



13 KFH reports KD 95.2m net profit for shareholders in H1



24 Trump threatens Tehran in all caps; Iranians wary of US support claims



22 Guns and roses: Afghan farmers enjoying sweet smell of success



27 Manchester Utd held by San Jose Earthquakes



Expat jailed for helping to authenticate fake degrees

MoH to examine postgrad degrees of all medics • Govt vows no letup

By B Izzak and A Saleh

KUWAIT: The public prosecution yesterday ordered the detention of an Egyptian employee at the higher education ministry for allegedly helping holders of fake university degrees to register those degrees and get appointed in the government. The new development is expected to intensify the fake degrees scandal after a large number of lawmakers headed by the speaker have demanded full legal action against the culprits.

According to reports, the Egyptian employee admitted he had helped around 10 holders to authenticate their degrees and thus get appointed. But MPs have claimed that hundreds of government employees, some of them in senior positions, are believed to have obtained their degrees through fraudulent means. Education Minister Hamed Al-Azmi has said that around 40 suspects have been referred to the public prosecution and more were expected to be referred.

MP Riyadh Al-Adasani said yesterday that the issue of

the fake degrees is only a small part of rife corruption in the country, which has reached almost all sectors. He claimed that some are trying to make forgery a culture in the country, adding that it was the government which appointed holders of the fake degrees. He said wasta or influence is a key part of corruption and any minister who facilitates wasta is effectively participating in corruption.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah ordered the formation of a special committee to be presided by Undersecretary Dr Mustafa Redha to examine and validate university postgraduate degrees of MoH employees including both Kuwaiti and expat doctors, nurses, pharmacists, technicians and administrative staff members. Informed sources said the ministry of higher education would be contacted to verify the validity of questionable certificates. The sources added that out of transparency and setting a good example, the process would start with employees working in the minister's office and that proper legal measures would be taken against violators.

Later yesterday, Azmi briefed the Cabinet about referring fake certificates to the public prosecutor, as well as action taken against persons who acquired fake degrees. Azmi said the ministry of higher education referred the fake certificates' file to the prosecutor to take legal action against anyone proven to have acquired a fake certificate. The legal action, he added, includes corrective measures against promotions or wage raises. He said the ministry is currently scrutinizing suspect certificates in coordination with the interior ministry in order to identify violators, a government statement said. The Cabinet commended the ministry for pursuing people who forged their certificates, affirming determination to uproot corruption, as well as appreciating the parliament's support in this regard.

Kuwait has in recent years witnessed growing reports of corruption and bribery. Its ranking by Transparency International dropped to 85 out of 161 countries listed in the 2017 Corruption Perception Index, down from the rank of 41 the year before. The forged degrees scandal comes only a few weeks after the government issued a



Hamed Al-Azmi



Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah

new regulation requiring all engineers in Kuwait to be registered and certified by the Kuwait Engineering Society, a move aimed at combating a growing number of people working in Kuwait with the title of engineer but without a real or certified engineering degree.

KIA adds to infrastructure assets with UK gas pipeline buy

By Khaled Al-Yousef

KUWAIT/LONDON: The UK investment arm of Kuwait's sovereign wealth fund will buy an oil and gas pipeline firm in the UK for £1.3 billion. Wren House, the investment infrastructure arm of the Kuwait Investment Authority, will purchase the North Sea Midstream Partners (NSMP) energy company from ArcLight Capital, reported Reuters. NSMP owns several key natural gas transport pipelines in the UK, including a 67 percent interest in the SIRGE and FUKA pipelines which moves natural gas from North Sea and West of Shetlands basin fields. The firm also holds a controlling stake in the St Fergus Gas Terminal and Teesside Gas Processing Plant.

The Aberdeen-based energy firm also has contracts with the Iranian Oil Company, a factor that raised concerns of the financial impact in the event of possible new US sanctions against neighboring Iran. The current NSMP management team, including chief executive Andy Heppel, will keep their jobs, Reuters reported, quoting an unnamed source at the firm.

In 2015, Wren House bought a 25 percent stake in Spain's gas and electricity utility giant, Gas Natural Fenosa, investing \$550 million. The KIA, through Wren House, has embarked on a long-term strategy of investments in infrastructure in Europe. In the UK, KIA holds stakes in Associated British Ports, London City Airport and Thames Water. The Kuwaiti sovereign wealth fund is ranked the fourth-largest in the world, after Norway, China and the UAE, managing an estimated \$592 billion in assets.

Social media star unapologetic on workers' rights

KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti social media star remained unapologetic yesterday over comments she made against new laws aimed at improving conditions for Filipino domestic workers, despite a backlash on the Internet. Sondos Al-Qattan faces criticism for a video posted on July 10 on Instagram, where she has 2.3 million followers, in which she attacked measures introduced in May that grant Filipinas working in state one day off per week and prevent employers from keeping their passports.

Qattan, known for her Internet make-up tutorials, told AFP by phone that the outcry was "unjustified" and did

not require an apology. "All I said was that the employer was entitled to keep the servant's passport, and that many Kuwaitis and Gulf nationals agree with me," said Qattan. "I have the right as a kafil (sponsor) to keep my employee's passport, and I am responsible for paying a deposit of up to 1,500 dinars (around \$4,900)," she said.

Qattan insisted the practices are not an "insult to the employee, and do not concern humanity or human rights because I did not deprive the employee of her salary or beat her". "The servant lives in the house just like the owners, he eats the same food, sleeps, rests and goes out shopping... this is a natural right. He's not like a waiter who works fixed hours, so we give him a weekly leave," she added.

Qattan's comments in the now deleted clip sparked outrage on social media, with many Twitter and Instagram users calling on brands that work with the makeup artist to sever ties. Migrant International, an advocacy outfit for Filipinos working overseas, called on

Qattan to apologize and likened her comments to those of "a slave owner". On May 11, Kuwait and Manila signed an agreement regulating domestic labor, following a diplomatic crisis that led to a ban on Filipino workers going to work in the country.

In February, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte imposed a partial ban on workers travelling to Kuwait after a Filipina maid was murdered and her body found in a freezer. The crisis deepened after Kuwaiti authorities in April expelled Manila's ambassador over video footage of Philippine embassy staff helping workers escape employers accused of mistreatment. — AFP



Sondos Al-Qattan

Duterte vows 'unrelenting' war on drugs

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte pledged yesterday to press ahead with a war on drugs that has already killed thousands, and castigated critics of his signature initiative. Duterte opened his annual State of the Nation Address with a defense of the narcotics crackdown that is now in its third year and remains largely supported in the Philippines despite fierce international censure. "Let me begin by putting it bluntly: the war against illegal drugs is far from over," he told hundreds of lawmakers, celebrities and dignitaries. "It will be as relentless and chilling, if you will, as on the day it began."

Duterte launched the crackdown shortly after coming to power in June 2016. Since then authorities claim 4,354 alleged drug users and dealers have been killed in police operations. However, human rights groups and critics say the true number of dead is at least triple that.

Continued on Page 24



MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte poses for a selfie while surrounded by supporters and lawmakers after delivering his state of the nation address yesterday. — AFP

Ozil: From poster boy to racism storm

BERLIN: Once hailed as a prize-winning example of integration in Germany, Mesut Ozil has quit international duty amid bitter accusations of racism, leveled at German Football Association (DFB) chief Reinhard Grindel. "In the eyes of Grindel and his supporters, I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose," Ozil wrote in a lengthy farewell statement on Sunday.

At just 29, Ozil walks away from Germany duty in the wake of the fiasco caused by his meeting, on the eve of the World Cup, with Turkey President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "It wasn't about politics or elections, it was about me respecting

the highest office of my family's country," Ozil wrote to finally break his silence over the event in London in May.

He quits Germany after scoring 23 goals in 92 international appearances, having been a key component of the 2014 World Cup-winning side. His ability to split defenses with a single pass singled him out as one of the most technically gifted players of his generation. Born in Gelsenkirchen to Turkish parents, Ozil's talents were discovered by local club Schalke, whom he left for Bundesliga rivals Werder Bremen in 2008. His international breakthrough was at the 2010 World Cup as part of a bold, young German team which played eye-catching football in heavy knock-out-stage wins over England and Argentina.

Ozil's superb cross for Thomas Mueller to score Germany's fourth goal in the 4-1 thrashing of England was the highlight of

Continued on Page 24



LONDON: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan poses for a photo with German footballer Mesut Ozil in this May 13, 2018 photo. — AFP (See Page 28)

Top UN court orders UAE to protect Qatari citizens' rights

THE HAGUE: The UN's top court yesterday ordered the United Arab Emirates to protect the rights of Qatari citizens wading into a bitter crisis which has snapped ties between Doha and its Gulf neighbors. Judges at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague narrowly ruled in a binding decision that the UAE must allow families, which include Qatari members, to be reunited, and that Qatari students must be given the chance to complete their education in the Emirates.

Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE and other allies severed ties with Qatar on June 7, 2017, accusing Doha of backing terrorism. Qatari nationals living in the UAE were officially given just 14 days to leave the country. But Doha denies the accusations, and last month appealed to the ICJ to impose emergency measures

Continued on Page 24

Crown Prince meets state officials at Bayan Palace



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with National Security Apparatus Chief Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the Head of the Financial Supervisory Commission Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Chairman of the Environment Public Authority Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday National Security Apparatus Chief Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. His Highness then received the Head of the Financial Supervisory Commission Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel. His Highness also received Chairman of the Environment Public Authority Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Govt to act firmly against financial violations

Kuwait to build branch of Gustave Roussy cancer center



KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the Cabinet's meeting yesterday. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: The Cabinet assigned financial monitors and Civil Services Commission (CSC) to act firmly against violations registered by authorities overseeing performance. The Cabinet, in its weekly meeting chaired by Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, assigned financial monitors to prepare a guide to deal with financial violations, as well as the CSC to prevent repetition of the breaches in state institutions. The executives, meanwhile, discussed projects implemented according to the offset program. They also assigned the Civil Aviation General Directorate to provide a report every three months over the construction of the cargo city at Kuwait International Airport.

Kuwait-Saudi Coordination Council

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled briefed the cabinet about the signing of a document with Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir regarding the establishment of Kuwait-Saudi Coordination Council, which would include multi-faceted cooperation as well as achieving further integration. Meanwhile, the cabinet congratulated Egyptian President Abdulfatah Al-Sisi on July 23 revolution. It also rejected the Israeli parliament's Jewish nation law, which contradicted with international law, UN and human rights principles. It urged the international community to reject this law. The government condemned an explosion outside Kabul that killed and wounded many people.

Cancer center

The government will establish a branch of France-based Gustave Roussy cancer research and treatment institute in Kuwait, with aim of promoting efficiency of the health care. The Cabinet said the establishment of the Gustave Roussy in Kuwait would improve methods of diagnosis, tests and use of state-of-art technology to treat tumors. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for National Assembly Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement following the session Gustave Roussy would contribute to attracting renowned medical staff from around the world. The government assigned the Ministry of Finance to urgently finalize all measures to build the institute's branch in Kuwait. Gustave Roussy is one of the world's leading cancer research institutes and the premier European Cancer Centre. It is a center for patient care, research and teaching, where patients with all types of cancer can be treated. Kuwait's 2035 vision aimed at, among other things, promoting the health care through construction of hospitals, clinics as well as expansion of current ones.



Kuwait provides aid for Iraqis

Donations to Iraq

Kuwait has donated power generators and fresh water, and will be providing oil by-products for Iraq in order to honor energy and water needs of the Iraqi people, two ministers said. Minister of Electricity and Water and Minister of Oil Bakheet Al-Rashidi briefed the Cabinet that the Ministry of Electricity and Water donated power generators with a total production of 30,000 kilowatts and would be supplying Iraq with oil derivatives. Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan said the ministry dispatched fresh water tankers to honor needs of the Iraqi people. The two ministers were briefing the government in its weekly meeting, chaired by Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, about acts to alleviate suffering of the Iraqi people upon instructions of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Kuwait granted Iraq 17 mobile power generators in light of the critical circumstances the Iraqi people are undergoing, chiefly a serious shortage of power, mainly in southern city of Basra. His Highness the Amir had told Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi by phone that the State of Kuwait was ready to assist its neighbor to overcome the current turmoil, emphasizing that stability in Baghdad is among Kuwait's chief concerns. Lack of public services and electricity have resulted in mass protests throughout southern Iraqi cities, with protestors demanding better services and more job opportunities. — KUNA



(From left) The finance, commerce, housing and justice ministers attend the meeting.



(From left) The National Assembly affairs, education and oil ministers attend the meeting.



Senior government officials in attendance.

Local

Special coordination team to set up executive procedures for Kuwait-China agreements

China eager to invest in Kuwait: Minister Roudhan

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The government is about to form a special team to act as a coordinator amongst various state departments in order to work on setting the executive procedures for the agreements and treaties Kuwait recently signed during His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's visit to China, well-informed sources said. The sources added that agreements are a historic turning point towards achieving economic and security development in Kuwait, upon which the government relies in achieving its 2035 strategic vision of becoming one of the world's top 30 economies.

The sources added that the team would be headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and that it would meet twice a month presided by the minister of state for cabinet affairs. Source also noted that with the help of the Fatwa and Legislation Department and urgent referral to the parliament, the team would rephrase and amend current laws and bills in a way to facilitate the execution of these treaties so that they could be put into practice within a year.

Meanwhile, Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan said yesterday that China has great interest in investing in Kuwait, especially after the recent joint agreements signed between the two sides. In a statement released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Roudhan said Kuwait is also eager to benefit from the Chinese investment experience in developing the country's economy.

The statement added that the minister met with a top executive from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) yesterday to discuss issues of mutual concern. Kuwait and China had recently signed agreements on electronic trade to boost sustainable development during the visit of His Highness the Amir to China.

Schools reclaimed

The Ministry of Education (MoE) announced that it

would reclaim the schools being utilized by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to use as centers to distribute new electronic passports on Aug 12. MoE's assistant undersecretary for public education Fatima Al-Kandari said MoI had used five schools amid a rush by citizens to get the new electronic passports. She added that MoI would be contacted and urged to hand over the schools on time so that preparations for the new school year could begin. Responding to a question about teaching staff shortages in view of opening new schools by the beginning of the coming school year, Kandari stressed that no problems should be faced as various educational zones will cooperate to deal with any possible shortages.



Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan



Warnings issued to Fahaheel bachelors

Judicial staff
The Civil Service Commission (CSC) approved paying the bonuses of judicial staff members who had supervised the Municipal Council elections held in May, said informed sources, expecting the payments to start by next week at most.

Light oil

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's (KPC) international marketing sector is currently preparing to export super crude light 48API oil, said informed sources, noting that exporting super light KSLC, KEC and API38 oils would start by the end of 2019. The sources predicted that around 400,000 barrels would be exported mainly to China.

Warnings to bachelors

The engineering supervision and follow up department at Kuwait Municipality in Ahmadi issued warnings to bachelors to leave Fahaheel. Power will be cut if



bachelors do not move out of private homes (government houses).

'Abu Turab' sentenced

The cassation court sentenced 'Abu Turab': a defendant accused of joining a banned organization in Syria to five years in jail, and exonerated his mother.

Projects management system

Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower Ahmad Al-Mousa said the authority signed the first government contract approved by the projects management system. This comes on the instructions of Social Affairs and Labor Minister and State Minister for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh to use modern systems and programs in estimating the number of workers needed for government projects in order to

reduce the number of workers brought in on work permits to a minimum. Mousa said the projects management system is an international one specialized in estimating the numbers needed for government or major projects through dividing the project into segments and time plans.

Food stuff destroyed

The imported food department at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition destroyed 309,000 kg of chicken, meat, fruit, mineral water and cheese imported from the US, Australia, Italy, Greece, Iran, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen for being unfit for human consumption. Director of the department Ali Al-Khanfoor said destroyed amount is one of the largest since the transfer of the imported food department from the municipality to the authority.

Assembly panel to submit Filipino labor report soon

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly's foreign relations committee said yesterday that it will submit an investigation report on problems with the Philippines government regarding the deployment of the Filipino workers in Kuwait before the start of the next parliamentary term in October.

Rapporteur of the committee MP Mohammad Al-Huwailah said that the panel discussed the issue of the



MP Mohammad Al-Huwailah

Filipino workers in accordance with a decision by the national assembly. He said the report of the discussion will be ready soon and before the start of the next term.

Kuwait and the Philippines were involved in a diplomatic row a few months ago over allegations of mistreatment of Filipina domestic helpers. The dispute intensified amid fiery statements from the Philippine president and after Philippine embassy staff helped smuggle a number of maids from their employers claiming they had been abused. The dispute was resolved later and diplomatic relations returned to normal. During the crisis, the national assembly asked the foreign relations committee to investigate the issue.

Griffiths the latest developments in the Yemeni crisis. According to the GCC Secretariat, the two officials touched on efforts to resolve the situation in Yemen through the GCC initiative, results of the national dialogue conference and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2216. Zayani affirmed that the GCC would provide all necessary assistance to help the Yemeni people to overcome their bleak situation. — KUNA



GCC Secretary General Dr Abdulatif Al-Zayani

GCC chief, UN official discuss Yemeni developments

RIYADH: Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Abdulatif Al-Zayani discussed yesterday with the United Nations envoy for Yemen Martin



KUWAIT: The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) launched its 13th annual summer festival on Sunday night, with a concert featuring singers Nabil Shuail and Hassan Al-Attar at the Abdul Hussein Abdul Redha Theater in Salmiya. — KUNA photos

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Local



LOYAC visits SAVECO

KUWAIT: A group of over 50 young LOYACERS recently spent a wonderful time on a visit they made to SAVECO where they were briefed about hygiene and nutritional skills through a four-day training course in cooking presented by a number of SAVECO's most skilled chefs. Speaking on the occasion, LOYAC's com-

munity service manager Yosra Al-Essa hailed SAVECO's cooperation with the program noting that it plays a significant role in serving the Kuwaiti society. On her part, SAVECO's CEO Nour Al-Qatami expressed her joy for cooperating with LOYAC and promised to take part in more initiatives in the future.



Al Hamra supports Special Olympics

KUWAIT: In support of one of the largest worldwide movements, Al Hamra Real Estate Co., a leader in real estate development and management, recently demonstrated solidarity with the Special Olympics and Al Tomooh Sports Club cause by lighting the building red and shining the spotlight on the importance of inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities among its esteemed tenants and visitors located within Al Hamra Luxury Center. Reinforcing its commitment to social inclusion and national development, Al Hamra stood tall with other local and international iconic buildings and landmarks in a global act of unity to mark the 50 year milestone.

Embracing diversity, Al Hamra Business Tower lit up between 19 and 21 July in red lights as part of a global campaign to highlight people with special intellectual disabilities to help create a culture of solidarity in society. On the occasion, Al Hamra Business Tower, that houses over 6,000 employees, hosted 25 Special Olympics players from Al Tomooh Sports Club for Intellectual Disabilities in Kuwait, who narrated their several achievements and upcoming championships sharing

their own personal experiences with Special Olympics. Al Hamra Real Estate Co. Marketing and Public Relations Manager Abdullah Al Mansour said: "It is a truly rewarding experience to meet and host our national stars, who due to their courage, determination and commitment to excellence regardless of the challenges they face have become truly exceptional heroes. We are proud to be part of this positive movement as we deeply believe in equal opportunities and social inclusion. We

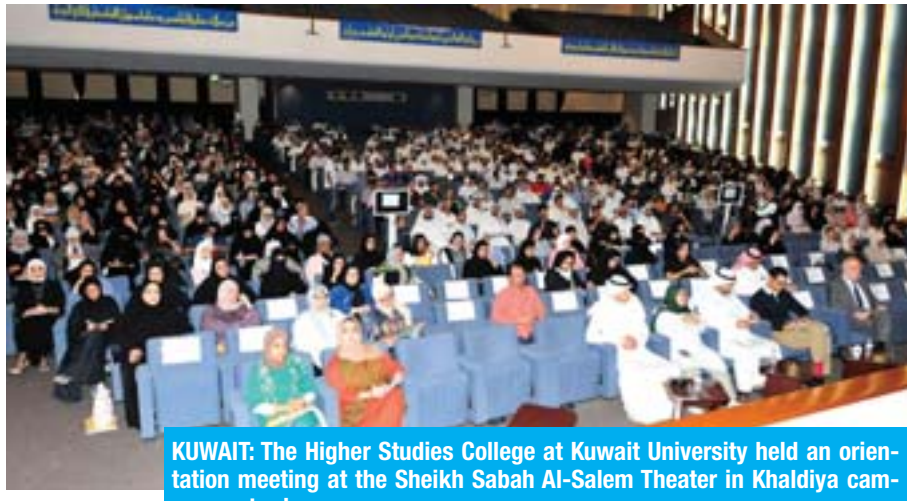
thank the Kuwaiti champions who are outstanding role models for our communities and wish them success in the matches to come." Kuwait's decorated athletes from Al Tomooh Sports Club for Intellectual Disabilities have made the country proud by competing in over 32 countries. They recently won 15 medals in the Special Olympics IX MENA games being held in UAE - Abu Dhabi, coming out victorious with six gold, two silver and seven bronze medals in athletics, swimming, football,

basketball, and bocce competitions. The Special Olympics is the world's largest sports organization for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, providing year-round training and competitions to five million athletes and Unified States Sports partners in 172 countries. Special Olympics competitions are held every day, all around the world-including local, national and regional competitions, adding up to more than 100,000 events a year.



Kuwait University appoints new dean of registration

KUWAIT: Under auspices of the dean of KU's college of petroleum and engineering, Dr. Abdullatif Al-Khulaifi, office of the assistant dean for scientific affairs recently celebrated appointing Dr. Ali Faisal Al-Mutairi as Kuwait University's dean of registration.



KUWAIT: The Higher Studies College at Kuwait University held an orientation meeting at the Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Theater in Khaldiya campus yesterday.

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Kuwait Towers, the country's most famous landmark and symbol of its modernity. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

Drug prevention coordination meeting held

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Based on the Instructions of Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah to continue the national campaign for the prevention of drugs as a top priority and to cooperate with government and non-government bodies to face the drugs problem in Kuwait, a coordination meeting was held between the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Information Department, the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) and Kuwait University which focused on a presentation by the DCGD on the security and criminal strategy to stop the growing drugs and psychoactive pill problem in the state. This was followed by a presentation of Relations and Security Information Department's "Wayakum" awareness project to prevent the use of drugs.

The meeting discussed finding new mechanisms for effective cooperation in the field of drug prevention. An agreement was reached to have preventive plans for those specialized in early detection of drugs use, besides specialized courses in the field of early detection and prevention of drugs use.

Municipality campaign
Kuwait Municipality's Public Relations



KUWAIT: Officials meet to coordinate on drug prevention plans.

Department said that the supervision and services follow up department in Ahmadi issued 139 citations for signboard violations. Department Director Saad Al-Shaibah said supervision of stores has been increased to make sure licenses

are valid. He said 139 citations were issued for not maintaining outside signs, not placing the store license in a clearly visible place and adding signs without licensing. He said 2,906 random signboards were removed.

News in brief

Smoker assaults cop at hospital

KUWAIT: Environment police responded to a call from the Jahra Hospital director about smoking within the hospital compound. Policemen issued several citations against smokers, until a soldier who was being treated lit up a cigarette in one of the wards, prompting a policeman to ask him to put it out and asked him for his ID. The soldier did not like this and asked him to leave. When the policeman insisted, the soldier and two of his relatives beat the policeman and tore his uniform. One of the relatives was arrested while the other two escaped and were placed on the wanted list.

Abandoned baby

A citizen told police he found a baby crying in Abu Fatira, which was left under a parked car. Detectives began investigations and may review camera recordings to identify the person who placed the baby there. The baby is about one month old.

Banned material

Customs Information Committee member Bilal Al-Khamees said he will ask Director General of Customs Jamal Al-Jelawi to activate the customs law and confiscate vehicles that have banned material hidden in them regardless of what kind of goods are being smuggled. He said this comes as cigarette smuggling attempts are on the rise to make profits from price differences in regional countries.

— Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai

Kuwait grants 17 generators to Iraq

KUWAIT: At the behest of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Electricity and Water has granted Iraq 17 mobile power generators with a total capacity of 30,000 kilowatts, a senior electricity official said. The Kuwaiti move comes in light of the critical circumstances the Iraqi people are undergoing, chiefly a serious shortage of power, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity and Water Mohammad Bushehri said in a press statement Sunday. It mainly aims at alleviating the electricity shortage in the Iraqi city of

Basra, the Kuwaiti official added. Earlier on Friday, the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity said that the State of Kuwait would provide fuel to out-of-service power stations in Iraq. His Highness the Amir had told Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi by phone that the State of Kuwait was ready to assist its neighbor to overcome the current turmoil, emphasizing that stability in Baghdad is among Kuwait's chief concerns. Lack of public services and electricity have resulted in mass protests throughout southern Iraqi cities, with protestors demanding better services and more job opportunities. — KUNA



Kuwait, UK discuss security cooperation



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with UK Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Jarrah Al-Sabah and UK Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport discussed ways to enhance bilateral relation yesterday. In a statement released by the Public Relations and Security Media Department at the Ministry of

Interior, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah underlined the strong Kuwaiti-British ties on all levels. The statement added that the two sides also discussed issues of mutual concern. Ambassador Davenport hailed Kuwait's role in supporting peace and security in the Middle East. — KUNA



Million slum dwellers in India's Odisha become home owners

‘Mommy is lying’: The travails of migrant kids taken from parents

Page 8

Page 9



TORONTO: Toronto Police officers work on Danforth St., at the scene of a shooting. — AFP

Two dead in Toronto shooting rampage

‘There must’ve been 20, 30 shots, altogether. It was a lot. We just ran’

TORONTO: A 29-year-old gunman opened fire on pedestrians in a bustling Toronto neighborhood, killing two and wounding a dozen others, police in Canada's largest city said yesterday, adding the suspect was found dead in an alley after an exchange of gunfire with police.

A video clip posted by Canadian media appeared to show a dark-clad man walking on the sidewalk in Toronto's Greektown neighborhood Sunday night and then turning to aim and fire a handgun.

“At approximately 10 pm on July 22, 2018, a man walking along Danforth Avenue fired shots at groups of people several times. Several people were struck. Two civilians were fatally injured,” the Ontario Special Investigations Unit said. The unit, which investigates police-involved shootings, said officers located the man on a cross street “and an exchange of gunfire took place.” “The man fled the area and was

located deceased on Danforth Avenue,” it said.

Toronto police chief Mark Saunders had said earlier that one of the victims was a young woman, and that a young girl was in critical condition. It put the number of wounded at 13. The gunman, who police said was 29, was not identified by name and a motive for the shooting in a district of cafes and restaurants was not immediately known.

Officers, some armed with rifles, sealed off Danforth Avenue, Greektown's main street, after getting the call around 10:00 pm (0200 GMT Monday). Witnesses reported hearing about 20 shots. “There was a lot of shots. It would shoot, there'd be a pause, we heard more shooting, and then a pause and then more shooting,” The Globe and Mail quoted John Tulloch, who was out for a walk at the time, as saying. “There must’ve been 20, 30 shots, altogether. It was a lot. We just ran.”

People screamed, fled

Jody Steinhauer told CBC News she was at a neighborhood restaurant with her family when she heard what sounded like 10 to 15 blasts of firecrackers. She said she was told to run to the back of the restaurant.

“We started to hear people scream out front,” Steinhauer told the broadcaster. Ontario's new Premier Doug Ford called it a “horrific act of gun violence” and said his heart went out to the victims. The incident comes with Canada's largest metropolis concerned over a surge of shootings. Canada traditionally has relatively low levels of gun violence, particularly compared with neighboring United States.

Mayor John Tory said Sunday night's firearms violence is “evidence of a gun problem” in Toronto. “Guns are too readily available to too many people,” Tory told a

news conference. Tory added that details of the latest incident remained sketchy and urged people to stay calm. “We have to figure out what happened here. We don't know,” he said.

Toronto Police statistics show that, to July 14, there had been a total of 220 shootings with 27 fatalities so far this year, against 196 with 17 deaths for all of 2017. Last week, Toronto police started implementing the enforcement component of their “gun violence reduction plan.” That includes around 200 additional officers on shift in particular neighborhoods between the hours of 7:00 pm and 3:00 am - when most shootings occur. The Greektown shooting comes about three months after the city was shaken by the deaths of 10 people killed by a man with an apparent grudge against women who drove into them on a busy street in Toronto's north end. — AFP

India investigates police ‘tea break’ in lynching case

NEW DELHI: Indian police yesterday began an inquiry into officers alleged to have taken a tea break instead of rushing a critically injured lynching victim to hospital. Akbar Khan, 28, succumbed to his injuries after being attacked by a gang of Hindu cow vigilantes in the district of Alwar in Rajasthan state on Friday.

Cows are considered sacred in Hindu-majority India where squads of vigilantes often roam highways inspecting livestock trucks. The murder stoked tension in the area amid media reports police stopped to have a tea break and wasted crucial time instead of taking Khan to hospital. Police also allegedly cared for the cows first, transporting them to a bovine shelter much farther away.

“Doubts have been cast on the initial response of the local police,” state police chief OP Galhotra said in a written order seen by AFP yesterday. “A team has been constituted to look into the circumstances leading to the alleged delay and connected issues.” India's right-wing government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been accused of turning a blind eye to a rising number of vigilante attacks on minority Muslims in the name of cow protection.

Rights groups say Hindu mobs have been emboldened under the party, which stormed to power in 2014. The government yesterday sought a report from state authorities on the latest lynching and “steps taken to restore peace” in the area. Two suspects have been arrested in the case so far. Slaughtering cows is illegal in many Indian states and some also require a licence for transporting them across

state borders. In two prominent cases last year, a dairy farmer was killed on a roadside for transporting cows and a Muslim teenager accused of carrying beef was stabbed to death on a crowded train. India has also been rocked by a separate spate of lynchings, with 23 people killed in the last two months after being accused of child kidnapping in viral messages circulated wildly on WhatsApp.

Another day, another lynching

A mob lynched a woman in India after rumors circulated on WhatsApp about child kidnappers, police said yesterday, days after the messaging firm said it was curbing the forwarding of messages. More than 20 people have been killed in similar incidents in the past two months, leaving both the Indian authorities and Facebook-owned WhatsApp scrambling to find a solution in its biggest market.

Police said nine people have been arrested and more are being sought after they found the middle-aged woman's mutilated body near a forest area in the Singrauli district of the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh on Sunday.

The accused men told police they caught hold of the woman late Saturday after finding her moving suspiciously and seeing a flurry of WhatsApp messages about gangs of child kidnappers in the area, local police chief Riyaz Iqbal said. “We are trying to identify the victim and have circulated her picture to all the police stations,” Singrauli police chief Riyaz Iqbal told AFP.

Last Thursday the Indian government threatened WhatsApp with legal action, saying the



AHMEDABAD: Indian activists take part in a protest against mob lynchings in India. — AFP

“medium” for spreading malicious rumours “cannot evade responsibility and accountability”. WhatsApp said the next day it would test limiting the ability of its more than 225 million Indian users to forward messages and remove the “quick forward button” next to media messages.

