied in the bottom of the ninth on a one-out, three-run triple by Malle Smith against reliever Drew Steckenrider, who had just entered the game. Steckenrider then allowed a sacrifice fly by C.J. Cron, and Adam Conley got the final out—striking out Daniel Robertson with two runners on—for his first save in eight years as a pro.

Royals 6, Twins 5

Lucas Duda homered and had three hits and three RBIs and Danny Duffy gave up just one run and five hits over seven innings as Kansas City held off visiting Minnesota. Duffy (6-8) struck out four and walked three while yielding five singles as Kansas City won for just the third time in its last 16 games. Salvador Perez had a two-run double, and Alcides Escobar added two hits for the Royals. Brandon Maurer got the final out during a nail-biting three-run ninth by the Twins to earn his first save.

Giants 5, Athletics 1

Ryder Jones and Pablo Sandoval homered to back the strong pitching of rookie Dereck Rodriguez, helping San Francisco win at Oakland. The game was tied 1-1 before Jones, recalled from Triple-A earlier in the day when Brandon Belt went on paternity leave, blasted an Edwin Jackson pitch off the right field foul pole leading off the fifth inning. Sandoval made it 3-1 in the seventh with his ninth homer of the season, another solo shot. Rodriguez (5-1), picked to open the Giants' second half ahead of Madison Bumgarner, limited the A's to three hits and one run in 6 1/3 innings. He struck out five and did not walk a batter.—Reuters