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Erdogan wins sweeping new powers after election victory

Amir congratulates Turkish president; Opposition warns of one-man rule

ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan won sweeping new executive powers yesterday after his victory in landmark elections that also saw his Islamist-rooted AK Party and its nationalist allies secure a majority in parliament. Erdogan's main rival, Muharrem Ince of the Republican People's Party (CHP), conceded defeat but branded the elections "unjust" and said the presidential system that now takes effect was "very dangerous" because it would lead to one-man rule.

A leading European rights watchdog that sent observers to monitor the voting also said the opposition had faced "unequal conditions" and that limits on the freedom of media to cover the elections were further hindered by a continuing state of emergency imposed in Turkey after a failed 2016 coup. Erdogan, 64, the most popular - yet divisive - leader in modern Turkish history, told jubilant, flag-waving supporters there would be no retreat from his drive to transform Turkey, a NATO member and, at least nominally, a candidate to join the European Union.

He is loved by millions of devoutly Muslim working class Turks for delivering years of stellar economic growth and overseeing the construction of roads, bridges, airports, hospitals and schools. But his critics, including rights groups, accuse him of destroying the independence of the courts and press freedoms. A crackdown launched after the coup has seen 160,000 people detained, and the state of emergency allows Erdogan to bypass parliament with decrees. He says it will be lifted soon.

Erdogan and the AK Party claimed victory in Sunday's presidential and parliamentary elections after defeating a revitalized opposition that had gained considerable momentum recently and looked capable of staging an upset. "It is out of the question for us to turn back from where we've brought our country in terms of democracy and the economy," Erdogan said on Sunday night. His victory means he will remain president at least until 2023 - the centenary of the founding of the Turkish republic on the ashes of the Ottoman Empire by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Erdogan's foes accuse him of dismantling Ataturk's secular legacy by bringing religion back into public life.

Erdogan responds to such criticism by saying he is trying to modernize Turkey and improve religious freedoms. With virtually all votes counted, Erdogan had 53 percent against Ince's 31 percent, while in the parliamentary vote the AKP took 42.5 percent and its MHP nationalist allies secured 11 percent, outstripping expectations. Turkish markets initially rallied on hopes of increased political stability - investors had feared deadlock between Erdogan and an opposition-controlled parliament - but then retreated amid concerns over future monetary policy.

The vote ushers in a powerful executive presidency backed by a narrow majority in a 2017 referendum. The office of prime minister will be abolished and Erdogan will be able to issue decrees to form and regulate ministries and remove civil servants, all without parliamentary approval.

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ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and his wife Emine Erdogan greet supporters at the headquarters of the AK Party in Ankara as they celebrate Erdogan winning five more years in office with sweeping new powers after a decisive election victory. — AFP

News in brief

12 kids trapped in cave

BANGKOK: A dramatic underwater rescue mission to find a children's football team who have been trapped in a flooded cave for two days was underway in northern Thailand, officials said yesterday. Divers have reached a large chamber of the vast cave inside which the 12 boys and their coach are believed to be stuck, said the deputy governor of Chiang Rai province. "We think they are in this part of the cave, which continues for another three kilometers," Pasakorn Boonyalug said. "They haven't eaten anything since Saturday, so we have brought them food and drink," he added. The children aged between 11 and 16 entered Tham Luang cave, in a national park near the Myanmar and Laos borders, with their coach on Saturday. One of their mothers raised the alarm when her son did not return from football training that evening. — AFP

Saudi intercepts missiles

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia said on Sunday it had intercepted two missiles launched by Yemen's Houthi militia over the capital Riyadh, as a Saudi-led coalition moved to wrest control of Yemen's main port city from the Iran-aligned group. At least six loud blasts were heard and bright flashes were seen in the sky over the Saudi capital, a Reuters witness said. Shrapnel was spotted on a street in the diplomatic quarter where most embassies are located and many foreigners live, but there was no serious damage. "Saudi Royal Air Defense Forces intercepted and destroyed the missiles. Some of the debris of the intercepted missiles landed on residential areas, thankfully without causing any casualties," coalition spokesman Colonel Turki Al-Malki said in a statement. Houthi-run Al-Masirah television said Burkan missiles were fired at the Saudi defense ministry and other targets. — Reuters

8 Hezbollah fighters killed

RIYADH: The Saudi-led coalition battling rebels in Yemen yesterday said its forces killed eight members of Lebanon's Shiite militant group Hezbollah in northern Yemen, near the Saudi border. "The coalition killed 41 terrorist elements in Maran and destroyed their vehicles and equipment. Among the dead were eight members of Lebanese Hezbollah, including a commander," coalition spokesman Colonel Turki Al-Malki said in a statement, without offering details on how the fighters were killed. Maran is in Saada province, a stronghold of Yemen's Shiite Houthi rebels who are backed by Iran. It was the first official announcement by the coalition of Lebanese Hezbollah fighters being killed in Yemen although Malki said it was "not the first time". — AFP

NA approves budgets, bill amendments

KUWAIT: The National Assembly (NA) yesterday approved amendments to a number of laws and budgets of eight state agencies in a special session in which speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem strongly defended the Assembly budget. MPs overwhelmingly passed a number of key amendments to the corporate law to strengthen the rights of minorities in shareholding companies.

One amendment stipulates that the company general assembly can be held with the attendance of just 10 percent of shareholders instead of 25 percent and raising the duration for inviting for the meeting to 21 days

from the current 15. The third amendment obligates companies to distribute dividends within a month after the general assembly meeting and not leaving it open. The Assembly also approved a government-sponsored law to establish the Anti-Doping Agency despite some opposition from several lawmakers who opposed establishing new government authorities at a time of cutting spending.

Only six MPs out of 51 attending the session opposed the law which was passed in two rounds. The Assembly also approved a government sponsored law to authorize the Kuwait contribution of over \$536 million into the Asian Investment Bank. Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf told the house that HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah will pay a state visit to China on July 7 - leading a high-level economic delegation.

The minister said that the contribution will give Kuwait an investment role in China. Lawmakers then briefly debated and approved budgets and final

accounts for eight state authorities: The Anti-Corruption Authority, the National Assembly, Compensation Claims Authority, Public Food Agency, Public Authority for Publishing Holy Quran, Public Authority for Civil Information, Public Youth Authority and Public Sports Authority. MP Safa Al-Hashem called for merging the Quran Authority with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic affairs.

The budgets were passed with little opposition but arguments were raised about the National Assembly budget after MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri claimed that the Assembly budget increased and that it was being used in unnecessary areas with suspicions of violations. Speaker Ghanem defended the Assembly and said that over the past few years, the budget was reduced from KD 60 million to KD 40 million and categorically denied any violation. Assembly officials also said that more Kuwaitis had been recently appointed in the Assembly while the expatriate workforce was reduced by 12 percent.

Saudi stun Egypt in World Cup farewell



VOLGOGRAD: Saudi players celebrate their winning goal during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group A football match between Saudi Arabia and Egypt at the Volgograd Arena in Volgograd yesterday. — AFP (See page 27)

When a text can trigger lynching

MUMBAI: A WhatsApp text circulating in some districts of India's central Madhya Pradesh state helped to inflame a mob of 50-60 villagers into savagely beating up two innocent men last week on suspicion that they were going to murder people and sell their body parts. The essence of the message, written in Hindi, was that 500 people disguised as beggars were roaming the area so that they could kill people to harvest their organs.

The message also urged recipients to forward it to

friends and family. Police say the message was fake. Police officers who joined several local WhatsApp groups, found three men circulating the message and they were arrested, said Jayadevan A. the police chief for Balaghat district, where the incident occurred. This happened just weeks after a WhatsApp text warning of 400 child traffickers arriving in the southern Indian technology hub of Bengaluru led a frenzied mob to lynch a 26-year-old man, a migrant construction worker from another Indian state, on suspicions that he was a kidnapper. He was attacked while he was just walking on the road. So far this year, false messages about child abductors on Facebook Inc-owned WhatsApp have

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Egypt's El Hadary becomes oldest player in WCup

VOLGOGRAD: Egypt goalkeeper Essam El Hadary became the oldest player ever to appear at a World Cup after the 45-year-old was named in the team to face Saudi Arabia in Volgograd yesterday. Egypt tweeted their team line-up including El Hadary, who smashed the record set by Colombia goalkeeper Faryd Mondragon, who was aged 43 years and three days when he played against Japan in Brazil in 2014.

El Hadary, who is 45 years and 161 days old and nicknamed 'High Dam', made his debut for Egypt in 1996 - a year before his Egyptian squad mate Ramadan Sobhy was born. Both teams have only pride to play for, having both been eliminated from Group A, with Russia and Uruguay already guaranteed last-16 berths.

Essam El Hadary, the oldest player ever to appear at a World Cup, marked his record achievement with one outstanding penalty save for Egypt but was powerless to stop a second in a 2-1 defeat by Saudi Arabia yesterday. The 45-year-old goalkeeper flew to his right to make a spectacular stop in the 39th minute from Fahad Al-Muwallad's spot-kick, awarded for handball, at the Volgograd Arena. But Saudi Arabia scored deep into stoppage time in both halves, with Salem Al-Dawsari's last-gasp winner securing their first World Cup victory since a run to the last 16 in 1994. — Agencies



Egypt's goalkeeper Essam El Hadary

Amir, Crown Prince receive latest Al-Sabah family tree

Crown Prince hosts chief of Lebanon's court of auditors



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives the latest Al-Sabah family tree. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Seif palace head of Amiri Protocols Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, Sheikh Nayef Al-Ahmad Al-Malek Al-Sabah and Sheikh Khaled Al-Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah who presented His Highness with the latest Al-Sabah

family tree. Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah attended the meeting. Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah, Sheikh Nayef Al-Ahmad and Sheikh Khaled Al-Mubarak also presented the latest Al-Sabah family tree to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives the latest Al-Sabah family tree.

received National Security Bureau Chief Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. He also received Acting Chairman for Kuwait's State Audit Bureau (SAB) Adel Al-Saraawi and the visiting Lebanese President of the Court of Auditors Judge Ahmad Hamdan, head of the Court of Audit Judge Abdul Rida Nasser and their accompanying delega-

tion. During the reception, the two sides discussed a number of key issues and subjects of mutual interest, including the supervisory work and exchanging experience in the field of financial supervision. Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem also received Saraawi and the visiting Lebanese officials. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Acting Chairman for Kuwait's State Audit Bureau (SAB) Adel Al-Saraawi and visiting Lebanese President of the Court of Auditors Judge Ahmad Hamdan and head of the Court of Audit Judge Abdul Rida Nasser.



Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with Acting Chairman for Kuwait's State Audit Bureau (SAB) Adel Al-Saraawi and visiting Lebanese President of the Court of Auditors Judge Ahmad Hamdan and head of the Court of Audit Judge Abdul Rida Nasser.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah waves as he prepares to leave to Germany yesterday. — KUNA

Premier heads to Germany for economic forum

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah left Kuwait yesterday, heading to the German capital Berlin to take part in the 'German-Arab Business Forum' as a guest of honor. The Kuwaiti prime minister, along with a delegation accompanying him, was seen off at the airport by senior state officials. The Kuwaiti delegation to one of the world's most prominent business gatherings includes Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan and Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah, amongst other top officials.

The German-Arab Chamber of Industry and Commerce (GACIC) expressed content over having Kuwait's Prime Minister as a guest of honor at the 2018 Arab Economic Forum. GACIC Secretary General Abdulaziz Al-Mekhlafi, in a statement on Sunday, expressed satisfaction over having His Highness the Premier

as a guest. He noted that cooperation between both Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) and GACIC is going perfectly well, and there is an interchangeable economic-political relationship between Kuwait and Germany. Kuwait is considered one of first investors in Germany, with an estimated volume of around \$35 billion.

Furthermore, Mekhlafi expressed his appreciation for the Kuwaiti role to encourage dialogue and peaceful methods to solve conflicts, stressing that Kuwait contributions has an international resonance that is a source of pride for Arab nations. According to GACIC, the 2017 trade volume between Arab countries and Germany was around \$55 billion, an increment of about 33.9 percent than 2016. Arab investments in Germany have also expanded recently to reach around \$116 billion. The three-day Forum will involve more than 600 businesspeople and experts, as well as discussion sessions for direct investments and knowledge exchange, supporting the manufacturing plans, management of digital transformation and major enterprise infrastructures. Other issues on the agenda include food industry, cooperation on agriculture and sustainable food security. There will also be a workshop themed 'Kuwait: Sustainable growth and development'. — KUNA



WELLINGTON: (From left) Kuwaiti Ambassador to New Zealand Ahmad Al-Wohaib, New Zealand's Foreign Minister's Undersecretary Fletcher Tabuteau and Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Americas Ambassador Reem Al-Khaled. — KUNA

Kuwait eyes closer ties with New Zealand

WELLINGTON: Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah has expressed desire to boost ties with New Zealand in various fields. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled made his remarks in a letter directed to his New Zealand counterpart Winston Peters, Kuwaiti Embassy in New Zealand said in a statement yesterday. The letter was handed to Foreign Minister's Undersecretary Fletcher Tabuteau by Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Americas Ambassador Reem Al-Khaled.

Kuwait reiterates pride of ties with Saudi Arabia

KUWAIT: Kuwait has reaffirmed deep pride of, and unequivocal adherence to the historical, fraternal, solid and close ties with Saudi Arabia. The deep-rooted ties between the two countries - based on mutual respect, absolute belief in

Ambassador Khaled also conveyed the Kuwaiti foreign minister's greetings to Peters, and stressed the importance of bolstering Kuwaiti-New Zealand relationship on all levels.

Meanwhile, Tabuteau lauded his country's deep bilateral ties with Kuwait, and praised the GCC-member country's regional efforts, particularly in resolving the ongoing Gulf rift. He also commended Kuwait's positive role as a non-permanent member of the UNSC towards several Arab and international issues.

The meeting was attended by Kuwaiti Ambassador to New Zealand Ahmad Al-Wohaib. The Kuwaiti diplomat is currently on a three-day official visit to New Zealand, noted the embassy. During her visit, Khaled has met and held talks with a number of senior foreign ministry's officials on ways to enhance the two countries' ties in various fields. — KUNA

common fate, permanent keenness on boosting bilateral relations in all fields - are inspired and directed by their wise leaders. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said yesterday. Within this framework, the two countries reiterate their respect to all bilateral and international charters and treaties concluded between them, Saleh added. He affirmed Kuwait's denunciation of the disservice to bilateral ties on the social media. Relations with the "Saudi brethren" are too strong to be affected by such rejected offences, Saleh stressed. — KUNA

GCC states affirm necessity to boost human rights' culture

GENEVA: Member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have affirmed significance of promoting human rights' culture and adopting dialogue and tolerance in face of mushrooming hatred and racial discrimination. This was declared in a statement made by the State of Kuwait Permanent Representative at the United Nations and International Organizations in Geneva, Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghuneim, during the 38th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council. On behalf of the GCC states, he affirmed importance of human rights to ensure respect for human dignity, stressing on cooperation, building bridges of confidence among states and respecting their sovereignty.

He called for a professional approach to address this issue to "overcome any difficulties that may emerge in the face of our efforts to attain common objectives for bolstering and protecting the human rights." "Our celebration this year of the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights places more responsibilities on our shoulders to re-affirm our commitment to bolstering and respecting the human rights," Ghuneim added.

The Kuwaiti ambassador said that the GCC states have substantiated their adherence to human rights, citing a previous declaration in this respect by the bloc in the past. These states emphasize that attention should be equally devoted to all forms of human rights, including those at the economic, social and cultural levels.

Moreover, the GCC countries call for tackling obstacles affecting development because such hurdles impact on the human rights, Ghuneim has elaborated. The council 38th session which began on June 18 concludes on July 7. It is dedicated for addressing human rights worldwide according to each region's conditions. — KUNA



Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghuneim

Local

3,000 expat workers sought for Zour refinery, petrochemicals complex project

Kuwait Airways to launch Milan route in October

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) contacted the Public Authority for Manpower and the Ministry of Interior recently to request issuing work permits and residency visas for over 3,000 expatriate workers from various nationalities to work in Al-Zour refinery and petrochemicals complex, well-informed sources said.