It had already announced new features to help users identify messages that have been forwarded and bought full-page adverts in Indian newspapers with tips on how to spot misinformation. It has however stopped short of acceding to Indian government demands to enable the authorities to trace messages, saying its service would stay “end-to-end encrypted”. Lynchings are nothing new in India, but the spread of smartphones to even the most remote corners has enabled rumours to be shared at lightning speed and in huge volumes. — AFP

Officials defend handling of Macron aide scandal

PARIS: France's interior minister and the Paris police chief yesterday defended their responses to a video showing a top security aide to President Emmanuel Macron hitting a May Day protester, a scandal that has rocked the government and prompted accusations of a cover-up. Speaking before a parliamentary commission, both officials said they had learned of the video circulating on social media on May 2, the day after Alexandre Benalla beat a young man during a police operation to clear protesters from a Paris square.

“The president's office director (Patrick Strzoda) called me to ask for any news about the Benalla case — I didn't know what he was talking about,” police chief Michel Delpuech told lawmakers. Asked why he did not report the incident to prosecutors after watching the video, which shows Benalla striking the man at least twice while riot police officers look on, Delpuech said he considered it was up to Macron's office to respond.

But he denounced “unacceptable abuses by individuals” and “cronyism”, apparently a reference to three police officers accused of providing Benalla with surveillance footage so he could try to mount his defense. Interior Minister Gerard Collomb also said it was up to Benalla's superiors in Macron's office either to inform prosecutors or impose any punishment.

In several videos which have emerged of the police operation, Benalla is seen wearing a police helmet and armband, and Collomb told lawmakers he was also equipped with a police radio. He said investigators did not know how Benalla obtained the equipment, since he was

supposed to be only observing the operation accompanied by an officer. Delpuech added that investigators were also checking if Benalla and an associate at the scene, Vincent Crase, were armed, confirming that a weapons permit held by Benalla during Macron's presidential campaign had expired. Both officials said they had not been informed that Benalla and Crase would be attending the protest. “I was surprised, astonished even, to discover Benalla in the command room” the night of May 1, Delpuech said. “I was shaking people's hands, and when I came to him I said, ‘You're here?’ And he answered, ‘I was out in the field.’”

‘Benallagate’

Opposition lawmakers have seized on the affair, with some accusing the government of trying to cover up the alleged violence committed by Benalla and Crase, a security agent employed by Macron's Republic on the Move (LREM) party. Benalla was Macron's closest bodyguard during his campaign, before transferring to the president's security detail in May 2017. Despite mounting pressure, Macron has yet to speak publicly on “Benallagate”, which is swiftly becoming the most damaging scandal since he won the presidency last year promising to restore integrity to government.

He has called off Wednesday's scheduled appearance at the Tour de France cycling race, though aides insist the cancellation was unrelated to the case. Benalla, 26, was fired Friday after newspaper Le Monde published a smartphone video showing him hitting a man at the protest. — AFP

International

Hundreds of Syrian refugees return home from Lebanon

‘The voluntary repatriation of around 850 Syrian refugees started’

ARSAL: Hundreds of Syrian refugees left Lebanon yesterday for their neighboring home country, an AFP reporter said, the latest such return coordinated between Beirut and Damascus. In Lebanon's eastern border town of Arsal, men, women and children of all ages piled into cars, minivans and tractors.

Security forces checked the identity papers of those about to make the journey back to Syria with suitcases, boxes of food and even live poultry, an AFP photographer said. “The voluntary repatriation of around 850 Syrian refugees started” yesterday morning, Lebanon's state news agency NNA reported. Seven years into Syria's war, Lebanon hosts around 1.5 million Syrian refugees, compared with a local population of 4.5 million.

Over the past few months, more than 800 Syrians have left Lebanon in similar operations organised by the governments of Beirut and Damascus. Several thousand have also independently left in recent years. Syria's state news agency SANA said the first of “hundreds of Syrians coming from Lebanese territory” had arrived and were heading to Qalamun outside the capital.

Syria's ally Russia has also put forward plans to the United States to cooperate for the safe return of refugees to Syria. Moscow has proposed the establishment of working groups in Lebanon and Jordan, to where many refugees have fled, a Russian defence ministry official said on Friday.

An advisor to Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri has met Russia's deputy foreign minister Mikhail Bogdanov to find out more about the initiative, the premier's office said on Saturday. The step would “help solve the refugees’ crisis in Lebanon and put an end to their suffering and its social and economic repercussions on the host countries, mainly Lebanon,” it said in English.

Last month Lebanon's Hezbollah said the powerful move-

ment was creating a mechanism to help Syrian refugees return home, in coordination with Lebanese authorities and Damascus. More than 350,000 people have been killed and over half the country's population displaced since Syria's war started with the brutal repression of anti-government protests in 2011.

White Helmets evacuations slammed

The foreign ministry in Damascus condemned yesterday the evacuation of hundreds of trapped White Helmets rescue workers and their relatives from Syria's south through its arch-foe and neighbor, Israel. More than 400 rescue workers and family members from Syria's southern provinces of Daraa and Quneitra were ferried into Israel on Sunday, then taken into Jordan for resettlement into Western countries.

“The criminal operation that Israel and its tools conducted in the area reveals the true nature of the so-called White Helmets,” said a source at the foreign ministry, cited by state news agency SANA. The source repeated the

Syrian government's accusation that the rescue force is a front group for “terrorists” and said Damascus had warned the world of its “dangers”.

“Words of condemnation are not enough to express the indignation that every Syrian feels towards these despicable conspiracies and the limitless aid from Western countries, Israel, and Jordan to the White Helmets,” the source said. The White Helmets is a network of first responders which rescues the wounded in the aftermath of air strikes, shelling, or explosions in rebel territory across Syria.

Hundreds of them were stuck in a pocket of southern Syria, fearing advancing Syrian government forces. Jordan's foreign ministry announced in a statement that the kingdom



ARSAL: Syrian children ride a truck carrying their personal belongings at a Lebanese army checkpoint in Wadi Hmeid in the Bekaa valley, after leaving the village of Arsal to return to their homes in Syria's Qalamoun region. —AFP

received 422 Syrian nationals for resettlement in Britain, Germany and Canada. The group receives funding from a number of governments, including Britain, Germany, Canada and the United States, and from individual donors. Other White Helmets members have stayed in the south.

In other news, Israel yesterday said its air defenses fired at rockets that approached its territory from neighboring Syria, where regime troops are advancing on opposition

forces close to the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. “Syrian rockets were identified as having been launched as part of the internal fighting in Syria,” an Israeli army statement said in English. The statement said two of Israel's newly deployed David's Sling interceptors were launched “in response to the threat to Israeli territory,” but added the Syrian rockets fell inside Syria. It did not say if the interceptors hit the rockets. —AFP

Hunt: No Brexit deal could harm ties for ‘a generation’

BERLIN: Britain's new foreign minister Jeremy Hunt warned yesterday on his first official visit to Germany that failure to secure a Brexit deal could harm European ties for decades to come. After talks with his German counterpart Heiko Maas in Berlin, Hunt told reporters that complacency could lead to Britain crashing out of the European Union without a roadmap for future ties.

“When it comes to Brexit there is now a very real risk of a Brexit no-deal by accident,” he said. “This is because I think that many people in the EU are thinking that they just have to wait long enough and Britain will blink and that's not going to happen.” Hunt, who took over from Boris Johnson after his resignation this month, said that “without a real change in approach from the EU negotiators”, both sides could be left struggling to maintain

trade and security ties.

“That would be incredibly challenging economically. Britain would find that challenging but in the end we would find a way not just to survive but to thrive economically,” he said. “But my real concern is that it would change British public attitudes to Europe for a generation and it would lead to a fissure in relations which would be highly damaging for that great partnership that we've had for so many years, that has been so important in sustaining the international order.”

Maas insisted Germany too had an interest in maintaining the closest ties possible with Britain post-Brexit, while stressing that only the European Commission had the power to negotiate the terms. “We, the German government, don't want a disorderly Brexit, we want a deal,” he said. “We know that everyone is going to have to take steps toward the other to reach an agreement. “I hope that the British government and the Commission in Brussels can succeed in sealing a deal that can win a majority in the House of Commons in London but also in the European Parliament in Brussels.”

Maas said Britain and Germany would work together on a bilateral “strategic paper” on foreign policy for the post-



NEWCASTLE: Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May gestures as she speaks during her visit to Responsive Engineering's Armstrong Works plant, a unit of Reece Group Limited. —AFP

Brexit period to ensure as much continuity as possible. Britain is set to leave the European Union on March 30 next year. The two sides want to strike an initial withdrawal agreement by late October, in order to give parliament enough time to endorse it, before reaching a broader

deal on their future relationship. However, negotiations have stalled over a range of thorny issues and the Commission, the EU's executive arm, has warned remaining member states and businesses to “step up preparations” for no deal. —AFP

Obrador floats idea of new relationship in letter to Trump

MEXICO CITY: Mexico's incoming president on Sunday said he had floated the idea of a new relationship between the neighboring countries in a letter to US President Donald Trump. Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said he sent Trump proposals on bilateral relations — which have reached one of their lowest points in decades — in the areas of migration, public safety and trade.

Lopez Obrador, who won the presidential election July 1 with 53 percent of the vote and will take office in December, said Sunday that the letter was sent to Trump through the delegation of senior US officials that visited him in Mexico City on July 13. “It encourages me that we both know how to keep our pledges, and we have faced adversity successfully, we've managed

to put our voters and citizens at the center, displace the establishment or the predominant regime,” Lopez Obrador wrote.

While noting that he is awaiting Trump's response, Lopez Obrador published the letter “so that all Mexicans know our position on the new relationship we want” with the United States. The incoming president said Mexico wants a relationship of “respect, friendship and focused on development cooperation,” and said that the more developed Mexico is, the fewer people will have to leave their country in search of work.

US-Mexican relations have been severely strained since Trump won the 2016 presidential election after a campaign laced with anti-Mexican insults, attacks on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and vows to make Mexico pay for a wall on their border. Since then, US tariffs on Mexican steel and aluminum, Trump's “zero-tolerance” policy on undocumented immigrants, and President Enrique Pena Nieto's two abrupt can-



MEXICO CITY: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (L) and Mexico's Foreign Minister Luis Videgaray speak to the press at the Foreign Ministry. —AFP

cellations of visits to Washington have only added to the tension. Lopez Obrador, 64, pledged during the campaign to “put (Trump) in his place.” But

both men say they had a positive phone call the day after Mexico's July 1 election, and Lopez Obrador has invited Trump to his inauguration. —AFP

8 killed as Lebanon army swoops on drug baron

BEIRUT: Eight people were killed in eastern Lebanon yesterday in an army raid on the home of a suspected drug trafficking baron, the armed forces said. “An army unit raided the house of Ali Zayd Ismail, wanted on several counts of drug trafficking in the area of Al-Hamudiya-Brital,” in the eastern Bekaa Valley, the army said.

“The unit was shot at... forcing the force's members to retaliate, which led to the killing of eight gunmen,” it said in a statement. The army said it detained a further 41 people, six of whom were wounded in the clashes, and seized weapons and drugs. The statement did not say whether Ismail, a notorious figure, was among those killed or arrested. But an army source told AFP he was killed in the raid and identified by a relative.

In April, the army seized 20 kilograms of Captagon from an abandoned house they said Ismail was using in Brital. Captagon is classified by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime as an “amphetamine-type stimulant” and usually blends ampheta-

mines, caffeine and other substances. And in December, the army seized 800 kilograms of cannabis from Ismail's home.

Consuming, growing and selling marijuana are all illegal in Lebanon. But in the Bekaa Valley, long marginalized by the central government, its widespread production has become a multi-million-dollar industry. The Lebanese parliament is soon to review legislation to legalize medicinal marijuana, its speaker Nabih Berri said last week. The move comes after a consulting firm, charged with setting a vision to kickstart the Lebanese economy, suggested legalizing and regularizing the production and sale of marijuana. —AFP

Nostalgic for Brazil's dictatorship, Bolsonaro sets sites on presidency

RIO DE JANEIRO: Angry Brazilians long for a return to order, and former army officer Jair Bolsonaro, a fan of the dictatorship that stretched from the 1960s to the 1980s, hopes to ride that wave into the presidency. Often labeled a Brazilian Donald Trump, Bolsonaro, 63, made his candidacy official Sunday at a convention in Rio of his Social Liberal Party, telling some 3,000 enthusiastic supporters, “My candidacy is a mission. If I am here it is because I believe in you, and if you are here it is because you believe in Brazil.”

To the supporters who have propelled him to near the top of opinion polls ahead of the October election, he could be Brazil's savior. No accident, they say, that Bolsonaro's second name is Messias, or messiah. Fans know him as “the myth” — a title they chanted exuberantly during his speech Sunday. But like Trump, Bolsonaro actually seems to enjoy offending his critics in a campaign that seeks to tear up the rules book.

Opponents say Bolsonaro is a far-right agitator whose insults against gays and women, and his praise for the torturers of the 1964-85 dictatorship, have only deepened Brazil's already sharp political divides. But for all his deeply conservative views, Bolsonaro is a master of the social media landscape inhabited by young Brazilians, with 1.2 million Twitter subscribers and almost 5.5 million Facebook followers. Scenes where he gets mobbed by supporters on arrival at airports never fail to show up on Facebook.

Part of his undoubted appeal has nothing to do with left-right politics: simply, he is one of the very few well-known Brazilian politicians who have not been investigated, let alone charged, in the mammoth “Car Wash” graft scandal shaking the elite. “Bolsonaro is the person who can make a difference,” said 35-year-old Gilmar Jasset, a bus driver who attended the party rally Sunday dressed as his hero. “He is our hope, because he is not involved in corruption, and he is sincere.”

On another of Brazil's biggest problems — the epidemic of violent crime — Bolsonaro offers what to many seems like a seductively direct idea: loosen Brazil's tight gun ownership restrictions to allow self-defense. Critics say this would just add to the mayhem. But Bolsonaro's message is well received by those who have given up on the ineffectual — and themselves often corrupt — police.

Burning bridges

“Bolsonaro's the light at the end of the tunnel. He's the only candidate who really represents the Brazilian people and who can stop the corruption,” said one supporter, marketer Agnes Plocharski, 47, when the candidate arrived recently in the southern city of Curitiba. Polls give him 20 percent of the vote, enough to get into a second round of the election, although there he is projected to lose against leftist candidates. Support is greatest among the youth, with 26 percent, and among the better off, with 34 percent. Bolsonaro also finds backing among evangelical Christians for his uncompromising anti-abortion stand.

Bolsonaro campaigns as an outsider. The reality is that he's been a member of Congress from Rio de Janeiro since 1991, though not a particularly prominent one, passing only two bills in those 27 years. “He talks about politicians as if he wasn't part of that world. He has succeeded in portraying himself as a strongman, with a hard line against corruption,” said Michael Mohallem, a law professor at the Getulio Vargas Foundation. —AFP

‘Mommy is lying’: The travails of migrant kids taken from parents

‘My mommy is lying. She is not coming. She is not coming’

MIAMI: A little boy named Jose who braved the dangerous trek through Mexico to the United States with his mother is confused and upset. He has not seen his mom for months. She promised him a Spiderman pinata for his 4th birthday, but it came and went without her. She is supposed to come and get him. She said she would. But she hasn't. She's lying, says Jose.

Unbeknownst to him the mother is actually in US custody. She is the adoptive mother of Jose, and did not have the right papers when they crossed over. Children who made the trip through Mexico, most of them Central Americans, do not suffer just the perils of people who are fleeing: crime, domestic violence, poverty, lack of education and health care.

Rather, once their trip ends, they become vulnerable for more intangible reasons: lack of documents, disinformation and scarce legal representation, which makes it hard for them to navigate a bureaucracy that can seem byzantine. Such is the case of Jose, whose real name and those of his relatives have been withheld in this story at their request because they fear retaliation.

Jose is the adoptive son of a 51-year-old Honduran woman who was detained when she asked for asylum in McAllen, Texas on December 29. “My mommy is lying. She is not coming. She is not coming,” the boy says angrily into a phone, to a human rights lawyer helping them. Does he want to see his mom?

“Yes. Very much,” Jose says. Jose was held in a shelter for nearly a month until he was handed over to his 30-year-old sister-named E. for the purposes of this

article-in Texas. “My mother came here because if she had remained in Honduras another month she would have been killed,” E. said. “There was a man who beat her. If it were not for the neighbors he would have killed her with a machete.”

A federal court ordered last month that thousands of children separated from their parents or guardians at the border be reunited with them by July 26. The deadline for 103 of them aged five or under has already passed. But the government could only return 57. The rest were classified as ineligible-either because their parents had been deported or had criminal records or other problems that the government cited as grounds to keep them from their parents.

“We want our government to be verifying relationships”

A piece of paper
Jose turned four last month. No pinata. His sister said her mother met a girl in Honduras who was pregnant and did not want the baby. The day it was born, she gave it to E.'s mother. “All the neighbors signed as witnesses. They all know, because the girl always said she was going to give the baby away,” said E. But that was not enough for the US government.

The immigration lawyer who is handling Jose's case, Sara Ramey, has collected photos, witness accounts and medical records to show how the adoptive mother has taken care of the boy. “Many Central American societies, including Honduras, have an informal, community-based approach to arranging matters, like child custody,” Ramey, who is executive director of the Migrant Center



LOS ANGELES: In this file photo taken on June 14, 2018, shows critics of US government policy which separates children from their parents when they cross the border illegally from Mexico protest during a 'Families Belong Together March', in downtown Los Angeles. — AFP

for Human Rights in San Antonio, Texas, told AFP.

“We want our government to be verifying relationships,” she said. “We want them to confirm what the relationship is, and that that is a healthy and safe relationship for the child.” The authorities did that in this case and no one questions whether the mother is a good caregiver. “The only thing that's holding her case up is this piece of paper, this formal document,” said Ramey,

referring to an adoption certificate.

Immigrants can lack papers for reasons that are out of their control, said Maureen Meyer, director for Mexico and Migrant Rights at the Washington Office on Latin America, an advocacy group. For instance, she said, “in mountainous areas of Guatemala, there are indigenous people who may never have registered the birth of their children.” — AFP

Far from Ethiopia’s capital, change remains a dream

HARAR, Ethiopia: Clutching the bloodstained student ID card and post-mortem certificate of his younger brother, Abedir Jamal's elation at the huge changes underway in Ethiopia is tempered by his fear that they won't reach him. Across the country of 100 million people, Abedir, 25, and legions of unemployed graduates like him are holding their breath, hoping that new Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed will succeed in his sledgehammer approach to dismantling the status quo. Only 41 himself, Abiy has taken Ethiopia and the broader Horn of Africa by storm since taking office in April by doing the unthinkable. In just three months, he has secured peace with bitter foe Eritrea, got parliament to lift a “terrorist” ban on opposition groups and pledged to open up key sectors of the economy to foreign investment.

Given the security-obsessed mentality and the Marxist-Leninist roots of the ruling EPRDF coalition that he now leads, it is hard to say Abiy is not moving at lightning speed. But for Abedir, whose brother was shot at a protest near his home-town last year, it is not fast enough. The shooting was one of many instances since 2015 in which security forces used live rounds to quell unrest that roiled small towns and some cities, including Harar, an ancient walled city 500 km east of Addis.

The crackdown included the arrest of 30,000 people under anti-terrorism laws. When it failed to keep a lid on the crisis, it prompted the resignation of Abiy's predecessor in February. “We need him to go faster. We



ASMARA: An aerial picture taken on July 21, 2018 shows a view of the Eritrean capital, Asmara with the St Mary Cathedral tower. — AFP

need his promises to turn into action now,” Abedir said of Abiy, as his friends - also graduates and jobless - nodded in agreement.

Such views underscore one of the biggest challenges facing the wildly popular prime minister: delivering on his promises across a vast country overseen by a sclerotic and stifling bureaucracy. Despite the euphoria at the winds of changes sweeping through the corridors of power in Addis Ababa, there is little sign of change so far in places like Harar. “The government, the security forces, the judiciary, they have all been against us,” Abedir said. “We need Dr Abiy to know about our problems. We are not feeling the reforms here yet.”

He also wants justice for his brother, Obsa - specifically a thorough investigation into his

death and an open trial. Obsa was one of many youngsters who took to the streets last year against what they felt was the marginalization suffered by Ethiopia's largest ethnic group at the hands of the Tigrayan ethnic clique that has dominated the EPRDF since it seized power from a military junta 27 years ago.

The coalition, which holds every seat in parliament, includes four ethnicity-based parties but Oromo protesters in Harar and other places have accused it of focusing on the interests of the Tigrayan elite. The government has regularly denied any bias. But many Oromos hope they will see a real change now that Abiy, one of their own, is in charge. That would still leave one of Ethiopia's biggest problems: unemployment, especially in the hinterland. — Reuters

Ten jailed in Vietnam over anti-China demos

HANOI: Ten people were jailed in Vietnam yesterday for joining explosive protests that swept across the communist country last month after a draft investment law triggered widespread anger. The rare rallies in the one-party state — where even peaceful demonstrations are outlawed — drew thousands to the streets, including in southern Binh Thuan province where protests quickly spun out of control.

In some areas of the province, demonstrators attacked riot police, torched patrol cars and stormed property in rallies over the proposed law that would grant investors lengthy leases in special economic zones. Ten people were convicted Monday in Binh Thuan for their hand in the violence and sentenced to between two and three-and-a-half years in prison at the one day-trial where the suspects were accompanied by police in protective vests.

They were found guilty of “massive attacks against police deployments...injuring some officers, damaging two government vehicles and causing widespread traffic blockages for 15 hours on

a national highway,” the Voice of Vietnam said on its website. Several others have already been convicted for joining the nationwide rallies, including American student William Nguyen who was found guilty for “causing public disorder” last week and swiftly deported from the country after more than a month in jail.

His case drew ire from several US lawmakers demanding his release and was raised by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on a visit to Hanoi this month. The June 10 protests caught Vietnamese authorities off-guard, though resentment over the draft bill had been brewing online. Protesters feared the land would be handed over to China — a touchy topic in Vietnam, which has a tumultuous relationship with its powerful communist neighbour.

China was not named in the draft law, which has been tabled for now, and the government said it would reduce the original plan to hand out 99-year leases in the proposed special economic zones, but it was not enough to quell anger. Six people are already behind bars for participating in the protests, while another was given a suspended sentence.

Deadly anti-China protests gripped Vietnam in 2014 when Beijing moved an oil rig into a section of the disputed South China Sea claimed by Hanoi. The countries frequently spar over competing claims in the resource-rich waterway, the latest in a long history of disputes — including a brief but bloody border war in 1979. — AFP

Mozambique fights against climate change, forest loss

GILE: From a distance, the Gile National Reserve in northern Mozambique is a vast, dense ocean of green that reaches as far as the horizon. Bigger than Luxembourg, the 2,800-square-kilometre (1,080-square-mile) forest seems to be reassuringly preserved, its hardwood treasure placed by Mozambique under legal protection.

Close up though, the forest bears deep scars from bouts of rampant logging and relentless population growth—a testimony to the real-life challenge of how to shield this jewel. Logs line the path leading into the reserve, while further along, trucks piled high with wood shavings, seized by the authorities, stand idle, rusting in the weeds.

“Illegal logging was a huge problem between 2014 and 2016,” said reserve manager Jose Mohamede Dias. “The other challenge is the bushfires used in hunting and agriculture which feed local people.” Such blazes are the main reason for the forest's shrinkage in recent years, he explained. Local people burn down swathes of forest to open up arable land. Once the fields become



In this hand out picture made available by Nitidae on June 29, 2018, a view of the Gile Natural Reserve (GNR) in the Zambeze Province is seen on March 28, 2018 in the Gile and Pemba province. — AFP

exhausted, the farmers burn down more trees, and so on. The reserve's population, currently more than 10,000, has shot up in recent years, putting immense pressure on the ecosystem. Some seven million hectares (17 million acres) of tropical forests go up in smoke every year worldwide, according to a UN estimate.

Decompose and fertilize

In a bid to stop the ravaging of the forest, French environmental group Nitidae is offering practical, low-tech help to small farmers

on how to use the land more sustainably. One beneficiary is Alexandre Soares, who enrolled a year ago in a training scheme on how to cope with drought and retain soil fertility.

“They explained that I should leave certain trees in place to balance the ecosystem. Their leaves decompose and fertilize the soil for the next season,” he said, wearing a white hat as he tended his plot under the baking sun. Nitidae specialist Dinis Augusto looked at Soares' mix of crops, which include corn, cassava and beans. — AFP

Malaysia PM vows to repeal security law

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will repeal a tough security law used to detain government critics without charge under the former government, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has said, with activists yesterday hailing the “bold” vow. It was the latest pledge by the country's new reformist leaders to roll back repressive legislation introduced by scandal-hit ex-premier Najib Razak, whose long-serving government was toppled at elections in May.

Leading pro-democracy activists were among those arrested using the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act, or SOSMA, introduced in 2012 purportedly to combat security threats from extremists. It allows for suspects to be detained without charge for 28 days and can incur a lengthy prison sentence. In a speech late Sunday, Mahathir said Najib had used repressive laws to do “whatever he liked” and vowed to abolish SOSMA.

“The people will now be protected

under laws that are fair and any offences will be brought before and decided by the court,” he was quoted as saying by the New Straits Times newspaper. Eric Paulsen, legal director of Southeast Asia-focused rights group Fortify Rights, hailed the announcement as a “timely and bold move”. “We demand that no one should be detained without trial or be a victim of arbitrary arrest,” he said.

One of the most high-profile figures detained under SOSMA was Maria Chin Abdullah, the former leader of pro-reform group “Bersih” which staged huge rallies against Najib's government. She was arrested in 2016, when still the head of Bersih, on the eve of a demonstration and kept in solitary confinement for 10 days. She is now an MP with the ruling alliance. Najib launched a crackdown on government critics after allegations emerged he was at the centre of a massive scandal linked to state fund 1MDB. He was arrested this month and has been charged with corruption. Mahathir himself, during a first stint as premier from 1981-2003, used repressive laws to target critics. More than 100 people, including opposition politicians and activists, were arrested and detained without trial during a major crackdown in 1987. — AFP

International

With titles, a million slum dwellers in India's Odisha become home owners

Program to give land rights to about 1 million people

GOPALPUR: Every year, Neelabeni and her family await the monsoon with trepidation in their mud-and-brick home in an informal settlement near the coast in the eastern Indian state of Odisha. Nearly every year, cyclones that brewed in the Bay of Bengal would damage the nearly 300 homes in their settlement in Gopalpur town, tearing the tin and thatch roofs and smashing the flimsy walls. This year however, Neelabeni - who goes by one name - is looking forward to the monsoon, as she and her neighbors will start building pucca, or permanent homes, when the rains stop.

Nearly every family has received a title, or patta, under an ambitious program to give land rights to about 1 million people living in slums across Odisha. They will also receive a loan with which to build their homes. "We have always lived in a kutchra (temporary) home, and we would spend all our savings on building a new home every year after the rains. Now we will build a proper home," she said.

"This is the first document with my name - everything else only has my husband's name. I will have full rights over the house," she said, showing the laminated title, along with a loan approval document and an assurance from the chief minister. About 65 million people live in India's slums, according to census data, which activists say is a low estimate.

Nearly half the country's population is forecast to live in its cities by 2025, as more people leave the villages to seek better prospects, according to demographers. Many will end up in overcrowded slums that lack even basic facilities, with no claim on the land or property, and in fear of being evicted every day. The Odisha program aims to give titles to 200,000 house-

holds in urban slums and those on the outskirts of cities by the end of the year. Alongside, authorities are widening roads, laying sewage pipes, and installing water taps, toilets and playgrounds. "People who come to the cities are all contributing to its economic activity, yet they are considered encroachers," said G Mathi Vathanan, the state housing department commissioner. "The usual policy of settling them in the city's periphery doesn't work because they don't want to live so far away. So the idea behind the legislation was, why not settle them where they live, and transform these slums into liveable habitats?"

Drone mapping

The Odisha Land Rights to Slum Dwellers Act 2017 gives slum dwellers in small towns rights over up to 600 sq of land, while in the cities they get rights over up to 450 sq ft. It was unveiled last year by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who called it a "historic" legislation. Charity Tata Trusts is helping implement the mission, as are dozens of local charities that are conducting surveys and verifying documents.

Officials have made detailed maps of the slums after drone surveys and door-to-door interviews to fix property boundaries and ensure that no private lands are encroached. A slum dwellers' association in each settlement liaises with officials and a designated charity on the data and the applications for titles. The process is streamlined to avoid bureaucratic bottlenecks, with everyone communicating via mobile chat app WhatsApp, said Mathi Vathanan, showing notifications on his phone from the dozens of groups that he is a part of.

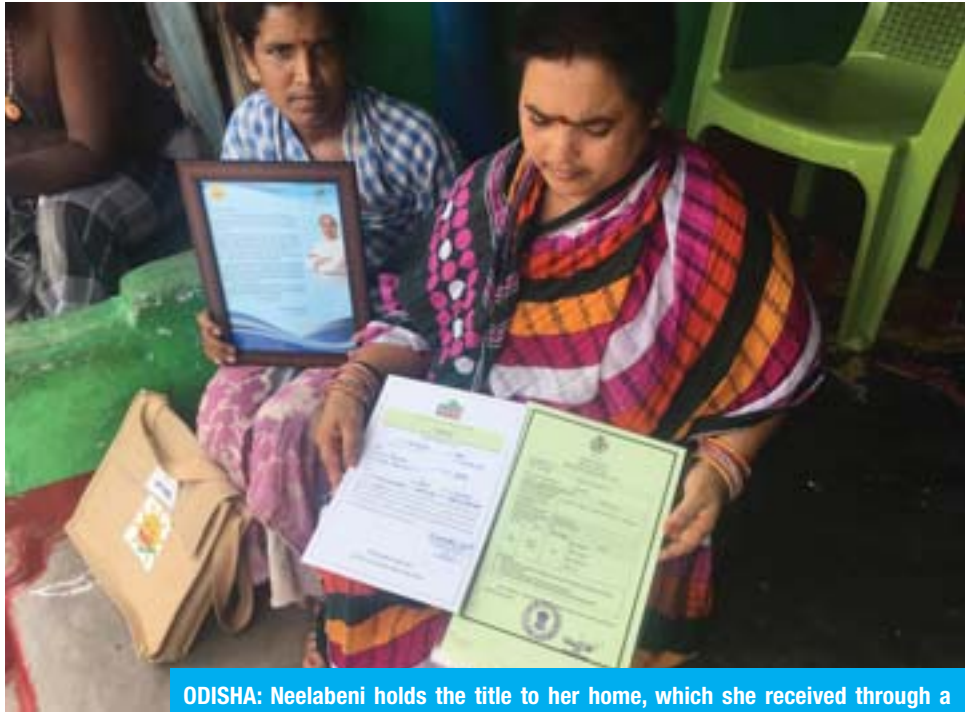
He was a district official in Ganjam, where

Gopalpur is located, when a Super Cyclone struck Odisha in 1999, killing nearly 10,000 people and damaging more than 1.5 million homes. "I realized then how inadequate shelters of the poor are," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "We attach so much value to land, we sometimes don't value people. Owning their homes can ensure their safety and dignity."

Across India, at least six homes are destroyed and 30 people forcibly evicted each hour as authorities modernize cities and build highways, activists say. Slum-dwellers have long opposed efforts by authorities to relocate them to distant suburbs, which limits their access to jobs and amenities. Instead, they favor in-situ upgrading of facilities and secure tenancy. But while several states have schemes to give land to the rural poor, the high cost of land in India's cities has hamstrung slum redevelopment and affordable housing schemes.

Feasible, sustainable

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Housing For All Mission in 2015, with a deadline of 2022. It aims to build 20 million urban housing units and 30 million rural homes. Despite the shortage, tens of thousands of low-cost homes are lying empty because they are too expensive for the urban poor, or because they are in undesirable locations. The Odisha program offers financial assistance of up to 200,000 rupees (\$2,900) along with the titles, and leaves construction to the homeowner. Officials have distributed more than 2,000 titles, and aim to hand titles to all 200,000 households by the end of the year. Odisha's model is "feasible and sustainable, and already imagined at scale", said Renu Khosla, director of the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence, which is assist-



ODISHA: Neelabeni holds the title to her home, which she received through a program to give land rights to slum dwellers. — Reuters photos

ing the state in the program. While other states have hesitated to settle slum dwellers because of a lack of political will and lobbying by developers, Odisha can succeed because it is a collective action led by the community, she said. The impact can be enormous. "Upgrading slums can trigger development of the entire town or city. So developing slums may be good for the city's development," she said.

In Gopalpur, Neelabeni's neighbours are buying cement, bricks and paint, and comparing notes on layout and design. Her home will have a single room and a kitchen, with a toilet added on later with separate funds, she said. "This house is just mud and bricks; we will demolish it and build a strong house that can withstand any cyclone," she said. "Once we have our new houses, we will have better lives." — Reuters

Extremists charged over Bangladesh cafe attack

DHAKA: Bangladesh police yesterday charged eight Islamist extremists over the savage 2016 attack claimed by Islamic State on a Dhaka cafe popular with Westerners that killed 22 people including 18 foreigners. Of the eight charged, "six have been arrested and two have absconded," Monirul Islam, the head of Dhaka police's counter-terrorism unit, told reporters.

"Their aim was to destabilise the country and turn the country into a militant state," Islam said. Police said the eight face a maximum sentence of death by hanging under anti-terrorism laws. The brazen assault on July 1, 2016 saw five militants with assault rifles and machetes storm the Holey Artisan Bakery cafe in Dhaka's well-heeled Gulshan neighborhood.

Nine Italians and seven Japanese were among the foreigners to be hacked or shot dead. Two policemen were also killed. Military commandos stormed the cafe after a 10-hour standoff and freed more than two dozen hostages. The attack claimed by the Islamic State group fuelled tensions over Islamist extremism in Muslim-majority Bangladesh.

All five militants were killed when police stormed the cafe. Eight others-including mastermind Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury, a Canadian of Bangladesh descent-were killed during raids in Dhaka and its suburbs months

after the attack. They included commanders of a new faction of the homegrown extremist group Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh.

One of the freed hostages, a British national of Bangladeshi origin named Hasnat Karim, was later detained by police over allegations he played a role into the attack. But Mohibul Islam Khan, counter-terrorism police deputy commissioner, said investigators found no evidence against Karim and his name has been left off the charge sheet. The government has repeatedly denied that international jihadist networks have a presence in Bangladesh. The IS-linked news agency Amaq however published extensive details of the attack, including photos from inside the cafe.

Monirul Islam said Rohan Imtiaz, 19, led the attack. Imtiaz had completed his A-levels at Scholastica, a school for the children of well-to-do families in Dhaka. The hostage crisis marked an escalation from a spate of murders claimed by IS and Al Qaeda of rights activists, gays, foreigners and religious minorities. It was seen as a major blow to the country's image as a moderate Muslim nation. Dozens of atheist writers, publishers, members of religious minorities, social activists and foreign aid workers have been murdered in Bangladesh since 2013. — AFP

Fears mount in Pakistan over military's election powers

ISLAMABAD: Fears have mounted over wide-ranging powers granted to military units overseeing Pakistan's polling stations when the country votes tomorrow, with opposition parties and analysts warning the move could erode trust in the tense contest. The Pakistan military will station over 370,000 troops nationwide to ensure the vote goes smoothly, the largest such deployment in the country's history on an election day.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) later said military officers would also be given magisterial powers, effectively making them judge and jury to punish individuals for illegal acts committed inside polling stations. "I don't know why they have given these powers, because that will unnecessarily create doubts in the minds of people," retired general and security analyst Talat Masood told AFP. "I don't think these powers have ever been granted."

Election observers also questioned the move, and said there was rising anxiety over the large military presence at the polls. "A lot of our interlocutors, and I would dare to say most of them, they raise serious concerns regarding the role of the military," said Dimitra Ioannou, deputy chief observer of the European Union Election Observation Mission.

Last week, Sherry Rehman — opposition leader in the Senate, the parliament's upper house — said the move could lead to potential conflicts and confusion. Raza Rabbani, another



RAWALPINDI: Pakistani soldiers patrol on a street beside a billboard featuring an image of Pakistani cricketer turned politician Imran Khan (top L) of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (Movement for Justice), ahead of general election. — AFP

high-profile senator, demanded a clarification from the ECP. The ECP said Sunday the presence of troops at polling stations is meant to ensure a "free and fair election". The military — which has ruled the country for roughly half its 70 year history — remains Pakistan's most powerful institution and has a long history of meddling in politics and judicial affairs — a charge it denies.

"It would be difficult to call the elections free and fair," Ibn Abdur Rehman of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan told AFP yesterday, following a press conference on media censorship during the campaign season. The controversy comes as increasing militant attacks on campaign events in the last month have raised

fears that insurgents may target voters. Three candidates have been killed in attacks at political events this month, including a member of cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party in a suicide attack on Sunday.

And yesterday, authorities announced an increased death toll — 153 — for an earlier attack on a rally in the town of Mastung in south-western Balochistan province, making it the second-deadliest terror attack in Pakistan's history. The increasingly bitter contest is expected to be a tight race between jailed former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's incumbent Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party and Khan's PTI. — AFP



BANDUNG: This picture taken on July 22, 2018 shows Indonesian officials standing near home appliances that were collected from inmates at the Sukamiskin jail. — AFP

Indonesian jailers busted over fancy cells

BANDUNG: Inmates at an Indonesian prison paid for luxury cells equipped with air conditioning, flat-screen TVs and private washrooms, anti-graft officials said, in the graft-riddled country's latest corruption scandal. Jail staff allegedly took bribes of 200-500 million rupiah (\$14,000-\$35,000) from inmates to renovate cells and supply banned mobile phones or even let them temporarily leave prison, Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) said.

Anti-graft agents arrested five people connected to the scandal at Sukamiskin prison, including inmates and the warden who got

cash and a pair of vehicles to look the other way, it added. A raid on Sunday turned up several cells that featured modern bathrooms with hot showers, full-sized refrigerators, coffee makers, microwave ovens and stereo loudspeakers, the KPK said. "We apologize to the Indonesian people," Sri Pughu Budi Utami, the director general of Indonesia's prisons, told reporters late Sunday.

"We're very sorry that we still have not been able to maximise our monitoring systems." A former tax official now serving time at Sukamiskin was once photographed watching a tennis tournament in Bali and had even travelled overseas on a fake passport when he was supposed to be in another jail. The prison's other inmates include a former chief justice and ex-house speaker Setya Novanto, who was convicted in April of taking millions of dollars in kickbacks and bribes linked to the national roll-out of government ID cards. They were not among the inmates or prison staff arrested Sunday. — AFP

Japan reopens beaches hit by 2011 disasters

TOKYO: Japan has reopened three beaches in regions devastated by the 2011 tsunami and resulting Fukushima nuclear disaster after years of reconstruction efforts, officials said yesterday. Local officials in Fukushima said they hoped the opening of the Haragamaobama beach would help change perceptions of the region, which has become inextricably linked with the 2011 disaster.

One of the reopened waterfronts is Haragamaobama beach in Fukushima prefecture, about 40 kilometres north of the crippled Daiichi

nuclear plant. The beach in the city of Soma is the closest to the plant of four beaches that the prefecture has reopened. "I'm delighted, because life in Soma had always been associated with the sea before the disaster," Hiroyuki Ito, secretary general of the Soma Tourism Association, told AFP.

Water quality inspection has not detected radioactive materials in the offshore seawater for years, and reopening the beach was only delayed while infrastructure for bathers was being built, he said. "I used to play on the beach as a child every day... but I couldn't let my daughter have the same experience, as she was a sixth grader" when the disaster hit the region, he said. "Even now, if you Google search images for 'Fukushima', the top search result shows a lot of photos of the nuclear plant and other negative images... but our everyday lives here are returning back to normal," he said. "We want people in foreign coun-

tries to know that Soma is a place to visit," he said, noting that the association uploaded the image of the opening of the beach Saturday on its Twitter account @somakanokoyokai.

Two other beaches affected by the devastating tsunami in Miyagi prefecture, north of Fukushima, also reopened this weekend, Miyagi officials said. Beaches on Japan's northern Pacific coast have been gradually reopening after the construction of huge dikes to prevent future tsunami damage and the restoration of sand that was washed away in the 2011 disaster. On March 11, 2011, a devastating 9.1-magnitude quake struck under the Pacific Ocean, and the resulting tsunami caused widespread damage and claimed thousands of lives. It also sent three reactors into meltdown at the Fukushima nuclear plant, causing Japan's worst postwar disaster and the most serious nuclear accident since Chernobyl in 1986. — AFP

Cambodia accuses former oppn members of urging poll boycott

PHNOM PENH: Cambodian authorities are investigating former opposition officials after accusing them of encouraging a boycott of controversial elections, one of the officials said yesterday. The Supreme Court dissolved the main opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) late last year, setting up an easy poll victory this coming Sunday for Prime Minister Hun Sen, who has ruled the country for 33 years.

The dissolution was accompanied by a crackdown on party members, many of whom fled the country. But in the lead-up to the poll some are pushing back by calling for a "clean-finger" campaign, referring to the ink used to mark people to stop them voting twice. Voting is not compulsory but officials have said urging others to boycott the poll is a crime and vowed to prosecute. The first known complaint was filed against ex-CNRP officials who appeared in

a photo on Facebook displaying a clean finger.

Chea Chiv, former head of the opposition party in Battambang province, told AFP the photo comes from an informal gathering which he and his wife hosted on Thursday with around 30 former CNRP officials.

"I showed the clean finger because I won't go to vote when there is no party that I love," he said. "They sued me for obstructing and inciting people not to go to vote." He and others described the complaint as intimidation and said they were not part of a wider campaign but wanted to express their personal preference. Several said they had also been monitored by plainclothes police.

"They are trying to silence people," said Kruiy Kimsaing, 44, a former district councillor who also appeared in the picture. Hang Puthea, a spokesman for the National election

Committee, told AFP that local election officials in Battambang received five complaints. He said the accused could face up to \$5,000 in fines if found guilty after an investigation by election officials. But it is unclear whether they will face immediate action.

Interior Minister Sar Kheng said in a speech streamed on his official Facebook page that the former officials should not be arrested. "Now calm down, let legal officers work on the case," he said. Analysts say Hun Sen fears a low turnout that could further damage the credibility of the election. Both the US and the EU have withdrawn funding for it but countries including China and Japan have offered support. Rhona Smith, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights in Cambodia, has urged the government to respect the freedom of voters and make clear that calling for a boycott is permitted.

She also expressed concern over reports that local authorities had threatened to withhold public services from those who did not vote for the ruling party. The foreign ministry said Monday it was "utterly dismayed" by the comments. — AFP

Analysis

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ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
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Too poor for periods, Zimbabwe's girls rely on rags, paper, leaves

When her monthly period comes, 17-year-old Maria Chaodza dismantles a home-made pillowcase and picks out pieces of its worn stuffing - an old, cloth rug - which she uses in place of the sanitary pad she cannot afford. Menstruation means missing school: Chaodza feels too ashamed of her makeshift pad to show her face as she battles days of heavy bleeding. Neither her parents, who are peasant farmers in Zimbabwe's Mashonaland West Province in Makonde rural district, nor her boyfriend in the village can afford to buy her sanitary wear.

Zimbabwe is suffering a sanitary wear crisis. With many schoolgirls too poor to buy the sort of basic products most teens take for granted, they rely on teachers' donations, torn strips of cloth, plants and old newspapers. In February this year, hundreds of girls and women gathered in the capital for a march dubbed "Happy Flow Campaign" to demand more affordable sanitary wear.

First Lady Auxillia Mnangagwa has distributed free sanitary pads to poor women and girls, and hopes are now rising that this year's elections might yet ease the crisis. "If we vote for the right person to lead our country, I'm sure things will get better for us, as poor woman, facing difficulties (getting) sanitary wear," said Chaodza. Until then, handouts and ersatz pads will have to do. "Some young girls resort to using weeds and leaves in place of sanitary pads, compromising their health," Obert Masaraure, president of the Amalgamated Rural Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "We appeal for free sanitary wear in our schools."

Along with the rural teachers, civil society groups such as the Youth Dialogue Action Network have stepped in to help. "We have managed to raise resources to enable us get sanitary wear for the poor women and girls, especially in rural areas. Sanitary wear is a big challenge to them because most families here live on less than \$1 a day," its director Catherine Mkwapati told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. It costs the equivalent of \$5 to buy one standard packet of pads in Zimbabwe, way beyond the reach of many families. It cost just \$1 in 2015, before the nation's economic crisis worsened. With average earnings per head of \$253 a month, most families would rather spend \$5 on a standard 20 kg bag of maize.

Torn towel

Even for grown women like 37-year-old Tracy Hungwe, who lives in the same rural district as Chaodza, so-called period poverty has become a repeated monthly problem. "I share a little torn towel with my 16-year-old daughter during our menstruation because buying actual sanitary wear from shops is very expensive," she told Thomson Reuters Foundation. "And even if they become cheaper, we have no money." Yet with two years of cash shortages worsening in this southern African nation, pads have only grown more expensive.

Companies such as Clovit Investments - which used to manufacture sanitary pads in Zimbabwe - ceased operations four years ago, so pads are now imported from neighboring countries like South Africa, boosting prices. In November, Zimbabwe's sole remaining sanitary wear maker, Onsdale Enterprises, faced closure as it lacked the foreign currency to import raw materials. It is not currently operating.

Politics of periods

Parliamentarians from the opposition Movement for Democratic Change party have urged the government to invest in the industry and provide free period products as a show of respect. "Sanitary wear should be made readily available free of charge just like condoms: government should pay for sanitary wear. Government should take the dignity of women and girls seriously," Jessie Majome, a Zimbabwean legislator from the opposition MDC party, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

But with a dearth of cash in the rural areas that are home to more than 70 percent of the population, women are hard hit. "Here in the village, even if a relative living in the city sends you money via your mobile phone, in order to buy (things) using that money, shops require physical money, not money transferred from your phone. This is hurting us," Chaodza said. Traders who sell imported sanitary products need foreign currency and a handsome margin to turn enough profit from their business, pushing prices out of the reach of many locals.

"Remember, we need foreign currency to go and buy these sanitary pads to sell, and we also need profit. We can't run a business on practicing mercy," Jimson Mugove, who sells wares imported from South Africa, told Thomson Reuters Foundation. Activists say the situation is now desperate, forcing tough decisions on anyone poor who menstruates. "Because they just want to have sanitary wear, some of the girls and women are in desperate mode and engage in sex work, just to have something to buy sanitary wear," Sarah Chikono, an activist with the rights group Women of Zimbabwe Arise, said. "But that doesn't end like that, because it's always tragic as some of them get infected with AIDS," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. — Reuters



Venezuelans expose cracks in Trinidad policy

Underneath a sign reading "Jesus was a refugee", a line of Venezuelan asylum seekers 30 people long stretches in front of a Catholic church in Trinidad's capital, Port of Spain. They have fled their homeland, where a political crisis and crippling recession have left people in the once-prosperous South American country jobless, battling poverty, and struggling with chronic shortages of food, medicine and other essentials. Miguel Vegas, 39, was an ambulance driver in Aragua state. He left after armed men hijacked his vehicle and held a gun to his head for a ride across town.

Last August, he flew to Trinidad, began working in construction and applied for asylum. He and his wife, a former health-care worker, sat on the curb with their two sons, waiting for Living Water Community, Trinidad's reception center for refugee and asylum applicants, to open. "We just want permission to work. We want to pay taxes," Vegas told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I'm simply looking for a basic quality of life for my future, which is my kids."

The family is among about 3,300 Venezuelans who had petitioned for asylum in Trinidad and Tobago as of April - more than in any other Caribbean country, according to the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR). The twin-island nation is an increasingly popular destination for middle-class Venezuelans looking for a fast exit, as it is just a 30-minute flight from the eastern part of their country or a couple of hours by boat. Once in Trinidad, a stable oil and gas-producing state with the highest per-capita GDP in the region, many don't look back. "I'm a refugee in the sense that I don't want to return to Venezuela," Vegas told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I can't deal with the unemployment, the crime, the abandonment."

Whether Trinidad wants them is less clear. The nation faces the existential ques-

tion of whether a small island can absorb significant numbers of refugees. Despite signing onto the UN Refugee Convention in 2000, the country has yet to adopt an asylum law. In April, the government deported 82 Venezuelans in a move the UNHCR called "a breach of international law". Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Keith Rowley bristled at the criticism. He told local media his country was "a little island" with limited space and 1.3 million people, and could not be turned into "a refugee camp" by the United Nations.

Trinidadian independent researcher Michele Reis said the country has "systematically failed to have an adequate migration policy", despite its multi-cultural demographics reflecting historic waves of newcomers, from European colonisers to enslaved Africans and indentured Indian labour.

Life in limbo

By the end of 2017, more than 1.5 million of Venezuela's 30 million people had moved into neighboring countries and beyond, according to the UNHCR. As of mid-July, roughly 858,300 had sought asylum or residency abroad, it said. In May, President Nicolas Maduro won re-election in a vote the Venezuelan opposition, United States and other Latin American nations decried as a sham, cementing an autocracy that has devastated the economy. Hyperinflation and a free-fall in the value of the bolivar currency against the dollar have left the minimum wage equal to just a handful of dollars a month.

That kind of economic instability prompted environmental engineer Andrea Rojas, 32, to call a cousin who had lived in Trinidad for decades and fly over on a tourist visa in 2016. She began quietly working in his coffee shop, relying on a barista course she had taken to sling lattes. "I can pay my rent, eat (and) other things that I can't do in Venezuela," she said on a

break before a second evening shift at a restaurant.

In March, unable to renew a student visa for English classes, she joined the line-up seeking asylum papers at Living Water, which declined to comment for this story. But the white piece of paper with the UNHCR logo she carries around, certifying her asylum application, does not give her legal permission to work. Nor does it offer security, especially since the April deportations, which included asylum seekers. "(Trinidadians) think we are prostitutes, we bring drugs, guns, that sort of thing," Rojas said.

Rooms in or near neighborhoods where educated Venezuelans work in restaurants and bars rent for about 1,500 Trinidad and Tobago dollars (\$226) per month, with migrants living up to five per room to save money. Rojas hopes eventually to move on to Argentina or Spain. "My life is on stand-by," she said.

'Worse than dogs'

UNHCR spokeswoman Sibylla Brodzinsky said her agency was working



Venezuelan migrant Miguel Vegas (right) and his family pose for a portrait while they wait outside Living Waters Community, a processing center for refugee and asylum applicants, in Port of Spain on May 23, 2018. — Reuters

Berlin locals, drug dealers meet as welcome wavers

Dog walkers, cyclists and doting parents all enjoy Berlin's Gorkitz Park. Everyone goes about their business, including the drug dealers - many of them migrants from west Africa - who work the park gates, seeking out potential customers. Nobody seems much to mind the cannabis: it is just accepted as the way things are in this hipster neighborhood of Berlin. But after getting to know the dealers while walking her dogs each day, one local woman decided to do something about it. Migrants can do way more than deal drugs, she said.

"We want to show they can have normal jobs and this can reverse the whole situation in the park. If you give migrants opportunities they will take them," said Brigitta Varadinek, founder of Bantabaa - "meeting point" in the mandinka language, which is spoken in west Africa. As well as weekly German lessons and legal advice as a first step to integration, the social enterprise she founded in 2015 offers employment opportunities in its cafe and a place to live for 15 people chosen for its work training scheme.

Not welcome

There are more than 300,000 unregistered migrants in Germany, drawn largely by the promise of work. Immigration is increasingly shaping politics in the United States and Europe. Wealthy Germany is where the newly-arrived mostly end up and Chancellor Angela Merkel is under pressure to curb their numbers. Since Mediterranean arrivals spiked in 2015, when more than a million refugees and migrants reached the EU, only about 41,000 people have made it to the bloc across the sea this year. But opinion polls show migration is the top concern



The entrance to Gorkitz Park, where African migrants deal in drugs in Berlin, is seen on June 21, 2018. — Reuters

of the EU's 500 million citizens. In Germany, dozens of charities and social enterprises are working to ease their integration, with a host of initiatives from retraining refugees as city tour guides to helping them fulfil the country's complex bureaucratic obligations.

Escaping slavery

Slim and shy to speak, Mass, 38, works at the cafe. He has been in Germany since 2015 and spent two days sleeping in the park every week when travelling into Berlin to seek work from a refugee shelter in Mecklenburg Vorpommern, the federal state north of Berlin. Bantabaa employed him because, of the many migrants who come asking for work, he was one of the few with a CV. Although Mass - who did not want to reveal his surname - has been refused asylum, he cannot be returned to Mauritania as he does not have a passport. He does, however, have a work permit.

Mass fled slavery in Mauritania, working as a bonded laborer for five years for a man who had been subcon-

tracted by a German construction company. He was given food and shelter, but said his boss kept his money. The West African country has one of the highest rates of slavery in the world, with two in 100 people living as slaves, according to the 2018 Global Slavery Index. Mass said he cannot return to Mauritania because he would be forced back into slavery. If he refused to work for the man who owns him, he would be killed, he said.

Like his 80 fellow passengers, he was told to bring enough food and water for a five-day journey from Morocco to Spain by boat, for which he had paid Å500. But bad weather hit. "The journey was prolonged to two weeks. Food and drinking water ran out and 15 people on board died as a result. They were tossed overboard," said Mass. He eventually arrived in Italy. The people in the park have come looking for work because they don't have any in their home countries, Mass said. "Bantabaa is doing a lot for the African people that work here and it doesn't get any support from the state. They could help them with money or clothing. The state should support them," Mass told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Political change

Chancellor Angela Merkel offered a warm welcome to refugees in 2015 but is under pressure over a policy that is threatening to undermine her ruling coalition. The situation in Gorkitz Park is tolerated because of its location in Kreuzberg, with its liberal local government. But things have changed, said Varadinek, who continues to work as a lawyer while running her social enterprise. So far, it has helped 50 people and is largely funded by Varadinek, with donations from companies, charities and friends. Her aim is to help more migrants as the cafe makes more money.

The drug dealing still exists and the political atmosphere has soured - but Bantabaa will keep trying to bridge the gap. "We will not solve the whole migrant question," Varadinek said. "It's a question of helping each other not to change the whole world. This is something we cannot do." — Reuters

TUESDAY, JULY 24, 2018

Business

13 KFH reports KD 95.2 million net profit for shareholders in H1 '18



14 Nissan LEAF NISMO to make world debut



15 Trash heroes and scavenger apps battle Bali 'garbage emergency'



VIVA reports KD 23.8 million net profit for H1

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the financial results for six-month period ended 30 June 2018; whereby VIVA's net profit grew to reach KD 23.8 million recording growth of 21 percent compared to the same period in 2017. Whereas the revenues during the first six-month period of 2018 reached KD 149.1 million recording a growth rate of 7.6 percent compared to the same period in 2017. These results reflect VIVA's focus on achieving superior customer experience, high quality of services, innovative promotions and packages offered to its customers to meet their needs and expectations, inspired by our customers' confidence which motivates us to provide the best services with the highest possible quality.

Commenting on the six-month's financial results, Dr Mahmoud Ahmed Abdulrahman, VIVA's Chairman said: "Despite the high competition witnessed in Kuwait Telecommunication Market, VIVA was able to achieve growth in profitability and revenues to sustain the operational efficiency to ensure generating positive return to our shareholders. These Results were achieved by an integrated management approach from a highly professional team that reinforces VIVA's sub-



Dr Mahmoud Ahmed Abdulrahman



Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran

- Revenues reach KD 149.1 million, a growth of 7.6%
- Net profit records 21% growth

stantial and positive role as a leading telecommunications company that always provides intelligent communications solutions to satisfy the needs of its customers and meet their needs".

Ability to grow

He added: "VIVA has demonstrated its

ability to achieve growth in the net profit amid the current fierce conditions in Kuwait Telecommunication sector and the decline in telecom tariffs thus pressurizing the profit margin of all telecom companies in Kuwait. VIVA managed to achieve net profit of KD 23.8 million (earnings per share of 48 fils) during the

six month period ended 30 June 2018 compared to net profit of KD 19.7 million (earnings per share of 39 fils) during the same period in 2017."

On his part, Eng. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran, VIVA's CEO said: "Results of the six-month period ended 30 June 2018 came in line with VIVA's goals and boundless ambitions to achieve an increase in its operational revenues, profitability and strengthen its leadership in the telecommunication market. It is noteworthy to mention that, VIVA has won many awards including "Best Network Development", in the MENA region, presented at the third annual 5G MENA Awards 2018 Ceremony, and "Speedtest Award Winner 2017 - Kuwait's Fastest Mobile Network" by Ookla, and launched Voice over Long Term Evolution Plus 'VoLTE Plus' technology, and was the first telecom company in Kuwait that has physically demo its "5G" services to its customers."

Al-Badran added: "VIVA has achieved good levels of revenues and increase in the profitability which improved the company's financial and operational efficiency. As a result, VIVA recorded revenues of KD 149.1 million during the first six-month period in 2018 and achieved net profit of KD 23.8 million (earnings per share of 48 fils) recording growth of 21 percent com-

pared to the same period in 2017, whereas EBITDA reached KD 37 million compared to KD 32.3 million during the same period in 2017. On the other hand, VIVA customer base has reached 2.35 million at the end of June, 2018".

On his part, Mohammed Bin AbdulMohsen Al-Assaf, VIVA's CFO, said that "VIVA's financial results reflect its ability to compete, sustain revenues and maintain its position as the second largest telecom operator in the Kuwaiti market in term of market share in the telecommunication sector. The company managed to reach nearly 0x leverage ratio due to its safe financial policy at the end of June 2018 as compared to 0.27x recorded at end of June 2017". Al-Assaf said, "we started to observe the impact of the cost optimization program adopted by the company during the current year on profitability, as the company adopted a balanced and effective financial policy in managing CAPEX and operating expenses". He added: "We will continue our hard work in implementing our strategy to maintain our competitive edge and achieve further growth and success in the Kuwaiti telecom market through offering innovative products and services in line with the latest technology to meet our customers' needs".

Total Revenues

149.1

KD million

The Board of Directors of the Kuwait Telecommunications Company (VIVA) is pleased to announce to its shareholders that the company has achieved a net profit of KD 23.8 million during the first half of the financial year 2018.

2018
First Half
37.0
KD Million
EBITDA

2018
First Half
23.8
KD Million
Net Profit

2018
First Half
48
Kuwaiti Fils
EPS

2018
June 30
2.35
Million
Subscribers

Business

SABIC's deal lets Saudi delay Aramco IPO, spend on growth

Major goal of Aramco IPO was bolstering sovereign fund

DUBAI: A proposed reshuffle of state assets would allow Saudi Arabia to delay the listing of national oil giant Aramco until 2020 or beyond while still spending on economic development projects, according to three sources familiar with the matter. Late last week Aramco confirmed a Reuters report that it was working on a possible purchase of a "strategic stake" in local petrochemicals maker Saudi Basic Industries Corp from the Public Investment Fund (PIF), the kingdom's top sovereign wealth fund.

The deal could inject tens of billions of dollars into the PIF, giving it resources to proceed with its plans to create jobs and diversify the economy beyond oil exports, including a \$500 billion business zone in the northwest of the country.

A major goal of the planned Aramco listing - which was initially slated for the end of 2018 and could prove the biggest IPO in history - was to raise money for the PIF, making the fund an engine for transforming the Saudi economy.

A SABIC deal would allow the government to buy time for the initial public offer of shares in Aramco, according to industry and international banking sources, who declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter. It could raise

roughly as much money for the PIF as an Aramco IPO, while giving the government more time to reach decisions on contentious aspects of the flotation such as whether Aramco shares should be listed on a foreign market as well as in Riyadh. "The PIF will have more cash to invest and there is no need to IPO now," one of the sources said. Aramco declined to comment on its IPO plans, and a Saudi government official did not respond to a request for comment.

Aramco's Chief Executive Amin Nasser said on Friday in an interview with Saudi-owned Al Arabiya TV that the SABIC acquisition was a complex deal and would need a certain timeframe to be completed, delaying the Aramco IPO. "There is no doubt that the potential acquisition of a strategic stake in SABIC ... will delay the IPO," he said.

Valuation

Final decisions on the listing rest with Prince Mohammed, the sources said. The planned IPO is the centerpiece of an ambitious plan championed by the crown prince to diversify Saudi Arabia's economy beyond oil. When he announced the plan to sell about 5 percent of

Aramco in 2016, he predicted the sale would value the whole company at \$2 trillion or more. Since then, however, many estimates by oil and gas industry analysts have been far lower, around \$1.0-1.5 trillion, implying the PIF would receive a \$50-75 billion windfall from the IPO.

The fund owns 70 percent of SABIC, which has a market capitalization of \$104 billion. Aramco has not said exactly how much of SABIC it might buy but two sources told Reuters yesterday that Aramco aims to become a "majority" owner; buying the PIF's entire stake could give the fund over \$70 billion.

The PIF has officially reported assets of over \$220 billion but most of that is believed to be tied up in real estate or stakes in big Saudi companies, which could not be sold without undermining the local property and stock markets. The SABIC deal would put temporary pressure on the finances of Aramco, the government's main source of revenue. But higher oil prices this year have given Riyadh more money to play with. Investment bank Jadwa forecasts state oil revenues of \$154 billion this year instead of the \$131 billion budgeted by Riyadh last December. —Reuters

Fiat limits its losses after visionary boss departs

ROME: Fiat Chrysler avoided heavy losses on the Milan stock exchange yesterday after its boss of 14 years Sergio Marchionne stepped down at the weekend due to serious health issues believed to be life-threatening. As trading got under way, sister companies Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), Ferrari and CNH Industrial saw their shares fall over 4 percent each.

The three groups are controlled by the Agnelli family. By 1 pm (1100 GMT), FCA's stock had edged upwards to a 3 percent loss. Ferrari was down 4.4 percent while CNH Industrial lost 2.1 percent.

The losses came after Marchionne stepped down Saturday after 14 years at the helm of Fiat.

The 66-year-old is gravely ill in hospital in Zurich after suffering serious complications following surgery on his right shoulder last month. In a statement the Fiat Chrysler group said Marchionne "will not come back to work," while the Italian media described his condition as "irreversible" yesterday.

The Italian-Canadian executive had taken the reins at Fiat in 2004.

He revamped Fiat, Italy's premier private enterprise, from top to bottom. In 2009, he merged Fiat with US automaker Chrysler, then hived off its industrial vehicles in 2011 to create CNH Industrial and successfully spun off the luxury brand Ferrari in January 2016. John Elkann, FCA chairman who will also take over as chairman of racing car brand Ferrari, said that Marchionne "has been the best CEO that anyone could ask for and, to me personally, a true mentor, partner and close friend."

"He taught us to have the courage to challenge the status quo, to break with convention and go beyond the tried and tested. He has always pushed everybody to learn, to grow and to excel—often beyond their own limits—starting always with himself," Elkann said. —AFP

US home sales see 3rd straight decline amid record prices

WASHINGTON: The tight US housing market pushed sales of existing homes down for the third month in row in June while prices hit a record high, according to industry data released yesterday.