The manpower authority and KPC started meetings with the company that is currently executing the project in order to prepare lists of workers, who are mostly of Asian nationalities, and arrange for their housing, said the sources who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The workers' residencies will expire when the project is finished, the sources explained, adding that the contractor would provide health insurance for the workers during their stay in Kuwait and make arrangements for the workers' repatriation after the completion of the project.



Power consumption rates normal

Power consumption

Power consumption loads in Kuwait are still within normal rates, Ministry of Electricity and Water's Undersecretary Mohammad Bushehri said, adding that all ministry sectors are fully prepared for the summer.

Medical equipment

The Ministry of Health's medical engineering department announced offering for public bidding a number of tenders to provide medical equipment for a number of medical facilities including the maternity, Farwaniya and Jaber Al-Ahmad hospitals, said informed sources. The ministry conditioned that biddings should be valid for 90 days and that bidding would be limited to companies listed and registered with the department, the sources added.

Ransomware

Kuwait has experienced 1.9 million threats from ransomware during the first quarter of this year, according to a report made by the Japanese Trend Micro company, which specializes in cybersecurity and protection. The report added that most Middle East countries, especially in the GCC area, are main targets for cyber-attacks and that ransomware still poses a major threat in UAE.

Trend Micro also warned of the growing cyber-attacks in view of the vast growing digitalization and economic development in regional countries, noting that data breaches and cybercrimes can deter such progress.

Commenting on the report, Trend Micro regional manager Sherif Jarbo'a said that securing cyber space becomes very urgent with digitalizing GCC economies.



Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's building.

He added that Trend Micro had detected 1.6 million malware in UAE, 465,058 in Kuwait, 202,241 in

Bahrain and around 161,055 in Oman during the first quarter of 2018.

DNA report can't be used to prove lineage: Court

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Court of Cassation cancelled a previous verdict which sentenced a citizen and his wife to seven years in prison, and acquitted them from charges of forging a DNA report to receive the Kuwaiti citizenship. The court stressed that the DNA report could not be used to prove lineage, the defendants' lawyer Mohammad Al-Khaldi explained. Meanwhile, a court yesterday acquitted a citizen from charges pressed by the public prosecution of joining the Islamic State (IS) and training on the use of weapons.

Separately, the public prosecution yesterday released Kuwaiti blogger Abdullah Al-Jasser, also known as '3bodka', on a KD 1,000 bail following a five-day detention period over charges of misusing his mobile phone and slandering the entire Kuwaiti people. The defendant had denied charges and stressed that his statements were not addressing the entire Kuwaiti people, but instead were addressing certain

people who he said had angered him by slandering his parents.

Shrimp fishing season

Chairman of Kuwait Fishermen Union Thaher Al-Sowayan highly commended the cabinet's public services committee on resuming shrimp fishing in national waters. Sowayan also said that fishermen are waiting for the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) to make an official announcement regarding the beginning of the shrimp fishing season in national and international waters on Sunday, July 1st. Fishing boats in national waters provide 40 percent of shrimp catch, or 950 tons annually, Sowayan added. He also warned that delaying the beginning of the season would lead to unprecedented confusion in the market as most of the shrimp in Kuwait's territorial waters would leave to neighboring countries where they would be caught by fishermen there and then shipped back to Kuwait to be sold as 'imported catch'.

Control system

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) is preparing to launch electronic monitoring for consumer goods and services provided in various co-op societies and vegetable outlets, assistant undersecretary for co-operative societies' affairs Abdul Aziz Shuaib said. Speaking during a visit to Kuwait Farmers Union's veg-



etable market in Andalus, Shuaib said that the electronic control system would allow linking the data on co-op societies' computer systems with the ministry's system, adding that the new service would start with vegetable and fruit branches. Further, Shuaib said that products' quality and prices had improved, as 94 percent of co-ops are now committed to direct purchase of national products. Meanwhile, Kuwait Farmers Union's manager Ayed Al-Rasheedi stressed that the union is working on developing the farming sector in Kuwait, adding that the union provide assistance around the clock to farmers who are facing problems. He also said that the direct purchase committee helps prevent mediators interfering in purchasing the products, and thus controls prices.

Legalese

Termination without notice

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

What happens if you are terminated immediately without notice or benefits? Does the company have the right to do that? We have spoken many times about employees and their rights in Kuwait but what rights does the company have? We have also discussed how employers take advantage of employees because of the nature of the relationship, and how the law has tried to keep a balance between all parties involved. One thing the law has introduced is the right for both the employer and the employee to file a case without providing notice.

Termination letter

Question: I received a termination letter yesterday and it stated that my termination is effective immediately and that I am not entitled to any benefits. Is this legal? What rights do I have?

Attorney Fajer: The company has the right to terminate without notice in accordance to one article under Kuwait Labor Law and that is Article (41), which states: "The employer may terminate the services of a worker without notice, compensation or benefit in the event where the worker has committed any of the following acts:

- 1 If the worker has committed a mistake that resulted in a large loss for the employer.
 - 2 If it was found that the worker obtained employment through cheating or fraud.
 - 3 If the worker divulged secrets related to the establishment which caused or would have caused real losses.
- Also, the employer may dismiss the worker in any of the following events:
- 1 If he was found guilty of a crime that relates to honor, trust or morals.
 - 2 If he committed an act against public morals at the work site.
 - 3 If he assaulted one of his colleagues, his employer or deputy during work or for any reason thereof.
 - 4 If he breached or failed to abide by any of the obligations imposed on him by the contract and the provisions of this law.
 - 5 If he is found to have repeatedly violated the instructions of the employer."

This article also goes on to state that if an employer makes such a decision, the employer shall inform the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and the employee shall have the right to object to the above at the ministry.

Providing notice

Question: As an employee, do I have the right to terminate my employment without providing notice also?

Attorney Fajer: Yes, employees have the right to terminate a contract without providing a notice should the employer violate Kuwait's labor law and employment rights. One major violation in Kuwait is holding passports, or not paying overtime. It is very important though that the termination is done correctly as follows:

- a) Have the termination letter submitted in writing.
- b) If the termination letter is not accepted, then email the termination letter for proof that it was sent.
- c) State the violations on the termination letter.
- d) File a complaint at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

For questions or queries, please email us at info@tl-legal.com.



KUWAIT: The victims' vehicle is seen after the fire was extinguished.

Woman, two kids dead in three-car crash

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A woman and her two children were killed while a man was injured

when three vehicles collided along the Fifth Ring Road in an accident that also left a man injured. The woman and two children were trapped inside one of the vehicles which caught fire due to the impact. Firefighters arrived to the scene shortly after the accident was reported, and they put out the blaze before retrieving the victims' bodies from the burned vehicle. An investigation was opened to determine the circumstances behind the accident.

Birds' imports okayed from Iran, banned from Finland

KUWAIT: Kuwait is allowing imports of all birds' species from Iran and barring them from Finland. Public Authority for

Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) indicated in a statement yesterday that birds in Iran have become free of Bird Flu (Avian Flu, H5N1), however, the disease has infected poultry in Finland. All birds' imports are subject to terms issued by PAAAFR's livestock health department, implementing World Health Organization's regulations and those stipulated in veterinary by-laws in Kuwait and other GCC countries. Importers of infected livestock are compelled to send the cargo back to the exporting country on their expenses. —KUNA

Special forces donate blood

KUWAIT: The special forces department at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) organized its third blood donation campaign under the slogan of 'Your Donation Saves Them'. The campaign took place under the auspices and with the attendance of acting assistant undersecretary for special security forces' affairs Maj Gen Shokri Al-Najjar, and in

collaboration with the Central Blood Bank. Speaking on the occasion, Al-Najjar stressed that the campaign comes within MoI's social responsibility activities and aims at increasing the blood bank's reserve of blood units. The campaign goes on for three days from 8:30 am till 12:30 pm, Najjar said, adding that it is held at the special forces' camp.



Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Sunset at Shuwalkh Port. — Photo by Mohammad Sobhi (KUNA)

Zain Al-Oyoon campaign raises KD 32,000 within five days

Ramadan campaign to build two camps for treating eye diseases



KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced the successful conclusion of its humanitarian campaign entitled 'Zain Al-Oyoon' launched during the holy month of Ramadan in partnership with Direct Aid and YouTube star Omar Farouq (Omar Tries). The campaign raised KD 32,000 within five days to build two camps for treating eye diseases, which will benefit over 800 people in Africa.

Zain launched this humanitarian campaign under its comprehensive Ramadan social campaign as well as its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility Strategy that closely focuses on supporting humanitarian initiatives. The company strongly believes that such initiatives help infuse a sense of responsibility into members of the society, and help support those who are in need of help.

'Zain Al-Oyoon' campaign aimed at collecting donations for 'Al-Noor Camps' to treat eye diseases in Africa. The campaign kicked-off with an initiative called 'Do You Have 100 Fils?', where Omar Farouq (owner of the popular YouTube show Omar Tries) visited public places and asked pedestrians for 100 fils, which he gathered to collect the cost of one eye surgery (KD 40). The initiative centered around the idea that helping people can start at any amount no matter how small. An official donation channel was then launched in partnership with Direct Aid, where KD 32,000 were collected within just 5 days to build two eye camps, which will benefit over 800 underprivileged people in Africa.

Zain is committed to enrich the culture of giving and social contribution through

launching such campaigns and supporting initiatives adopted by leading non-profit organizations inside and outside of Kuwait. Zain prides itself on its long track of records and contributions it has put in philanthropic areas over the years, being one of the leading companies in the private sector.

During the holy month of Ramadan, Zain was the Platinum Partner of Nurture and Educate Students Today's (NEST) educational campaign, entitled #Rock_Paper_Pen, which mainly aimed at raising donations for the benefit of building three new schools set to serve 820 students in the Republic of Chad. The campaign's idea centered around using advanced technology solutions to attract and aware potential donors in the campaign's booth at the Avenues Mall.

Zain was also the humanitarian partner to a new campaign launched by the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) to offer essential food supplies and medical aid to underprivileged families inside Kuwait. Zain donated the full amount of donations it collected from its charitable initiative 'Ya Baghi Al-Khair Aqbel' last year to support this initiative. Zain also sent awareness messages through SMS and social media to raise awareness about this campaign and encourage the public to donate via the official channels.

Zain is proud of its long list of programs and contributions that serve noble causes through strategically partnering with entities that adopt humanitarian work, including Direct Aid, as well as other non-profit organizations, governmental institutions, and global entities.

LOYAC volunteers repair homes in Kuwait, school in Jordan

Under auspices of the Ahliya Insurance company and the umbrella of IS program, LOYAC volunteers recently repaired a number of the houses of needy families in Sulaibiya, Taima and Jahra. Meanwhile, another team of Kuwait LOYAC volunteers took part in repairing Othman Ibn Affan School in Jerash, Jordan for the benefit of

over 120 students. Notably, Homes program in Jordan's LOYAC works throughout the whole year. Speaking on the occasion, LOYAC's social services manager, Yosra Al-Essa stressed that LOYAC is always keen on taking part in various charity and humane activities as part of its mission in promoting global peace and supporting various social sects.



KUWAIT: LOYAC volunteers participated in a campaign launched recently to restore homes of families in need in the Sulaibiya and Taima districts of Jahra. They also participated in a similar campaign to restore a school in Jerash, Jordan.

Local

Almost half of Middle East hires are made after one interview: Bayt.com poll

73.4 percent job seekers had positive job interview experiences

KUWAIT: Making a positive impression during the job interview stage is imperative for the jobseeker's success. A new poll by Bayt.com, the Middle East's largest job site, entitled, 'Job Interviews in the Middle East and North Africa' revealed that 45.3 percent of respondents believe that employers make the hiring choice after the first interview. 15.6 percent said it takes two interviews to make the decision, 17.2 percent said it takes three interviews, while 13 percent said four or more interviews are needed.

The Typical Interview Process in the MENA

While there are different types of job interviews, 71.6 percent of the respondents claim to have experienced group interviews, where the company interviews multiple candidates at the same time. One in five (21.2 percent) have had individual interviews and less than 5 percent have had panel interviews, behavioral interviews, or lunch interviews.

The greater proportion of respondents prefer group interviews (57.8 percent) and individual interviews (30.7 percent), while only 5.5 percent favor panel interviews, 3 percent prefer lunch interviews, and 3 percent prefer behavioral interviews.

According to the vast majority (90.5 percent) of MENA respondents, face-to-face interviews generally last less than one hour. 6.1 percent state that interviews last between one and two hours, and a nominal number (1.2 percent) have experienced interviews that lasted longer than two hours.

When it comes to phone screening interviews, three quarters of respondents (75 percent) claim that they last less than 15 minutes, while 15.1 percent say that they last between 15 to 30 minutes. Only 5.2 percent of respondents have experienced phone interviews that last longer than 30 minutes.

According to the Bayt.com poll, two thirds (67.1 percent) of MENA respondents say that they are generally asked one to five questions during a job interview, while 14.2 percent claim that they usually receive six to 10 questions. 7.6 percent claim to be asked 11 to 15 questions during an interview, and only 6.3 percent have had over 15 questions in their interview.

Verification questions are amongst the most com-

mon questions posed to potential candidates according to three quarters of the respondents (76.3 percent), this is followed by behavioral questions (7.5 percent), competency questions (7.3 percent), opinion and personality questions (4.2 percent), and case/problem solving questions (2.8 percent).

When it comes to assessing the candidates' qualifications, four in five (81.4 percent) respondents believe that job interviews should include a test or an assessment, while 13.7 percent believe the opposite to be true.

81.4 percent prefer test, assignment

"At Bayt.com we aim to prepare both employers and job seekers for a successful job search and hiring process," said Suhail Masri, VP of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "For many job seekers, the interview is perceived as the daunting part of the hiring process. As the majority of candidates realize the need to prepare prior to an interview, we offer insights and advice into what type of preparation a candidate should undertake in order to get the most out of their job interview experience and to give them the advantage in the stiff competition they may be facing. As the region's largest job site, we continue to match 32.5 million job seekers with over 10,000 jobs that are available on Bayt.com on a daily basis. We hope that job seekers also make use of the information and tools we offer to be in the best shape for the interview stage."

Preparing for the Interview

When it comes to scheduling an interview, over two thirds (68.7 percent) of respondents state that they don't mind an interview being scheduled less than two days in advance, while 12.1 percent prefer to be informed two to four days in advance, 6.8 percent need 5-6 days, and 8.5 percent require no less than a week's notice prior to an interview.



Suhail Masri



Over three quarters of MENA respondents (76 percent) claim to prepare for an interview by 'researching the company and position', 3.7 percent 'read common interview questions' and 1.1 percent 'practice with a friend or on their own'. One in five (17.1 percent) respondents claim to do all three things in preparation of an interview, while only 2.1 percent do not prepare before the interview. Further, the majority (86.4 percent) of candidates polled by Bayt.com say that they prepare their own questions to ask during the job interview, while only 13.6 percent said they do not.

During the Interview

Two thirds of the respondents (66.9 percent) claim that they always take notes during the interview, while one in five say that they sometimes do (18.6 percent). 14.5 percent say they 'never' take notes. 82.3 percent of jobseekers polled state that they inquire about the salary and benefits during the interview, while 17.7 percent state that they request this information afterwards at the job offer stage.

After the interview

Four in five candidates (80.5 percent) say that they follow up with the employer after a job interview, while 19.5 percent of respondents say that they wait for the company to follow up after a job interview. 81 percent state that they always send a thank you note to the employer after the job interview, 9.2 percent say they 'sometimes' send a note, while 9.8 percent say they 'never' do.

When asked about their feelings towards job interviews in the Middle East, nearly three quarters (73.4 percent) of respondents claim to have had 'positive' job interview experiences. 5.7 percent were neutral and only 1.8 percent described their experiences as 'negative'.

Data for the 2018 Bayt.com 'Job Interviews in the Middle East and Africa' poll was collected online from April 11, 2018 to June 10, 2018. Results are based on a sample of 10,617 respondents. Countries that participated are the UAE, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Bahrain, Tunisia, Qatar, KSA, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and others.

Kuwait exerts efforts to help drug addicts recover: Expert

KUWAIT: Kuwait is keen on developing strategies of combating drugs and other psychotropic substances in cooperation with all concerned bodies, either locally or internationally, in a bid to limit the spread of this scourge in society. The Ministry of Health is working relentlessly on the matter by offering help to addicts willing to quit through treatment programs involving psychological and physical rehabilitation stages.