The rising prices and falling sales came despite a slight uptick in supply, suggesting would-be buyers were being priced out of the market. With a downward revision to May, the June figures suggested the housing sector could contribute only modestly to GDP growth in the second quarter, which is expected to be robust.

Sales of single-family houses, townhouses, condos and co-ops fell 0.6 percent compared to May, to an annual rate 5.38 million units, the lowest level since January, the National Association of Realtors said in its monthly report. This left sales 2.2 percent below their level of a year ago, and was significantly below economists' expectations.

Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist, said the national market was in the grip of a "severe" housing shortage.

"What is for sale in most areas is going under contract very fast and in many cases, has multiple offers," he said in a statement. "This dynamic is keeping home price growth elevated, pricing out would-be buyers and ultimately slowing sales." In the 76th straight month of increases, the median home price jumped to a new all-time high of \$276,900, 5.2 percent above compared June of last year.

But the inventory of existing homes available for sale rose 4.3 percent to 1.95 million units. That was 0.5 percent higher than in June 2017 — the first year-on-year increase in three years. Properties sold quickly, typically within 26 days, down from 28 days a year ago, according to NAR. Analysts say years of steady but slow economic growth have produced strong demand for single-family homes, with a generation of millennials at long last able to move out of their parents' homes. But rising input costs, scarce labor and a significant share of housing stock held for rental by investors, have depressed available supplies. —AFP

China rejects Trump accusations of currency manipulation



NANTONG: An employee counts 100-yuan notes at a bank in Nantong in China's eastern Jiangsu province yesterday. —AFP

BEIJING: China yesterday rejected accusations by US President Donald Trump that it was manipulating the yuan to give its exporters an edge, saying Washington appeared "bent on provoking a trade war". Trump launched his latest trade salvo on Friday, accusing China and the European Union of currency manipulation and saying he was ready to impose tariffs on all Chinese imports coming into the United States. But China's Foreign Ministry denied the charge during a daily briefing in Beijing, saying the yuan's rate was determined by market forces.

"China has no desire to spur exports through competitive devaluation of its currency," ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters.

While it does let market forces play a role, China keeps the yuan within a narrow trading band that its adjusts daily and is widely known to intervene, which has triggered past US allegations of manipulation, including from Trump. "As to the US being bent on

provoking a trade war, China does not want a trade war but is not afraid of a trade war," Geng said, when asked about Trump's threat to impose across-the-board tariffs on Chinese goods. "When necessary, China will fight. Threats and intimidation will not work on the Chinese people." 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.

With the trade conflict escalating, fears of a parallel currency war have emerged as the yuan has tumbled over the last several weeks, sparking Trump's ire.

A weaker yuan gives Chinese exports a price advantage overseas, ameliorating some of the impact of the US tariffs, economists have said. —AFP

CBK-Mastercard discount on BA flights

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) has announced a 16 per cent discount on all British Airways flights departing from Kuwait for clients holding CBK-British Airways Mastercard.

CBK explained that clients wishing to benefit from the offer will have to click the link 'ba.com/cbkoffer' on the bank's website for more details and booking between 1st June and 31st December 2018 to travel before 31st December, 2019.

Notably, CBK is the first bank in the Middle East to issue cards holding joint logos of both CBK and British Airways which come in three types: Mastercard World, Mastercard Platinum and pre-paid Mastercards which all grant holders Avios points on British Airways executive club.

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Business

KFH reports KD 95.2 million net profit for shareholders in H1 ‘18

Earnings per share 15.23 fils, an increase of 16.6 %

KUWAIT: Chairman of Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq said that KFH has, by the grace of Allah, reported net profits of KD 95.22 million for the first half of 2018 for KFH shareholders compared to KD 81.64 million for the same period last year i.e. an increase of 16.6 percent.

Total financing income for H1 this year reached KD 424.14 million i.e. a growth of 22.2 percent compared to the same period last year. Net financing income for H1 this year reached KD 277.84 million i.e. a growth of 31.8 percent compared to the same period last year. Total operating income for the first half of the year reached KD 389.87 million, i.e. an increase by 13.6 percent and net operating income reached KD 235.80 million, i.e. a growth of 17.7 percent compared to the same period last year.

The cost to income ratio decreased to 39.5 percent for the first half of 2018, compared to 41.6 percent for the same period last year.

Earnings per share for the first half of 2018 reached 15.23 fils, compared to 13.06 fils for the same period last year i.e. an increase of 16.6 percent. Total assets for H1 this year reached KD 17.624 billion i.e. a growth of 1.5 percent compared to last year end.

Finance portfolio reached KD 9.561 billion i.e. an increase of KD 345 million or 3.7 percent compared to last year end. Total deposits reached KD 11.947 billion i.e. an increase of KD 350 million or 3.0 percent compared to last year end.

Sustainable growth

Al-Marzouq indicated that the positive financial results and the stable and sustainable growth confirm the success of KFH's strategy of the development of current customer base, innovation based on the new digital financial technology (fintech) and achievement of operational excellence, while achieving harmony among KFH group banks to ensure sustainable growth, enhanced risk policies and adherence to regulations.



Hamad Al-Marzouq



- Net financing income increased by 31.8% to KD 278m

He added in a press release that KFH is moving forward towards achieving rewarding returns for shareholders and investors and continuing the upward trend in profits despite the competitive environment and the economic challenges.

Al-Marzouq referred to the great success of KFH efforts in focusing on core banking business and divesting nonstrategic investments to improve asset quality while delivering superior innovation and customer service excellence in an attempt to achieve its vision of leading the international development of Islamic financial services, and becoming the most trusted and sustainably most profitable Sharia-compliant bank in the world.

Fintech priority

He stressed the importance of making strides in the strategy of adopting the modern technology and enhancing the advanced digital services, indicating future technology is the element of evolution.

Islamic finance can take advantage of technology to provide more efficient and accurate services to customers, helping to meet their banking needs that go beyond

their expectations. Fintech is at the forefront of the interests of KFH that has made great strides in providing high end electronic and digital services. KFH was a pioneer in rolling out a large variable package of advanced banking and investment products to meet customers' finance and investment needs as per the highest international standards of quality and efficiency.

Performance integration

Al-Marzouq said that the performance Integration among Group Banks has achieved great success. KFH group banks in Turkey, Malaysia, Bahrain and Germany have continued their outstanding and successful performance in accordance with the set plans and strategies to benefit from the elements of strength in each market in which they operate. Group subsidiaries continued collaboration and coordination for further efficiency in performance, thus better return on customers and shareholders and further boost to the economic development.

Financing projects

Al-Marzouq emphasized KFH leadership in financing major and infrastructure projects

in line with KFH strategy in supporting the national economy and achieving the comprehensive development. In addition, this comes as part of KFH's contribution to the development efforts and assisting companies to develop their business. KFH signed a contract of credit facility with Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) to participate in financing the company's \$2.3 billion Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import. KFH was selected to lead the deal of the Islamic banks for their share in the \$500 million. KFH financed different mega projects in Kuwait and the countries where it operates of which inking credit facility agreement of KD 124.6 million for financing terminal II building for Kuwait International Airport, and 200 million euros credit facility for the construction of Canakkale Bridge in Turkey. In addition, KFH and Kuwait Projects Company Holding (KIPCO), signed a Memorandum of Cooperation 'MOC' stating that KFH offers sharia-compliant financing solutions for individual purchasers of residential or commercial property in Hessa Al-Mubarak District real estate development project. KFH inked credit facility of KD 120 million with Mena Homes Real estate

Company, affiliated to Kuwait Projects Company Holding (KIPCO).

He noted that KFH succeeded in supporting the small and medium enterprises SMEs, indicating KFH serves over 1000 customers of this segment.

He said that KFH enjoys a leadership position in the Sukuk market and the Islamic financial services in general. The vast experience of KFH Group in the Sukuk issuance has positioned it as a trustworthy and highly recognized organization by major corporates and governments globally. The various structures used by KFH Group in arranging Sukuk have made Sukuk to be highly competitive and efficient.

Positive ratings

Al-Marzouq reiterated that the positive ratings of KFH by international rating agencies, the prestigious international awards granted by global institutions and enlisting it in the premier market in Boursa Kuwait are considered as a positive indicator on the soundness and success of set plans.

Social responsibility

KFH's social responsibility and contribution was diversified and comprehensive for development of society, thus reinforcing the concept of "sustainable growth". KFH has adopted certain fundamental aspects to perform its social role including education, health, youth, and people with special needs to confirm the leadership in social responsibility. He explains that the total social contributions of KFH during the last two decades account for over USD500million, among of which KD48 million paid to Zakat House in the last 7 years.

Al-Marzouq concluded by conveying his sincere thanks to all shareholders and customers for their continuous and valuable support and trust in KFH activities and business. He extended his appreciation to all regulatory authorities for their support. He appreciated the efforts of KFH staff and the executive management for their distinguished performance.

Praise be to Allah



Financial Results for the First Half of 2018

	30/06/2018	30/06/2017	%
Net Profit for Shareholders "KD Million"	95.22	81.64	16.6
Earnings per Share "Fils"	15.23	13.06	16.6
Total Financing Income "KD Million"	424.14	346.97	22.2
Net Financing Income "KD Million"	277.84	210.84	31.8
Total Operating Income "KD Million"	389.87	343.18	13.6
Net Operating Income "KD Million"	235.80	200.27	17.7

	30/06/2018	31/12/2017	%
Total Assets "KD Billion"	17.624	17.358	1.5
Financing Receivables "KD Billion"	9.561	9.216	3.7
Depositors' Accounts "KD Billion"	11.947	11.597	3.0

Business

Nissan LEAF NISMO to make world debut

World's best-selling electric car joins NISMO's road car

YOKOHAMA: The Nissan LEAF NISMO will go on sale July 31 in Japan - combining, for the first time, the excitement and advanced technologies of the world's best-selling electric car with the sporty image and performance of the NISMO road car series.

The Nissan LEAF NISMO features a custom tuning computer for more responsive acceleration, custom tires and suspension for improved handling and ride comfort, and stylish exterior and interior design.

The model is based on the new Nissan LEAF, which debuted in October 2017. The new LEAF offers the exhilarating acceleration and environmental performance of a 100 per cent electric powertrain, a dynamic design, and advanced technologies such as e-Pedal and the ProPILOT and ProPILOT Park autonomous driving features.

The new Nissan LEAF is the icon of Nissan Intelligent Mobility, the company's vision for changing how cars are powered, driven and integrated into society. It has won several awards for its cutting-edge technology and zero-emission performance. The LEAF won the "2018 World Green Car" award at the New York International Auto Show and has received 5-star safety ratings from both the Japan New Car Assessment Program and the European New Car Assessment Program.

Nissan aims to sell 1 million electrified vehicles a year, including the new Nissan LEAF, globally by fiscal 2022.

NISMO, Nissan's motorsports and in-house tuning division, launched its road car



Lineup for the first time; will go on sale July 31

series with the Nissan Juke NISMO in 2013. It has since added the Nissan March NISMO, Nissan Note NISMO, Nissan 370Z NISMO, Nissan GT-R NISMO and Nissan Serena NISMO.

The following is an overview of the Nissan LEAF NISMO:

Exterior design

The Nissan LEAF NISMO features the characteristic layered double wings of the NISMO road car series, improving down force without compromising drag coefficient. Signaling the high-performance driving provided by its low center of gravity, the exterior also includes custom 18-inch aluminum wheels that minimize air resistance.

The nine available body colors include the NISMO series' custom Brilliant Silver (M)/Super Black two-tone and the Dark Metal Grey (M)/Super Black two-tone.

The sporty interior appeals to the senses with prominent use of NISMO's custom red accents, including the three-spoke steering wheel with a red center mark. The instrument panel features a custom carbon-like finish,



and the electronic shift has a gun metal chrome finish.

Chassis performance

The Nissan LEAF NISMO's dedicated 18-inch high-grip tires and custom suspension system provide a comfortable ride and stable handling. Its custom-tuned electric power steering and Intelligent Trace Control (corner-

ing stabilization system) provide high stability and lane-tracing abilities.

Comfortable acceleration

The custom tuning computer in the Nissan LEAF NISMO allows for a delicate but strong acceleration response. This results in comfortable driving on both city streets and winding roads.

NBK makes payments faster and easier with 'Quick Pay'

KUWAIT: Making daily money transactions faster, easier and more secure, anytime and anywhere, the National Bank of Kuwait enables customers to receive funds with few taps, thanks to the newly launch 'Quick Pay' service available through the NBK Mobile Banking app.

The service comes as part of the Bank's continued efforts to provide customers with a satisfying banking experience every day. The 'Quick Pay' service is an instant and easy way to receive money into their personal accounts and a convenient way to pay bills or pay back a friend. Whether a week-day, holiday, day or night, the service is available in Kuwaiti Dinars and from any local bank. Customers do not need to add lengthy beneficiary details, but simply add the payer or receiver's email or mobile number to securely receive money transfers.

Hala Al-Shoaibi, Senior Alternative Channels Manager, Consumer Banking



Hala Al-Shoaibi

Group, National Bank of Kuwait, said: "Quick Pay is one of our newest services and we're receiving positive feedback from customers for enabling them to conveniently receive money anywhere, anytime."

Quick Pay can be accessed through the updated NBK Mobile Banking app. Once updated, Quick Pay will allow customers to create a link for the payment to be made and share the link by SMS or email with the payer. Payments can be made by other NBK customers or non-NBK customers holding a debit card from a local bank. Al-Shoaibi added: "Our objective is to innovate solutions

that make daily transactions easier. At NBK, we are focused on constantly upgrading our online and mobile banking services to give customers additional alternatives to access their money, wherever and whenever they need, and decide when, where and how to bank. We want to give them the ultimate banking experience."

NBK's Online and Mobile Banking solutions provide a complete banking experience convenient for every segment of customers. The wide array of solutions is constantly enhanced for an advanced and secure service. Customers can transfer funds locally or abroad, pay bills including local mobile phone bills, transfer money between accounts, and much more through an easy and interactive interface.

Honda Alghanim brings you its most exclusive deals for summer!

KUWAIT: Keen to provide its loyal shoppers with exceptional offers as per their specific needs, Honda Alghanim, the exclusive distributor of Honda cars, motorcycles and marine equipment in Kuwait, launched its summer special deals on the 2018 Civic, Pilot, Odyssey, Odyssey-J, and CR-V vehicles. Customers who wish to take advantage of this unique saving opportunity can now acquire their favorite Honda car at irresistible prices and benefit as well from Honda Alghanim's exclusive warranty and after-sales services. Over and above that, Honda City's enthusiasts will be able to land their hand on the car synonymous of practicality with minimum installments as low as KD 79 per month.

Honda Alghanim offers its customers the chance to own one of its internationally admired cars thanks to their durability and modernly fresh design, yet at unmatched prices. This summer campaign brings exclusive offers on latest models, including the all-new Civic, acclaimed as the city's ideal car, setting new standards with its superior performance and sporty design. Equipped with a 1.5, 1.6 or 2.0 liters engine, the Honda Civic 2018 displays automatic side mirrors, a 7-inch touch screen, as well as a luxurious cabin for maximum comfort.

Customers who are looking for a family vehicle can count on the Odyssey (starting at KD 9,999) or Odyssey-J (starting at KD 7,777) being the best in their class in terms of spaciousness, high-performance, and fuel efficiency.



Known as the absolute vehicle for families, the Odyssey series provides safe performance and enjoys state-of-the-art technology owing to the rear-seat DVD entertainment system. Furthermore, a child safety car seat can be easily placed in the Odyssey and Odyssey-J, making of it the ultimate car for children's daily trip to school, housewives' daily shopping routine, and weekend trips. Honda Alghanim is offering its customers as well the chance to own the compact crossover CR-V at a very unique

price (starting at KD 6,999 only). Honda Alghanim's summer offer additionally includes the Pilot, the largest car in Honda's fleet with seating for as many as eight persons. Promoting sophisticated qualities along a unique interior and exterior features, this four-wheel-drive modern SUV has sold nearly 1.4 million vehicles since first released, making this stylish, practical, and comfortable car the perfect choice for families looking to embark on fun-filled journeys.

50 Ooredoo 5G network towers now live

DOHA: Ooredoo has yesterday announced that the first commercial 5G network in the world has now reached 50 sites in Qatar. Since Ooredoo announced it was the first operator in the world to launch a 5G network commercially in May, the company has invested heavily in rolling-out the next-generation technology to ensure Qatar is at the forefront of 5G developments and the 5G ecosystem.

Thanks to this latest milestone some of Qatar's most populated areas in Doha are now 5G enabled, meaning a huge number of Ooredoo customers and businesses will be able to instantly access the 5G network when devices become available.

As well as investing in the 5G roll-out, Ooredoo is thoroughly testing a batch of the first-ever live 5G home broadband devices. The 25 devices in Qatar are being tested on Ooredoo's 5G network to ensure the performance is seamless in various use-cases before being made available to customers.

So far, the company has announced the new 5G home broadband devices will work on both the Ooredoo 4G and 5G network and can achieve speeds of up to 2 Gbps, 20 times the speeds of Ooredoo's 100Mbps fibre.

Waleed Al Sayed, Chief Executive Officer, Ooredoo Qatar, said: "As the countdown to 2022 has begun, we need to ensure that Qatar is ready ahead of time, in all sectors. As a proud Qatari company, we are preparing our network now so that it can seamlessly serve our country and peo-



ple, and the thousands of expected visitors. 5G will enable our customers to download movies in seconds, stream VR gaming experiences like never before and open up a world of smart technology."

"We're working tirelessly to reach the 100 5G sites milestone, and we're pushing the 5G Home Broadband device to its limit, to make sure it's 5G ready and Qatar worthy," added Waleed Al-Sayed.

Ooredoo's 5G network roll-out will have a hugely positive impact on many business sectors and organizations in Qatar. Most noticeably, 5G serves as the next step in network evolution, as it has much higher speeds and capacity, and extreme low latency. Ooredoo 5G will enable new types of applications like driverless cars and smart roads, the connection of millions of low powered connected devices, Augmented Reality and much more.

Due to world-wide manufacturing limitations, Ooredoo's 5G Supernet network is not yet accessible by smartphones, however, the company has stated that it is working to rapidly roll-out its state-of-the-art network so that consumers and businesses across Qatar can instantly benefit as soon as compatible devices are made available. Ooredoo welcomes device manufacturers and developers of 5G use cases to Qatar so that arrangements can be made for them to test against the world's first, deployed, commercial 5G network.

Ooredoo provides smart home solutions with Arlo

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait announced the launch of three new smart home devices from Arlo, a NetGear product for monitoring and surveillance. The launch of the product reiterates Ooredoo's commitment to embracing digitalization, with the growing demands for online and digital services in Kuwait, especially in the fast-paced telecom industry. The new devices target families and small business owners, with the ability to be monitored via a smartphone application, in addition to easy installation and configuration, without the need for technicians.

The new products include the Arlo Pro 2, which has a wireless rechargeable battery that lasts up to 2 months, a mobile camera, in addition to motion and sound detectors and Night Vision Technology. The range also includes Arlo Go, a SIM-enabled wire-free weather proffer camera, 2 way audio, and the Arlo Baby, a device that can play soothing music and lights, in addition to the ability to record the parents' voice to soothe and comfort crying babies. Additionally, the camera has air temperature sensors to ensure that the environment is comfortable and set to the desired temperature.

With the increase of interest in smart home solutions, Ooredoo is working extensively with different partners to provide the best products and services for its customers.



Qatar Airways to launch direct flights to Gothenburg, Sweden

DOHA: Qatar Airways is pleased to announce that it will launch direct five-times weekly flights to Gothenburg, Sweden starting 12 December, making it the airline's second Swedish gateway after Stockholm.

Five weekly flights to Gothenburg will be served with a Boeing 787-8 aircraft, featuring 22 seats in Business Class and 232 seats in Economy Class.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, Akbar Al-Baker, said: "It is with great pleasure that we announce the launch of direct services to Gothenburg, our second gateway into Sweden. Gothenburg is a charming city with much to offer both business and leisure travellers. This new direct route demonstrates our commitment to expanding our presence in the Nordic countries, a highly important market for us, and to further connecting these destinations on our global network. We look forward to introducing travellers from around the world to this beautiful city."

Jonas Abrahamsson, Chief Executive Officer at Swedavia, said: "Sweden is the largest economy in Scandinavia, and at the moment it is also the strongest in Europe. New direct routes are an important contributing factor, as they improve connectivity to markets that are crucial to the Swedish business community and attract capital and knowledge to the region. This direct route is the result of successful cooperation where we, together with the region, have shown Qatar Airways the potential in the western Swedish market. Therefore, it is with great pleasure that Swedavia and western Sweden jointly welcome this large Middle East airline to Gothenburg Landvetter Airport."

Gothenburg, Sweden's second-largest city, is set to grow by almost a third by the end of 2035. It is an important industrial and

business center, with the largest port in the Nordic countries.

Gothenburg also offers many scenic natural attractions for visitors to enjoy, from glistening lakes and granite cliffs, to picturesque fishing villages. Its Bohuslän islands, stretching up the west coast, have been named 'one of the ten great wilderness areas left in the world' and are renowned as a kayaking destination. Visitors can also visit Gothenburg's "Universeum," which offers a rainforest, a huge aquarium and a variety of exotic animals and plants all under one roof.

Qatar Airways launched flights to Stockholm's Arlanda Airport in 2007. The Stockholm-Doha route, which operates 14 flights per week, is also operated by a wide-body Dreamliner 787 with 22 seats in Business Class and 232 seats in Economy Class.

Qatar Airways currently serves the Scandinavian capital cities of Oslo, Norway; Copenhagen, Denmark; Stockholm, Sweden and Helsinki, Finland, to and from Doha's Hamad International Airport (HIA). Alongside Helsinki's current Boeing 787 service, the cities of Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo are also served with a fleet of Dreamliner aircraft.

Passengers travelling to Sweden in Business Class can look forward to relaxing in one of the most comfortable, fully-lie flat beds as well as avail of the five-star food and beverage service, which is served 'dine-on-demand'. Passengers can also take advantage of the airline's award-winning in-flight entertainment system, Oryx One, offering up to 4,000 entertainment options. The launch of cargo belly-hold flights out of Gothenburg will also provide a direct uplift for major exports to trade markets in Africa, Middle East, Asia, Australia and New Zealand via the carrier's state-of-the-art hub in Doha.

Technology

Trash heroes and scavenger apps battle Bali ‘garbage emergency’

Once-pristine Bali beaches face a mounting rubbish problem

DENPASAR, Indonesia: Five years ago, tour guide Wayan Aksara noticed that more and more visitors he showed around the Indonesian island of Bali were complaining about garbage on its once-pristine beaches. Bali's mounting rubbish problem was also becoming personal for Aksara, who lives near Saba beach - an undeveloped area close to the holiday resort of Sanur, which faces a constant battle with trash washed onto its shores from a nearby river.

"Every time we drove around, our guests ... would comment about it not being clean and the large amount of plastic," said Aksara. "They would say the trash is bad, that tourism here is not sustainable, and ask what we are doing about it."

Aksara joined - and is now chairman of - Trash Hero Indonesia, a community group with more than 20 chapters across Indonesia and about 12 on Bali. It uses social media to organize weekly garbage-collection events for volunteers.

Aksara, a father-of-two, also gives talks at schools and community events on how to manage waste better. Like many parts of Asia, the Indonesian archipelago of more than 17,000 islands has a fast-growing economy and population, and a huge coastline with many densely populated cities. These factors have created a "perfect storm" for garbage in the surrounding seas, said Susan Ruffo, a managing director at the U.S.-based non-profit group Ocean Conservancy. Garbage collection services and infrastructure have largely failed to keep pace with rapid development. Now, as awareness rises, civil society groups like Trash Hero are playing an important role in Bali's push to keep its famous beaches and temples free of rubbish.

On Saba beach, surrounded by coconut trees and grazing cows, the garbage strewn about includes toothpaste tubes, shoes, plastic bottles, nappies, drinking straws and cigarette packets. "There is a plastic problem in Bali ... We need time but we (have) started already," Aksara told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Big things start from small things."

No silver bullet

Globally, more than 8 million tons of plastics are dumped into the ocean each year, scientists say - about one truck-

load per minute. China, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Thailand are the top five culprits, said Ocean Conservancy's Ruffo.

Aside from the impacts on human health and wildlife, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, a 21-nation forum, has put the cost to the region's tourism, fishing and shipping industries at about \$1.3 billion per year. Stung by criticism, Indonesia's President Joko Widodo - who has targeted "10 new Balis" across the archipelago to boost tourism - has been quick to act.

Last year, Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, Indonesia's coordinating minister for maritime affairs, launched a national action plan pledging up to \$1 billion to cut ocean waste 70 percent by 2025. In June, local media reported the government had teamed up with Muslim clerics to tell their more than 100 million followers to choose reusable bags over plastic ones.

Jenna Jambeck, a University of Georgia professor who specializes in plastic waste and marine debris, said Indonesia had become a leader on the issue out of a desire "to protect their amazing resources and beautiful country". Bali's most popular tourist beaches are now cleaned of trash at least once a day by local authorities using heavy machinery.

Mass clean-ups are organized at least three times a year on Bali and across Indonesia, bringing together tens of thousands of tourists and locals to tidy up communities. Despite this, the rubbish problem on Bali was so bad late last year that officials declared a "garbage emergency". "If you're finding plastic on the beach, it's already too late," said Ocean Conservancy's Ruffo. "It should never be there in the first place. How do you stop it at source? There is no one fix or silver bullet."

Recycling camp

Tracing the origins of the trash on Bali's beaches is difficult, but experts estimate up to 80 percent comes from the island itself. Rubbish collected from hotels and villages by informal workers is often dumped in rivers and then carried out to sea before eventually finding its way back to the coastline.

A rise in the use of plastic packaging over the last decade, coupled with increased wealth and consumption, has exacer-



DENPASER BALI: A girl walks through the garbage dump on Saba Beach in the region of Gianyar on the island of Bali, Indonesia. —Reuters

bated the problem, experts told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Bali desperately needs to improve its landfill sites, invest in more recycling facilities, carry out regular trash collections and expand its piped water supply, they added.

Businesses, meanwhile, should redesign products or change materials so they are easier to reuse or recycle, said Jambeck. Governments also can make a difference by requiring a certain amount of recycled content in products, ban-

ning plastic bags or taxing single-use plastics, she added. Based in Bali's cultural center of Ubud, local company Rumah Kompos has six trucks that collect waste from hotels and private homes. The trash is then separated at the company's depot to recycle, turn into compost or send to landfill. A new \$1-million recycling facility, funded by the government, will boost Rumah Kompos' capacity later this year, said manager Supardi Asmorobangun. —Reuters

Canon awarded gold rating from EcoVadis for sustainability

KUWAIT: Canon, a global provider of imaging technologies and services, yesterday announced it has been awarded the EcoVadis gold rating, for a fourth consecutive year, which positions the company within the top 5 percent for sustainability performance.

To decide company ratings, the EcoVadis CSR analysis system assesses 21 criteria across four themes of environment, fair labor practices, ethics/fair business practices and supply chain. Canon submitted data relating to CSR practices across its businesses to support these themes.

Anurag Agrawal, Managing Director, Canon Middle East, said: "The EcoVadis award is a significant achievement for us, and we are proud of this successive recognition. Sustainability is at the heart of what we do and by delivering environmental benefits through our people and products, we are powerfully demonstrating commitment to our philosophy of Kyosei: living and working together for the common good. In the region, we continue to spread our philosophy and credentials to our partners and customers to promote the immense value of sustainability in today's business environment."

Canon's commitment to sustainability spans across responsible business, society and the environment. It continues to monitor and assess its environmental impact to identify ways to improve its sustainability performance across all areas of the business.

In 2017 Canon Middle East launched a powerful CSR campaign called 'Follow Your Happiness' driven by three pillars: Future, Youth and Happiness. Within each pillar there are a series of projects and initiatives, with a significant emphasis on the environment and sustainability, for Canon's employees to participate in and drive the campaign. These initiatives were recognized industry-wide and Canon received the Creative Innovator Awards for 2017 in the 'Best Innovation - Public good' category for the CSR campaign. EcoVadis is an independent CSR assessment agency. Its unique CSR assessment methodology covers 150 purchasing categories, 110 countries, and 21 CSR indicators. The methodology is also built on international CSR standards including the Global Reporting Initiative, the United Nations Global Compact, and the ISO 26000.



French IT services group Atos to buy Syntel of US

PARIS: French IT services group Atos said yesterday it has agreed to buy US information technology group Syntel in a move to significantly expand its presence in North America. Atos said in a statement that it will acquire Syntel for \$41 per share which amounts to around \$3.4 billion.

"This transaction is a major step in the strategy of Atos to reach a global scale," the French company said. "In particular, the highly complementary portfolio, customer base, and geographic footprint of the combination between Atos and Syntel will significantly enhance our presence in North America," said chief executive Thierry Breton. —AFP

Huawei: Taking your selfie game to superstar status

KUWAIT: One thousand selfies are posted on Instagram every second. And that's just the number according to a report by Rawhide last year: that's likely grown since, with more than 93 million selfies being created each day! A 2017 study by Now Sourcing and Frames Direct says the average millennial is expected to take 25,700 selfies in their lifetime - which is at least an hour per week spent on snapping the perfect selfie, retaking it or editing it.

Here in the Middle East, we're probably guilty of taking more selfies than in most places. From the serenity of Middle Eastern deserts to its pristine beaches and skylines that tower over clouds, how is one to resist striking a pose every single day? These spots have been the backdrop of not just selfies, but of international movies. But, finding that one smartphone camera that will capture the 'perfect' selfie with these scenic backdrops has become the impossible dream.

Needless to say, a front camera that will reduce the painful number of retakes and edits is the real dream. According to a study cited earlier this year, majority of women selfie takers typically discard about five selfies for each selfie uploaded. But let's be honest, so many of us take countless more before we capture the perfect image. Why? Because a selfie is a reflection of ourselves - our dreams, our hopes and our aspirations. And we want our selfie - ourselves included - to look its absolute best.

The answer is to find a smartphone camera that will be intelligent enough to do the work for you - a camera that will recognize the background and adjust automatically to bring to life the clear blue



skies, lush green landscapes or deep turquoise waters, without taking away from the face that's the focus of the picture.

Nailing that perfect selfie is far more work than that though, because even after getting the perfect shot, it's still not perfect to post without editing and filtering to make sure the light falls to accentuate facial contours and conceal imperfections. But, what if there were a camera that could automatically adjust skin tones and facial details by age, editing and filtering the image as it's taken to capture the perfect-to-post shot? In a world where artificial intelligence is leading technology and robots are being built more advanced than ever, this is certainly a possibility.

Imagine if your smartphone camera was powered by AI - making it like a robot, which could think and adjust automatically to give you the perfect picture possible. With the pace of technological advancements moving at an ever-increasing rate, this vision may not be too far away. Huawei, one of the top smartphone manufacturers globally, is set to lead the way for the new generation of selfies, with its AI powered HUAWEI nova 3 series. The brand has spearheaded the industry's research and development



Shot on HUAWEI nova 3 Ai Selfie Superstar



over the last year, making its mark as a leader in the AI powered smartphone product category. Could this series be the breakthrough solution that we all have been waiting for to up our selfie game to superstar status? We look forward to seeing what's to come!

Infiniti Al-Babtain records the highest 1st quarter sales in its history

KUWAIT: The management of Nissan Gulf and Infiniti Middle East honored Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co (AABC), the sole authorized dealer of Infiniti vehicles in the State of Kuwait, during an awards ceremony to celebrate the Sales Team Challenger club's sales performance in its First quarter of this year. Demonstrating commitment to optimal customer satisfaction, the Sales Team Challenger club responsible for the brands growth, were recognized for their hard work and skills in achieving the highest 1st quarter sales results ever.

In the presence of Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company management, Nissan Gulf and Infiniti Middle East management, the ceremony was held to award several of the high achievers: Yasser Abed, Mahmoud Al-Shafie, Mohamad Darwish and Elian Haddad - the Sales Ambassadors were applauded for their outstanding efforts in driving the brand forward successfully.

Laurent Pernet, General Manager Automotive at Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-



Babtain said, "We congratulate the top performers who have supported our vision in delivering unique consumer experiences and consistently maintaining year on year excellence. Despite market conditions and

rising competition, our sales team have made us proud in promoting trust and credibility by reflecting the unique features of our brand and its models."

Infiniti Al-Babtain continues to invest in

high caliber personnel and nurture new skills as part of our ongoing training strategy to ensure all customers receive the very best the brand has to offer in line with world class quality and standards.

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248 33 199

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Travel

A testament to the Andean gods survives in Bolivia's capital

‘This is live ancestral wisdom mixed with new elements, but it keeps its roots’



At the Witches' Market in Bolivia's capital city, llama fetuses hang above stalls as offerings to the mother earth spirit known as Pachamama. Tourists and residents line up to buy medicinal plants to heal their bodies and ward off curses, while "yatiris," or indigenous healers, offer to read their fortunes on coca leaves. Incense perfumes the air. It's all part of the mystical aura of this colorful market devoted to the worship of ancient Andean gods. The market seems stuck in time amid the urban chaos of La Paz, in a neighborhood just blocks from the presidential palace.

"This is live ancestral wisdom mixed with new elements, but it keeps its roots," said David Mendoza, a sociologist and member of the La Paz municipality patrimony directory. Before the Spanish colonizers arrived, this was sacred ceremonial ground where animal blood was offered to thank the gods for an abundant harvest. Those sacrifices don't take place here now, but other practices once considered pagan have survived efforts to uproot them. And the site has become a major tourist attraction. "Witchcraft is not ours, it's related to the devil (beliefs) that were brought by the Spanish colonizers," said Helena Martinez, a spiritual guide. "Our thing is all about culture. And the offerings to the gods seek harmony with nature."

Symbol of earth's fertility

In this same place in 1549, the Franciscan order built a church. It was rebuilt some 200 years later by indigenous people who had converted to Catholicism. In its baroque-styled facade, they carved in stone the head of a bull, a symbol of the colonizers, as well as Franciscan shields, and a bare-breasted goddess, who Mendoza says is Pachamama, a symbol of earth's fertility for Andean cultures. Anthropologists say that the indigenous would camouflage their beliefs under Catholic ones. That created a blend of Christian and ancestral rites, called religious syncretism. It is recognized by Bolivia's constitution under the term "Andean cosmovi-

sion," and it is widely practiced by many in the mostly indigenous South American country.

Llama fetuses remain one of the most popular and exotic offerings to Pachamama at the market. "Every offering is prepared by us and has its own meaning," said Veronica Quispe, a ritual organizer. "It's like offering a plate of food to Pachamama as a way to thank her." The llama has traditionally been regarded as sacred to the Indians of Bolivia and other Andean countries because it was a source of wool, transportation and food. The fetus of the animal symbolizes the messenger that takes requests from people to the gods, Quispe said.

A plaque at the atrium of the San Francis church that is part of the market reads: "What began causing divisions, ended up uniting two cultures in a rich blend of cultures that marks the identity of this unique city." The office of the La Paz mayor is now promoting a law that would pay tribute to the market. It is as a first step before authorities request UNESCO World Heritage status for the site. The market is also a bridge to modernity. The indigenous women of the Andes usually wear traditional bowler hats, wide pollera skirts and embroidered shawls. But at the market, T-shirts depict one of them at sea riding a surfboard, even though Bolivia is landlocked. Tourist agencies at the market offer an adventurous bike ride through "el Camino de la Muerte." That's the Highway of Death, a 40-mile (64-kilometer) road carved into mountainside that drops 11,700 feet (3,600 meters) from the snowcapped Andes to the steaming jungle.

Medicinal plants at the market range from herbs to cure coughs to natural Viagra, along with magic powders that promise to keep lovers away. Popular treatments include aloe vera to heal ailments, and herbs like rosemary and broom to attract good luck and keep curses away, said Nalaria Mamani, who owns one of the shops at the market and who learned the trade from her ancestors. — AP



People - and politics - threaten Kano's ancient walls

Young boys scramble up the remains of a crumbling section of the ancient city wall in the Kofar Na'isa area of Kano, in northern Nigeria. "This wall may not survive the rainy season," warned Falalu Musa, a local resident. "It will soon join the others," he added, pointing to mounds of red earth lying nearby. Houses and commercial buildings have sprung up on other demolished sections or been turned into dumping grounds for rubbish, litter and sewage from the ever more crowded city. Elsewhere, excavators dig into the fortifications for the red iron- and aluminum-rich rock laterite, which is loaded onto donkeys and taken away for use in construction and renovation.

What remains of the weakened walls that once stretched 14 kilometers (nine miles) around the city is then prone to crumble at the foundations and collapse when the rains come. The historic walls are under threat as never before from a combination of an exploding population that has put pressure on land and housing, as well as local politics. "If you look at the city wall generally, almost 80 percent of it has been destroyed," the curator of the Gidan Makama Museum in Kano, Mustapha

Bachaka, told AFP. The walls no longer mark the city limits. "There is a lot of encroachment," he added. Now, those wanting to protect the city's unique heritage are appealing for fresh funding to shore up the ancient defenses before it is too late.

'Magnificent work'

The mud walls date back to the 11th century and have come to define Kano as an ancient city state, attracting archaeologists' attention and tourists from across the world. Local archives record that in their original state the walls were 15 meters (50 feet) high and 12 meters thick at the base, with a broad rampart walk. Surrounding the wall were added trenches several meters deep to further deter would-be invaders, while access was controlled by 13 large entrance gates. Two more have since been added. "It was a magnificent work of military engineering, which captivated the British when they conquered Kano in 1903," said Aliyu Abdu, from the National Commission for Museums and Monuments.

Despite their shared culture, language and tradition,

rivalry, warfare and conquest were the norm in pre-colonial Hausa states that now make up most of northern Nigeria. But the city, now home to most of the estimated 13 million people living in Kano state, survived and developed into an important center for Islamic scholarship, industry and a trading hub for the wider region. "Wars were everywhere in Hausaland, just for territorial expansion. The city wall provided protection against invasion," Bachaka said. "Without these walls there would have been no Kano by now."

Funding shortfall

Abdu blamed the Kano state government as "the main culprit" for the degradation of the city walls. "The government is giving out land around the city wall to political supporters to compensate them for their support," he said. That has robbed them of the moral authority to punish anyone who encroaches themselves. No one from the government responded to requests for comment.

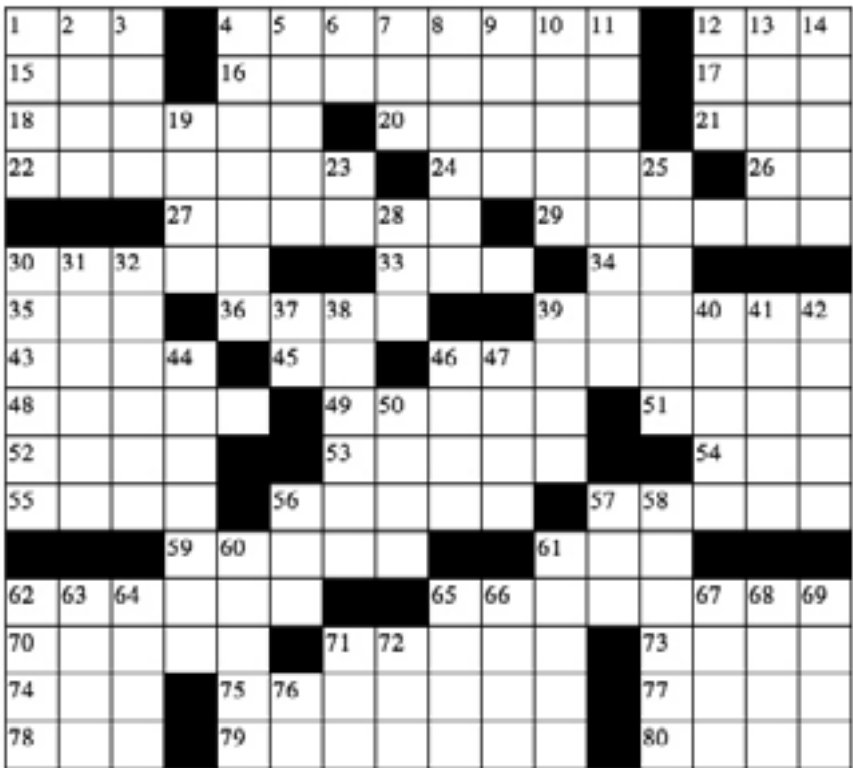
But the situation demonstrates the difficulties in protecting sites of historic and national interest. The National Commission for Museums and Monuments

took over protection of the walls from the Emir of Kano, the spiritual leader who is revered across the Muslim-majority north.

In 2007, the commission submitted a bid to have the walls, the emir's palace and other places of interest declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. But little or no progress has been made in the last 10 years. Experts fear that securing global protection status is unlikely if they are unable to save the walls from further damage. "It is an irony that while we are making efforts to put Kano walls on the World Heritage map, people have turned them into pit latrines," Bachaka said.

Those keen to preserve the walls for generations to come say the widespread damage can be salvaged if money is found to fund the work. The only work carried out in recent years was thanks to a 58,000 euro (\$68,000) grant from the German government. In the meantime, the Kano museum has set up a monitoring team to patrol the remaining walls to stop encroachment. "This is all we can do in the interim," said the commission's Abdu. "Despite the challenges, it will not be a lost battle." —AFP

CROSSWORD 1967



ACROSS

- 1. A Turkish unit of weight equal to about 2.75 pounds.
- 4. A fibrous amphibole.
- 12. The federal department responsible for safeguarding national security.
- 15. Floor covering consisting of a piece of thick heavy fabric (usually with nap or pile).
- 16. Subject to change or variation especially in behavior.
- 17. South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
- 18. Argentinian carisma.
- 20. Open to or abounding in fresh air.
- 21. Being one hundred more than two hundred.
- 22. A lack of vitality.
- 24. Ratio of the hypotenuse to the opposite side.
- 26. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
- 27. Vigorous and enthusiastic enjoyment.
- 29. Type genus of the Anhimidae.
- 30. (Greek mythology) The husband of Medea and leader of the Argonauts who sailed in quest of the Golden Fleece.
- 33. An unabridged dictionary constructed on historical principles.
- 34. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
- 35. Hormone secreted by the posterior pituitary gland (trade name Pitressin) and also by nerve endings in the hypothalamus.
- 36. Pretentious or silly talk or writing.
- 43. Wild goose having white adult plumage.
- 45. The presence of an unwanted signal via an accidental coupling.
- 48. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- 49. Worn or shabby from overuse or (of pages) from having corners turned down.
- 51. One of a set of small pieces of stiff paper marked in various ways and used for playing games or for telling fortunes.
- 52. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- 53. United States parapsychologist (1895-1980).
- 54. The compass point that is one point east (clockwise) of due north.
- 55. Wife or mistress of Zeus and mother of Apollo and Artemis in ancient mythology.
- 59. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- 62. Harmony of people's opinions or actions or characters.
- 70. An Indian tree of the family Combretaceae that is a source of timber and gum.
- 73. (Old Testament) The eldest son of Isaac who would have inherited the Covenant that God made with Abraham and that Abraham passed on to Isaac.
- 74. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- 75. A tiny cavity filled with fluid in the cytoplasm of a cell.
- 77. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
- 78. An insecticide that is also toxic to animals and humans.
- 79. The trait of lacking restraint or control.
- 80. Not far distant in time or space or degree or circumstances.

DOWN

- 1. Predatory black-and-white toothed whale with large dorsal fin.
- 2. Austrian chemist who did research on carotenoids and vitamins (1900-1967).
- 3. Largest known toad species.
- 4. Enlarge or increase.

- 5. Freshwater or marine or terrestrial gastropod mollusk usually having an external enclosing spiral shell.
- 6. A bachelor's degree in science.
- 7. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- 8. A wave on the surface of a lake or landlocked bay.
- 9. Edible starchy tuberous root of taro plants.
- 10. A port city of south central Ukraine on an arm of the Black Sea.
- 11. English physician (1624-1689).
- 12. A licensed medical practitioner.
- 13. English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
- 14. The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
- 19. Roman Emperor notorious for his monstrous vice and fantastic luxury (was said to have started a fire that destroyed much of Rome in 64) but the Empire remained prosperous during his rule (37-68).
- 23. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
- 25. A family of Afroasiatic tonal languages (mostly two tones) spoken in the regions west and south of Lake Chad in north central Africa.
- 28. The syllable naming the fifth (dominant) note of any musical scale in solmization.
- 31. Be compatible or in accordance with.
- 32. The fifth month of the civil year.
- 37. An adult castrated bull of the genus Bos.
- 38. (electronics) Designating sound transmission from two sources through two channels.
- 39. A Chadic language spoken in northern Nigeria.
- 40. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
- 41. United States film actress (born in Sweden) known for her reclusiveness (1905-1990).
- 42. Yellow-fever mosquitos.
- 44. United States writer (born in Russia) (1899-1977).
- 46. Lacking sufficient water or rainfall.
- 47. A self-replicating protein molecule that occupies a fixed place on a chromosome.
- 50. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- 56. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
- 57. An emergency procedure consisting of external cardiac massage and artificial respiration.
- 58. Of or relating to or characteristic of Hades or Tartarus.
- 60. An anti-TNF compound (trade name Arava) that is given orally.
- 61. Having been taken into the mouth for consumption.
- 63. Of or relating to or characteristic of the Republic of Chad or its people or language.
- 64. A heavy open wagon usually having two wheels and drawn by an animal.
- 65. An aggressive and violent young criminal.
- 66. The capital and largest city of Norway.
- 67. A small island.
- 68. Kamarupan languages spoken in north-eastern India and western Burma.
- 69. Drought-tolerant herb grown for forage and for its seed which yield a gum used as a thickening agent or sizing material.
- 71. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
- 72. A member of a nomadic people who invaded Europe in the 4th century.
- 76. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You are a practical person with an abundance of common sense. You are able to use both of these qualities as assets to make your way to the top in the career world. You may be feeling a need to change your focus and tighten your circle a bit. You feel as if you need to spend more of your time and attention on you and yours. At this point you may have accomplished your goal in the workplace but feel you need to continue to work on your goal at home. This will be a balancing act to continue to make sure you thrive in every area of your life. Your communication skills are at all time high and you are able to relate and interact with ease to all who surround you.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You have set your focus on providing a strong foundation for your family life. You crave security and the one that will be by your side for a lifetime. You find yourself in a serious mood where deep conversation and planning will help to insure the stability you crave. You are serious about your future and who you want to spend it with. The seeds you plant today will develop the roots of the reward you seek. You are focused and determined to lead a healthy, happy life. You make your health a priority now, a gym membership, meal planning, or making plans to exercise as team, is where your focus is. This is great start to making your plans a reality. You know exactly what you want, and you will make it happen.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may find yourself tense and anxious about a situation you have found yourself in. You may feel under pressure and feel somewhat anxious. This may lead to you mentally checking out. You may use this as a coping mechanism for the stress you are under. An out of body feeling in a dreamy state may be the way your mind chooses to handle this conflict. Others may not be fond of this side of you and this could result in conflict with someone close to you. You will find your way and through your ability to get to the root of your problems, this too will be solved. Gemini. You may find a negative result from the escape you take from reality as it may cause an opportunity you have been hoping for to pass you by.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Seems you may find yourself in a power struggle. You may find someone challenging you concerning a very private matter. Your personal issues are just that, personal! You may find someone invades your space and this could lead to conflict. Respect is something that is a priority in your world. Not only to treat others with respect, you demand to be treated as such. You are ambitious and practical and may find this a time you are able to work well with others developing strong teams who will be able to accomplish big goals.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your dedication and devotion to friends and family you have earned a deep level of respect from those closest to you. You may feel if you should be allowed to claim some of these friends on your taxes as dependents as it seems every time you turn around they are there with their hand out. This is the price you pay for being the dependable and responsible one of the group. You would not trade your friends for anything. You value the level of respect they have for you. Today you find yourself surrounded by friends seeking your advice and asking for your helping hand. Leo, you are a wonderful friend. Your thoughts and dreams seem to be ever present at this time. It is a great time to sit and think and maybe reach out to share this with someone close to you.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

It is rare that you are beaming with pride. You have reached a level of self-confidence that is not familiar to you and you are beginning to appreciate yourself for all of your hard work. It has taken quite a while for you to realize just how successful you have become. You may hold a special place in your heart and really be appreciative to an older figure in your life that has acted as a role model or mentor. Be careful not to let this sense of self pride push others away as they may see it as you are being over confident or conceited. With the high energy you are feeling this is not a great day to make any major purchases. You do not want to bite off more than you can chew.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You are always able to see through the smoke and get to the root of the problem. You may find others turn to you for advice often. They are willing to share very personal matters and respect your opinion and appreciate your willingness to help them be supportive. Today is a very productive day for you and you may find your hand eye coordination is at an all-time high. This may be a great day to get out and into what your favorite sport. This is a great day to get a lot accomplished. You may find yourself very emotional that you are well in control of these emotions. Enjoy your high energy and a productive day.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your mind is sharp, and your wit is quick. You will face anything that comes your way with force and confidence. You may find yourself at odds with others because you seem to stand alone being very independent and voice tress with your opinion. Use caution and do not let the scrutiny of others let you make decisions you will regret. Scorpio. You have always been wise and able to make your own decisions. Follow the same pattern now and you may find this to be a very rewarding time for you. Your mind is in the right place and you will find you may reap great rewards from decisions made now.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Your peers are appreciative of your ability to be able to make constructive suggestions or to help them with practical decisions, which relate to group issues. Knowing exactly what the public wants at this time is yet another feather in your hat. Your name and reputation are spreading quickly. Expect an upgrade soon in your job identity and pay. The idea of value or a greater appreciation for things of value is fun to comprehend this afternoon. It is most assuredly a time when tangible things have a great deal of importance. Your emotions or the feelings of those around you should be quite clear, making it a great time to reflect and truly understand individual family members and your connection in the family.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your mind is sharp, and ideas are flowing. This is a great time for decisions as you are experiencing a sense of clarity. It is a great time to make decisions for you. You may take some time today to develop great understanding of your own situation. Where you are in life and everything that led you to this point seem to be of great importance to you at this time. You may truly value your situation today and find yourself placing more value on your close relationships as a result. You didn't walk this path alone. Support and love from others helped to get you where you are. This is something you are truly beginning to discover and appreciate. Capricorn, don't be surprised find someone admiring you today and paying you a compliment.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a time you finally decide to put yourself first. You find yourself always putting the needs and feelings before your own. This is your time to shine. It seems as if everything in your life has been heading in this direction and you have arrived. You are finally beginning to understand what you know is not as important as how you use what you know. Where others are concerned you finally realize it is not so much who you are but about how you make others feel. When all of these realties finally begin to make sense to you is the time you begin to truly love yourself and find that others are drawn towards your light. Enjoy the limelight, and shine on.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is not the best day in the workplace for you. You may feel as if things just aren't going your way. You may encounter some sort of blockage, it seems like you will not be able to keep your focus. Your mind may be a million miles away. You need to take a step back, take a deep breath and face the realities around you head on. Frustration can cause you to give up or you can look at this with a positive attitude and focus and fight back. The strength and determination inside of you will push you right through any obstacle that gets in your way. You are strong, Pisces, and now is a time to gather that strength and turn things around.

Wordsearch Puzzle

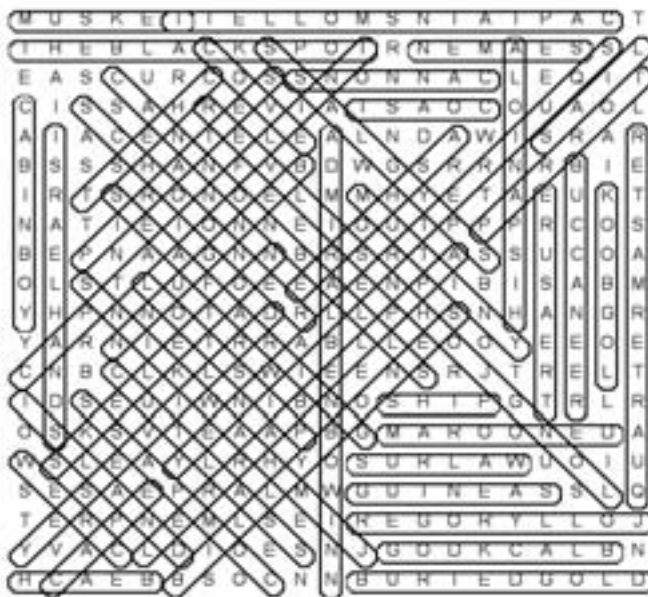
Trees
Find and circle all of the Trees that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Greek Proverb.



- APPLE, APRICOT, ASH, ASPEN, ARBORVITAE, BALD CYPRESS, BEECH, BIRCH, BOXWOOD, SUEKEYE, BUTTERNUT, CATALPA, CEDAR, CHERRY, CHESTNUT, COTTONWOOD, ELM, FIR, GINKGO, GOLDENRAIN, HAZELNUT, HEMLOCK, HICKORY, LARCH, LINDEN, LONDON PLANE, MAPLE, NECTARINE, OAK, PALM, PEACH, PEAR, PECAN, PLUM, PINE, POPLAR, REDBUD, RUBBER TREE, SEQUOIA, SPRUCE, SYCAMORE, TULIPTREE, WALNUT, WITCHHAZEL, WILLOW, YELLOWWOOD

Yesterday's Solution

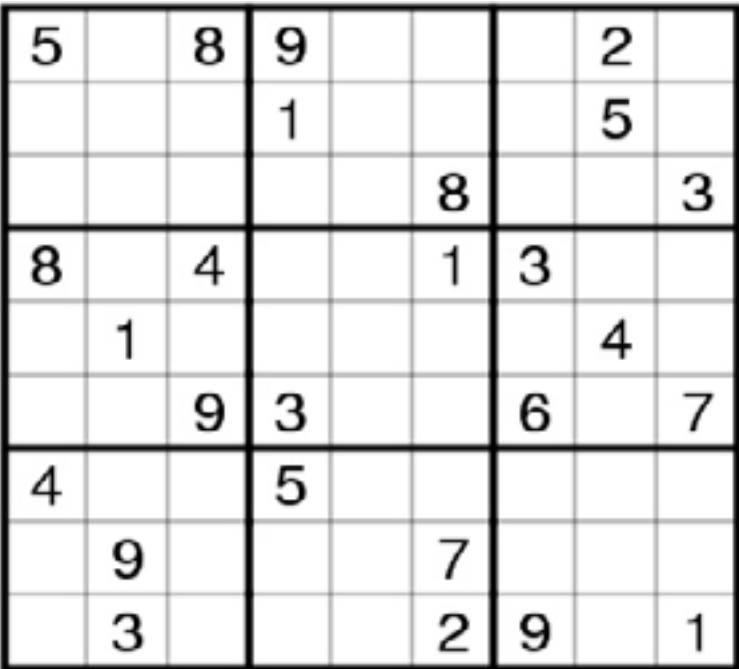
Treasure Island



- ADMIRAL, RAINBOW INN, ASHORE, CAPTAIN FLINT, CAPTAIN SHOLLETT, BEACH, CHEST, BEN GUNN, BILLY BONES, COAST, COMPASS, BLACK DOG, COVE, CREW, BUCCANEER, CUTLASS, BURIED GOLD, DR. LIVESY, CASIN BOY, GUNFAS, CANNON BALLS, HISPANOLA, CANNONS, ISLAND, ISRAEL HANDS, JEM HAWKINS, JOLLY ROGER, LOGBOOK, LONG JOHN SILVER, MARGONED, MUSKET, MUTINY, PARROT, PIRATES, PISTOL, QUARTERMASTER, SAIL, SCHOONER, SEAFARING, SEAMEN, SHIP, SKELETON, SPY-GLASS, SQUARE TRELAWNEY, THE BLACK SPOT, TREASURE, WALRUS

The hidden message is: TREASURE ISLAND WAS WRITTEN BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JULY 24, 2018



This photo taken on July 21, 2018 shows an installation depicting a whale shark made of plastic bottles in Rizhao Ocean Park in Rizhao, China's eastern Shandong province. Some 12 million tons of plastic, mostly in the form of single-use packaging, are dumped into the world's oceans per year creating an ecological nightmare. — AFP

Egyptian women challenge social norms by practicing Parkour



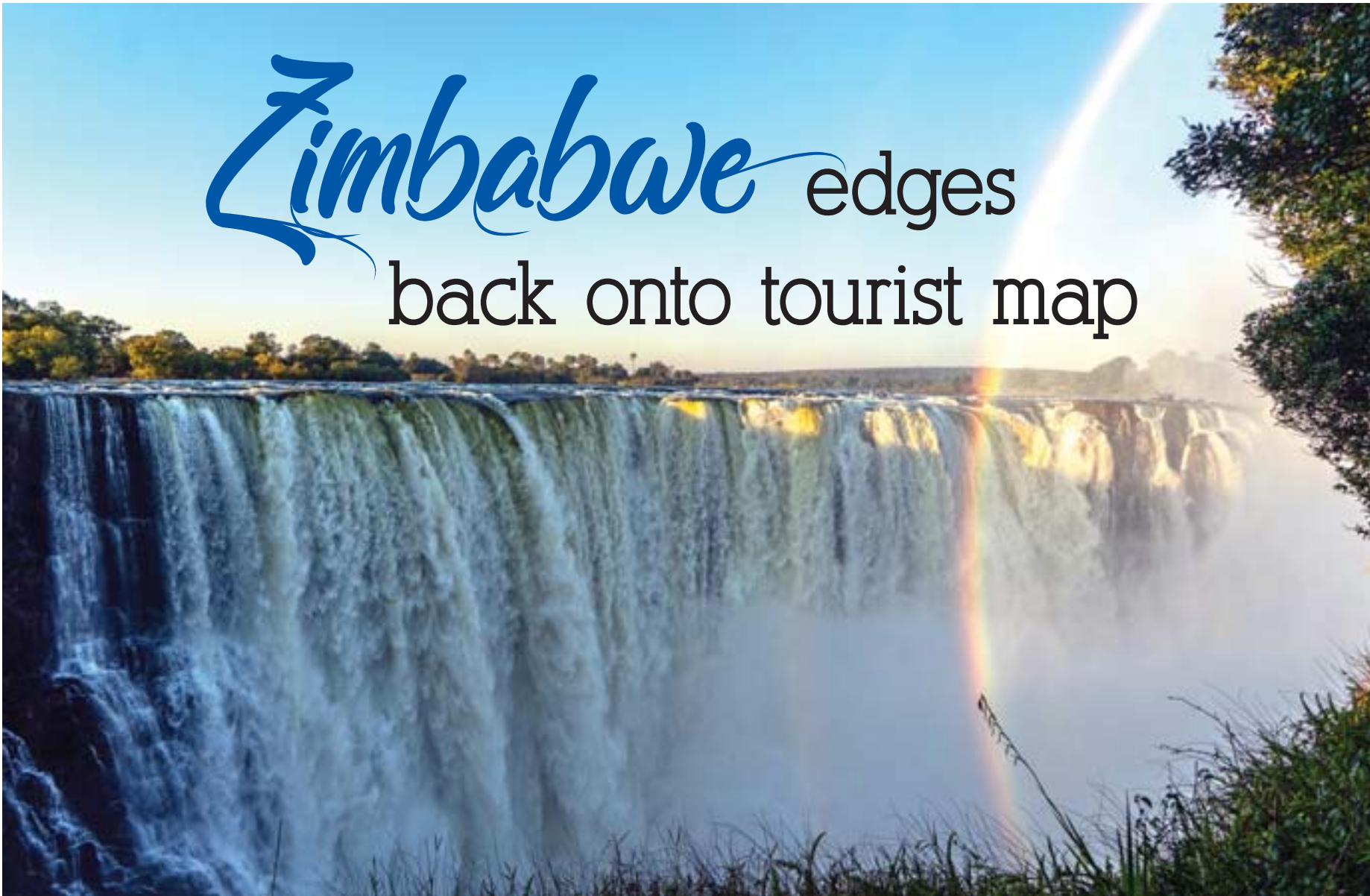
Egyptian women from Parkour Egypt "PKE" practice their parkour skills around buildings on the outskirts of Cairo, Egypt. — Reuters photos



A group of Egyptian women gather at an abandoned park in a Cairo suburb once a week, climbing walls and jumping around in the strenuous physical discipline known as Parkour, while also challenging the country's conservative social norms. Founded in France in the 1980s as the Art du Deplacement and later taking its name from the French word 'parcours' (course or route), Parkour involves running, climbing and jumping acrobatically around buildings and over terrain. The women have trained every week for the past six months with the eventual aim of forming

the first professional Parkour team in Egypt. Ten women took part in last Friday's training, which focused on building upper body strength and different methods of dealing with surroundings. Curious crowds, accustomed to women taking a low profile in Egypt, often congregate to watch the training, sometimes taking pictures and filming. But the women keep up the training unhindered, insisting that no sport is exclusive for men. "It is natural that people did not accept it because they were not used to it," said Zayneb Helal, one of the players. "They did not accept the idea that girls could play sports, let alone on the street," she added. It is uncommon for women to play such sports on the streets in Egypt. A 2017 Thomson Reuters Foundation survey of experts on how women fared in mega cities rated Cairo as the world's most dangerous megacity for women, while London came out as best. Guided by coach Mohamed Omran, women train hard on climbing obstacles, landing correctly after jumps and seeing opportunities in buildings around them. "Women are now training and more women are starting to come," Omran said. "As the sport spreads the acceptance of women training increases and it is not unusual for women to have a team and train," he added. Parkour is played by men in Egypt but the sport is neglected and has no regulatory body. Parkour Egypt, a group that comprises men and women, has grown exponentially after starting off with a handful of players. Last year Britain became the first country officially to recognize Parkour as a sport. "It needs more time to evolve and the sport needs to spread more so that people would learn about it," Helal said. — Reuters





A picture at Victoria Falls, shows a view of the waterfalls from the “Devil’s Cataract” where water rumbles down at height of seventy three (73) meters producing a thunderous sound and creating a thick vapor. — AFP photos



A picture taken in the Victoria Falls rainforest shows a statue of David Livingstone, a Scottish explorer in Africa who discovered the Victoria on 17 November 1855, after he heard natives talk of smokes that thunder.



Gugulethu Ndlovu, manager of a family business trading curios, pose for a portrait in the resort town of Victoria Falls.



A picture taken in the resort town of Victoria Falls shows a wooden sculpture of a lion named after “Cecil the Lion” displayed at a curio shop.



Chefs prepare food at a restaurant in the resort town of Victoria Falls.