The United Nations' International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is observed annually on June 26 since 1989. In Kuwait, the Addiction Treatment Center, affiliated with the Ministry of Health, indicated in an official statistic that the number of addicts hit 8,088, including 189 females with ages ranging between 15-36 years, including 137 Kuwaiti female for the year 2017.

The center handles 7,400 cases, of which 688 are newly admitted ones. Director of the center Dr Adel Al-Zayed said yesterday that the Center succeeded in fulfilling its programs and approved plans by the ministry. A large number of male drug addicts are now fully recovered according to the latest statistics, compared to the first five months of 2017 and 2018, he said.

The number of new addicts registering in the center dropped by 38 cases after being at 291 cases during the first five months of 2017, he added. On the other hand, the statistics showed a slight increase of non-Kuwaiti female addict cases; 17, in



A lab technician is seen inside the Addiction Treatment Center.

comparison to male addicts' rate that was decreasing, he noted. The rate of Kuwait female addicts was higher of that of non-Kuwaitis, as a total of 62 cases were admitted.

The Kuwaiti government is footing a significant budget to combat drug addiction, as well as treatment and awareness programs, he affirmed. According to Zayed, female addicts usually start by the age 15 in Kuwait, warning from the spread of drugs within schools as being target market for dealers. The Center treats the ones joining as 'patients not criminals,' he stressed, noting that quitting addiction is achieved through willpower.

Head of social services at the Center Hanadi Ashkanani said that the facility has a 350-bed capacity for first timers, in addition to 200 beds more for advanced rehabilitation stages, including 25 beds for women for each treatment stage. This Center is the only one in the Middle East that includes treatment for all addiction stages, she affirmed. —KUNA



KUWAIT: The Addiction Treatment Center's entrance. —KUNA

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Families flee as regime, Russia pummel Syria's south

Migrants who 'invade' US have no right to due process, says Trump

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PARIS: Sea rescuers paddle during a nautical parade on the Seine river in Paris a day after the national sea rescuers' day. — AFP

86 killed in deadly violence in Nigeria

Nigeria's Buhari under pressure as elections approach

JOS, Nigeria: Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari on Sunday called for calm after 86 people were killed in an attack by suspected nomadic herders against farming communities in the restive centre of the country. The grim discovery in the Barikin Ladi area of Plateau state came after days of violence apparently sparked by an attack by ethnic Berom farmers on Fulani herders on Thursday. State police commissioner Undie Adie said a search of Berom villages in the area following clashes on Saturday found "86 persons altogether were killed".

Adie told reporters six people were also injured and 50 houses were razed. Bodies of those who died have been released to their families, he added. The deaths are the latest in a long-running battle for land and resources that is putting President Muhammadu Buhari under pressure as elections approach next year. The violence fuelled by ethnic, religious and political allegiances has killed thousands over several decades. Analysts believe it could become Nigeria's biggest security concern, eclipsing Boko Haram's Islamist insurgency that has left at least 20,000 dead since 2009. Buhari's office said he "appeals for calm and assures that no efforts will be spared" to bring those responsible to justice and prevent further attacks. "The grievous loss of lives and property arising from the killings in Plateau today is painful and regrettable," he added.

Curfew imposed

The Plateau state government said it had imposed restrictions on movements in the Riyom, Barikin Ladi and Jos South areas "to avert a breakdown of law and order". "The curfew takes effect immediately... and movement is

restricted from 6:00 pm to 6:00 am, except (for) those on essential duties," spokesman Rufus Bature said. On Sunday, ethnic Berom youths set up barricades on the Jos-Abuja highway and attacked motorists who looked "Fulani and Muslim", according to those who escaped the violence.

Plateau state police spokesman Tyopev Terna and Major Adam Umar, from the military taskforce in the state capital, Jos, confirmed the blockade and vandalism to several cars. There were no official reports of deaths but Baba Bala, who escaped the violence on the road, said at least six people were killed. "I escaped with a smashed windscreen and dents on my car. I saw six dead bodies and several damaged cars," he added.

Not safe

Plateau state governor Simon Lalong promised that "operational plans are currently being put in place to secure the affected communities and fish out perpetrators of these crimes. "While we pray for God's guidance through this difficult time, we will do everything humanly possible to secure our state immediately." But the violence in Plateau followed a pattern that has become familiar in the state and elsewhere and which the authorities appear unable to stop.

On Thursday, Berom farmers attacked five ethnic Fulani

herders travelling with their cattle in a truck at Heipang, in Barikin Ladi. On Friday, two Berom children were killed in Arangai and Mangu Halle villages in what appeared to be reprisal attacks. Police spokesman Terna said there were more reprisals on Berom villages in the Gashish area of Barikin Ladi which were "believed to have been carried out by Fulani herders". "This led to today's violence," he added.

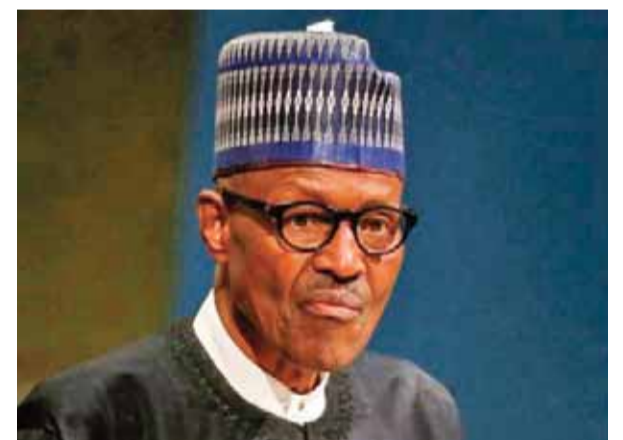
Lamwakers earlier this month demanded that Buhari address worsening security across the country, accusing police of failing to prevent the violence.

On Sunday, Senate leader Bukola Saraki said the killings gave the impression that Nigeria was "not safe". It was "important for Nigerians to start having the assurances that the government is decisively responding to the current threat to lives and property", he said.

Grazing dispute

Separately, clashes erupted on Friday between Fulani herders and ethnic Bachama farmers in Dawayan village, in the Demsa area of Adamawa state, in northeast Nigeria. Adamawa police spokesman Othman Abubakar said: "Six people were killed and seven others injured."

"The violence started when Bachama farmers prevented Fulani herders from grazing in a field outside the village.



NEW YORK: Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari addresses the 72nd United Nations General Assembly at UN headquarters in New York. — Reuters

Clashes erupted as a result. "The Bachama mobilized and burnt some Fulani settlements and the Fulani went into Dawayan and burnt houses."

Demsa and the nearby Numan area of Adamawa were the scene of deadly clashes between herders and farmers that left scores dead last December. Buhari has been accused of failing to act as he is also Muslim and Fulani. His government has proposed setting up cattle ranches to prevent tensions over grazing land.—AFP

Nicaragua talks to resume after fresh violence

MANAGUA: The Nicaraguan government and the opposition, which is demanding the resignation of President Daniel Ortega, were set to resume talks yesterday after a weekend of deadly violence. The Catholic Church, which is mediating the talks, called on delegates from the government and from the opposition alliance to renew negotiations at 10:00 am (16H00 GMT). On the agenda was a proposal to organize new elections for March 2019, rather than at the end of 2021 as scheduled.

"We need a roadmap, a point of reference," said Cardinal Leopoldo Brenes, the archbishop of Managua, who is helping table the talks. "On the question of democratization, if we are talking about elections... the president must let us know if he agrees," he said. The proposal was passed on by the church on June 7 but Ortega, a 72-year-old former guerilla leader who is on his third consecutive term in office since coming to power in 2007, and having previously ruled from 1979-1990, asked for time to consider it. Since then, he has made no public announcement on the issue.

More than 200 people have been killed in two months of street protests as opposition groups demand Ortega step down. The latest deaths at the weekend included a baby shot

in the head as police and pro-government paramilitary groups carried out operations in Managua. Two students were also killed on the campus of the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN), where dozens of students have holed up. Church negotiators said it was "essential" that the government "communicates its acceptance in a formal and official manner" regarding the proposal which, it said, reflects "popular sentiment."

Talks between the government and the opposition Civic Alliance were suspended a week ago when the government failed to allow international human rights bodies to investigate the violence that has rocked the country. It eventually did so on Wednesday. The protests began in April as demonstrations against now-scrapped social security reforms, but a heavy-handed police reaction transformed them into demands for justice for those killed, and for the exit of Ortega and his wife and vice president Rosario Murillo.

"Now our fight is for everything. We want a change of government," said a 25-year-old student at a barricade in front of UNAN, his face hidden by a bandana. Ortega has said he is willing to democratize the country via a separation of powers, which are currently all in the hands of his government, including the national electoral committee. He has discussed the reforms with the Organization of American States (OAS), but the opposition wants him to go further. "For the Civic Alliance, the election agreements between the OAS and the government are no longer valid. Ortega must say if he accepts early elections," said Carlos Tunnerman, a former ambassador to the United States and member of the opposition.—AFP

Caste-based killing in India prompts call for govt action

BANGKOK: Indian police are investigating the killing of a Dalit farmer over a land dispute in the central state of Madhya Pradesh, which has prompted calls for authorities to do more to protect the land rights of lower-caste communities in the country. Kishorilal Jatav was attacked by his higher-caste neighbours who doused him with petrol and set him alight last week after he challenged them for encroaching his land in Bhopal district, a police official said. He later died in hospital.

Police have arrested four men and set up an investigation team, said Deputy Inspector General Dharmendra Choudhary. "Prime facie, it appears that it was a land dispute. Jatav had repeatedly asked his neighbours to stop cultivating on his land which was adjacent to theirs, but they continued to do so," Choudhary said on Monday after a meeting with state officials. "When he confronted them again last week, they beat him up, poured petrol on him and set him on fire,"

he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. India banned caste-based discrimination in 1955, but centuries-old attitudes persist, and lower-caste groups, including Dalits, are among the most marginalized communities. More than half India's lower-caste population is landless, official data show. Dalits are at the bottom rung of the social hierarchy, vulnerable to discrimination and attacks by upper-caste Hindus, including a spate of recent ones by hardline vigilantes who accuse them of killing cows they regard as sacred.

Land rights have become a rallying cry for Dalit activists, who say it is the only way they can be free of the dirty and dangerous jobs - including skinning dead cows - that have traditionally been thrust upon them. But a land title alone does not ensure Dalits get land, said Ramesh Nathan at the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights. Jatav had received 3.5 acres (1.4 hectares) of land in 2000 from the state, but did not have full access, Nathan said.

"The state can allot land and even give a patta (title), but then it is up to the Dalit to claim that land and safeguard it," he said. "In many cases, they are prevented from taking possession by powerful upper-caste people. The state must do more to guarantee full possession of land and protection of rights of Dalits." Earlier this year, a Dalit activist set himself alight over a delay in granting land to a Dalit couple in neighbouring Gujarat state.—Reuters

International

Families flee as regime and Russia pummel Syria's south

President Assad set on recapturing south

DARAA, Syria: Syria's government ramped up its bombardment of the southern city of Daraa yesterday, forcing dozens of families to flee an expected assault on the cradle of a seven-year uprising. After a string of wins elsewhere in the country, President Bashar al-Assad has set his sights on recapturing the country's strategic south, which borders Jordan and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. His forces have been battering rebel-held towns in Daraa province for nearly a week, leaving at least 28 civilians dead, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

They then turned to the provincial capital of the same name, launching air strikes and barrel bombs on opposition-held districts in the early hours yesterday. More than 55 surface-to-surface missiles slammed into those neighborhoods after midnight, followed by four barrel bombs, the Britain-based Observatory said. "It is the first time they drop barrel bombs on Daraa city in more than a year," said monitor chief Rami Abdel Rahman. The city was struck again around noon, this time with air strikes by Syria's ally Russia, which has helped Assad's troops recapture swathes of territory since 2015.

The attacks prompted dozens of terrified families to stream out of Daraa city. Many set out in the dead of night to seek shelter in olive groves on the city limits, AFP's correspondent there said. Leaving on foot or by motorbike, they took refuge in small shacks or tents among the trees. "We don't know what happened. We were sleeping with the children when all of a sudden, we heard heavy shelling," said Ahmad al-Musalima, 31. "The kids started shaking in fear," he said. He and his family fled overnight, joining an estimated 20,000 people displaced by the past week's escalating violence, according to the Observatory.

“All of a sudden, we heard heavy shelling”

Divide and conquer
"We left the house and didn't know where to go. We headed towards the plain with the kids crying and heavy shelling overhead," Musalima said. Syrian rebels hold the western half of Daraa city and most of the surrounding province, as well most of the adjacent governorate of Quneitra to the west. That territory roughly forms a horseshoe, whose bottom curve borders Jordan and includes a military base held by rebels since 2014. Syrian troops meanwhile hold Daraa city's eastern half and nearly all the adjacent province of Sweida.

Frontlines had been relatively quiet for nearly a year under a "de-escalation" deal agreed in July 2017 by Russia, the US, and Jordan. But now, the regime and its Russian allies are pursuing a divide-and-conquer strategy against rebels. On Monday, Russian bombing raids hit the military base near the border with Jordan, said the Observatory. Ousting rebels from it would divide the opposition horseshoe into a western and eastern section.

Russian strikes and 20 regime barrel bombs on Monday also hit the key town of Basr al-Harir in Daraa's eastern countryside, rocked by clashes for nearly a week. "Capturing the town would allow troops to divide rebel territory to smaller pockets," Abdel Rahman said. The heavy strikes on Daraa's eastern countryside forced rescue workers to stop operations in the town of Al-Laja. "The civil defense teams have not been able to reach targeted areas because of the intense bombing," the local civil defense centre said in an online statement.

US holds back

The United Nations has warned that the renewed hostilities could put 750,000 lives at risk and urged all sides to respect last year's de-escalation agreement. "Any humanitarian crisis in south Syria must be averted first by sparing civilians the pains of



DARAA, Syria: Smoke rises above opposition held areas of Daraa during an airstrike by Syrian regime forces. —AFP

fighting, and second, be responded to swiftly from inside and outside Syria," said Ali al-Zaatari, UN humanitarian coordinator in Syria. Jordan said on Sunday it could not absorb a new wave of refugees across its border. In an effort to avoid a bloody onslaught, Russia is leading negotiations with Syria, Jordan, Israel, and the US in a bid to reach a settlement. The uptick in violence could be tied to those talks, said Sam Heller of the International Crisis Group. "It seems the air strikes have two

aims: exerting pressure in order to get negotiations, either international or local, and paving the way for a wider attack in case the negotiations don't make progress," he said.

Although it had a key role in the original de-escalation deal, Washington has yet to put its political or military weight behind a solution for the south, he said. "The Americans haven't gotten seriously involved in the talks over the south, and they're not expected to intervene militarily," Heller said. —AFP

UN envoy due in Yemen as strains escalate with Houthi missile launch

RIYADH/ADEN: The Iran-aligned Houthi movement fired missiles at the Saudi capital Riyadh late on Sunday, escalating tensions ahead of a visit by the UN envoy to Yemen this week to try to avert a military assault on the country's main port city. A Houthi spokesman threatened more attacks in response to the offensive launched by a Saudi-led coalition on June 12 to seize control of Hodeidah port, long a key target, in an attempt to weaken the Houthis by cutting their main supply line.

The United Nations fears an assault on the Red Sea port, a lifeline for millions of Yemenis, could trigger a famine imperiling millions of lives. The offensive could also have ramifications further afield due to Yemen's role in a proxy war between Sunni Muslim Saudi Arabia and Shi'ite Muslim Iran that has fuelled instability across the Middle East.

The coalition said on Monday that eight members of Lebanon's Shi'ite Hezbollah group had been killed in battles in the mountainous Saada region in Yemen's northwest, which is held by the Houthis along with the capital Sanaa. Hezbollah officials could not be immediately reached for com-

ment, but the group has previously denied Saudi accusations that it is helping Houthi rebels.

UN envoy Martin Griffiths was due to arrive in the southern city of Aden on Wednesday for talks with ousted President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi in the exiled government's temporary capital, government officials said. "He will only be there for a few hours and the talks will focus on the situation in Hodeidah and (on) averting any military operation on the port," one official told Reuters.