Tourists cover themselves with a raincoat in the rainforest overlooking the waterfalls at Victoria Falls.

After nearly two decades in the doldrums, Zimbabwe’s tourism sector is enjoying a rebound, with visitors returning in droves to see the majestic Victoria Falls and explore unspoilt safari reserves. The number of foreign visitors to Victoria Falls, the southern African country’s flagship destination, jumped nearly 50 percent in the first quarter of this year compared with the same period in 2017, the tourism minister says.

Countrywide, arrivals rose by 15 percent to 554,417, according to treasury statistics. Political and economic turmoil under longtime autocratic ruler Robert Mugabe had wrecked the sector, but authorities and tourism operators now believe the industry has a new lease of life. Mugabe was ousted in November after a 37-year repressive rule during which tourists shunned the country, fearful of police demanding bribes, crumbling infrastructure and scarce fuel. Cash was also in short supply from 2009, when hyperinflation forced Zimbabwe to abandon its own currency in favor of the US dollar.

hotels have been fully booked. “The general sense in this country, especially from a tourist, is one of anticipation, one of excitement.” Lloyd Machaka, who operates Chikopokopo Flights helicopter tours over the Victoria Falls, has also seen more visitors from Malawi and the southern African region. “Hopefully we will have more investors coming in to build more hotels, bigger hotels. We want more airlines coming here,” said Machaka, standing by one of his helicopters.

“ There are good vibes from the industry and from the international world , everybody is so positive ”

‘Good vibes’

“We were in a closed period for a long time,” admitted Tourism Minister Priscah Mupfumira, speaking ahead of key elections on July 30. “We closed ourselves in, doors were locked.” Since Emmerson Mnangagwa took over as president from Mugabe in a de facto coup last year, “we are poised for growth,” the minister told AFP. “There are good vibes from the industry and from the international world — everybody is so positive,” she said. With Zimbabwe’s economy still in tatters, an influx of tourists is expected to help bring in desperately needed revenue, with the sector already contributing around 10 percent to GDP. “It’s a key pillar to our economy and a low-hanging fruit—we just have to get our act together,” Mupfumira said.

But visiting Zimbabwe is generally more expensive compared with neighboring countries. “It is not a cheap holiday,” said Ilan Wiesenbacher, a restaurateur in Victoria Falls, where the Zambezi River plunges over a gorge and raises a mist that can be seen more than 20 kilometers (12 miles) away. “We have seen a steady rise in numbers,” said Wiesenbacher, manager at the Three Monkeys restaurant. “There is a general good feeling around Zimbabwe and tourism.” Even in the traditional low season from January to March, craft beer brewer Jake Le Breton had more glasses to fill at his River Brewing Company bar in Victoria Falls.

“We have just come out of a quiet season... (but) it was a busy time with a higher number of tourists than we have seen in previous years,” said Le Breton, adding that local

Fresh start?

Kenya Airways and Ethiopian Airlines now fly direct to Victoria Falls’s smart new airport. “I feel very safe, the people are welcoming. Getting the visa was really easy,” said Canadian tourist Katelyn Pretzlaff. French tourist Patrice Lehmann, who was visiting the Victoria Falls for the third time, said: “It’s one of the most impressive things I have seen in my life.” Zimbabwe has also removed the notorious police roadblocks that had become a constant annoyance for motorists. Typically, drivers reluctantly paid bribes to evade long questioning over minor alleged offences. “The issue of roadblocks—it was a disaster, a real problem,” the minister admitted.

Authorities have launched an aggressive drive to “reassure the world that Zimbabwe is open for business, Zimbabwe is a safe, peaceful tourist destination,” Mupfumira said. Alongside “Vic Falls”, the country’s highlights include Lake Kariba, the vast game-filled national parks of Hwange and Mana Pools and the Eastern Highlands mountains. Mnangagwa, a former ally of Mugabe, has vowed to hold a clean election next week as proof of the country’s fresh start, but many critics say the same ZANU-PF party chiefs still call the shots. Mnangagwa is the favorite to win, but any dispute or violence over a close result could spell a return to instability. — AFP



A car await tourists in the Zambezi national park near a Baobab tree famed to be on 10 cent coin former circulation piece of Zimbabwe before it was remonitized in 2013.



A tourist follows a path in the Victoria Falls rainforest in the resort town of Victoria Falls.

CELEBRATING MUSIC, BRITAIN TO HAVE 'NATIONAL ALBUM DAY'

Britain is to have its first ever “National Album Day” this autumn, an event organizers hope music fans will celebrate annually to mark their appreciation of the format. Music lovers around the country will honor singers, songwriters, producers and sleeve designers on Oct 13 and various events, organized by industry players and BBC Music, celebrating “all aspects of the UK’s love of the album” will be held in the run-up to the day.

Fans are also being asked to play their favorite album in

full that afternoon. “Streaming may be broadening our ability to access and discover music,” Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive of the British Phonographic Industry, said in a statement. “But the concept of the album as a body of work that expresses a narrative or an artist’s creative vision at a given moment, remains as relevant and inspiring as ever.” Monday’s announcement comes as the music industry this year marks 70 years since the release of the very first vinyl LP, or long playing record. Like other

countries, Britain already has a “Record Store Day” when independent record shops are celebrated each year with vinyl releases and events and performances. — Reuters

A shopper passes a book about vinyl music at an HMV music store in London, Britain. — Reuters



Forty years after 'Jaws', summer still means sharks

The sun is out, the oceans are warmer, and sharks are out in force on television and in the movies. More than 40 years after "Jaws" sank its teeth into popular culture, sharks remain one of summer's biggest attractions on the big and small screen, despite concerns by marine scientists that some programming harms efforts to protect a dwindling population.

Celebrating its 30th anniversary, Discovery Channel's "Shark Week" kicked off on Sunday featuring celebrity encounters with the animals, a "SharkCam" which captures their lives in the Bahamas, and a scientific trip to waters off Cuba where some of the world's biggest great whites have been sighted. "There is something about it being summer vacation. A lot of people are going to spend some amount of time on the beach, and 'Shark Week' just connects," said Nancy Daniels, head of Discovery Channel.

"Shark Week" is one of Discovery's biggest successes, attracting a U.S. audience last year of more than 35 million viewers. The mix of information, entertainment and scien-

tific research can be a tough balance, but Daniels said "Shark Week" starts from a place of wonder. "We have really tried to partner with the scientific community to make sure it's not just a scare fest but is actually teaching the public about these animals so they can learn more and respect their behavior," Daniels said.

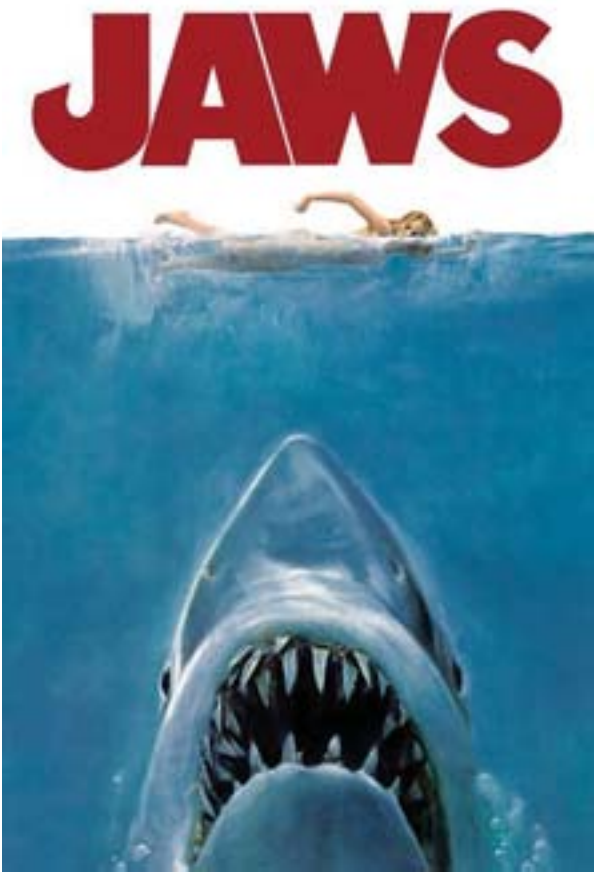
"Shark Week" has inspired rivals, like National Geographic's current two-week "SharkFest" with documentaries such as "Mayhem in Mexico" and "The Whale That Ate Jaws." Syfy channel weighs in next month with the sixth installment of the cult film "Sharknado," a disaster-comedy about a cyclone that lifts man-eating sharks out of the ocean and dumps them in suburban Los Angeles.

In August, movie "The Meg" seeks to rival "Jaws" with its tale of a 70 ft long Megalodon shark that reappears off an American beach after being thought extinct for millions of years. Marine biologists note that of the 400 shark species in the world, none see humans as their preferred food. Their main job as predators is to keep ocean popula-

tions healthy by weeding out the sick or unfit.

"The portrayal of sharks in certain media has probably added to the myth of sharks as a dangerous killer," said Hans Walters, a field scientist at the New York Aquarium. "If you have ever swam in the ocean you have most probably swam with sharks. The really interesting thing to me about shark attacks is not how often they occur, it's how often they don't occur," Walters said.

The world's shark population is plummeting, with estimates of 100 million lost every year to fishing, often just for their fins, or from becoming entangled in nets. Despite public fascination with shark attacks, marine biologist Luke Tipple hopes that shows like "Shark Week" spread the message that they need protecting. "It also inspires people to get out and go see sharks for themselves, or maybe to be marine biologists or scientists, or to contribute to conservation," Tipple said. — Reuters



(From left) Director Patty Jenkins, and actors Chris Pine and Gal Gadot participate in the Warner Bros. Theatrical Panel for 'Wonder 1984' during Comic Con in San Diego. — AFP

Mystery surrounds Pine return to 'Wonder Woman' film series

Actor Chris Pine surprised superhero fans with an appearance alongside "Wonder Woman" star Gal Gadot on Saturday but offered no explanation for how he will return to the film franchise following his character's fiery death in the last movie. At San Diego Comic-Con, Pine joined Gadot and director Patty Jenkins in a packed, 6,500-seat convention hall to talk about "Wonder Woman 1984," which began filming three weeks ago. "I am actually not really here right now," Pine quipped when asked by moderator Aisha Tyler how he will re-emerge on the screen. "I'm just an aura of emotional support for my pals."

Pine played World War I pilot Steve Trevor in 2017 blockbuster movie "Wonder Woman." At the end of the film, Trevor sacrifices himself for the greater good and appears to die as his plane explodes. Jenkins, who had tweeted a photo of Pine on the "1984" set in June, also was vague about his role on Saturday. "What is he back here for? It's something I'm super excited for everybody to see the movie find out," she said. "It's a very important part of our movie."

The hugely successful "Wonder Woman" was a bright spot for Warner Bros.' DC Comics movies, which have earned mixed

reviews from critics and failed to match the box office success of films from Walt Disney Co.'s Marvel Studios. "Wonder Woman" grossed \$821.8 million worldwide. In early "1984" footage shown to the crowd, Wonder Woman lassos two bad guys and saves a child during a battle in a shopping mall food court. The movie is scheduled to reach theaters in November 2019.

Gadot said "1984" was not a traditional sequel. "It's its own story. It's a different story," she said. Warner Bros., a unit of AT&T Inc, also unveiled the first trailer for superhero movie "Aquaman," which is due in theaters in December. The footage showed glimpses of a brightly colored underwater world that is in peril due to conflicts with surface dwellers. Jason Momoa plays the title character, a reluctant king forced to battle his brother. Director James Wan, known for "Furious 7" and "The Conjuring" movies, said he wanted to give "Aquaman" a different feel than other superhero movies filling up screens. "My movie in some ways plays more like a science-fiction fantasy film than a traditional superhero movie," he said. — Reuters

Disney axes director James Gunn over offensive tweets

"Guardians of the Galaxy" franchise director James Gunn has been axed from the third movie over a series of offensive messages posted on Twitter several years ago. The tweets, mainly from 2008 and 2011, joked about taboo topics such as rape and pedophilia. Disney, which owns the franchise as the parent company of Marvel Studios, sent AFP a statement confirming the studio was parting ways with one of its biggest stars. "The offensive attitudes and statements discovered on James' Twitter feed are indefensible and inconsistent with our studio's values, and we have severed our business relationship with him," said Alan Horn, chairman of Walt Disney Studios.

Gunn has been an outspoken critic of President Donald Trump and has drawn the ire of conservative critics, who went back through his timeline and dug up the tweets.



In this file photo writer and director James Gunn arrives for the world premiere of the film 'Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2' in Hollywood, California. — AFP

Jack Posobiec of The Daily Caller and right-wing commentator Mike Cernovich are among those who unearthed the messages. "Many people who have followed my career know when I started, I viewed myself as a provocateur, making movies and telling jokes that were outrageous and taboo," Gunn wrote on Twitter after the offensive tweets resurfaced late Thursday. "As I have discussed publicly many times, as I've developed as a person, so has my work and my humor."

Gunn, who has deleted his account, described himself as a "very, very different" person than when he wrote the tweets, now focusing on love rather than anger. "My days saying something just because it's shocking and trying to get a reaction are over," he added. —AFP

Rock the vote: Pakistani political music keeps the party going

As the crowd swells with anticipation for their leader Shahbaz Sharif's arrival a DJ blares the anthem "Respect the vote", while supporters chant slogans and sway to the synth-driven dance track. "We are enjoying it a lot," shouts Nauman Khan over the ear-splitting volume as he dances with friends at the rally in Punjab province, days ahead of Pakistan's national elections. "We really like the songs of Nawaz Sharif," he screams, referring to Shahbaz's brother, the jailed former premier who continues to inspire his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supporters from behind bars. Pakistani political rallies have been transformed in recent years to festive blowouts, designed to entertain as much as inspire supporters to vote.

DJ Butt and the PTI are the spiritual heads of this

style. In the rural northwest he sticks to traditional folk tunes, while in urban areas the playlist is exclusively pop. "DJ Butt and the PTI are the spiritual heads of this," says pop culture writer Ahmer Naqvi on music's shaping of Pakistani politics. His success has since sparked a cottage industry, with political parties across the country hiring DJs on the campaign trail to attract voters.

At a PTI rally in Lahore, portions of the crowd resemble a mosh pit as men spin in circles, hands flailing in response to deafening political anthems. "The younger gen-



Asif Butt gestures during an interview with AFP.

eration likes music at Imran Khan's rallies because there is enthusiasm and fervour in it," says PTI supporter Muhammad Ali. "And there's DJs there and the music is good." But not all are fans. Back in Punjab province's Pindi Gheb, Sharif supporter Abdul Ghaffar slams the "singing and dancing" witnessed at Imran Khan's rallies for involving both men and women. "We don't have anything like dancing by women in our public meetings," he scoffs.

'Arrow to the heart'

For those upset with the ways of the young, there are still the classic songs of old, with the lyrics largely centered on the personalities of party leaders. "Arrow to the heart", an ode to the late former prime minister Benazir Bhutto and her Pakistan People's Party (PPP), remains the gold standard for political anthems in the eyes of many. "That bassline could bring down empires. It's so powerful," says pop culture writer Naqvi of the song's timelessness. "I don't know what is so special in this song but there is something that still attracts party leaders and workers alike," says Shabana Noshi, who provided vocals on the now iconic track.

Since being recorded almost 30 years ago, the song has outgrown its political mandate and is now a staple at weddings in southern Pakistan's Sindh province, where the PPP draws its support, Noshi says. And for the faithful, a PPP rally is not complete without the song. "No rally during the elections could be successful if the party song is not played on big speakers," says PPP supporter Naqash Saeed in Karachi. "Whenever it is played my partisanship gets stronger." — AFP

Play to the crowd

Butt's career resembles that of an ambitious upstart in the country's chaotic political landscape. He has played to crowds numbering tens of thousands, spent time in jail, and even manned the decks during a riot as police cracked down on a PTI protest with batons and tear gas. Butt's blueprint for success is simple: play to the crowd. In Punjab, he belts out tunes to suit the province's homegrown Bhangra dance



Asif Butt, better known by his stage persona DJ Butt, performs during a rally of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in Islamabad. — AFP photos

Second time lucky for Denzel, whose new film tops box office

Superstar Denzel Washington had never made a sequel in a career reaching back nearly four decades, but when he did, with the Sony/Columbia production of "The Equalizer 2," it managed to open at the top of the North American box office. With estimated ticket sales of \$35.8 million for the three-day weekend, "Equalizer" edged out another new sequel, star-studded "Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again," according to industry tracker Exhibitor Relations. In his new film, Washington again plays a former black-op agent and now soft-spoken Lyft driver — who is drawn back into action to avenge a

friend's death. Director Antoine Fuqua also made "Training Day," which earned Washington a best actor Oscar nod.

Industry watchers had expected Universal's "Mamma Mia!" to open atop the box office, but its ticket sales of \$34.4 million were "by no means a disappointment" at 22 percent above the original film's opening, according to Hollywood Reporter. With a star-studded cast-including Meryl Streep, Amanda Seyfried, Colin Firth and Pierce Brosnan-the film is set after the events of the original "Mamma Mia!" but uses flashbacks to fill in the story of Streep's carefree character on

the sun-splashed Greek island where an ABBA soundtrack is never far away.

In third spot was "Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation" from Sony, which took in \$23.2 million. The animated comedy, whose voice cast includes Adam Sandler and Selena Gomez, follows Count Dracula and his family as they get away from their hotel for their own vacation. Slipping from second last week to fourth was "Ant-Man and the Wasp," the 20th release in Disney's Marvel Cinematic Universe, at \$16.1 million. It has ex-con Scott Lang (Paul Rudd) struggling to balance home life and Ant-Man duties as he and old flame Hope van Dyne (Evangeline Lilly, alias the Wasp), take up an urgent new mission. And in fifth, also from Disney, was "Incredibles 2," at \$11.5 million, which earlier in the month pushed past Pixar stablemate "Finding Dory" as the top-grossing animated film of all time.

Rounding out the top 5 were: "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" (\$11 million) "Skyscraper" (\$11 million) "The First Purge" (\$5 million) "Unfriended: Dark Web" (\$3.5 million) "Sorry to Bother You" (\$2.8 million). — AFP



In this file actor Denzel Washington attends "The Equalizer 2" premiere at the TCL Chinese Theater in Hollywood, California.



Sanders, Director Antoine Fuqua and Denzel Washington attend the premiere of Columbia Picture's "Equalizer 2" at TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, California. — AFP photos

Guns and roses:

Afghan farmers enjoy sweet smell of success

Standing in a field of roses in eastern Afghanistan, former poppy grower Mohammad Din Sapai quickly but carefully plucks the delicate petals that will be turned into rose water and oils for sale around the world. The sweet smelling crop is providing farmers in Nangarhar province with a viable alternative to growing opium poppies, the sale of which has fuelled the conflict raging across the country. "I am very happy with this harvest of flowers," Sapai tells AFP as he stands among hundreds of blooming rose bushes. Sapai is one of more than 800 farmers in the province bordering Pakistan benefiting from the "Roses for Nangarhar" project, a joint Afghan-

figures show. But Sapai says he is perfectly happy to grow roses. He makes enough money to support his family, and insists roses have fewer costs and take less effort. After the rose season, which ends in May, he switches to growing vegetables.

'Better than poppies'

Starting at dawn and working until late morning when the heat sets in, Sapai and his workers appear resigned to the constant dangers lurking around them as they quickly pick off petals and drop them into large bags. Nangarhar is rife with fighters belonging to the Islamic State group



An Afghan farmer harvests rose petals from a rose garden near Jalalabad in the Dara-i-Noor district of Nangarhar province. — AFP photos

are much better... I make good money from roses. They are resistant and don't require as much expense or work." Khan Agha, a representative for Afghan Rose Ltd in Dara-e-Noor district, which emerged out of the Afghan-German initiative, agrees. Roses "do not require watering, fertilizer or care"-unlike poppies, he says. Rose trees are also more durable, lasting 30 to 50 years, compared with poppies, which must be planted every season.

"We have solid contracts with the farmers who grow roses asking them to stop cultivating poppy and other types of narcotics, and the places where we grow roses

allows". Like Mohmand, Orzala never stops worrying about the constant threat of violence. In 2016, 50 farmers working for him packed up and abandoned their crops in Achin district after it became an IS stronghold.

"You can deal with the Taleban, but you can't mess with Daesh," he says, using the Arabic name for IS. Two years later, his farmers remain displaced further north. Afghan Rose Ltd also closed the Achin distillery and retreated to Jalalabad. Its rose oil now supplies several European companies, including German organic cosmetics brand Dr Hauschka-whose products are priced well out of reach of ordinary Afghans. "They make very expensive creams with our roses," says Mohmand. Orzala exports its rose oil to Canadian company The 7 Virtues, which also sources essential oils from Haiti, the Middle East and Rwanda under the slogan "Make perfume, not war". It is a message that has more than a whiff of support among Nangarhar farmers. — AFP

'Make perfume, not war'

are clean from poppy 100 percent," he adds. The farmers grow a variety known as Damask roses, which were brought from Bulgaria by the Germans but are endemic to Afghanistan, says Mohammad Akbar Mohmand, the owner of Afghan Rose Ltd. The petals are distilled in the provincial capital Jalalabad. It takes about six tons of petals on average to extract one liter of essential oil.

At peak harvest time, Mohmand's distillery employs more than 120 people. From dawn until late morning, trucks flow from districts across the province delivering their precious cargo. Once picked, rose petals begin to wilt within hours and lose their scent. "The roses picked in the morning have to be distilled the very same day, even if we have to work until 2:00 am or 3:00 am," explains Mohmand, as bags of petals are poured into seven huge stainless steel vats.

'Make perfume, not war'

Shortly before the "Roses for Nangarhar" project started, Afghan entrepreneur Abdullah Orzala began growing roses and distributing the plants. The US-trained engineer recently opened a boutique in Kabul selling rose water and perfumes to middle-class Afghans and foreigners. He has 100 hectares (250 acres) of roses, but hopes to triple the number of plants next year "if the security (situation)



Roses are pictured after being collected from a rose garden near Jalalabad.



Afghan farmers harvest rose petals from a rose garden near Jalalabad.

German initiative set up in 2007 to encourage poppy growers to switch to a legal, money-making flower.

"They provided us with the plants, the tools and even paid us for the first year when we had no harvest," Sapai, 50, explains. "Now I have 600 plants and I collect up to 1,200 kilos (2,650 pounds) of petals." Opium is big business in Afghanistan, where Nangarhar is the sixth biggest poppy-producing province. Poppy cultivation hit a new record last year, with opium production soaring 87 percent to an estimated 9,000 tonnes, official

(IS), which emerged in Afghanistan by the end of 2014 and quickly turned the province into a stronghold. The Taleban also roam the area, and bombs planted along the roads leading to rose fields are a constant threat. In nearby Omar Qala village, teacher and rose-grower Shah Zaman is also convinced about the benefits of harvesting petals instead of poppies.

"The people here used to cultivate poppies but this is haram (forbidden under Islamic law)," Zaman tells AFP. He expects to harvest one ton of petals this year. "The roses



Afghan farmers harvest rose petals from a rose garden near Jalalabad.



Art dealer buys storage locker for \$15,000, finds treasures

New York City art dealer who bought the contents of a New Jersey storage locker filled with paintings for \$15,000 says he got more than he bargained for. He found half a dozen paintings he believes were done by artist Willem de Kooning, whose works have sold for millions of dollars at auction.

The New York Post reports David Killen bought the contents of the Ho-Ho-Kus (hoh-HOH'-kuhs), New

Jersey, locker last year. The paintings were originally from the studio of art conservator Orrin Riley, who died in 1986, and his partner, Susanne Schnitzer, who died in 2009. The paintings aren't signed, but Killen reached out to an expert who's confident they were done by de Kooning, an abstract expressionist from the Netherlands who moved to the United States and died in 1997. — AP

Alligator found in Pennsylvania woman's backyard

Pennsylvania woman who was admiring a turtle in her backyard got a surprise when she spotted an alligator just a few feet away. Tracie Hoffercker says she found the 2-to-3-foot-long (0.9-meter) gator near her home in the Philadelphia suburb of Prospect Park on Sunday morning. Hoffercker called her cousin, who is a Philadelphia firefighter, and he safely removed the alligator using a net.

Slimy, Scaly, Taily Reptile Rescue arrived on the scene and recovered the animal. Rescue group representative Matt Snider says the alligator will go to an aquarium. Authorities say the alligator was likely someone's pet and was illegally dumped in the area. It is legal to own an alligator under Pennsylvania state law. But it is illegal to release them into the wild. — AP

Classifieds

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



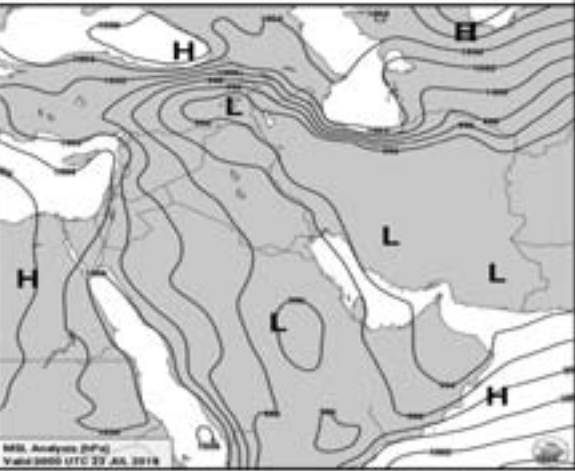
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 35 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind changing to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	<div>SFC. CHART23/07/2018 0000 UTC</div>	
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	35 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	47 °C	29 °C		
ABDALY	45 °C	27 °C		
BUBYAN	** °C	** °C		
JAHRA	45 °C	31 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	45 °C	28 °C		
SALMIYAH	41 °C	33 °C		
AHMADI	43 °C	34 °C		
NUWAISIB	45 °C	32 °C		
WAFRA	45 °C	27 °C		
SALMY	43 °C	28 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	07/24	Very hot and some scattered clouds will appear	48 °C	31 °C	NW	12 - 38 km/h
Wednesday	07/25	Very hot and some scattered clouds will appear	48 °C	31 °C	NW	15 - 40 km/h
Thursday	07/26	Very hot and Dusty	49 °C	33 °C	NW	22 - 55 km/h
Friday	07/27	Very hot and Dusty	48 °C	32 °C	NW	25 - 55 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:32
Sunrise	05:03
Zuhr	11:54
Asr	15:30
Sunset	18:46
Isha	20:14

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	46 °C
MIN. Temp.	34 °C
MAX. RH	26 %
MIN. RH	07 %
MAX. Wind	NW 57 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Hospitals

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sayed Salibhai Sayed Jaffar D/o Jaffar Ali, holder of Indian Passport No.

K2086240, Civil ID No. 256061602493, hereby change my name to Saleha Jaffer Ali Sayed. (C 5409) 23-7-2018

EMERGENCY

112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

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Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
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Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9



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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 24/7/2018

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	JZR	1543	Cairo	13:05
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	PFA	571	KTM	13:05
WAN	886	Sarajevo	00:20	AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10
KAC	102	London	00:50	JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	FEG	341	Sohag	13:50
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	KAC	672	Dubai	13:55
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	QTR	1078	Doha	14:10
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	FDB	059	Dubai	14:20
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	516	Tehran	14:20
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	618	Doha	14:20
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	286	Dhaka	14:25
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:45
JZR	267	Beirut	02:10	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	304	Mumbai	15:05
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KNE	529	Jeddah	15:10
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	OMA	645	Muscat	15:20
WAN	416D	Beirut	02:40	KAC	562	Amman	15:20
THY	768	Istanbul	02:40	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
JZR	553D	Alexandria	02:50	KAC	502	Beirut	15:35
JZR	607	Kochi	02:55	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KAC	118	New York	16:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	SAW	705	Damascus	16:00
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	JZR	535	Cairo	16:10
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	FDB	051	Dubai	16:20
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	FEG	241	Alexandria	16:45
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	NIA	361	Alexandria	16:50
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	JZR	125	Bahrain	16:55
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	KAC	542	Cairo	17:00
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
KAC	152	Istanbul	04:20	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:35
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	JZR	145	Doha	17:35
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	JZR	177	Dubai	17:40
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	QTR	1080	Doha	18:10
THY	1414	TZX	05:05	JZR	483	Istanbul	18:20
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	WAN	874	Istanbul	18:25
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:20	WAN	966	Tbilisi	18:30
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	RJA	640	Amman	19:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
KAC	362	Colombo	06:00	FDB	063	Dubai	19:10
RUN	6376	Istanbul	06:10	KAC	744	Dammam	19:10
BAW	157	London	06:10	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:25
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	NIA	0161	Cairo	19:30
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	JAI	216	Delhi	19:35
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:35
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	RBG	555	Alexandria	19:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	KAC	674	Dubai	19:40
JZR	605	Ahmedabad	07:05	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
JZR	143	Doha	07:20	KAC	178	Vienna	19:55
JZR	529	Asyut	07:30	KAC	616	Bahrain	20:00
KAC	358	Kochi	07:35	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:05
KAC	122	AGP	07:35	OMA	647	Muscat	20:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	620	Doha	20:15
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	JZR	563	Sohag	20:15
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KAC	166	Rome	20:25
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	TZS	616	Baku	20:30
WAN	312	Asyut	09:05	QTR	1088	Doha	20:40
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	172	Frankfurt	20:45
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	JZR	553	Alexandria	21:05
SYR	341	Damascus	09:40	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15
SAW	703	Damascus	10:00	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:30	KAC	168	Paris	21:20
JZR	531	Asyut	10:40	THY	764	Istanbul	21:30
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	564	Amman	21:50
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50
JZR	541	Cairo	11:05	AZG	565	Baku	22:00
WAN	134	Doha	11:10	ICV	675	Luxembourg	22:05
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:20	WAN	884	Sarajevo	22:05
MSC	411	Asyut	12:30	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
SAW	701	Damascus	12:45	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:15
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	BBC	043	Dhaka	22:30
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	PIA	239	Sialkot	22:35
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	WAN	118	Bahrain	22:40
ETD	995	Abu Dhabi/Bahrain	13:00	JZR	185	Dubai	22:50
				JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00

Trump threatens Tehran in all caps; Iranians wary of US support claims

Netanyahu praises Trump's 'tough stand' against Iran

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has launched an exceptionally raw attack on Iran, in a tone reminiscent of his war on words with North Korea last year - sparking questions about US strategy towards the Islamic republic. The threatening tweet, sent late Sunday and written in all capital letters, was quickly hailed yesterday by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who praised the US leader's "tough stand".

But some analysts warned that Trump's words could backfire if they are not followed up with action. The saber-rattling began when Iranian President Hassan Rouhani cautioned Trump not to "play with the lion's tail", saying that conflict with Iran would be the "mother of all wars" - prompting the furious salvo from the US leader.

"NEVER, EVER THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN OR YOU WILL SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE," Trump warned Rouhani. "WE ARE NO LONGER A COUNTRY THAT WILL STAND FOR YOUR DEMENTED WORDS OF VIOLENCE & DEATH. BE CAUTIOUS!"

Iranian General Gholam Hossein Gheypour, head of the country's powerful Basij militia, then accused Trump of carrying out "psychological warfare" with his tweets - while saying Trump was "not in a position to act". Trump's National Security Advisor John Bolton backed him up yesterday, insisting that the Republican president would make good on his threats, meaning Tehran "could pay the price" for any misstep.

So what do all the warnings and counter-threats mean? For some analysts in Washington, Trump is simply trying to redirect the conversation after a week of dire headlines over his much-maligned summit with Russia's Vladimir Putin and a relative lack of progress on North Korea. "Frustrated



Donald Trump



Hassan Rouhani

by no progress w/NK: angered by negative push back post Helsinki, Trump is looking to vent, act tough, and change channel," said Aaron David Miller, a former US diplomat and Middle East negotiator for several administrations. "If nothing else, Trump's ALL CAPS tirade reflect(s) reality that US has no Iran policy. Empty/ridiculous US rhetoric in response to same from Iran."

'Stop threat inflation'

In May, Trump - who has made Iran his public enemy number one - announced the US withdrawal from what he called a "defective" multinational nuclear deal with Tehran, and moved to reinstate punishing sanctions. Under Trump, many suspect the US government is hoping for regime change in Iran. On Sunday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said only: "Our hope is that ultimately the regime will make meaningful changes in its behavior both inside Iran and globally."

For Miller, the "one/two punch" from Trump and Pompeo showed a "lack of a

coherent US policy" on Iran. "US should have 3 redlines for possible military action against Iran: and ridiculous Iranian rhetoric isn't one of them," Miller wrote. "Preventing terror against the US; interruption of oil supply; stopping Iran from getting nuclear weapon. Otherwise stop threat inflation/ridiculous rhetoric."

After speaking with European officials about Trump's warnings, International Crisis Group president Rob Malley said diplomats on the continent were not "really taking it seriously". In Europe, Trump's tirade is seen as a way to distract from controversy over his summit with Putin and the ongoing Mueller investigation into possible collusion between the Trump campaign and a Russian effort to sway the 2016 election. "One can only hope they're right," Malley said.

Saber-rattling

While US ties with Iran and North Korea are different on several fronts, the words used by Trump to denigrate Tehran are simi-

lar in tone to those he directed a little more than a year ago at North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Several observers noted the similarities between the threats on Iran, and Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign towards Pyongyang. In Sept 2017, in his first speech to the United National General Assembly, Trump threatened to "totally destroy" North Korea.

Nearly a year on, Trump has met Kim - who he once called "Rocket Man" on a "suicide mission" - for a landmark summit in Singapore, and follow-up talks are underway between the two sides. However, concrete progress has been scant so far on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula - a goal Kim pledged to work towards. Yesterday, Trump took aim at The Washington Post for highlighting the lack of solid results and reporting, citing unnamed officials, that the US president was frustrated by it. "The Fake News is saying, without ever asking me (always anonymous sources), that I am angry because it is not going fast enough. Wrong, very happy!" he tweeted.

Netanyahu's remarks came hours before a meeting with top Russian officials on Iran and the situation in Syria, where Moscow-backed regime forces have been battering rebels in the south for more than a month. "I would like to praise the tough stand expressed yesterday by President Trump and Secretary of State (Mike) Pompeo against the aggression of the Iranian regime," Netanyahu said at the start of a cabinet meeting. "Over the years, this regime has been spoiled by the major powers and it is good to see that the US is changing this unacceptable equation."

Tehranis skeptical

Tehranis yesterday said they were deeply skeptical at Washington's claims that it stood with them against their government. "It's true that at the moment our society is in a crisis

and under pressure that is creating discontent," said Haleh, a child psychologist in the north Tehran suburb of Jordan. "But we don't want the West to impose a revolution that can lead to disorder," she added.

Pompeo gave a much-hyped speech in California on Sunday in which he described Iran's government as "a nightmare for the Iranian people". He announced an intensified American propaganda campaign so that "ordinary Iranians inside Iran and around the globe can know that America stands with them." Tehran reacted to Pompeo's speech as an interference in Tehran's affairs, the semi-official Tasnim news agency reported. "Such policies will unite Iranians who will overcome plots against their country," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qasemi said.

Many Iranians - even those opposed to the current system - fear what they see as a push for regime change, especially after the US pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal and announced it was re-imposing crippling financial sanctions. "People want change, but not necessarily a change of regime," said office worker Firouzeh. "It's been 40 years since the last revolution and we are still paying the price. An entire generation has paid the price. Do they really want another revolution?"

Regardless of how they view their government, Iranians are at least glad to have been spared the violence engulfing much of the region. "For us, the most important thing is security, and for now we have security. We must have reforms, but people hope it happens without violence so that everyone wins," said Haleh, the psychologist. Others felt a deal was still possible with the US president. "Trump is a businessman," said Amir, who said he did multiple jobs to get by in Iran's struggling economy. He'll make an offer and we'll reach a mutual agreement, with God's help." — Agencies

Ozil: From poster boy to...

Continued from Page 1

an outstanding display in Bloemfontein in the last 16. After the finals in South Africa, Ozil moved to Real Madrid for €18 million (\$21 million). However, the shy midfielder first found himself in the grey area between sport and politics soon after.

He was booed while playing for Germany at Berlin's Olympic Stadium in Oct 2010 in a European Championship qualifier against Turkey. Berlin has a large Turkish community and many in the 74,244-strong crowd were supporting the away team. There were loud whistles whenever Ozil got the ball - just because he had opted to play for Germany. Like him, three members of the Turkish team that night - Nuri Sahin, plus brothers Hamit and Halil Altintop, were born in Germany's industrial Ruhr region. Unlike him, however, they chose to represent Turkey.

Ozil, just 21 at the time, scored the second goal in an outstanding display in a 3-0 win and subdued his celebrations out of respect. Nevertheless, Angela Merkel's press department put out a picture of the German Chancellor congratulating Ozil in the German changing room. The softly-spoken midfielder was now Germany's integration mascot. The following month, Ozil won a Bambi award, a prestigious German media prize, as a prime example of

successful integration in German society, but he has often had to cope with criticism.

The subtle differences Ozil makes on the pitch often means he sometimes fails to shine in matches. Ozil quit the Bernabeu for Arsenal in 2013 and has built a large social media following with 31 million Facebook followers, 23 million on Twitter and 17 million on Instagram. He is known for his charity work, financing medical surgery for 23 Russian children after the World Cup. He did the same for sick minors in both Brazil and South Africa following the 2010 and 2014 finals.

Yet on the pitch, he has frustrated both Germany and Arsenal fans in recent seasons with a series of below-par displays for club and country. In interviews, he has always avoided questions about his heritage and only once, in 2015, did he vent his anger at being referred to as a 'German-Turk'. "Many forget that I was born in Gelsenkirchen, grew up in Germany," he fumed. His parting shot to Grindel "I will no longer be playing for Germany ... while I have this feeling of racism and disrespect" is a direct challenge to shake up the DFB.

However, the rise of populism in Germany has often been echoed in some of the criticism he has been forced to endure. Ozil's statement on Sunday, over three posts on both Instagram and Twitter, was seized upon by Germany's right-wing party Alternative for Germany (AfD) which has also criticized centre-back Jerome Boateng in the past. "With his farewell tirade #Ozil proves to be a typical example of the failed #Integration of far too many immigrants from the Turkish-Muslim culture," tweeted AfD deputy leader Alice Weidel. — AFP

trary measures against Qataris," foreign ministry spokeswoman Luhwa Al-Khater said in Arabic language comments published by state news agency QNA.

The UAE said it was already implementing the provisional procedures ordered by the court. "The judges rejected the Qatari demands and called for three procedures relating to families, students and adjudication and they are measures the UAE has already implemented according to its national regulations," UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said in a Twitter post in Arabic.

The court found that mixed UAE-Qatari families have been separated. Qatari students have been deprived of the opportunity to complete their education, and Qataris have been denied equal access to justice. "The court concludes that the conditions required by its statute for it to indicate provisional measures are met," it said.

The move into the international courts came a year after the severing of ties and imposition of punitive measures, accusing Doha of backing terrorism. These also included banning Qatar Airways from their airspace and closing the country's only land border with Saudi Arabia. The UAE had insisted the ICJ had no authority to hear Qatar's case and stressed the situation for Qataris living in the country today is different from a year ago.

"Qatar has failed to provide any evidence of mass expulsions or deportations or any specific actions to interfere in the enjoyment by Qataris of their civil, property or business rights," Saeed Alnowais, the UAE's ambassador to the Netherlands, told the court last month. He accused Doha of "mounting a public relations campaign against these states that have been most critical of its policies." The ICJ was set up in 1946 to rule in disputes against states. Diplomatic efforts have so far proved fruitless in resolving the crisis which has rendered the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council practically obsolete. — Agencies

US aid suspension hits poor in Gaza

GAZA CITY: Hadil Al-Rafati gently adjusts her anaemia-stricken toddler's frail legs onto her lap in the lobby of an NGO's clinic in Gaza City. The program providing treatment to her son is among those in the enclave facing cuts or closure due to a freeze on US aid to the Palestinians, organizers say. "He weighs 7.2 kilograms, but at a year and a month, he should be at least 10," the 21-year-old mother said of her son, Essam.

Since January, US financing for humanitarian programs serving the Palestinians has been suspended, with Washington saying it is being reviewed. President Donald Trump has threatened to withhold hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to force the Palestinians back to the negotiating table with Israel. On a recent day, around 15 mothers waited in the lobby of the clinic run by Palestinian organization Ard al-Insan to see a paediatrician or to receive food supplements for their children.

Certain services have been maintained with available funding, but the program is due to expire at the end of August if the money is not released. "They help us, give us medicine," said Rafati, who is unemployed and whose husband picks up odd jobs to make ends meet. "If they close, where will we go?"

The Gaza Strip, controlled by Islamist movement Hamas, has been under an Israeli blockade for more than 10 years. The two sides have fought three wars since 2008. Some 80 percent of the enclave's two million residents rely on aid, according to the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA). Trump's comments on aid in January came after Palestinian leaders suspended relations with the White House over its deeply controversial recognition of the disputed city of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Since then, the passage of a US law in March withholding certain aid to the Palestinians over payments made to prisoners jailed for security offences, or to the families of those killed while carrying out attacks against Israelis, has further complicated the situation.

Some \$215 million that the United States was to invest in humanitarian aid and development in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip has been held up, according to an analysis for the US Congress. US financing for UNRWA has also been blocked. "At President Trump's direction, assistance to the Palestinians remains under review," a US State Department official said. Some programs are already facing cuts, such as the Palestine Avenir for Childhood Foundation, which has not renewed contracts for some 30 employees since the start of the year.

Suffering from cerebral palsy, nine-month-old Maher had been receiving four physiotherapy sessions per week from the organization. He now only comes twice per week due to a lack of available therapists. "The change has been huge in the last three months," said his mother Nada Abu Assi, 27, as she watches her son move with the help of a support device.

The foundation's director, Ahmad Alkashif, said "these are the last beneficiaries", adding that hundreds of children are on its waiting list. The project, financed by Washington's development agency USAID, is part of a \$50 million program started in 2016 and meant to last five years. Some 20,000 patients were to benefit from the plan, with the possibility of extending it to 250,000 in case of disaster. "Unless the funding hold is lifted in the next three months, the 'Health Matters' program will close, leaving the most vulnerable families in Gaza without even the most basic health care services," said Ky Luu, chief operating officer of International Medical Corps, an American NGO contracted for the program. — AFP

Top UN court orders UAE to protect...

Continued from Page 1

against the UAE accusing Abu Dhabi of breaking the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD).

In a hearing in late June, Qatar accused the United Arab Emirates of spreading a "climate of fear" among Qataris living there, splitting families and causing "substantial pain" during the year-long blockade. Yesterday, the ICJ judges voted by eight votes in favor and seven against that the UAE "must ensure that families, that include a Qatari, separated by the measures adopted by the United Arab Emirates ... are reunited," said presiding judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf.

Qatari students must also be given the opportunity "to complete their education" in the Emirates or obtain their educational records if they wish to study elsewhere. Qataris "affected" by the UAE measures must also be allowed "access to tribunals and other judicial organs" in the country. "Many Qataris residing in the UAE appeared to have been forced to leave their place of residence without the possibility of return," the judges' ruling said. "There is an imminent risk that the measures adopted by the UAE could lead to irreparable prejudice to the rights invoked by Qatar."

Qatar welcomed yesterday's ruling, with foreign ministry spokesman Ahmed bin Saeed Al-Rumaihi, saying in a tweet that his country "was not seeking to escalate the dispute with the Emirates, but to repair the prejudice imposed on its citizens". "This is only the first step on a long road to defend our rights, but at the same time this sends an early strong signal that there will be no tolerance shown to countries that take arbi-

Duterte vows 'unrelenting'...

Continued from Page 1

They say the killing could amount to crimes against humanity. "If you think that I can be dissuaded from continuing this fight because of demonstrations, your protests which I find misdirected, then you got it all wrong," he said, referring to critics. "Your concern is human rights, mine is human lives," he added.

As Duterte spoke thousands of protesters took to the streets to denounce his administration's policies, including the drug war and a plan to re-write the constitution. Demonstrators torched large effigies of the president and waved banners calling for wage rises and relief from rising inflation, hovering at a five-year high. This year's address was also marked by high drama as political infighting in Congress delayed the passage of autonomy legislation for the nation's Muslim minority. After years of political wrangling and negotiations, a final draft of the proposed law was on the point of being approved and sent to Duterte for his signature.

But a fight for control of the top leadership post in the House of Representatives led to the delay of a final vote. Duterte promised that the legislation would still move forward. "When the approved version is transmitted and received by my office... I intend to - give me 48

hours - to sign it and ratify the law," he added. The measure is the key missing element in a languishing peace pact with the largest Islamic rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Along with other guerrillas, it waged a rebellion that has claimed about 150,000 lives since the 1970s.

The law aims to reinforce a historic but fragile 2014 peace deal under which the MILF will give up its quest for an independent homeland in the southern island of Mindanao in return for self-rule in a newly declared autonomous region. Both sides believe that creating the area will deter extremism in a region where brutal poverty and perennial bloodshed has fuelled recruitment by radical groups. "I have made a pledge that ISIS (Islamic State) terrorists or groups or allies will never gain a foothold in our country," Duterte said, referring to the months-long siege last year of the southern city of Marawi by militants. "We owe it to our fallen soldiers and police officers in Marawi and elsewhere to put an end to the bloodshed and seek the path of true peace."

Duterte reiterated that his foreign policy would not ally with any one power, but that ties with historic foe China had been "re-energized", bringing unprecedented cooperation in the battle on transnational crime and dismantling clandestine drug laboratories. But those warmer relations would not come at the expense of the Philippines' territorial integrity and economic interests in the South China Sea, he added. Duterte read his prepared 50-minute speech in full, unlike his two previous addresses, when he eventually ditched his script to improvise and ramble. — Reuters

Sports

In pinch, Rays' Robertson hits walk-off slam against Marlins

Diamondbacks overpower Rockies 6-1

FLORIDA: Daniel Robertson lined a pinch-hit, walk-off grand slam to left field, leading the host Tampa Bay Rays to a 6-4 win over the Miami Marlins on Sunday. Tampa Bay snapped a three-game losing streak. The loss ended Miami's four-game winning streak, which matched a season high. The Rays trailed 4-1 entering the ninth when Jake Bauers led off with a double to right, advanced to third on a single by C.J. Cron and scored on Ji-Man Choi's RBI single. Miami closer Kyle Barraclough (0-4) struck out Carlos Gomez and got Mallex Smith to ground into a fielder's choice. However, after walking Willy Adames, Barraclough allowed the homer on a 1-0 fastball to Robertson. According to the Marlins, Robertson's blast was also the first walk-off grand slam in the history of the franchise, which began play in 1998.

Royals 5, Twins 3

Drew Butera hit a three-run, inside-the-park home run, and Alex Gordon added a two-run double as Kansas City completed its first series sweep of the season, beating visiting Minnesota. Brad Keller (3-4) allowed three runs on three hits and two walks over seven innings while tying his career high with eight strikeouts. Wily Peralta earned his fourth save in four tries this season by retiring the Twins in the ninth. Max Kepler homered and Brian Dozier had an RBI double for Minnesota, which lost its third in a row and extended its road losing streak to nine.

Cubs 7, Cardinals 2

The historic home run streak for St Louis' Matt Carpenter ended, and Kyle Schwarber's sixth-inning solo shot snapped a tie and spurred host Chicago to a victory. The Cubs won three out of five games in the series. Carpenter, who set a single-season Cardinals record by homering in his previous six games, went 1-for-4. Jose Quintana (9-6) earned the win after allowing two runs on six hits and four walks while striking out six over seven innings.

A's 6, Giants 5 (10 innings)

San Francisco shortstop Brandon Crawford couldn't handle Matt Chapman's high chopper with two outs in the 10th inning, allowing Marcus Semien to score from second base and give the host Oakland a second straight extra-inning win in the Bay Bridge Series. Khris Davis and Matt Olson each hit two home runs for Oakland. Jeurys Familia (1-0), making his A's debut after having been acquired in a trade Saturday, earned the win with two innings of shutout relief. Austin Slater had three hits, including an RBI double, for the Giants, and Andrew McCutchen homered.

Diamondbacks 6, Rockies 1

Zack Greinke gave up one run and two hits in eight dominant innings while striking out a season-high 13, and Arizona broke a two-game losing streak with a victory over Colorado in Phoenix. Nick Ahmed had a two-run triple and Jeff Mathis had a two-run single for the Diamondbacks. Greinke (11-5) threw first-pitch strikes to 22 of the 27 batters he faced while extending a run in which he has given up five runs in his past 39 1/3 innings.

Indonesia football fans damage Asian Games stadium

PALEMBANG: Irate Indonesian football fans ripped plastic seats from the stands and hurled them onto the pitch at a stadium scheduled to host the Asian Games next month, an official said Sunday. A league match between Sriwijaya FC and Arema FC ended in chaos Saturday afternoon when the fans tore up seats at the Gelora Sriwijaya Stadium in Palembang on the island of Sumatra. Pictures showed multi-colored chairs strewn across the outer edges of the ground, which is bordered by an athletics track. "We are very upset with the supporters who ruined the seats in Gelora Sriwijaya during the game," Rusli Nawi, the stadium's security supervisor said. "I've been here for nearly 10 years... there has never been damage to the seats like yesterday."

The stadium had been renovated for the Games, which are being held in Palembang and the capital Jakarta from August 18-September 2. Indonesia has been scrambling to prepare venues, finish building work, widen roads and ease traffic congestion. Some 335 seats were damaged, about half of which will have to be replaced with seats ordered from outside Indonesia, Nawi said. Police have arrested four people over the rampage, which was started by Sriwijaya fans upset at their team's 3-0 home loss, Nawi said. No one was injured. About 11,000 athletes and 5,000 officials from 45 Asian countries will compete in the Games, the world's biggest multi-sports event after the Olympics.—AFP

China seeking to ban Taiwan flag from Gay Games

TAIPEI: Taiwan's gay rights activists yesterday accused China of pressuring organizers of the Gay Games to bar the island's national flag at next month's competition in Paris as ties with Beijing worsen. China considers Taiwan as part of its territory and is particularly sensitive to the self-ruled island's use of names, emblems and flags at international events. These sensitivities-backed up by Beijing's clout on the world stage-mean Taiwan is forced to compete as "Chinese Taipei" at the Olympics and a host of other international sports competitions. The Federation

Mariners 8, White Sox 2

Ryon Healy hit a pair of three-run homers, and Marco Gonzales didn't allow a hit until the sixth inning as Seattle defeated visiting Chicago. Healy capped a five-run first inning with his first homer and went deep again in the eighth for his 20th of the season to close the scoring. The Mariners took two of three games in the series. Gonzales (11-5) allowed two runs on four hits in 6 1/3 innings. He walked one and struck out six.

Angels 14, Astros 5

Andrew Heaney produced a strong start while Justin Upton blasted a tape-measure home run in Los Angeles' win at Anaheim, Calif. Ian Kinsler collected three hits for the Angels, including a homer, and Kole Calhoun and Mike Trout also went deep. Heaney (6-6) surrendered one run on four hits and two walks over six innings. Houston's Lance McCullers (10-5) gave up five runs on six hits in 4 1/3 innings.

Blue Jays 5, Orioles 4

Randal Grichuk and Yangervis Solarte each hit two-run home runs in a four-run eighth inning as Toronto came back to defeat visiting Baltimore. The Blue Jays completed a sweep of the three-game series after falling behind 4-1 when Baltimore scored two runs in the top of the eighth against John Axford (4-1). Tyler Clippard pitched around a hit batter in the ninth to earn his seventh save of the season. Tanner Scott (1-2) took the loss after serving up Solarte's go-ahead homer.

Nationals 6, Braves 2

Anthony Rendon drove in two runs with a first-inning triple, and Bryce Harper homered and had two RBIs as host Washington defeated Atlanta. The teams battled through two long rain delays, and the game didn't end until 8:34 p.m. ET-after it was scheduled for a 1:35 start-thanks to stoppages totaling 3:33 along with a game that lasted 3:26. Washington's Max Scherzer (13-5) won his third consecutive start, allowing two runs on eight hits in six innings while striking out seven and walking one. Atlanta's Mike Foltynewicz (7-6) gave up four runs in 5 2/3 innings.

Padres 10, Phillies 2 (Game 1)

San Diego scored four runs in the first three innings on two-out hits, and Tyson Ross allowed two runs in five innings during a rout of host Philadelphia in the first game of a split doubleheader. Carlos Asuaje had two doubles and scored two runs, and Freddy Galvis, Wil Myers and Travis Jankowski each drove in two runs for the Padres, who snapped a six-game losing streak. Three San Diego relievers combined to strike out six while tossing four innings of one-hit ball.

Phillies 5, Padres 0 (Game 2)

Vince Velasquez took a no-hitter into the sixth inning for the third time this season, and Odubel Herrera and Rhys Hoskins homered to help Philadelphia earn a split of the doubleheader with San Diego. The Padres got only two hits in the second game against Velasquez and three relievers. Velasquez gave up two hits, a walk and a hit batter with seven strikeouts in seven innings. In two career starts against the Padres,



ST PETERSBURG: Hunter Wood #61 of the Tampa Bay Rays successfully breaks up a double play attempt after being forced out by Starlin Castro #13 of the Miami Marlins during the ninth inning of the game at Tropicana Field on July 22, 2018. — AFP

Velasquez has pitched 16 shutout innings, giving up five hits and a walk with 20 strikeouts.

Pirates 9, Reds 2

Pittsburgh completed a three-game demolition of host Cincinnati, pounding out 15 hits, including four home runs, while running its season-high winning streak to nine games. Corey Dickerson bombed his fourth home run of the series among four hits, helping the Pirates complete a sweep during which they collected 43 hits, including 18 for extra bases. Gregory Polanco, Starling Marte and Sean Rodriguez also homered for Pittsburgh. Ivan Nova (6-6) coasted through 6 2/3 innings of two-run ball for the win.

Red Sox 9, Tigers 1

Chris Sale tossed six shutout innings, Jackie Bradley Jr. blasted a three-run homer, and Boston cruised to a victory at Detroit. Sale (11-4) gave up just two hits, walked none and struck out nine. He has won his last five starts and has notched at least nine strikeouts in eight consecutive outings. Steve Pearce and Xander Bogaerts each had two hits and scored two runs, while Andrew Benintendi contributed a two-run triple. Jeimer Candelario homered for the Tigers.

Rangers 5, Indians 0

Yovani Gallardo pitched six solid innings while Rougned Odor went 3-for-3 and drove in three runs as Texas shut out visiting Cleveland. Gallardo (4-1) helped the Rangers avoid a three-game sweep after they

allowed 25 runs in the first two games of the series. He allowed three hits and worked around four walks. Odor went 8-for-13 in the series and drove in three runs in a game for the second time this season. He hit an RBI single in the third off Mike Clevinger (7-6), lifted a sacrifice fly in the fifth and homered in the eighth off Oliver Perez.

Dodgers 11, Brewers 2

Matt Kemp hit two home runs, and Alex Wood worked his way out of trouble to pitch six strong innings as Los Angeles rolled to a win at Milwaukee. Kemp hit solo home runs in the second and third innings. Manny Machado had two hits, including an RBI double in the second inning, and went 5-for-13 in his first three-game series with the Dodgers since being acquired from the Orioles. The Brewers loaded the bases in the first two innings against Wood (6-5), but the left-hander limited the damage. He gave up two runs on five hits over six innings with four strikeouts and three walks. Milwaukee lost for the eighth time in nine games.

Mets at Yankees, ppd

The series finale between the New York Yankees and New York Mets was postponed because of inclement weather. The game will be made up on Aug 13, which previously had been scheduled as an off day for both clubs. The Mets will make a detour to the Bronx between series in Miami and Baltimore, while the Yankees will be in the middle of what now will be an 11-game homestand.— Reuters

World Cup Sevens knockout format under scrutiny

SAN FRANCISCO: World Rugby chiefs have declared the "brutal" knockout format of the World Cup Sevens a success but coaches have urged officials to think twice before using the same system more widely. In a break from tradition, this year's tournament scrapped the usual round-robin stage in favor of a single-elimination knockout, raising the stakes from the opening rounds.

Yet while the format change created undeniable drama, with Australia a notable casualty on the opening day, some players and coaches remain unconvinced whether the experiment should continue. World Rugby chief executive Brett Gosper said the move to straight knockout had been a hit with fans. "It played into the drama of the tournament," Gosper said. "We're getting a lot of positive feedback from fans about the drama of knockout. It makes each game exciting. It can be brutal for teams, but sport's brutal. What can you say?"

New Zealand coach Clark Laidlaw, however, remained unimpressed. "I haven't changed my mind," Laidlaw said after his team romped to victory over England in Sunday's final at AT&T Park. "I don't enjoy the format," Laidlaw added. "Ultimately once you're through the first day, every tournament is straight knockout anyway. So it's not actually any different from a rugby perspective. As a spectacle I'm sure everyone enjoyed it. "But when you've got coaches and players' livelihoods at stake, and the format isn't quite what we're paid to do... It's an interesting question."

England coach Simon Amor, meanwhile, said that while he was not opposed to the knockout system being used in one-off tournaments, he did not support its introduction on the international circuit. "I don't think it works in the series," Amor said. "Because one game on one day is not really the nature of sevens. You need a couple of games. But as a standalone one-off event it's okay." England captain Tom Mitchell said the switch to single elimination had been "interesting."—AFP



PALEMBANG: Irate spectators throw chairs ripped from the stands during the league football match between Sriwijaya FC and Arema FC at the Gelora Sriwijaya Stadium, also known as Jakabaring Stadium, a venue for the upcoming Asian Games, in Palembang. — AFP

of Gay Games (FGG) had looked as if it would buck this trend when it gave its blessing for Taiwanese competitors to compete under the name "Taiwan" and use the national flag, according to Taiwanese activists.

But Yang Chih-chun, president of the Taiwan Gay Sports and Gay Development Movement Association, said they were notified by the FGG last week that the French government had "expressed concerns" over displaying the Taiwanese flag. "Our logical conclusion is that China protests to the French government or otherwise this would not have happened," Yang said. The association added that it is also negotiating with FGG over its listing as "Taiwan (Chinese Taipei)" on the Paris games website rather than just "Taiwan"—the name it used when filling out registration form. "We hope the FGG can resist pressure," said Yang.

Relations between Taipei and Beijing have deteriorated since President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan's independence-leaning Democratic Progressive Party took office two years ago, as her government refuses to recognize that the

island is part of "one China." China has cut off official communication with Tsai's government while stepping up military and diplomatic pressure on the island. Under pressure from Beijing, a growing number of international airlines and companies recently changed their website classifications of Taiwan to "Taiwan, China" or "Chinese Taipei".

The Gay Games sporting and cultural festival was founded in 1982, and organizers estimate up to 10,000 people will take part in this year's event. The 28-member Taiwanese delegation led by prominent gay rights campaigner Chi Chia-wei will leave for Paris on August 2 for the competition between August 4 and 12. Chi said the Paris games could be "an unprecedented rare opportunity" for Taiwan to compete as Taiwan and use its national flag as such arrangements would be impossible in the next tournament due to be held in Hong Kong. "We will fight till the last moment to use our national flag at the Gay Games," he said.— AFP

Sports

Who needs Ferrari? Italy has Molinari; First Italian to win

Molinari hails ‘hero’ Rocca after British Open triumph

CARNOUSTIE: Francesco Molinari was only half joking when he said his stunning British Open victory might make the headlines back home - as long Ferrari had not won the Grand Prix in Hockenheim. The 35-year-old became the first Italian to win a major when his two-under-par round of 69 helped him eclipse the likes of Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy and Jordan Spieth on a nerve-jangling final day around Carnoustie. Only 14 of the 79 players on breezy Sunday shot a sub-par round but he churned out par after par before birdies at the 14th and 18th earned him the Claret Jug. Asked whether his triumph would knock more traditional Italian passions off the sports pages, Molinari said: "It depends. Ferrari won today? If they won, they'll probably get the headlines."

As it was Ferrari did not win and with the Italian soccer team missing the World Cup, golf might just have a chance to thrust itself out of the shadows. "Obviously, to achieve something like this is on another level," he said. "Hopefully, there were a lot of young kids watching on TV today, like I was watching Costantino (Rocca) in '95 coming so close. Hopefully, they will get as inspired as I was at the time, watching him vie for the Claret Jug." Rocca famously lost a playoff to American John Daly having holed an incredible putt from the so-called "Valley of Sin" in front of the 18th green at St Andrews in 1995.

It took an Italian 23 years to challenge again at the Open and this time Molinari prevailed, having managed only three top-10 finishes in his 35 previous majors. Despite having won two of his last five tournaments in the build-up to Carnoustie, Molinari was considered an outsider. He said the lack of spotlight on him helped - especially as he was playing alongside a charging Woods on Sunday in front of galleries 10 deep in places. While others were losing their cool, Molinari simply buckled down and cranked out a winning score.

"Clearly, in my group, the attention wasn't really on me, let's put it that way," Molinari, who rocketed from

15th to sixth in the world rankings and clinched his place in Europe's team for the Ryder Cup in France in September, said. "If someone was expecting a charge, probably they weren't expecting it from me, but it's been the same the whole of my career. I don't really care too much about it. "I care about the people around me, the work that we put in. They know how much we've all worked to get here."

In 2010 Molinari and his elder brother Edoardo became the first brothers to compete together in the Ryder Cup since 1963. Edoardo has since suffered with wrist and hand injuries and slumped down the rankings before a return to form last year, when he won the Trophée Hassan II in Morocco. The new Open champion said he hoped his victory would also be a boost to his sibling with whom he won golf's World Cup for Italy in 2009. "I would love for him to get back to where he was a few years ago," he said. "Golf is a tough beast. He's experienced some bad injuries and two hand surgeries, but he's come back. "I'm sure this will motivate him even more to achieve some great things in the game of golf in the future."

'Hero' Rocca hailed

Molinari insisted Costantino Rocca would remain his "hero and idol" after succeeding where his compatriot failed narrowly by becoming the first Italian to win the British Open. Despite the pressure of playing alongside golf great Tiger Woods, who was himself in title contention, Molinari produced a brilliant final round of 69 to win the Open at the Carnoustie course in Scotland on Sunday. Remarkably, it was the 35-year-old Molinari's second consecutive round without the blemish of a bogey and saw him finish the Open on eight under par.