Missiles over Riyadh

Saudi air defense forces intercepted two rockets over Riyadh late on Sunday, sending debris measuring up to several meters hurtling towards residential areas. Pieces fell near the US mission in the Saudi capital and at a school in the diplomatic quarter. Debris sparked a fire at a construction site 10 km (six miles) further south and fell on the roof of a private residence, but Saudi officials said there were no casualties.

"Our rockets will reach places that the enemy will not expect," Houthi spokesman Mohammed Abdul-Salam said. "The longer the aggression and war continue, the greater our ballistic missile capabilities." Coalition spokesman Turki al-Malki said the alliance's advances on Hodeidah and other fronts were pushing the Houthis to try to project strength through such attacks. Coalition-backed forces seized Hodeidah airport last week and



SANAA: Supporters of the Shi'ite Yemeni Houthis demonstrate in the capital Sanaa in support of fellow Houthis engaged in battles against the coalition forces led by the UAE and Saudi Arabia in Red Sea port city of Hodeidah. —AFP

have been consolidating their hold in the area as more Houthi fighters, mostly armed with Ak-47 assault rifles, were deployed in the city and around the port.

The United Nations fears heavy fighting will worsen what is already the world's most urgent humanitarian crisis, with 22 million Yemenis dependent on aid and an estimated 8.4 million believed to be on the verge of starvation. The Houthis have indicated they would be willing to hand over management of the port to the United Nations,

sources told Reuters. A US official said Washington was urging the Saudis and Emiratis to accept the deal.

The Arab states say they must recapture Hodeidah to deprive the Houthis of their main source of income and prevent them from smuggling in Iranian-made missiles, accusations denied by the group and Tehran. The coalition has pledged a swift military operation to take over the airport and seaport without entering the city centre, to minimize civilian casualties and maintain the flow of goods. —Reuters

South Sudan foes in new peace talks to end deadly war

KHARTOUM: South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and arch-foe Riek Machar met yesterday for a new round of peace talks after a first meeting last week faltered. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir is hosting in Khartoum the second round of talks between the two bitter rivals, aimed at ending South Sudan's four-and-a-half year brutal civil war. A first round brokered by Ethiopian premier Abiy Ahmed in Addis Ababa on Thursday failed to achieve any breakthrough.

Yesterday, the two warring South Sudanese heavyweights met at a Khartoum convention centre in the presence of Bashir and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, an AFP correspondent reported. Kiir and Machar shook hands and later stood alongside Bashir and Museveni with their hands raised. Yesterday meeting comes as regional East African leaders launched new efforts to secure peace in South Sudan where warring factions face a looming deadline to avert UN sanctions.

The war has killed tens of thousands of people and driven about four million

others from their homes. It erupted after Kiir fell out with his then deputy Machar in December 2013, dashing the optimism that accompanied independence of South Sudan just two years earlier from Sudan. Kiir and Machar's meeting in Addis Ababa was their first face-to-face encounter in nearly two years and the first in Sudan since the fighting erupted.

Looking for breakthrough

"In this round of talks we are looking for a breakthrough to this thorny issue," Sudanese Foreign Minister Al-Dierdiry Ahmed told reporters on Sunday. The Khartoum meeting comes after the one in Addis Ababa failed to reach a breakthrough when South Sudan's government declared that it "had enough" of Machar soon after that encounter. "As the people of South Sudan, not the president alone, but as the people of South Sudan, we are saying enough is enough," South Sudanese government spokesman Michael Makuei said Friday.

Makuei rejected Machar's presence in any transitional government but did not rule out the involvement of other rebel figures. His remarks show the personal enmity between Kiir and Machar, that lies at the heart of the conflict, is as strong as ever. Before the start of talks in Ethiopia, Machar's SPLM-IO rebel group had



KHARTOUM: From left to right, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and South Sudanese President Salva Kiir, participate in a peace meeting in Khartoum. —AFP

also dismissed the latest peace efforts as "unrealistic". South Sudan descended into civil war after Kiir accused Machar of plotting a coup against him, sparking violence between the two factions that was fuelled by brooding ethnic tensions.

Since a 2015 peace deal collapsed in July 2016 with Machar fleeing to South Africa, Kiir's government has gained the upper hand militarily as the opposition has splintered into a myriad of factions. Initially largely

fought out between South Sudan's two largest ethnic groups—Kiir's Dinka and Machar's Nuer—smaller groups have since spawned their own militias raising question marks about the ability of either leader to halt the war. In May, the UN Security Council gave the two warring sides a month to reach a peace deal or face sanctions. A landlocked state with a large ethnic mix, South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in 2011 after a long and brutal war. —AFP

FBI to help probe into Ethiopia rally blast

ADDIS ABABA: The US is sending the FBI to help investigate a grenade attack in Addis Ababa which killed two people at a rally addressed by Ethiopia's reformist prime minister, state media said yesterday. "The US government said it will send FBI experts to investigate Saturday's bomb blast at a rally organized to support [the] reform agendas of Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed," state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting Corporate said. A spokesman for the US embassy in Addis Ababa confirmed the FBI's involvement.

Yesterday, an AFP photographer saw four people who did not appear to be Ethiopian combing the site of the blast while a US embassy vehicle was parked nearby. Thirty people have so far been arrested over the attack that took place as Abiy concluded a speech promoting his reformist policies before a crowd of hundreds of thousands in the capital's Meskel Square. Saturday's explosion sparked panic in the crowd, resulting in a stampede and more than 150 injuries.

There has been no claim of responsibility for the attack. Rally organizer Seyoum Teshome earlier told AFP he saw police scuffle with a person attempting to hurl a grenade at the stage Abiy had spoken from. Nine officers have also been arrested for negligence, including the deputy commissioner of the Addis Ababa police. Since taking office in April, 42-year-old former cabinet minister and army officer Abiy has initiated unprecedented reforms that have been broadly welcomed but have upset the status quo. —AFP

Bahrain jails woman and man over anti-regime posts

DUBAI: A Bahraini court yesterday sentenced a woman, believed to be activist Najah Ahmed Yousif, and man to three years in jail over social media use, the public prosecution said. The woman was convicted for managing accounts on social networking sites "which published articles and videos promoting terrorist acts, incited hatred against the governing regime and collected funds to organize anti-government events", Issa al-Rowaie, acting chief prosecutor for terrorist crimes, was quoted as saying in a statement.

The man was found guilty of helping her to run those social media accounts. Together, "they broadcast false and biased news" about conditions in Bahrain and "promoted terrorist acts" in the kingdom, the prosecution statement said, without specifying the acts. The two individuals were not named. Hours earlier, the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) issued a statement condemning the verdict and naming the woman as political activist Najah Ahmed Yousif.

It said Yousif had been targeted on "politically motivated charges" after criticizing the kingdom's hosting of the 2017 Bahrain Grand Prix. Yousif has been held in detention since April 2017, according to BIRD. The Bahraini rights group says the activist faced psychological pressure, with threats to her sons, was sexually assaulted and threatened with rape during her initial four-day interrogation. —AFP

International

Migrants who 'invade' US have no right to due process, says Trump

President ends separation, continues hardline immigration talk

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Sunday said migrants who "invade" the US should be deprived of legal due process, reinforcing his hardline stand despite an about-face on family separations that has seen more than 500 children reunited with relatives. Trying to stanch the flow of tens of thousands of migrants from Central America and Mexico arriving at the southern border every month, Trump in early May had ordered that all adults crossing illegally would be arrested, and their children held separately as a result.

After images of children in chain-link enclosures sparked domestic and global outrage, the president ended the separation practice but has continued his hardline talk on immigration. He sees the issue as crucial ahead of midterm congressional elections in November. "We cannot allow all of these people to invade our country," Trump said Sunday on Twitter.

"When somebody comes in, we must immediately, with no Judges or Court Cases, bring them back from where they came," said Trump, suggesting they be handled without the due legal process guaranteed for "any person" by the US Constitution. Nearly all of the arriving families have officially requested asylum. "Our system is a mockery to good immigration policy and Law and Order," said Trump, who has repeatedly tried to link immigrants with crime.

His remarks came after the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released its first official data since Trump ended the family separations on Wednesday. It said 522 children separated as part of "zero tolerance" have been reunited with their families, but another 2,053 separated minors remained in the care of the US Department of Health and Human Services as of Wednesday. "The United States government knows the location of all children in its custody and is working to reunite them with their families," DHS said in a statement.

On Sunday, US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis said the military is preparing camps for migrants at two bases, describing it as "providing shelter for people without shelter." The military is providing "logistic support" for DHS, a "quite appropriate" function for it to do, Mattis said.

A great sadness

Fleeing from impoverished Central America, the arrivals say they are seeking a better life and also a refuge from criminal gangs terrorizing their region, which has one of the world's highest murder rates. Central American migrants deported from the US without their children have spoken of their anguish at seeing families split under the "zero tolerance" approach. Ever Sierra, deported after trying to enter the US, told AFP he planned to try again in a few days.

He arrived back in Honduras with his eight-month-old daughter's shoes hanging from his backpack. She was being held in a detention center in McAllen, Texas, along with her mother. Benjamin Raymundo, a 33-year-old deported back to Guatemala, told AFP he left his home country in April with his son Roberto, aged five, but the pair were separated when immigration officers in California stopped them. The boy was eventually placed in a relative's custody. "It's a great sadness for me, as if I'll never see my son again," Raymundo lamented.

Trump's former deputy national security advisor, Tom Bossert, said the past week had provided "terrible optics" for the administration, and "almost from the outset we didn't have the capacity to detain these parents and children, together or separately." Speaking on ABC's "This Week," Bossert predicted that Trump's executive order ending the family separations will not stand up in court because a judge had ruled in 2015 that even detaining parents and children together is "inhuman."



TEXAS: In this file photo a man holds a sign at the Tornillo Port of Entry near El Paso, Texas, during a protest rally including several American mayors against the US administration's family separation policy. —AFP

“We cannot allow these people to invade our Country”

Poisoned politics

US lawmakers on Sunday spoke of the need for a longer-term solution. But in a poisoned political climate, they have failed to advance either of two Republican immigration bills in the House of Representatives, which the Republicans control along with the Senate. A hardline proposal was defeated last week, as expected, and a vote on a "compromise" bill between the party's hard-right and moderate factions has

been pushed back, with signs it could not pass.

Trump and other hardline Republicans accuse opposition Democrats of being soft on crime and immigration. On Saturday, former Republican presidential hopeful Mike Huckabee posted a picture on Twitter of MS-13 gang members and joked that the heavily tattooed Latinos were the "campaign committee" for top Democrat Nancy Pelosi. Trump frequently brings up the Hispanic gang when he talks of immigration. —AFP

MPs vote on expanding London's Heathrow airport

LONDON: British MPs were set yesterday to approve plans to build a third runway at London Heathrow, Europe's busiest airport, after decades of debate. Prime Minister Theresa May's government agreed to the £14 billion plan earlier this month, saying it would provide a major boost to the economy. The House of Commons is expected to back the expansion despite opposition from many MPs from London and south-east England, where residents fear the extra pollution and noise from an increase in flights.

Among them is Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, who once pledged to lie in front of bulldozers to stop construction, but was set to miss the last-minute vote due to a trip to Afghanistan. Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said he was "cautiously optimistic" of securing approval for the plan, which officials say could create up to 114,000 local jobs by 2030. "This is a momentous vote that has been 50 years in the making and represents the biggest transport decision in a generation," he said.

"At stake are thousands of new jobs and the country's ability to compete on an international stage and win new global trade," Heathrow hopes to begin construction by 2021 although it must still obtain planning permission and could face legal challenges. Grayling said the project would be funded by the private sector, adding that the government would work with Heathrow's operator to ensure costs are not passed on to airlines.

British Airways owner IAG has expressed concerns about higher landing charges for what it said is already the most expensive hub airport in the world. Grayling also insisted the plan could be delivered without breaking Britain's commitments on climate change, and has sought to reassure locals with a ban on night flights. However, Doug Parr, policy director for environmental campaign group Greenpeace UK, said: "A vote for a new Heathrow runway is a vote for more climate change, more air pollution, and more noise."

Not worth resigning

A junior trade minister and London MP, Greg Hands, quit the government last week to vote against the expansion, and criticized Johnson for dodging the decision. "I wouldn't want to be abroad...#commitments," Hands wrote in a Twitter message. May has ordered all her Conservative MPs to back the plan, but agreed to Johnson's trip, saying he would be the "living embodiment of global Britain"—the slogan for Britain's future outside the EU.

The Afghan foreign ministry said Johnson held talks with Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai on a range of issues, notably security. In a letter to his constituents obtained by London's Evening Standard newspaper, he said he would continue to lobby within government against Heathrow. "But it is clear from what is likely to be a large majority of MPs who are in favor of a third runway that my resignation would have achieved absolutely nothing," Johnson wrote.

The minister, a leading voice for Brexit in the government, added that given the "considerable difficulties" the project still faced, it may not even happen. The main opposition Labor party is against Heathrow's expansion but has given its MPs a free vote and many will back the plan, particularly as it has trade union support. —AFP

Mattis visits China amid Korea talks, strategic tensions

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE: US Secretary of Defense James Mattis will make his first visit to China this week amid rising tensions between the two countries but also a deep need for Beijing's support in nuclear talks with North Korea. Mattis told reporters Sunday he wants to "take measure" of China's strategic ambitions after it positioned weaponry on disputed islets in the South China Sea and is seeking to project its military power deep into the Pacific.

But in a four-day trip that will also include South Korea and Japan, the Pentagon chief also hopes to confirm China's commitment to pressuring North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons, after historic talks between President Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un in Singapore. The United States, China, Japan and South Korea "have a common goal: the complete, irreversible and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula," Mattis said.

In Beijing from Tuesday to Thursday, Mattis will meet with senior Chinese defense officials. Then he will travel to Seoul for talks with his South Korean counterpart Song Young-moo, followed by a stop Friday in Japan to see defense chief Itsunori Onodera. Those meetings are aimed at reassuring both allies that Washington's regional defense commitment remains unchanged after Trump unexpectedly announced on June 12 that the US would suspend a major joint military exercise in South Korea following his meeting with Kim.

Nearly 1,000 migrants rescued off Libya coast

TRIPOLI: Libya's coastguard has rescued nearly 1,000 migrants who were on boats in distress in the Mediterranean on their way to Europe, the navy said yesterday. Three separate operations took place on Sunday with the coastguard bringing ashore in Libya a total of 948 migrants, navy spokesman Ayoub Kacem said. The migrants were on inflatable dinghies which were facing difficulties in the Mediterranean off the coast of Garabulli east of the capital Tripoli, navy officer Rami Ghommeidh said.

A first group of 97 migrants were rescued, while a second operation brought 361 migrants—including 88 women and 44 children—ashore and late in the evening a final group of 490 migrants were rescued, said Kacem. In all a total of 2,000 migrants trying to make the perilous journey to Europe, often on unseaworthy boats, were either intercepted or assisted by the Libyan navy since Wednesday. Yesterday's announcement by the navy came as Italy's far-right Interior Minister Matteo Salvini was en route to Libya for talks on the migrant crisis.

South China Sea tensions

The visit to China comes amid bilateral strains that cross multiple sectors. The Trump administration is challenging China on trade, theft of industrial secrets, and cyber threats. In the defense sector, China's decision to position military hardware in built-up atolls in the South China Sea has sparked new security concerns throughout Southeast Asia. Signaling Washington's displeasure, in May the Pentagon disinvited China from the 2018 Rim of the Pacific Exercise, in which some two dozen navies train together for mostly civilian missions.

Weeks later at the Shangri-la Dialogue security conference in Singapore, Mattis slammed China for showing contempt of other nations' interests in the South China Sea. "Despite China's claims to the contrary, the placement of these weapon systems is tied directly to military use for the purposes of intimidation and coercion," Mattis said. The Chinese, who say the weaponry is only defensive in nature, retorted that Mattis had made "irresponsible comments" that "cannot be accepted."