Back in 1995 at St Andrews, another Scottish course and the venue for this week's Senior British Open, Rocca holed a stunning 60-foot birdie on the 18th hole to force a play-off only for John Daly of the United States to win that year's Open. "It feels weird,"



CARNOUSTIE: Italy's Francesco Molinari poses for pictures with the Claret Jug - the trophy for the Champion golfer of the year after winning the 147th Open golf Championship at Carnoustie, Scotland on July 22, 2018. — AFP

Molinari, now the first Italian to win any of golf's four major championships, told Sky Sports on Monday. "Costantino still is and will always be my hero and my idol. "His text last (Sunday) night was probably one of the most special ones. He came so close to winning this that it's for him as well. He told me congratulations and how pleased he was for me. "He knows how hard I've been working to get here so I think he felt the same pride as I did. I felt yesterday," added the 35-year-old Molinari, who in May won the European PGA Championship title at England's Wentworth course and recently claimed his first title on the US tour at

the Quicken Loans National.

Molinari, a more outwardly reserved figure than Rocca, said he was determined to keep the Open champion's Claret Jug trophy, arguably the most famous piece of silverware in golf, in his sights. "It wasn't too wild, there was a lot of joy from everyone but a lot of tiredness as well after a long week," he said of Sunday's celebrations. "But it was great to have a few close friends and my wife having a few drinks and telling a few stories about the week," added Molinari, whose brother, Edoardo, is also a professional golfer.—Agencies

Sky chief slams Tour haters, calls race's billing into doubt

CARCASSONNE: Team Sky chief Dave Brailsford hit out at organizers yesterday for failing to stop "intimidating" abuse of his riders and staff as they attempt to win the Tour de France. With Welshman Geraint Thomas in the yellow jersey and four-time champion Chris Froome in second place at 1min 39sec, Sky are in an optimal position as they head into the Pyrenees for three consecutive stages starting today.

But the British outfit's bid to win the French race for the sixth time in seven years is not sitting well with some fans. Amid a general feeling of suspicion surrounding Sky and their sheer domination of the race, Froome has been spat at, Thomas has been booed off the podium and some of Sky's staff have also faced abuse during the opening 15 stages.

Brailsford, who has been questioned by a British parliamentary inquiry following allegations Sky had breached ethical guidelines by abusing the legal use of Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUE's) for their riders, said he did not expect the abuse to stop. But he claimed the organizers' inability to step in and take effective measures against the haters had compromised the race's billing as the "the world's greatest annual sporting event". "The Tour de France is promoted as the world's greatest annual sporting event. If that's the case, then maybe treat it with a bit more respect," Brailsford said on the rest day Monday.

"If you don't want international teams to come, you can have a Tour de France for French teams. That's the way I see it really," He added: "We're trying to remain dignified, we're trying to not get distracted by it. "I don't think spitting and throwing things really has a base in professional sport, nor in everyday life." Sky, though, started the race under a cloud. Froome was initially barred from starting his title defence by organizers because of the suspicion surrounding his "adverse analytical finding" for the asthma drug salbutamol at the Tour of Spain last year.

The Kenyan-born Briton had double the permitted amount of the drug in his sample when he won the race in 2017. Yet days before the Tour, the International Cycling Union (UCI) cleared Froome to race. Brailsford said: "Chris's case was open when we raced in Italy. And they were fantastic, the Italians (fans). "It seems to be the thing that's done here. It just seems to be a French thing. A French cultural thing really," He added: "I'm not sure they would like to have seen their (France) football players being spat at (the World Cup) in Russia. "I'm sure there would have been a word or two about that. But it's okay to spit at us and our staff? It's very, very intimidating."

"It's a shame, but we're not going to let it distract us." Sky's victory bid was potentially dented when the team lost Italian rider Gianni Moscon on Sunday after he was thrown off the race for striking Frenchman Elie Gesbert of the Fortuneo team. Brailsford admitted the incident is unlikely to get fans on their side. "It's certainly not going to calm people down," he said. But he added: "It's not acceptable for a rider to do that. I agree with the decision of the race commissaires. "It's impact on the team overall means that some of the riders will have to do a bit more work."— AFP

'It stings,' Woods admits as Open charge fades away

CARNOUSTIE: Tiger Woods at one moment looked like completing an astonishing fairytale comeback when he led the British Open in the final round on Sunday but ultimately came up short, posting a level par 71 to finish five-under for the tournament. However, the 42-year-old 14-time major winner had his rivals rattled when he grabbed the lead thanks to two birdies on the front nine while they were dropping shots. The dream, though, ended for Woods on his return after a two-year hiatus to a major he has won three times when he double-bogeyed the 11th and then dropped another shot on the following hole.

Woods, who was watched by his children and got adoring hugs as he left the final green, admitted he was "a little ticked off with himself" but said his close friend and tennis superstar Serena Williams — who lost in the Wimbledon singles final last weekend — would set him right. "Serena will probably call me and talk to me about it because you've got to put things in perspective," said Woods who eventually finished tied for sixth, three shots behind playing partner and champion Francesco Molinari.

"She just had a baby and lost the Wimbledon finals. Just keep it in perspective, and the same thing with me. I know that it's going to sting for a little bit here, but given where I was to where I'm at now, blessed." Early on Sunday, that old familiar Tiger charge - missing for several years due to personal problems and back issues - seemed to be on the

cards as the packed gallery appeared to energize him. He was pumping his fist and even raised a two-fingered V for victory to the gallery at the fourth as he sank a longish birdie putt to move to three off the lead. He secured another birdie on the par five seventh, holing an uphill putt — this time there was no fist pump just a determined look in his eyes as he strode off the green. Woods then found himself in the lead in the middle of his round as the leaders shed shots all over the place but from that tantalizing high his game began to falter visiting the sand on three successive holes from the eighth to the tenth.

'Pretty significant hugs'

However, his run of luck came to an abrupt end at the 11th - as did his lead - finding the rough then hitting a spectator before rolling behind a bush and resulting in a double bogey with him exiting the green grim-faced. Further trouble and another dropped shot was to follow at the next and it was with his head bowed deep in thought he strode down the par-three 13th where he managed to stem the haemorrhage with a par. He got one back on the par five-14th but Molinari also birdied to take him two shots ahead of the American.

He vented his frustration when distracted by a shout from a spectator in the middle of his swing although the drive itself found the fairway. He quickly set aside his anger and produced a sublime approach shot onto the green - Molinari congratulating him as the passed - taking the applause of the crowd with a wave of his cap. However, in a reflection of his final nine holes, the birdie putt did not drop while Molinari's did and it was the Italian who pumped his fist and Woods who patted his back in congratulations.

However, his disappointment was quickly counter-balanced by the warmth of the reception from his children. "I



CARNOUSTIE: US golfer Tiger Woods watches his iron shot from the 3rd tee during his final round on day 4 of The 147th Open golf Championship at Carnoustie. — AFP

told them I tried, and I said, "Hopefully you're proud of your pops for trying as hard as I did."," said Woods. "They gave me some — it's pretty emotional because they gave me some pretty significant hugs there and squeezed."

"I know that they know how much this championship means to me and how much it feels good to be back playing again." Woods said it was extra special for him as all his two children had witnessed before were his fall from grace both personally — divorcing their mother Elin Nordgren because of serial infidelities - and professionally. "The only thing they've seen is my struggles and the pain I was going through," said Woods. "Now they just want to go play soccer with me. So that's — man, it's just such a great feeling."— AFP

Froome ready to give up his yellow jersey dream for Thomas

CARCASSONNE: Defending champion Chris Froome said he is ready to sacrifice a record-equaling fifth Tour de France victory if it helps Sky teammate Geraint Thomas claim his maiden yellow jersey. Four-time champion Froome can pull level with the likes of former five-time winners Jacques Anquetil, Bernard Hinault, Eddy Merckx and Miguel Indurain if he triumphs on the Champs Elysees next Sunday. The feat would also see the Kenyan-born Briton, who won the 2017 Tour of Spain and this year's Giro d'Italia, become the first rider since deceased Italian Marco Pantani, in 1998, to claim a Giro-Tour double in the same calendar year.

But Froome, currently 1min 39sec behind Thomas in the overall standings going into three consecutive days in the Pyrenees, said he would be happy to forego all the glory if it means Thomas wins the race for Sky. "As long as there is a Team Sky rider on the top step of the podium in Paris, I'm happy," Froome said as he and Thomas faced media on the race's second and final rest day in Carcassonne. Asked if he would sacrifice his hopes of a fifth Tour crown to help Thomas, Froome replied: "Yes." Thomas has yet to podium on a three-week Grand Tour and, despite winning the Criterium du Dauphine last month, crashed out of both the Giro d'Italia and Tour de France in 2017.

But despite uncertainties over his ability to maintain form, and stay on the bike, in the crucial third week, the 32-year-old Welshman has often looked more incisive than Froome. For some, Thomas is simply preparing the terrain for Froome to take flight on one of the Pyrenean stages before targeting his record-equaling fifth win. Alternatively, Sky could be counting on Thomas to take it all the way. Froome's participation in the Giro d'Italia means he, like many other racers before him, may pay for those efforts in the final week. Team Sky chief Dave Brailsford was at pains



CARCASSONNE: Photo shows Great Britain's Team Sky cycling team teammates (from left) Italy's Gianni Moscon, Great Britain's Luke Rowe, Spain's Jonathan Castroviejo, Poland's Michal Kwiatkowski, Netherlands' Wout Poels. — AFP

to underline his admiration for both riders, saying: "The two of them are big champions."

"For me it's important to see either one of them win the Tour de France." But, replying in French to one journalist, he possibly let slip the key to Sky's internal race strategy. "At the end of the day, it's the legs of the riders that will decide," he added. Froome was more evasive when asked if he would attack Thomas if in a position to do so. "All this talk of attacking or not attacking ... we're in an amazing position, we're one and two," he said. "It's not up to us to be attacking. It's for all the other riders in the peloton to make up time on us and dislodge us from the position we're in."

Luxemburger Bob Jungels, who has dropped to 12th overall at nearly 10 minutes behind Thomas, said it was no easier to decipher Sky's dilemma from inside the peloton. "Geraint Thomas has been in yellow since stage 11, and Froome's still making a good impression," the Quick Step rider said. "At the end of the day it's up to them to decide. Maybe if one of them has an off day, you never know. "All I can say is, they race very, very fast." Thomas, who spent several years racing alongside Froome in their former team Barloworld, said, for now, the team is united. — AFP

Root falls cheaply again in Roses clash

LONDON: England captain Joe Root's hopes of spending valuable time in the middle batting against the red ball ahead of next week's first Test against India were dealt another blow yesterday as he again fell cheaply in the Roses match. The only consolation for Root, who fell for three in the second innings of Yorkshire's County Championship clash away to arch-rivals Lancashire, was that he was caught behind off the bowling of England spearhead James Anderson on the second day of four at Old Trafford.

In a Roses match where bowlers have been on top, Adam Lyth had earlier fallen for four Kane Williamson, the New Zealand captain, out for just one as ex-England paceman Graham Onions struck twice. Root had been the first of a trio of world-class batsmen involved in a hat-trick from Lancashire all-rounder Jordan Clark on Sunday when he was lbw for 22. Next ball Clark then had Williamson lbw for a duck before England wicket-keeper Jonny Bairstow was caught in the slips.

Yorkshire, the White Rose county, were dismissed for 109 but led on first innings as hosts Lancashire, whose emblem is the Red Rose, slumped to 102 all out in reply. Monday saw Bairstow guide Yorkshire to 154 for four in their second innings at lunch, the in-form batsman 77 not out from just 63 balls at the interval as his side established an imposing lead of 237. England begin a five-Test series with India at the Edgbaston ground in Birmingham on August 1.— AFP

Sports

Napoli chief accuses Sarri of trying to ‘dismantle’ squad

Chelsea urged to embrace Sarri’s new formation

LONDON: Napoli president Aurelio De Laurentiis has said that former manager Maurizio Sarri tried to “dismantle” the Italian team’s squad by signing their players for his new club Chelsea. Sarri coached Napoli for three seasons before joining the Premier League side earlier this month and his arrival at Stamford Bridge was closely followed by the signing of midfielder Jorginho from his former team. While De Laurentiis said Jorginho’s transfer was sanctioned after discussions with Napoli’s new manager Carlo Ancelotti, he accused Sarri of trying to take more of Napoli’s players to Chelsea.

“He wanted to take my whole team to England and dismantle it. I had to lay down the law to Marina (Granovskaia, Chelsea director),” De Laurentiis told Sky Sports Italia. “He wanted Jorginho and I gave him away after I talked to Ancelotti, who told me he was banking a lot on (Amadou) Diawara and that he wanted to play (Marek) Hamsik deeper.” Sarri will lead FA Cup holders Chelsea in his first competitive match in charge against league champions Manchester City in the Community Shield on Aug 5.

Sarri’s new formation

Chelsea’s players must quickly adapt to new manager Maurizio Sarri’s demands as the Italian looks to reshape the team for the new Premier League season, midfielder Cesc Fabregas said. The 59-year-old Sarri replaced sacked compatriot Antonio Conte at the helm

this month and is known to favor an attacking approach as seen at his former club Napoli. “He is bringing a different style, a different formation and we just need to grow into it,” Fabregas told the club’s website.

One of Sarri’s first changes has been to ditch Conte’s preferred system of three central defenders to deploy four at the back and Fabregas said the team, currently on a pre-season tour of Australia, were adjusting. “We need time to re-adapt to a back four and to what the boss wants but I believe we’re intelligent players and players at the top level who will try to adapt as soon as possible,” Fabregas said ahead of Monday’s clash with A-League side Perth Glory. “The players who are here, together with the youngsters, do a good job trying to get it as fast as we can and hopefully this is a good day to start seeing a few things from what the manager wants from us.”

Left back Marcos Alonso looked forward to Sarri leaving his imprint on the team’s style as they look to improve on their fifth-placed finish last season. “He likes to play football, likes to press high, to try to have control of the ball and control of the game,” Spaniard Alonso said. “It could be more similar to the Spanish style, but he has Italian aspects as well... he likes to work with the defense a lot, the back-four line, lots of positioning work.” Chelsea begin their campaign in the Community Shield against champions Manchester City on Aug 5. They visit Huddersfield Town in their league opener six days later. —Agencies



PERTH: Chelsea’s Ethan Ampadu (2nd right) speaks to coach Maurizio Sarri as he leaves the field during the football friendly match against Perth Glory at Optus stadium in Perth yesterday. Chelsea beat Perth Glory FC 1-0. —AFP

Man United held to scoreless draw by Earthquakes

LOS ANGELES: Manchester United, buoyed by the arrival of Alexis Sanchez on Sunday, nevertheless remained without a win in their North American pre-season tour after a 0-0 draw against the San Jose Earthquakes. The match at Levi’s Stadium in Santa Clara, California, pitted a United side playing its second match of the pre-season against an Earthquakes team in the midst of what has been a lackluster Major League Soccer campaign. Sanchez was a lively presence after missing the 1-1 draw against Club America of Mexico in Phoenix on Thursday because of visa issues.

But in hot conditions before a sparse crowd, United created few chances, and saw Antonio Valencia limp off with an apparent calf injury less than 10 minutes in. Valencia, who was replaced by Matteo Darmian, was part of Jose Mourinho’s starting back four along with Luke Shaw, Eric Bailly and Chris Smalling. Bailly had a golden chance to score in the fifth minute but his header off a free kick from Sanchez rocketed off the cross bar.

Minutes later Valencia departed, and Sanchez himself was lucky to escape injury when Florian Jungwirth stuck out an arm in a “clothesline” tackle of the Chilean—who went close with a free kick in the 30th minute. “Today is good for Alexis,” Mourinho said. “The first time he plays after some individual sessions. He needed this and he made a good effort, a good physical effort, which is important for him in this moment.” After a scoreless first half, the Earthquakes nearly opened the scoring when Vako beat keeper Lee Grant only for defender Timothy Fosu-Mensah—one of five second-



CALIFORNIA: Chris Smalling #12 of Manchester United battles for control of the ball with Quincy Amarikwa #25 of the San Jose Earthquakes during the first half of their exhibition soccer game at Levi’s Stadium on July 22, 2018. —AFP

half substitutions—to clear the danger.

Nine minutes from time Grant’s superb diving save denied Tommy Thompson’s long-range effort. “This is one more training session. We are not a team. We’re a group of players from different teams,” said Mourinho, whose players are now looking toward three

International Champions Cup friendly tournament matches against AC Milan, Liverpool and Real Madrid. “Some are first-team, some under-23s, some coming from loans and going on loan, some are younger, under-18s. “We don’t have a team to play much better than we did but (it’s) one more training session.”—AFP

Key dates in the Mesut Ozil saga

BERLIN: Here are the key moments that culminated in Mesut Ozil’s bombshell announcement he was retiring from international football after a career including Germany’s triumph at the 2014 World Cup:

Erdogan meeting

The fiasco started on May 13 when Ozil and fellow Germany midfielder Ilkay Gundogan met Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in London during a charity gala event. Both players posed for pictures with Erdogan, who they presented with shirts of their respective clubs Arsenal and Manchester City, the latter of which was signed “for my president” by City star Gundogan. The photos were released on social media by Erdogan’s election campaign team on May 14, the day before the Germany squad for the World Cup finals was announced. Gundogan posted on Instagram to say the pictures were not a “political statement”, but Ozil kept silent.

They were heavily criticized by German politicians and football pundits, while Reinhard Grindel, the president of the German FA (DFB), said the players had allowed themselves to be “manipulated”.

World Cup call-up

Despite heavy criticism in Germany of the controversial pictures, head coach Joachim Loew named both Ozil and Gundogan in his provisional World Cup squad on May 15. “Not for a second” had Loew thought of leaving them out, despite calls for the pair to be dropped. On May 19, Ozil and Gundogan meet Loew and senior DFB officials, plus German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier in Berlin, in a failed attempt to clear up the matter. Steinmeier said both players affirmed their loyalty to Germany during the meeting. “I grew up here and I’m faithful to my country,” Ozil was quoted by Steinmeier as say-

ing, while Gundogan added, “Germany is today clearly my country and my team”.

Jeers and whistles

Ozil and Gundogan were jeered and whistled by travelling German fans during a 2-1 friendly defeat away to Austria in Klagenfurt on June 2, despite Ozil scoring the opening goal. Ozil sat out the narrow friendly win over Saudi Arabia six days later in Leverkusen, but Gundogan was booed when he came on and reportedly later wept in the German dressing room.

Bierhoff blunder

Former Germany captain Lothar Matthaeus said Ozil no longer seemed comfortable playing in the Germany shirt in the wake of the shock 1-0 defeat to Mexico in the opening World Cup game. Loew then dropped Ozil for the last-gasp 2-1 win over Sweden, but reinstated him for the 2-0 defeat to South Korea which saw the holders crash out in the group stages. In an interview on July 6 in newspaper Welt, Germany’s team director Oliver Bierhoff implied Ozil should have been left out of the World Cup squad — then backtracked in an embarrassing twist. Two days later, Grindel says Ozil should make his position clear to German fans in magazine Kicker, while Ozil’s father rejected the criticism and says his son should retire from Germany duty.

Ozil quits

After scoring 23 goals in 92 matches for Germany, Ozil retired from international football with immediate effect on July 22 after breaking his silence in lengthy posts on Twitter and Instagram. “For me, having a picture with President Erdogan wasn’t about politics or elections, it was about me respecting the highest office of my family’s country,” he wrote. “The treatment I have received from the DFB and many others makes me no longer want to wear the German national team shirt. “I feel unwanted and think what I have achieved since my international debut in 2009 has been forgotten. “In the eyes of Grindel and his supporters, I am German when we win but I am an immigrant when we lose.”—AFP



KAZAN: In this file photo, Germany’s midfielder Mesut Ozil controls the ball during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group F football match between South Korea and Germany at the Kazan Arena in Kazan. — AFP

Sydney targets 10 major events in next decade

SYDNEY: Australia’s most populous state announced ambitious plans yesterday to host 10 major sporting events over the next decade, including rugby World Cups and the new ATP tennis World Team Cup. An advisory committee headed by Rod McGeoch, the man who brought the Olympics to Sydney in 2000, has been set up to spearhead the drive. “We want to attract the world’s best and biggest events right here in New South Wales,” state Premier Gladys Berejiklian said. “The benefits are not just for sports fans being able to see the best in the world, but for jobs and the economy as well. The 10 major events would inject at least Aus\$1 billion (US\$750 million) into the economy in visitor spend alone.”

Sydney has already been announced as a co-host of the men’s and women’s Twenty20 cricket World Cups in 2020, and Berejiklian Monday threw her support behind Rugby Australia’s plan to bid for the 2021 women’s World Cup and the men’s version in 2027. Other events being targeted include the new ATP World Team Cup, which tennis chiefs announced this month would be held in Australia from 2020. The government also wants to bring the UCI Road World Cycling Championships to Sydney in 2022, along with the women’s football World Cup in 2023, the netball World Cup in 2027 and the 2029 rugby league World Cup.

Rugby Australia chief Raelene Castle said having state government backing was “terrific news for our game and sports fans across Australia”. “We wouldn’t be in a position to mount competitive bids for these events in Australia without this type of government support and access to world-class stadia,” she added. Rugby Australia is currently finalizing its bid for the women’s World Cup, with submissions closing on August 10. Bidding for the 2027 tournament is expected to open next year. The NSW government has previously announced plans to rebuild or refurbish two of the city’s major sporting arenas—Allianz Stadium and ANZ Stadium—to ensure Sydney is a legitimate bidder for major events.— AFP

Polish daredevil skies down K2 mountain in world’s first

ISLAMABAD: Daredevil Andrzej Bargiel has become the first person to ski down the world’s second-highest mountain, the Polish national said Sunday. Bargiel whizzed down from the summit of Pakistan’s 8,611-metre (28,251-foot) K2 to the mountain’s base camp after reaching the peak with around 30 others on Saturday. “Andrzej Bargiel reached the base of the mountain. The first complete descent on ski from K2 is done!” he posted on his Facebook page. The feat was the 30-year-old’s second bid to enter the record books, after an attempt last year was scotched by bad weather.

Three years ago Bargiel became the first skier in the world to descend from the nearby 8,015-meter Broad Peak. He has now skied from the summits of five of the 14 highest mountains in the world after earlier conquering Shishapangma and Manaslu peaks in the Himalayas, according to Polish media. Known as “Savage Mountain” among climbers, K2 is often deemed a more challenging ascent than Mount Everest, the world’s highest peak. Less than 350 people have made it to the top of K2 since it was first summited in 1954. A further 80 have died trying, including a Canadian national who fell to his death earlier this month.— AFP

25

In pinch, Rays' Robertson hits walk-off slam against Marlins

27

Manchester Utd held to a 0-0 draw by Earthquakes

27

Polish daredevil skies down K2 mountain in world's first

Ozil's resignation sparks racism storm

Turkey hails 'goal against fascist virus' after Ozil quits Germany side



BERLIN: File photo shows German Chancellor Angela Merkel congratulating Germany's midfielder Mesut Ozil in the dressing rooms after the Euro 2012 qualifying football match between Germany and Turkey at the Olympic stadium in Berlin. — AFP

BERLIN: Mesut Ozil's decision to quit playing for Germany unleashed a racism storm in Berlin yesterday, but earned the applause of Ankara with a Turkish minister hailing "a goal against the virus of fascism". After months of silence over a controversial photograph with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in May, which sparked questions about his loyalty to Germany, Ozil erupted on Sunday. The Arsenal midfielder posted a stinging four-page statement taking aim at German Football Association (DFB) bosses, sponsors and the media.

Ozil, a key member of the squad which won the 2014 World Cup, blamed the DFB management, in particular its president Reinhard Grindel, for failing to side with him against his critics. "In the eyes of Grindel and his supporters, I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose," Ozil wrote. The 29-year-old said he was true to both his Turkish and German origins and insisted he did not intend to make a political statement by appearing with Erdogan just before the World Cup finals.

"I have two hearts, one German and one Turkish," said Ozil, who was repeatedly singled out for criticism after Germany's woeful performance at the World Cup saw them

crash out after the group stages. Ozil's explosive statement, in three separate postings on Twitter and Instagram, was hailed by Erdogan's government, which has championed a campaign against what Ankara sees as growing Islamophobia in Europe. "I congratulate Mesut Ozil who by leaving the national team has scored the most beautiful goal against the virus of fascism," Justice Minister Abdulhamit Gul wrote on Twitter.

But it was met with a mix of dismay and outrage in Germany. Underlining that sports brings a lot to integration in a country, Chancellor Angela Merkel said she respects Ozil's decision. "The chancellor values Mesut Ozil highly. He is a great footballer who has contributed a great deal to the national team," said Merkel's spokeswoman Ulrike Demmer, adding that he has "now made a decision that must be respected." Justice Minister Katarina Barley wrote on Twitter that it was an "alarm bell if a great German footballer like Mesut Ozil no longer feels wanted in his country or represented by the DFB."

'Whiny resignation'
Cem Ozdemir of the Greens party also voiced dismay

that "young German-Turks now get the impression that they have no place in the German national team". At the same time, Ozdemir, who himself has Turkish roots, said Ozil "did not live up to his function of setting examples" by failing to distance himself from the hardline Turkish leader. Germany's best-selling newspaper Bild led the charge of criticism against Ozil, calling his statement a "whiny resignation" and said he heaped "criticism on everyone but himself".

Bild, which has for weeks called for Ozil to be dropped from the starting team, also rejected his claims that his Turkish origin and Erdogan photo have been used by some media to pander to the far-right. "Ozil's world view here is dangerously close to Erdogan and his despots," charged the tabloid-style daily. The photo, which was published on Turkey's presidential website and the Twitter feed of the ruling party, came just before the June 24 polls Erdogan won to claim sweeping new powers. Ozil has insisted that "it wasn't about politics or elections, it was about me respecting the highest office of my family's country". For Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, "all parties in the affair should engage in some soul-searching. I see few here who have really behaved correctly."

'Watershed'
Born and raised in Gelsenkirchen, Ozil has scored 23 goals and made 40 assists in 92 appearances with Die Mannschaft. He is third-generation German-Turk and counts among more than three million people of Turkish origin in Germany. The DFB has so far stayed mum. In a first reaction from his former teammates, defender Jerome Boateng wrote on Twitter using the Turkish word for "brother": "It was a pleasure, Abi." Former DFB chief Theo Zwanziger warned that the debacle was a "serious blow to the integration efforts in our country that goes beyond football".

For Tagesspiegel daily, the entire affair was a "watershed for sports, politics and society." While noting that Ozil's thinking that the Erdogan photograph could be non-political was "naive", it said the fiasco had far reaching consequences. "Ultimately, Ozil did not fall because of Grindel but because of a heated, populist mood in Germany," it said. "The danger exists because many who also have family roots in other countries or culture, can understand Ozil's mood. And this needs to be countered quickly and decisively. "Because more is at stake than just the future of the German national football team." —AFP

Sri Lanka thrash South Africa to sweep series 2-0

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka yesterday completed a 2-0 Test sweep of South Africa to record their first series win over the Proteas since 2006 after Rangana Herath wreaked havoc with six wickets. The visitors were all out for 290 in the second session of day four in Colombo, 200 runs short of the highly improbable winning target of 490 on a bone-dry wicket. It was South Africa's first Test white-wash since they went down in the island nation 2-0 in a two-match series almost 12 years ago.

Sri Lanka had wrapped up the first Test in Galle within three days, reducing South Africa to 73 in the second innings - their lowest Test total since the nation's post-apartheid readmission to international cricket. "Right through the series we didn't have that ability to score partnerships. I think we only had three partnerships of 50 and above the whole series," Faf du Plessis, South Africa's crestfallen skipper, said yesterday. "But once again you have to give credit to the opposition. They were able to put us under pressure for long periods of time and therefore we made a lot of mistakes."

In the second Test, Sri Lanka scored 338 in their first innings and South Africa could only respond with 124 as versatile off-spinner Akila Dananjaya made hay, taking five wickets. The hosts then scored 275 for five before declaring halfway through the afternoon session on day three, setting the visitors a highly improbable victory target. They were already five wickets down for 139 at stumps on Sunday, with Dananjaya dismissing du Plessis for seven and left-arm spinner Herath getting Hashim Amla for six. The South African wickets fell despite a comedy of errors from Sri Lanka, who dropped two catches, wasted both their reviews - on successive balls - and could have had Dean Elgar out twice beforehand had Perera not overstepped.

Impressive de Bruyn
Theunis de Bruyn and Temba Bavuma kept the Sri Lankan spinners at bay for most of the first session yesterday, putting on a valiant sixth-wicket stand of 123. Their partnership was South Africa's best ever in a fourth innings in Asia, and was by a distance their biggest of the series, the previous best having been worth only 64. De Bruyn was especially impressive, sweeping judiciously and defending doggedly on a tough surface, while Bavuma was also adept at picking gaps on the leg side and rotating the strike. Bavuma's resistance ended just after he was caught behind off Herath for 63. The left-arm spinner also had wicketkeeper-batsman Quinton de Kock lbw for eight on the stroke of lunch.

"I don't think we play spin badly, but if you compare yourself to the subcontinent batters, then they're obviously

SCOREBOARD			
COLOMBO: Final scoreboard of the second Test between Sri Lanka and South Africa in Colombo yesterday.			
Sri Lanka first innings 338 (de Silva 60, Gunathilaka 57, Karunaratne 53; Maharaj 9-129)		Q. de Kock lbw b Herath 8	
South Africa first innings 124 (Dananjaya 5-52)		K. Rabada c Mathews b Perera 18	
Sri Lanka second innings 275/5 dec (Karunaratne 85, Mathews 71; Maharaj 3-154)		D. Steyn c Gunathilaka b Herath 6	
South Africa 2nd innings (target 490, overnight 139-5)		L. Ngidi not out 4	
D. Elgar lbw b Perera 37		Extras (b16, lb5, nb4, w1) 26	
A. Markram lbw b Herath 14		Total (all out; 86.5 overs) 290	
T. de Bruyn b Herath 101		Fall of wickets: 1-23 (Markram), 2-80 (Elgar), 3-100 (Amla), 4-113 (du Plessis), 5-113 (Maharaj), 6-236 (Bavuma, 7-246 (de Kock), 8-280 (de Bruyn), 9-280 (Rabada), 10-290 (Steyn)	
H. Amla b Herath 6		Bowlers: Herath 32.5-5-98-6, Perera 30-4-90-2 (3nb), Dananjaya 19-2-67-2 (Inb), Lakmal 2-0-8-0, de Silva 2-0-5-0 (w1), Gunathilaka 1-0-1-0.	
F. du Plessis c Mathews b Dananjaya 7		Result: Sri Lanka beat South Africa by 199 runs	
K. Maharaj lbw b Dananjaya 0		Series: Sri Lanka win two-match series 2-0	
T. Bavuma c Dickwella b Herath 63			

a step above us in that regard," du Plessis told reporters. "That's where the challenge lies for the South Africa's and the England's and the Australia's of the world." After lunch, de Bruyn recorded his maiden century — South Africa's only one of the series — but was bowled by Herath for 101. "Worked very hard and these are the results of that. Sri Lanka has some of the best spinners in the world and that's why we bothered the South African batsmen," Sri Lanka's stand-in-captain Suranga Lakmal said.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, will take particular joy in this victory, as it came in the absence of their regular captain

and middle-order batsman Dinesh Chandimal, who was suspended following a ball-tampering scandal. The home side's coach Chandika Hathurusingha was also not allowed to be in the team dressing room during match days after being sanctioned over the same incident. The two teams will now head into the limited-overs series with the first of the five one-day internationals scheduled for Sunday in Dambulla. Sri Lanka also await England for a full series in October-November while South Africa tour Australia for three ODIs and one Twenty20 in that period.—AFP