Strategic competition

Mattis has visited Asia seven times in his 17 months since becoming defense secretary, but not China. He has yet to meet the new Chinese defense minister, Wei Fenghe. He said the talks in Beijing seek to scope out China's long-term strategic intentions and determine possible areas of military-to-military cooperation. He declined to characterize the relationship, saying that could "poison the well" before he meets his counterparts. "I'm going there to get what I consider to be straight from them what they see for a strategic relationship," he said. "I'm going there to have a conversation."

But speaking separately a senior Pentagon



EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE: US Defense Secretary James Mattis aboard his official aircraft, on the first leg of a trip which will take him to China, South Korea and Japan. —AFP

official called the United States and China "strategic competitors" and suggested that Washington needs to keep up the pressure over the South China Sea buildup. The Rimpac disinvite could be "just a first step", the official said. Chinese defense ministry spokesman Ren Guoqiang said Mattis was visiting Beijing at Wei's invitation. "It is in the common interests of both China and the United States to develop a healthy and stable bilateral military relationship," Ren said in a statement.

Beijing "hopes that the United States and China will walk towards each other and work together to make the bilateral military relationship an important stabilizing factor in the rela-

tionship between the two countries."

Korea talks

Mattis will also be adding his voice to North Korea talks, urging China to hold firm on commercial pressure on Pyongyang. He said he has had daily discussions on the talks with the lead US negotiator, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. The senior US defense official said they are hoping to see a concrete outcome, including a timeline for commitments by Pyongyang, "soon." Mattis tied the suspension of exercises to the getting concrete results. "We'll see if they continuing negotiations keep them that way." —AFP



TRIPOLI: Migrants arrive at a naval base in Tripoli, after being rescued in the Mediterranean. —AFP

Salvini, who has vowed a hardline stance on migrants, posted a selfie on Twitter showing him on board a military plane heading for Libya and wrote: "Mission Libya, we've left!". He is the first member of Italy's new populist government to visit the North African country, a former Italian colony. On Sunday Salvini ordered foreign charities to stop rescuing migrants off Libya even as reports emerged of that a group of nearly 1,000 were on boats in distress in the Mediterranean.

"Let the Libyan authorities do their work of rescue, recovery and return (of migrants) to their country, as they have been doing for some time, with-

out the ships of the voracious NGOs disturbing them or causing trouble," he said. Later on Sunday the Italian interior minister thanked Libyan authorities for rescuing migrants trapped at sea. "I would like to express my heartfelt thanks, as a minister and as a father, to the authorities and the Libyan coast-guard," he said in a tweet.

"Today they saved and brought 820 immigrants back to Libya, making the 'work' of the traffickers in vain and avoiding wrongful interventions by NGO ships," he added. Libya is a key departure point for thousands of migrants hoping to reach Europe, although hundreds drown each year attempting the crossing. —AFP

Vatican visit puts Macron's religious views in spotlight

PARIS: As a schoolboy, Emmanuel Macron decided he wanted to be baptized as a Catholic, despite his parents' misgivings. It was "the start of a mystical period that lasted for a few years," the French president told an interviewer during campaigning in 2017. By his mid-teens, he had distanced himself from the church, however, and he now considers himself to be agnostic. Asked last year whether he believed in God, he gave a cryptic answer that pointed to his faith in something spiritual and immaterial, but not Catholic in form.

"I believe in a form of transcendence, that's why I thoroughly respect the role of religions in society," he said during a chat with journalists. Faith and the highly sensitive subject of the role of the church in French society are set to be on the menu Tuesday when Macron visits the Vatican for the first time as leader for a meeting with Pope Francis. The 40-year-old centrist has decided to accept being made an honorary canon of St John Lateran, the cathedral of Rome, a tradition dating back to the 15th century when the French state and church were indistinguishable. Several of Macron's predecessors have declined the title, including Socialists Francois Mitterrand and Francois Hollande, in a bid to avoid associating themselves with religious imagery.

France is strictly secular under a landmark 1905 law that separated the state from the church. It remains one of the country's most debated rules and was invoked controversially in 2004 to ban religious symbols, including the Islamic headscarf, from schools. Macron's decision to accept the honorary canon title has drawn particular scrutiny at home following comments in April in which he said he wanted to "repair" the "bond" between church and state. One of his leftist opponents, Jean-Luc Melenchon, led criticism of the remarks, saying: "One expects a president, one gets a little priest!" —AFP

International

North, South Korea mark war anniversary in mood of detente

North Korea drops anti-US rhetoric

SEOUL: The two Koreas yesterday marked their war anniversary in a mood of detente, with Pyongyang dropping its customary anti-US rhetoric and Seoul saying talks have begun on moving the North's artillery back from the tense border. Pyongyang's tightly controlled official media are normally packed with anti-American invective on June 25, when the North launched a mass invasion of the South in 1950. But this year proved to be a marked exception in the wake of the historic Singapore summit.

In the South, Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon said discussions were taking place about relocating Pyongyang's long-range artillery away from their border. North Korea is estimated to have around 1,000 artillery pieces along the frontier, threatening much of the South's capital Seoul only 50 kilometers away. The North has long accused the US of provoking the 1950-53 Korean War as part of a plan for global domination and blames it for the division of the peninsula, agreed between Moscow and Washington in the closing days of World War II.

A US-led 16-country United Nations force supported the South in the conflict while China backed the North. "Every year on this day, our army and people row the boat of memories, full of creed and determination to defend the nation," read a report in the North's state-run Rodong Sinmun. "What surprised the world even more was... our people's solidarity to annihilate the enemy," it added—without identifying the enemy by name in any of its coverage.

In stark contrast, all six pages of the newspaper last

year were filled with colorful criticisms of the "US imperialists", blaming Americans for "a holocaust in which they massacred countless Koreans in the most brutal and barbarous way". This year's anniversary comes less than two weeks after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump shook hands at the unprecedented summit in Singapore.

More virulent forms of anti-US propaganda have been disappearing from the streets of Pyongyang, while images of missile launches and military formations on a prominent site outside the city train station have been replaced with visuals of industry and agriculture. Analysts say the rare omission of the US in North Korea media coverage of the anniversary may be part of the regime's efforts to maintain the current diplomatic momentum. "It's remarkable," said Peter Ward, a North Korea researcher at Seoul National University. "On this day of all days it's nowhere to be found."

"North Korean anti-Americanism may have popular roots (nourished by decades of agitprop), but what we see is what the state wants us to," he added. Across the border at a war anniversary ceremony in Seoul, Prime Minister Lee acknowledged that the conflict began "due to North Korea's invasion". But Lee noted the diplomatic rapprochement on the peninsula, with two inter-Korean summits preceding the meeting in Singapore—after which Trump announced the suspension of joint military exercises with the South, the US's security ally.

In Singapore Kim and Trump signed a joint statement in



SEOUL: South Korean soldiers salute during a ceremony marking the 68th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War in Seoul.—AFP

which Pyongyang committed to "work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula". But critics have said the encounter between the two mercurial leaders was

more style than substance, producing a document short on details about the key issue of the North's atomic weapons.—AFP

Indian women welcome foreign minister's move to call out trolls

MUMBAI: India's foreign minister has spoken out on abusive tweets directed at her, a move welcomed yesterday by women journalists and campaigners who say they routinely battle rape and death threats on social media. Online trolls targeted Sushma Swaraj, the most senior woman in India's government and an active Twitter user, after she helped a Hindu-Muslim couple who accused a passport official in her department of discriminating against them.

Most of the abuse was from Hindus who accused her of "appeasing" the Muslim community by not taking the official's side, and called for her to be removed from the Hindu nationalist government currently in power. "Had she been India's daughter, she would have put nation first. But she is a secular Visa Auntie," read one tweet in Hindi. Women applauded Swaraj for speaking out after she took to Twitter on Sunday to expose the trolls.

"These are organized swarms of gender trolling. It has the approval of someone, somewhere," Kavita Krishnan, an activist with the All India Progressive Women's Association, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Twitter trolls have attacked both men and women critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, but activists say the attacks against women are particularly vicious and can include rape and death threats. Dhanya Rajendran, editor of digi-



NEW DELHI: Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj, right, shakes hands with UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan prior to a meeting in New Delhi.—AFP

tal newspaper The News Minute who was trolled last year by fans of an actor whose film she had criticized, said the targeting of Swaraj showed how far the trolls were prepared to go. "People are not even scared of a senior minister who is among the top four of the Indian

government," she said. Online abuse and harassment pressure women and girls into censoring themselves on social media and makes them fear for their physical safety, with many withdrawing from public conversations, rights groups have said.—Reuters

Taiwan's Tsai urges world to stand up to China

TAIPEI: Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen called on the international community to "constrain" China by standing up for freedoms, casting her island's giant neighbor as a global threat to democracy. Her comments in an exclusive interview with AFP yesterday came as Taiwan faces what Tsai called "immense pressure" from Beijing. She urged other nations to unite with Taiwan in defending against China's expansionist aims and to protect shared liberal values.

"This is not just Taiwan's challenge, it is a challenge for the region and the world as a whole, because today it's Taiwan, but tomorrow it may be any other country that will have to face the expansion of China's influence," Tsai said. "Their democracy, freedom, and freedom to do business will one day be affected by China," Tsai added. "We need to work together to reaffirm our values of democracy and freedom in order to constrain China and also minimize the expansion of their hegemonic influence."

Her comments come after a sustained period of aggression from China towards Taiwan, which Beijing believes is part of mainland territory, to be reunified by force if necessary. Self-ruling Taiwan is a democracy and sees itself as a sovereign country, although it has never formally declared independence from the mainland. An increasingly hardline President Xi Jinping has made it clear that what he sees as threats to China's territorial integrity will not be tolerated.

China is deeply suspicious of Tsai as her Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) is traditionally pro-independence. Since she took office in 2016, Beijing has ramped up military drills near the island and has successfully pressured some major international companies to list Taiwan as part of China on their websites. It has also exerted diplomatic pressure by ensuring Taiwan is excluded from major international forums and wooing away some of its few remaining official allies.

Tsai said China should "be aware of their own responsibility" in the region and "engage in conversation with Taiwan". Countries both around the region and further afield have expressed concern over China building military facilities on remote islands in the South China Sea. Beijing has also been seeking to extend its power with its globe-spanning Belt and Road infrastructure project, which aims to connect the



TAIPEI: Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen —AFP

world's second-largest economy with Africa, Asia and Europe through a vast network of ports, railways, roads and industrial parks.

Meeting with Xi

But despite escalating tensions, Tsai said she would still "be willing" to meet with China's President Xi Jinping. "Of course, I hope that during my term as president, there is a chance for both sides to sit down and talk," Tsai said. She added she would meet Xi on an equal footing and with no political pre-conditions, a position she has long taken. However Beijing insists Tsai must agree that Taiwan is part of "one China" in order for any meeting to take place, which she has refused to do.

Tsai said the recent summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un had "provided a lot to think about". "Their two countries are very far apart in terms of cultural values and other aspects, as well as the positions they hold," said Tsai. "But they were able to sit down and talk on the basis of reciprocity and mutual respect in Singapore. I think this was a positive development for the international community. It is also an encouragement for countries that are at odds with one another."

With its number of official allies dwindling to 18 as Beijing lures them away, Taiwan is now trying to forge new friendships. Its most powerful ally is the United States, which is its major arms supplier even though it does not have formal diplomatic relations with the island. Tsai said Taiwan had seen growing support from the United States, where Congress recently passed bills paving the way for higher level official visits, and recommending greater US-Taiwan military exchanges. The US State Department also approved a preliminary license for sensitive submarine technology, riling Beijing.

The warming relationship comes as Taiwan tries to boost its homegrown defense force. "In the face of China's threats we feel the need for us to improve self-defense capabilities," she said. Tsai said Taiwan is looking to bolster ties with "like-minded" countries. But against Beijing's growing global influence, the island's desire to promote its status internationally as a beacon of democracy in Asia remains an uphill struggle. "Of course there are times when we feel frustrated, but the Taiwanese people do not have the option of giving up," she said.—AFP

Public suicide of Chinese student sparks online soul-searching

BEIJING: The suicide of a Chinese student who threw herself off a building after complaining of sexual harassment by a teacher has sparked online anguish about social decay, particularly because some onlookers egged her on and clapped when she jumped. The 19-year-old student surnamed Li jumped to her death from the eighth storey of a building in the city of Qingyang last Wednesday, state media reported.

Videos of the incident shared online showed Li sitting on a ledge for hours while rescue workers tried to talk her down. Some passersby on the street below heckled her, shouting "How come you haven't jumped yet?" When she jumped, some people clapped while a rescuer worker screamed out in distress. Police have detained some onlookers who shouted at Li, according to the state-backed China Youth Daily newspaper.

Online commentators lamented the callousness of the crowd. "How cold is society that people will ask her to jump?" one person asked. "The sound of the rescue worker's heart being torn reflects the evil of humanity." Li's parents say their daughter became depressed after she was sexually harassed in September by a teacher who had tried to kiss and hug her, the newspaper reported. Many Chinese schools and universities have been rocked by accusations of sexual harassment in recent years.

Rights activists and students had hoped to ride the wave of the global #MeToo movement to make progress in tackling what they say is systemic sexual harassment on campuses. But the movement has struggled to maintain momentum due to widespread online censorship. Some schools have also pressed students not to organize protests or post accusations of harassment, activists say. Li's parents told the newspaper the harassment had led to bouts of depression, a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress and multiple attempts of suicide by their daughter. —Reuters

News in brief

5.5 quake hits S Greece

ATHENS: A 5.5-magnitude earthquake struck off the coast of southern Greece yesterday, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The earthquake hit at a depth of 30 kilometers, about 70 kilometers southwest of the city of Kalamata, the US Geological Survey said. The epicenter was in the sea off the town of Pylos. "The quake had a long duration and initially we were worried, but right now we have absolute calm", the mayor of Pylos, Dimitris Kafantaris, told Antenna TV. Last July, however, a 6.7-magnitude quake killed two people and injured scores on the tourist island of Kos.—AFP

Sweden jails three over attack

STOCKHOLM: A Swedish court yesterday sentenced two refugees and one rejected asylum seeker to prison for attacking a synagogue with Molotov cocktails in the wake of the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital last year. The court in the country's second largest city of Gothenburg sentenced a 19-year-old Syrian to one year and the three months in prison, while two Palestinians, aged 24 and 22, received two years. A few days after US President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as the Jewish state's capital, a dozen people threw multiple burning objects at the Gothenburg synagogue on the evening of December 9, 2017.—AFP

Three killed in Indonesia

JAKARTA: Three bystanders were killed and a small child was wounded when separatist fighters in Indonesia's Papua province opened fire on a small plane bringing in security personnel ahead of regional elections due later this week, officials said yesterday. Voting will take place across Indonesia on Wednesday but security personnel are on high alert in Papua, where a long-running independence struggle has often turned violent. A group of armed men ambushed and shot at the plane after it landed at the tiny airport and also at vendors near the airstrip, a military official said.—Reuters

EU to penalize Myanmar officials

LUXEMBOURG: The European Union will impose sanctions on seven Myanmar security officials yesterday, according to EU diplomats and officials, over what it says are systemic human rights violations against the country's Rohingya Muslims. The seven will face asset freezes and be banned from travelling to the European Union, after the bloc extended an arms embargo and prohibited any training of or cooperation with Myanmar's armed forces.

The sanctions also mark a shift in diplomacy by the EU, which suspended its restrictive measures on the Southeast Asian country in 2012 to support its partial shift to democratic governance in recent years. But the plight of nearly 700,000 Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine state, which the United Nations denounced as ethnic cleansing by the military, has soured relations. Yangon rejects all accusations of wrongdoing.

Last December, the United States levied sanctions in response to the crackdown on the Rohingya minority in Rakhine. Canada followed suit in February, when Reuters also reported on events in the village of Inn Din, where 10 Rohingya Muslim men and boys were hacked to death by Rakhine Buddhist villagers or shot by security force members.

The killings were part of the larger army crackdown on the Rohingya. Two Reuters journalists were jailed while reporting the story and remain in prison in Yangon, where they face up to 14 years behind bars for violating Myanmar's Official Secrets Act.—Reuters

Analysis

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World reaction to Turkish leader election victory

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan won a decisive victory in an election that will give him five more years in office with sweeping new powers. Here are some of the first reactions yesterday from foreign governments:

Russia

Russian President Vladimir Putin "stressed that the results of the vote fully speak of Recep Tayyip Erdogan's great political authority (and) mass support of the course conducted under his leadership to solve Turkey's pressing social and economic tasks (and) strengthen the country's position on the international arena," the Kremlin said. Putin stressed his readiness to continue "close joint work" and dialogue with Erdogan. Turkey and Russia are on opposite sides in Syria, with Moscow remaining the chief ally of President Bashar Al-Assad's regime and Ankara backing rebels seeking his ouster. However, Putin and Erdogan have forged an increasingly close alliance in recent months.

NATO

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg congratulated Erdogan but stressed the alliance, of which Turkey is a member, "is based on some core values: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty." I personally attach great importance to these values and I underline the importance of these values in many different NATO capitals including Ankara when I met Turkish leaders there," Stoltenberg said.

Iran

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani offered his "sincerest congratulations" to Erdogan. He hoped that bilateral relations "could further develop based on firm historical, cultural and religious bonds, good neighborliness, mutual respect and common interests, and close, responsible cooperation between the two countries regarding the developments in the region and the World of Islam to prepare better groundwork for resolving issues and fostering peace and stability, as well as welfare for the peoples of the region."

China

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said Beijing congratulates Erdogan and "respects the choice made by the Turkish people." "China attaches great importance to its ties with Turkey. In recent years, under the guidance of the two heads of state, our bilateral ties and cooperation in all areas have been moving forward, and achieved a lot of positive outcomes," Geng said. "China is willing to work more with Turkey, to move forward our strategic cooperation, to serve the benefits of our two countries and two peoples."

Sweden

Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom that "Turkey is in no position to give other countries lessons in democracy when the (Kurdish) opposition leader has been in jail for a long time". She was referring to Erdogan's victory speech in which he said the almost 90 percent voter turnout "taught the entire world a democracy lesson". "The Kurdish issue and the economic developments in Turkey pose a serious challenge. We've been worried about how Turkey has been developing recently...it's very alarming," she told public broadcaster SVT ahead of an EU foreign ministers meeting in Luxembourg. Asked whether Turkey would become more democratic with Erdogan bolstering his powers Wallstrom said: "I unfortunately do not have any great hopes but we have to give them a chance."

Serbia

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic congratulated Erdogan, saying that Belgrade "will continue to be a reliable partner of Turkey and of its role as a leader ready to defend the values and principles in these more than difficult times."

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Bosnian Muslim leader Bakir Izetbegovic told Erdogan he was "convinced that you will continue to lead Turkey for the welfare of the Turkish people, but that you will also pursue, in the international arena, the fight for the rights of those who are deprived of them." "That is exactly why your victory is celebrated not only in Turkey but also across the Muslim world," Erdogan in late May addressed thousands of expatriate Turks in Sarajevo, at his only election rally outside Turkey after other European countries banned such events.

Bulgaria

Boyko Borisov, the prime minister of Turkey's neighbor Bulgaria, congratulated Erdogan in a telephone call. "I'm convinced that we will work together to consolidate relations between our two countries in the area of migration, as well as for peace and stability in the region," Borisov also told the Turkish president that he had insisted during a mini-summit on the migrant crisis in Brussels on Sunday that an EU-Turkey accord on migration be respected, the government press service said.

Hungary

Hungary's nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban welcomed Erdogan's re-election. "Turkey's stability is good news for the whole of Europe, because our continent faces a number of serious security challenges, and it is essential to overcome them with predictable and effective cooperation with Turkey," Orban said in a letter to Erdogan quoted by his office. — AFP



Foreign policy challenges Erdogan faces after re-election

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is set to take a tough line with the West on key foreign policy issues including the Syria conflict, Russian relations and migrants in his new term, but he may also show signs of compromise. In the months leading up to Sunday's presidential election, which Erdogan won decisively, tensions with the West have grown over Turkey's increasingly close alliance with Russia and other non-NATO powers as Ankara burnishes its ambitions as a global power. Here are the five foreign policy issues Erdogan will need to address during his new tenure:

Relations with the US

Turkey and the United States have been at loggerheads over a number of issues, from American support for a Syrian Kurdish militia despised by Ankara to Washington's failure to extradite Muslim preacher Fethullah Gulen, accused by Ankara of ordering a failed 2016 coup. "The new Erdogan administration will carry on these negotiations with the hope of fixing the relationship with the US," said Ozgur Unluhisarikli, Ankara office director of the German Marshall Fund of the US. One of the stumbling blocks is US backing for the Syrian People's Protection Units (YPG), deemed "terrorists" by Ankara and linked to the outlawed PKK militants who have waged a bloody insurgency against the Turkish state since 1984. However analysts say Washington has been willing to make concessions despite the tensions, as shown by the US delivering its first shipments of F-35 stealth fighter jets to Turkey last week.

Russia

Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin have forged an increasingly strong alliance based on seeking peace in Syria after patching up relations poisoned by Turkey's downing of a Russian war plane in 2015. Washington has been particularly concerned by Ankara's decision to buy Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile batteries, which are not compatible with NATO's defense systems. Putin, a frequent guest of Erdogan in Turkey, on Monday congratulated the Turkish strongman on his re-election, saying that the result showed his "great political authority". Gareth Jenkins, Istanbul-based non-resident senior research fellow at the Silk Road Studies Program, said "ultimately Erdogan is going to have to choose between the US and Russia-and he will pay a price whichever he chooses."

Syria

Since the Syrian war erupted in 2011, Turkey has been a fervent opponent of President Bashar Al-Assad's regime and ruled out any form of direct dialogue with Damascus. But with Turkey already hosting 3.5 million Syrian refugees, Ankara has focused more on border security and helping those displaced go home. Aaron Stein, resident senior fellow

Erdogan: Turkey's pugnacious 'chief' with eye on history

After 15 years in power that have already seen Turkey transformed, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan wants to win a new mandate and rank as the key figure of his country's modern history alongside its founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Erdogan, 64, has in his political career overcome a stint in prison, mass protests and even a bloody coup attempt to emerge as Turkey's uncontested leader first as premier and then as president from 2014. He has freed up constraints on religion in the officially secular but overwhelmingly Muslim state, overseen a vast program of infrastructure building he calls his "crazy projects" and implemented a more assertive foreign policy.

For supporters, Erdogan gives a voice to Turkey's conservative Muslim majority, has brought new levels of economic prosperity and commands respect on the international stage. But detractors argue Erdogan is taking Turkey on a dangerous path to authoritarianism reminiscent of the Ottoman Sultans, coupled with reckless handling of the economy and an imperial foreign policy. One thing is certain-Erdogan in elections on Sunday faces his biggest ballot challenge against a resurgent opposition and a rival, Muharemm Ince, who can match the president's charisma. Whatever the result, "his most powerful days may very well be behind him," said Kemal Kirisci of the Brookings Institution.

'The heavyweight campaigner'

If there was a global contest for winning elections,



Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, (center left), leader of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) is greeted by supporters in Istanbul. — AFP

at the Atlantic Council, said Turkey has already found a "formula" with the Assad regime. "It works through Russia to achieve its interests - and those interest don't include regime change," he told AFP. "Instead, they have accepted the regime will stay in power, but are determined to set up their own statelet to act as a buffer along the border."

Relations with the EU

Ties between Turkey and the European Union have been particularly strained since the crackdown that followed the attempted overthrow of Erdogan in July 2016, with EU member states calling on Ankara to lift the state of emergency. However veteran Turkish diplomat Ozdem Sanberk said he believed an era of compromise would start and "relations will reach a more healthy ground than before". Turkey and the EU agreed to a deal in 2016 to curb the influx of migrants into Europe which has been criticized by rights groups, but has helped slow down arrivals. Erdogan, who raised eyebrows in the West when he threatened to send millions of migrants to Europe, was sidelined from the agreement but so far it has remained in place.

Erdogan would see himself as the undisputed-and undefeated-heavyweight champion of the world. In one and a half decades since his ruling party came to power, Erdogan has taken part in 12 elections-five legislative polls, three referenda, three local elections and a presidential vote-and won them all.

Known to his inner circle as "beyefendi" (sir) and admirers as "reis" (the chief), Erdogan prides himself on being able to woo doubters with his indefatigable campaigning. His only setback-so far-came in June 2015 elections when the AKP won the most votes but lost its overall majority for the first time. But Erdogan swatted away the prospect of a coalition, saying such governments belonged to the days of "old Turkey". He called new elections in November 2015 where the party's majority was restored. Erdogan pressed on with an April 2017 referendum on a new constitution that abolishes the office of prime minister and that critics said resembled an autocracy, but eked out a relatively narrow win.

From Kasimpasa to presidency

Born in the working-class Istanbul harbor district of Kasimpasa but brought up near the Black Sea, Erdogan gained prominence in the nascent Islamic political movements that were challenging secular domination, becoming a popular mayor of Istanbul in 1994. His term was cut short when he was convicted and then jailed for four months for inciting religious hatred when he recited an Islamist poem. But this only magnified his profile. Founding the AKP after the previous Islamic party led by his mentor Necmettin Erbakan was banned, Erdogan spearheaded its 2002 landslide election victory and became premier less than six months later. Erdogan's signature early achievements included a series of reforms like abolishing the death penalty that gladdened the EU and beginning a peace process

"There might be a number of problems but there's no deal that works 100 percent perfectly," said Sanberk.

Global ambitions

Over the past few years Erdogan has pressed what Ankara calls a multi-vector foreign policy and championed causes like the Palestinians and Muslim minorities around the world. He has hosted Muslim leaders several times, including earlier this year for a summit aimed at coordinating a united Islamic response to the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

The countries who rapidly congratulated Erdogan on his re-election were symbolic of Ankara's foreign policy stance, with leaders such as Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Sudan's President Omar Al-Bashir, who have pariah status in the West, among the first to hail his win. But analyst Jenkins warned that Erdogan would make errors unless he "begins to employ people who both understand foreign policy and are willing to tell him the truth rather than what they think he wants to hear." — AFP

July 15, 2016

In its early days the AKP, lacking allies and experience, forged an alliance with Islamic preacher Fethullah Gulen who moved to permanent exile in the US in 1999 yet built huge influence in Turkish society. But Gulen turned against his former allies who blamed him for masterminding the July 15, 2016 coup bid by a renegade army faction, charges he denies. The president, on holiday by the Aegean, appeared on the FaceTime app on live TV to urge supporters out onto the streets, before returning in triumph to Istanbul and describing the events as a "gift from God".

The coup bid marked a watershed moment in Erdogan's rule with some 77,000 arrested in the unprecedented purge that followed, further increasing tensions with the West. And his increasingly pugnacious style has alienated some former allies such as predecessor Abdullah Gul, a co-founder of the AKP who even mulled standing against Erdogan in Sunday's polls. Family is key for Erdogan and one of his closest confidants is his energy minister and son-in-law Berat Albayrak, the husband of his eldest daughter Esra. His younger daughter Sumeyye plays a key role in a women's non-profit but, in contrast, his two sons are less prominent. — AFP

Business

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approvals in industry despite risks**14** Rebooting Germany: Why Europe's
most powerful economy is falling

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HONG KONG: Pedestrians walk pass an advertisement display of Xiaomi's "Redmi Note 5" mobile phone in Hong Kong on June 22, 2018. Chinese smartphone maker Xiaomi kicked off its initial public offering on June 21, but the firm is likely to pull in about 6.1 billion USD, far less than originally expected, with investors having mixed views about its main business.

Beijing softens 'Made in China 2025' message

Strategy aims to narrow capability gap in key technologies

BEIJING: Beijing has begun downplaying Made in China 2025, the state-backed industrial policy that has provoked alarm in the West and is core to Washington's complaints about the country's technological ambitions, diplomatic and Chinese state media sources said.

With a full-blown trade war looming amid US President Donald Trump's threats to impose tariffs on up to \$450 billion in Chinese imports, his administration has fixed on Beijing's signature effort to deploy state support to close a technology gap in 10 key sectors. Beijing is increasingly mindful that its rollout of the ambitious plan has triggered US backlash.

The Trump administration is considering rules that would bar companies with at least 25 percent Chinese ownership from buying US firms with "industrially significant technology," a US government official said on Sunday. A senior western diplomat told Reuters that in meetings Chinese officials have recently begun downplaying Made in China 2025. The officials have stressed that the aspects that have raised the most ire abroad were simply proposals by Chinese academics.

And state news agency Xinhua, which made more than 140

mentions of Made in China 2025 in Chinese language news items in the first five months of the year, has not done so since June 5, a search of a public database found. The diplomat said some Chinese officials have gone so far as to suggest it was a mistake for the government to have pushed the plan so forcefully and publicly because it had increased pressure on China.

"China is apparently starting to adjust to the blowback caused by the heavy propaganda," said the diplomat, who declined to be identified because of the sensitivity of the matter. "They won't stop doing it," the diplomat said, referring to Made in China 2025. "The way they talk about it is changing." China's State Council Information Office did not immediately respond to a faxed request for comment. Three state media journalists told Reuters they had been instructed not to use the term Made in China 2025. Two others said they received no such instructions.

Developing country

As President Xi Jinping's China has taken a more muscular stance on the global stage, to the discomfort of many in the west,

some academics and many netizens have urged a more modest approach. China's nationalistic Global Times tabloid struck a reserved tone in an editorial published late on Sunday, saying China had become "overconfident" about its technological advancements. "Prudence is needed in boosting citizens' confidence. Otherwise, negative effects may be exerted, be it domestically or abroad," the paper said. China still refers to itself as a "developing country" even though it is the world's second-largest economy, and has long held to former leader Deng Xiaoping's oft-quoted maxim: "Hide your strength, bide your time."

Closing the gap

Under Made in China 2025, unveiled by China's State Council in 2015, China wants to catch up with rivals in sectors including robotics, aerospace, clean-energy cars and advanced basic materials. The strategy is at the core of China's efforts to move up the value chain and achieve Xi's vision of turning the country into a global superpower by 2050.

But it has provoked the more hawkish members of Trump's

team, including US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and trade and manufacturing adviser Peter Navarro, author of the book "Death by China." Trump's initial list of tariffs on \$50 billion in Chinese goods, which will begin taking effect on July 6, specifically targets items related to Made in China 2025.

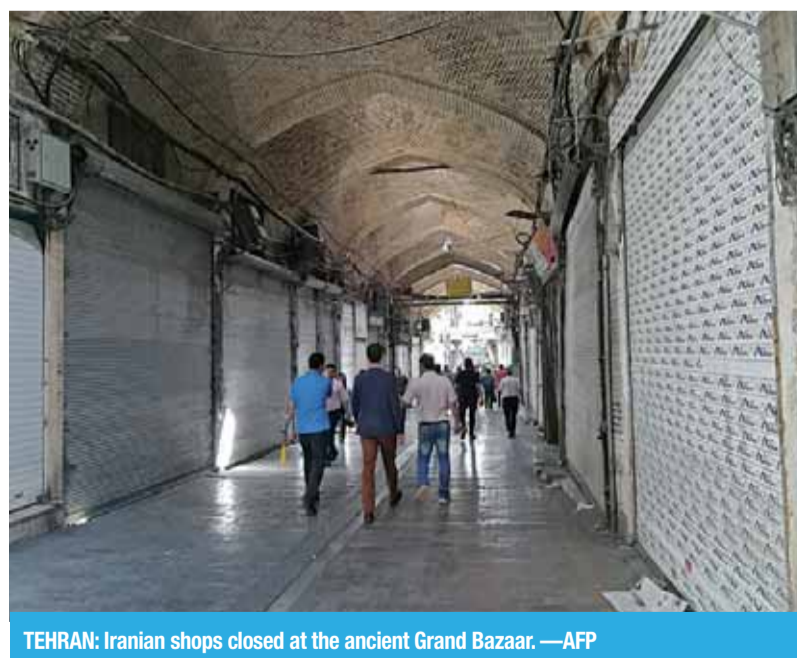
Foreign business groups have criticized the program as large-scale import substitution. Under the plan, Beijing wants Chinese suppliers to capture 70 percent of market share by 2025 for "basic core components and important basic materials" in strategic industries. Other targets endorsed by senior Chinese officials include ensuring 40 percent of smartphone chips are domestically made by 2025.

Xi gave a May 28 speech on innovation that reflected the key ideas of Made in China 2025 without mentioning it by name. "Practice repeatedly tells us, key core technology cannot be demanded, bought or begged," he said. "Only by firmly grasping key core technology in our hands can we fundamentally guarantee national economic security, national defense and other security." —Reuters

Tehran's Grand Bazaar strikes in protest at rial collapse

TEHRAN: Traders in the Iranian capital's Grand Bazaar held a rare protest strike yesterday against the collapse of the rial on the foreign exchange market as demonstrators also took to the streets. At a crossroads in central Tehran, police fired tear gas at dozens of youths shouting slogans and throwing stones, an AFP photographer said.

"The demands of bazaar traders are legitimate. They want the situation on the foreign exchange market to be clarified once and for all," Abdollah Esfandari, head of the historical covered market's administrative board, told ISNA news agency. He said the protest was against "the high exchange rate, foreign currency fluctuations... goods being blocked at customs, and the lack of clear criteria for duties".



TEHRAN: Iranian shops closed at the ancient Grand Bazaar. —AFP

Shops had their metal shutters down throughout the market, said 45-year-old carpet trader who grew up in the area. "It's the first time in my life that I have seen this." Iran's currency has plunged almost 50 percent in value in the past six months, with the US dollar now buying around 85,000 rials on the open market. "Anti-riot police intervened" to disperse a

protest in the Grand Bazaar, making two arrests, according to another carpet merchant. Iran has faced mounting economic woes since the United States in May pulled out of a 2015 nuclear accord between Tehran and world powers that lifted international sanctions in exchange for a scaling back of the Islamic republic's atomic program. —AFP

Syria to import 1.5m tons wheat: Minister

DAMASCUS: Syria is planning to import around 1.5 million tons of mostly Russian wheat this year, as local wheat procurement is expected at around half a million tons, the country's internal trade minister said. Imports will mostly be Russian but Syria is also looking to buy Romanian and Bulgarian wheat, Abdullah Al-Gharbi told Reuters.

"We are still in the beginning of the season of local purchasing, around 20 days or so have passed from the start of it, but we see our local purchases at between 500,000 tons to 600,000 tons this year," Gharbi said. Gharbi also said the country had strategic wheat reserves of more than eight months.

"This is an achievement, look at neighboring Egypt for example, they only have three months and Algeria have four," he said. Syria, which was once self-sufficient in wheat under a state-promoted policy, has had drastically lower production since the start of its multi-sided conflict. It used to produce 4 million tons of wheat in a good year and was able to export 1.5 million tons. The decline in output has put Bashar Al-Assad's government under increasing pressure to import the grain.

Reuters reported last week that Crimea has stepped up grain exports to Syria over the past year in an arrangement that gives the Black Sea peninsula an outlet for its surplus crops and ensures Assad has a reliable source of wheat. Flat bread is a subsidized staple for Syrians, who have suffered under a conflict estimated to have killed several hundred thousand people and forced millions to flee their homes.

Western sanctions

"We will not raise bread prices at all, not for the foreseeable future," Gharbi said. "This is a burden on the government of course especially with the higher wheat prices we pay farmers but we will continue to subsidize them," he said. Syria is paying its farmers 175,000 Syrian pounds (\$400) per tonne and additional 30,000 pounds in transportation subsidies.

"Our prices are more than excellent, it is around \$225 per ton in Turkey, ours is almost \$500," he said. The import gap will be fulfilled through international purchasing tenders announced by the state grain buyer, the General Establishment for Cereal Processing and Trade (Hoboob). Hoboob has already issued a tender with a July 2 deadline for 200,000 tonnes of Russian, Romanian or Bulgarian wheat.

Hoboob has stumbled on several previous tenders, failing to buy wheat and citing high prices. Foodstuffs are not restricted by Western sanctions on Assad's government, but banking sanctions and asset freezes have made it difficult for some trading houses to do business with Syria. Trade with ally Russia poses fewer problems.

Gharbi said a deal with Russia to supply 3 million tons of wheat outside of the tender process that he had announced to Reuters in September was still underway but no wheat had arrived yet. "We got all the agreements for this and we gave the direct order for the Russians to start the imports but we haven't received any quantities yet," he said. "I think that after the harvest in Russia we will get some." Another deal to trade Syrian fruits and vegetables for Russian wheat was also in its final stages. "The contracts with Russian firms for this are in their final stages," he said. —Reuters

Business

Stocks sink on trade fears as oil prices drop by 2 pct

China, auto shares take brunt of trade tensions

LONDON: World stocks sank yesterday, hit by worries over a worsening trade dispute between the United States and other leading economies, while crude oil prices fell by over two percent as traders factored in an output rise agreed by major exporters. The Wall Street Journal said US President Donald Trump planned to bar many Chinese companies from investing in US technology firms and block additional technology exports to China.

The report hit Asian stocks overnight and in London the pan-European STOXX 600 index was down by one percent by afternoon trade in London. S&P500 mini futures fell as much as 0.6 percent while MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan fell by one percent to 6-1/2-month lows. Japan's Nikkei lost 0.8 percent.

Taking a particular hit on the trade tensions was the European autos sector, falling 1.9 percent and set for its seventh straight day of losses after Trump said on Friday he aimed to hike tariffs on EU car imports by 20 percent. MSCI's All-Country World index, which tracks shares in 47 countries, was down 0.3 percent. As the threat of a full-blown trade war has grown, the gauge has fallen in five of the last six weeks. Last week it fell one percent - its biggest weekly drop in three months.

Biggest losers

"We suspect the Trump team will push ahead with these policies (which will elicit reciprocal tariffs from China and the EU)

until US equities start to crumble and polls move against Trump," ING strategists wrote in a research note. A spread between approval and disapproval ratings of the US President had reached its narrowest since March 2017, they noted.

Chinese shares were among the biggest losers, falling 1.27 percent and tumbling 3.7 percent last week, as Trump threatened to hit \$200 billion of Chinese imports with 10 percent tariffs. Policymakers in China moved fast to temper any potential economic drag from the dispute, as its central bank said on Sunday it would cut the amount of cash some banks must hold as reserves by 50 basis points. That reduction in reserve requirements, the third this year, had been widely anticipated by investors and is aimed at accelerating the pace of debt-for-equity swaps and spurring lending for smaller firms. Despite the move, the CSI300 Index of mainland Chinese shares lost 0.8 percent, edging near the one-year low it touched on Friday.

Beijing has begun downplaying Made in China 2025, the state-backed industrial policy that has provoked alarm in the West and is core to Washington's complaints about the country's technological ambitions, diplomatic and Chinese state media sources said. The index of global auto manufacturers fell 0.7 percent. It lost 4.7 percent last week. Trump threatened to impose a 20 percent tariff on Friday on all imports of EU-assembled cars, a month after his administration launched an investigation into whether auto imports

posed a national security threat. A senior European Commission official said on Saturday that the European Union would respond to any US move to raise tariffs on cars made in the bloc.

Slippery oil

Oil shed some of the gains posted on Friday after OPEC and non-OPEC producers agreed a modest increase in production from next month. They did not however announce a clear target for the output hike, leaving traders guessing how much more will actually be pumped. OPEC and non-OPEC said in a statement they would raise supply by returning to 100 percent compliance with previously agreed output cuts, after months of underproduction. "Saturday's OPEC+ press conference provided more clarity on the decision to increase production, with guidance for a full 1 million bpd ramp-up in 2H18," Goldman Sachs said in a note on Sunday. "This is a larger increase than presented Friday although the goal remains to stabilize inventories, not generate a surplus." US crude futures traded at \$68.79 per barrel, down 0.3 percent for the day after Friday's 4.6 percent rally. International benchmark Brent fell 1.5 percent, however, to \$74.41 per barrel, giving up nearly half of its gains made on Friday. In the currency market the euro rose, up 0.2 percent at \$1.1678. German business confidence deteriorated in June, a survey showed yesterday, suggesting the mood among company executives in



TOKYO: A man stands next to a stock indicator showing stock prices of Japanese companies listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. — AFP

Europe's biggest economy was darkening in light of the threat of a global trade war. The dollar fell 0.4 percent to 109.60 yen, earlier hitting its lowest levels in two weeks as the Japanese currency firmed on concerns about the global trade frictions. The Turkish lira gained up to 1.6 percent on expectations of a stable government after Tayyip Erdogan and his ruling AK Party claimed victory in presidential and parliamentary polls. But his victory kept alive worries about inflation and

the central bank's independence given recent comments suggesting he wanted to take greater control of monetary policy. The lira traded at 4.68 to the dollar, up 1.7 percent from 4.6625 at the end of last week. Bitcoin steadied after hitting seven-month lows during the weekend as the security of cryptocurrency exchange operators came under more scrutiny. The digital currency fell as low as \$5,780 overnight and last stood at \$6,209.63. — Reuters

UK minister tells companies to stop Brexit warnings



LONDON: Demonstrators wave the Union Flag as they participate in the People's March demanding a People's Vote on the final Brexit deal. — AFP

LONDON: A British minister accused Airbus and other major companies of issuing "completely inappropriate" threats and undermining Prime Minister Theresa May in a sign of growing tensions with business leaders over Brexit. Aircraft manufacturer Airbus last week issued its strongest warning over the impact of Britain's departure from the European Union, saying a withdrawal without a deal would force it to reconsider its long-term position and put thousands of British jobs at risk.

Other European companies with major operations in Britain have also started to speak out two years on from the Brexit vote, voicing concerns over a lack of clarity on the terms of trade when Britain leaves next March. "It was completely inappropriate for businesses to be making these kinds of threats for one very simple reason - we are in an absolutely critical moment in the Brexit discussions and what that means is that we

need to get behind Theresa May," Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt told the BBC.

"The more that we undermine Theresa May the more likely we to end up with a fudge which will be absolute disaster for everyone," he added.

German carmaker BMW has warned the company would have to make contingency plans within months if the government did not soon clarify its post-Brexit position and German industrial group Siemens said it urgently needs clarity on how its operations would have to be organized.

The leaders of five major business lobby groups also warned the prime minister over the weekend that the ongoing uncertainty about Brexit could cost the economy billions of pounds. Hunt, a senior figure in the government who is viewed as a potential future prime minister, dismissed "siren voices" who say Brexit negotiations are not going well and said people should ignore them. — Reuters

India speeds up environmental approvals in industry

PEDAVEEDU: India is fast-tracking environmental clearances for projects like power plants and coal mines in a bid to propel growth, setting off alarm bells among environmentalists and affected residents who say the decisions are being made too quickly. In a country where state machinery typically moves slowly, the environment ministry under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has slashed the average time taken to grant clearances to 170 days from 600 days, said two government sources with direct knowledge of the matter.

"We're standardizing processes and taking decisions swiftly," said one of the officials, who did not want to be named, citing government policy. "We know the basic issues, and merely taking more time for approvals does not mean much." The environment ministry did not respond to requests for comment. The push appears to be similar to U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts to speed up infrastructure approvals - his administration has said it wants environmental reviews for major projects to take no longer than 21 months, instead of years.

India's industrial sector grew at 4.3 percent last year but growth slowed from 4.6 percent a year ago. The speedier approvals come as some big-ticket infrastructure projects face delays, including the proposed \$100 billion Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor and the Japan-backed \$17 billion bullet train. Any loss of jobs from slowing growth could hurt Modi as he seeks a second term in 2019.

Environmental group Greenpeace says India's construction sector and coal-fired power plants are major contributors to rising levels of particulate matter in the air. The World Health Organisation says India is home to the world's 14 most polluted cities. The PM10 index, which measures the concentration of particulate matter of 10 microns diameter or less in the air, hit 999 in the capital New Delhi last week, the highest measure on monitoring devices. This coarse particulate matter is mostly dust, which attaches to toxic material from other emissions.

A level of 500 is considered "hazardous" and people are advised to remain indoors.



MUMBAI: Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond speaks at a panel discussion on 'UK and India Growing Together - Raising Finance in London'. — AFP

The government halted construction activities in the capital and nearby cities to ease the pollution and by Friday afternoon it was at 124, although that is still considered unhealthy. "The way in which in the last ten years government has allowed power plants to come up in the periphery of Delhi and its surrounding region is a major contributor to pollution," said Sunil Dahiya, senior campaigner with Greenpeace.

Tribal protest

Projects across the country cleared by the environment ministry this year include three new thermal power plants, a carbon black manufacturing facility, two cement plants and the expansion of four coal mines, according to government data. "Faster clearances can certainly compromise the quality of evaluation," said Srestha Banerjee, program manager at the private Centre for Science and Environment.

"By standardizing terms of references for various sectors the government has tried to reduce time in the environment clearance process. This is not a bad step. But in order to reduce time, it has exempted public hearing for some important sectors. This is extremely problematic." In India's villages and smaller towns, protests are mounting against rapid industrialization because of the environmental damage.

The Lambada, a tribe in the southern state of Telangana, is opposing a 200

megawatt coal-fired power plant near the village of Pedaveedu that the environment ministry cleared in 78 days this year. Environmentalists say it usually takes at least six months to clear such projects. The environment ministry did not respond to questions on the time taken for the approval.

"I won't let this power plant be constructed," said Mudavath Vui, a 60-year old Lambada woman dressed in a bright blue embroidered top with tinkling bells and coins and colorful beads around her neck. "I have seen my husband die from cancer and I don't want this plant to increase our suffering." Her community, which forms a major chunk of the population in three villages around the proposed site of the power plant to be built by privately held MG Power Projects, has also been opposing two large cement plants in the area that they accuse of triggering respiratory and other problems.

Groups of Lambada villagers frequently gather around Pedaveedu to shout slogans against the power plant. They and activists said they plan to intensify protests against MG Power's plant when construction starts. An MG official said the company is yet to firm up plans on starting construction. Protests by villagers and local tribesmen have also erupted at Vedanta's copper smelter in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, where 13 activists were bailed in a protest last month, and at its kaolinite mine in the state of Odisha. — Reuters

Australia's ANZ: We should have dealt better with our farm customers

SYDNEY: Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd said it failed to talk thousands of farm borrowers through a takeover of their former lender, adding some customers may have left if they knew it planned to hike fees immediately after the acquisition. The admission from Australia's third-largest lender yesterday came as a powerful public inquiry into finance sector misconduct turned its attention to the country's \$50 billion agriculture industry.

ANZ has previously apologized for its treatment of some of the 7,000 customers it inherited in a troubled 2010 takeover of the former wheat board's financial services arm, Landmark Financial Services, amid media and parliamentary scrutiny. But acknowledging it fell short of community expectations at the so-called Royal Commission adds to widespread expectations that the inquiry will recommend more regulation of rural lending, including a compulsory national farm debt mediation scheme. "We should have done a better job of the way we communicated that to Landmark customers," ANZ's head of corporate and commercial lending, Benjamin

Steinberg, told the inquiry, referring to the fact that the bank was taking them on as customers. "A lot of these Landmark customers have never dealt with a large financial institution before, like ANZ. Some of the customers felt that had they been advised earlier they may have made a decision to refinance their finances from Landmark before the acquisition occurred."

In a letter ANZ sent to Landmark customers soon after the deal, read out at the inquiry, ANZ said it had the right to change fees, charges and interest rates, and to cut its notice period to 30 days from 60 days if it wanted to change contract terms. The bank also told customers they were required to open an ANZ account. Asked about another ANZ internal document, read out at the inquiry, suggesting it planned to boost revenue by A\$6 million by hiking fees to Landmark customers, Steinberg said "the view at the time was that the Landmark book at the time was relatively underpriced (and) there was an opportunity to have a revenue uplift through repricing". — Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	America	Taiwan	0.010405	0.010585
British Pound	0.394772	0.408672	0.222584	0.231584	0.008903	0.009453
Czech Korune	0.005705	0.015005	0.299650	0.304450		
Danish Krone	0.043392	0.048392	0.300050	0.304850		
Euro	0.345592	0.359292				
Georgian Lari	0.139424	0.139424				
Hungarian 0.001143	0.001333					
Norwegian Krone	0.033425	0.038625				
Romanian Leu	0.064920	0.081770				
Russian ruble	0.004802	0.004802				
Slovakia	0.009046	0.019046				
Swedish Krona	0.300240	0.335240				
Swiss Franc	0.030318	0.311318				
Australasia						
Australian Dollar	0.216583	0.228583				
New Zealand Dollar	0.202729	0.212229				
Canada						
Canadian Dollar			0.222584	0.231584		
US Dollars			0.299650	0.304450		
US Dollars Mint			0.300050	0.304850		
Asia						
Bangladesh Taka	0.003144	0.003945				
Chinese Yuan	0.044939	0.048439				
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036888	0.039638				
Indian Rupee	0.003810	0.004582				
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023				
Japanese Yen	0.002685	0.002865				
Korean Won	0.000261	0.000276				
Malaysian Ringgit	0.071732	0.077732				
Nepalese Rupee	0.002659	0.002999				
Pakistan Rupee	0.001952	0.002722				
Philippine Peso	0.005496	0.005796				
Singapore Dollar	0.217889	0.227889				
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001623	0.002203				
Arab						
Bahraini Dinar	0.797488	0.805988				
Egyptian Pound	0.014313	0.020031				
Iranian Rial	0.000084	0.000085				
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197	0.000257				
Jordanian Dinar	0.423411	0.432411				
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000				
Moroccan Dirham	0.000156	0.000256				
Omani Rial	0.202532	0.044532				
Qatar Riyal	0.781344	0.787024				
Saudi Riyal	0.079905	0.083945				
Syrian Pound	0.079780	0.081080				
Tunisian Dinar	0.001285	0.001506				
Turkish Lira	0.112724	0.120724				
UAE Dirhams	0.060223	0.070523				
Yemeni Rial	0.081139	0.082839				
	0.000986	0.001066				

Business

NBK Economic Update

Oman Outlook: Growth to pick up, but finances remain vulnerable

Real growth is expected to accelerate to 3.5% in 2018 from 0.3% in 2017

KUWAIT: The government is committed to pursuing its diversification program, where the focus will increasingly be on downstream oil products, tourism and logistics. The non-oil economy should, therefore, gain some traction, potentially expanding at an average of 3.5% per year in 2018-2019.

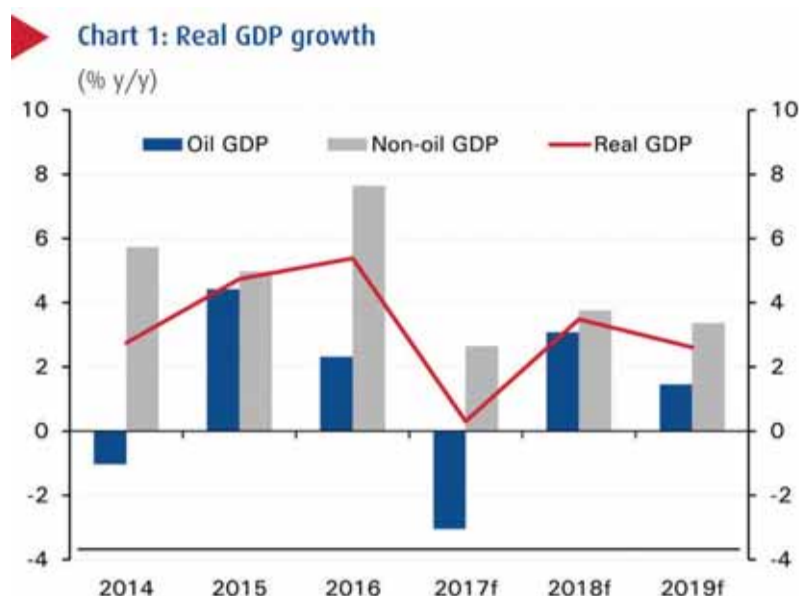
The opening of the new Muscat International Airport in 2018 is an important step in the government's plan to increase the contribution of the tourism sector to Oman's non-oil economy. The government intends to increase the number of tourists by more than 65% by 2020, from 3 million in 2017 to 5 million. Meanwhile, the Duqm special economic zone has attracted strong interest, mainly from small and medium enterprises that will service the tourism and logistics sectors.

Gas industry to play greater role in Oman's future

A slew of recent natural gas discoveries and new partnerships with international energy conglomerates highlights the importance of the hydrocarbon sector. Oman is committed to developing its natural gas facilities and capitalizing on its advantageous geographical location in the global LNG supply chain, all the more so in view of the fact that its oil wells are ageing. The country is also slowly diversifying its export destinations, hitherto almost exclusively Japan and South Korea. These plans should boost growth over the medium-term.

In the meantime, Oman's oil output should see some increase this year from OPEC+'s likely decision soon to increase oil production (to prevent the market from over-lightening) and from the full launch of the BP Khazan tight gas project. Full production capacity will likely be reached next year. Consequently, oil sector GDP is forecast to expand by 3.1% in 2018 and 1.5% in 2019.

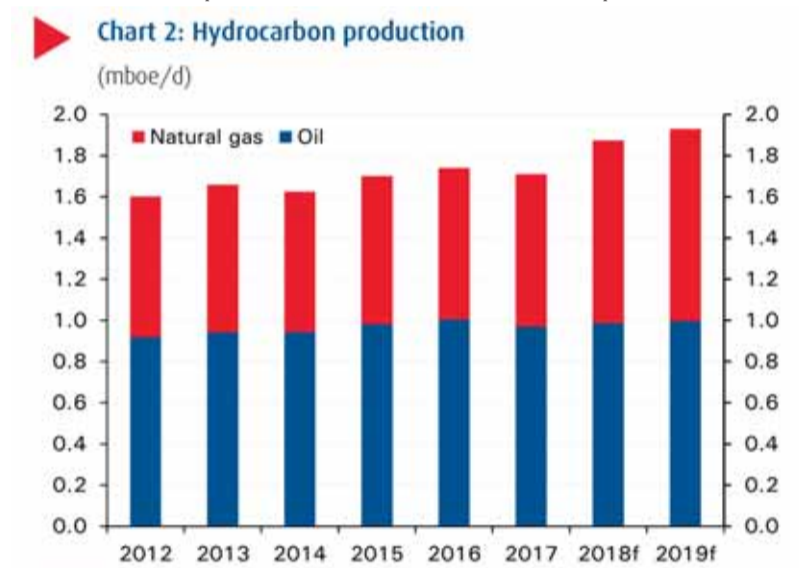
Risks to non-oil growth are to the downside, however. The recent extension of an expatriate employment ban has coincided with a slowdown in the real estate sector. Domestic demand may also be impacted by the departure of expatriate labor, while next year should see some downward pressures on the consumer sector with the intro-



duction of the VAT. These effects should be temporary, though, with the pick-up in investment and government spending providing solid support for the non-oil sector.

Fiscal deficit to narrow on higher oil prices, but non-oil income growth continues to lag behind thanks to firmer oil prices-\$65/bbl in 2018 and \$60/bbl in 2019 as per our own projections-Oman's budget deficit should narrow to 7% of GDP in 2018 and 8.5% of GDP in 2019 from close to an expected 15% of GDP

last year. Despite Oman's best efforts to increase non-hydrocarbon revenue, the sultanate continues to depend on oil and gas revenues, accounting historically for more than 80% of total revenues. The government's decision to postpone fiscal reforms such as the value added tax (VAT), to 2019, on concerns that it would negatively affect consumer spending and the non-hydrocarbon sector more broadly, did not help. Lower domestic demand and a weaker real estate market helped contain inflation to



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream, NBK estimates

1.0% in 2018. It should rise initially to about 3.0% in 2019 following the introduction of the VAT.

Access to finance key to achieving sultanate's ambition

In view of tight public finances and ambitious diversification plans, the government will need to rely increasingly on debt, privatization and foreign investment. For the time being, Oman can still count on relatively easy access to international debt markets, but this is getting more expensive due to the sultanate's low sovereign rating and the higher interest rate environment. And it will be much more difficult if the country loses its investment grade status; Moody's, the rating agency, recently downgraded Oman's sovereign rating to Baa3, which is only one notch above speculative grade, while S&P ranks the sultanate's credit profile as speculative.

Recognizing the risks in future public borrowing, the government has also turned to privatization as a potential source of income, with six entities slated for sale.

A partial equity stake sale in the new airport and in the BP Khazan field are being considered. However, the government and its entities will still rely primarily on debt markets for most of their required financing. Oman issued \$6.5 billion earlier this year, its biggest issuance to date, while publically owned enterprises, such as Oman Gas and Oman Electricity, are seeking \$1 billion and \$1.2 billion, respectively, in debt financing. Government debt is expected to rise to 47% of GDP in 2018 and 52% in 2019. The domestic banking system is also poised to help facilitate the sultanate's diversification drive, thanks to recent regulatory changes aimed at boosting domestic lending.

Indeed, in addition to other reforms, the Central Bank of Oman allowed the inclusion of interbank deposits when calculating lending ratios and lowered the capital adequacy ratio to 11% from 12%. This is expected to stimulate bank lending and position Oman's interbank system as a main pillar of its financial future. As such, private sector credit growth, which averaged 4% last year, is expected to accelerate to an annual average of 7% in 2018-19.

growth with low inflation," the BIS said in its Annual Economic Report, which also warned of possible trouble ahead. "An escalation of protectionist measures... could trigger a fresh downturn," the bank said. The report was launched days after the European Union slapped tariffs on iconic US products including bourbon, jeans and motorcycles in its opening salvo in a trade war with President Donald Trump.

Brussels imposed the raft of duties on US products worth 2.8 billion euros (\$3.3 billion) in a tit-for-tat response to Trump's decision to slap stiff tariffs on European steel and aluminum exports. Within hours, Trump responded with a threat to impose a 20 percent tariff on cars imported from the European Union. But the BIS underscored that the consequences could be devastating if reciprocal

protectionist measures undermine overall confidence in the "open multilateral trading system." "Indeed, there are signs that the rise in uncertainty associated with the first protectionist steps and the ratcheting up of rhetoric have already been inhibiting investment," the BIS said.

Leading policymakers and analysts generally agree that while limited tit-for-tat tariffs would be manageable, a full-out trade war would cripple growth. BIS general manager Agustin Carstens credited free and open trade with laying "the foundation for much of the global progress in improving living standards," and urged policymakers to safeguard it. Based in Basel, Switzerland, the BIS is owned by the central banks of 60 top global economies. — AFP

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Dow Jones	24,461.70	24,580.89	119.19	▲	0.49
NASDAQ	7,712.95	7,692.82	-20.13	▼	-0.26
SP500	2,749.76	2,754.88	5.12	▲	0.19
Financial Times	7,682.27	7,592.63	-89.64	▼	-1.17
DAX	12,579.72	12,399.40	-180.32	▼	-1.43
CAC 40	5,387.38	5,340.76	-46.62	▼	-0.87
Swiss	8,616.56	8,517.88	-98.68	▼	-1.15
Nikkei 225	22,516.83	22,338.15	-178.68	▼	-0.79
Topix	1,744.83	1,728.27	-16.56	▼	-0.95
Hang Seng	29,338.70	28,961.39	-377.31	▼	-1.29
Straits Times	3,287.40	3,260.84	-26.56	▼	-0.81

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait	4,824.08	4,867.07	42.99	▲	0.89
Saudi Arabia	8,350.96	8,339.64	-11.32	▼	-0.14
Dubai	2,929.06	2,867.85	-61.21	▼	-2.09
Abu Dhabi	4,550.51	4,537.30	-13.21	▼	-0.29
Bahrain	1,306.75	1,301.57	-5.17	▼	-0.40
Qatar	9,005.34	8,936.78	-68.56	▼	-0.76
Oman	4,593.28	4,583.27	-10.01	▼	-0.22
Lebanon	1,064.15	1,064.15	0.00	-	0.00
Jordan	2,095.74	2,092.84	-2.90	▼	-0.14
Egypt	16,395.02	16,552.07	157.05	▲	0.96
Morocco	12,233.63	12,181.84	-51.79	▼	-0.42
Tunisia	7,981.24	7,951.05	-30.19	▼	-0.38

Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwaiti Dinar	12.2862	3.2900	2.8219	2.4819	3.2499	360.29	4.4322	
Saudi Riyal	0.08139		0.2678	0.2297	0.2020	0.2645	29.32	
US Dollar	0.30395	3.7344		0.8577	0.7544	0.9878	109.51	
Euro	0.35438	4.3539	1.1659		0.8797	1.1518	127.70	
Sterling Pound	0.40292	4.9503	1.3256	1.1368		1.3098	145.19	
Swiss Franc	0.30770	3.7805	1.0124	0.8682	0.7635		110.89	
Japanese Yen	0.00278	0.0341	0.0091	0.0078	0.0069	0.0090		
Australian Dollar	0.22562	2.7720	0.7423	0.6366	0.5599	0.7332	81.29	

Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30395	3.7344	0.3770	3.6270	0.3831	3.6571	17.8300
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2900		12.2862	1.2403	11.9329	1.2605	12.0319	58.6610
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08139		0.1010	0.9712	0.1026	0.9793	4.7455
Bahraini Dinar	2.6525	0.80623	9.9056		9.6207	1.0162	9.7005	47.2944
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08380	1.0296	0.1039		0.1056	1.0083	4.9159
Omani Riyal	2.6101	0.79335	9.7473	0.9840	9.4670		9.5456	46.5389
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08311	1.0211	0.1031	0.9918	0.1048		4.8754
Egyptian Pound	0.0561	0.01705	0.2094	0.0211	0.2034	0.0215	0.2051	

Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.19	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50
US Dollar	1.98	2.09	2.33	2.50	2.77
Euro	-0.42	-0.39	-0.36	-0.31	-0.23
Sterling Pound	0.48	0.49	0.65	0.78	0.96
Swiss Franc	-0.79	-0.78	-0.73	-0.64	-0.52
Australian Dollar	1.71	1.99	1.88	1.89	1.92
Japanese Yen	-0.10	-0.09	-0.05	0.01	0.11

Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	2.53	2.75	2.88	3.03
Europe	-0.70	-0.31	0.33	1.10
United Kingdom	0.73	1.05	1.30	1.77

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil	71.26	71.39	0.13	▲	0.18
Brent	73.43	72.97	-0.46	▼	-0.63
West Texas	69.22	68.82	-0.40	▼	-0.58
Gold	1268.49	1267.36	-1.13	▼	-0.09
Silver	16.43	16.38	-0.05	▼	-0.33

Protectionism threatens 'vintage' global growth

GENEVA: A year of "vintage" economic growth could be undone by rising protectionism, the Bank of International Settlements (BIS) said Sunday, as fears of an all-out global trade war ramp up. The BIS, often described as the central bank of central banks, credited "a decade of extraordinary monetary policy," for leading the world out of the 2008 financial crisis. That culminated in 2017 with "a vintage year for




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Business

Nissan Al Babtain employees demonstrate true spirit of competition at national skills contests



KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co, the sole authorized dealer of Nissan in the State of Kuwait is proud to announce its national skills contests winners who will proceed to participate in the Nissan regional skills competitions to be held in Dubai from 25th to 28th July 2018

The annual skills contests comprises of four competitions - Nissan Service Technician Excellence Competency Award (NISTEC) for technicians, Nissan Sales Executive Excellence Competency Award (NISEC) for sales executives, Nissan Parts Executive Excellence Competency Award (NIPEC) for parts executives and Nissan Service Advisor Excellence Competency Award (NISAC) for service advisors. For the first time, all four contests were held simultaneously in the same venue - a feat that has never been done before in the region. Thus Dr. Meyyapen Mahendhran received an award of appreciation from Nissan Gulf as recognition of the outstanding event. Also, Mr. Mustafa Farag Service Manager Shuwaikh branch

was awarded for the best performing branch.

CEO of Al Babtain group Mr. Saleh Al Babtain said - "Our staff are pivotal to our constant efforts to deliver exceptional customer service and the reason behind our success. Our frontline staff act as brand ambassadors being the face and voice of our organization while providing unparalleled customer experience services in sales and after-sales. Our technicians ensure that every complaint is diagnosed accurately and fixed right 'the first time and on time.' The Nissan annual contests help our staff to hone these skills and demonstrate their expertise among peers. I wish all contestants good luck and exhort them to make us proud at the regionals."

The contest is a regular platform to constantly challenge every Nissan Al Babtain personnel to perform to the best of their abilities and raise the bar of excellence in their area of operations. Displaying exceptional quality of expertise, the winners of this year's contests under NISTEC were



Shamon Paul (Gold), Aneesh Antony (Silver), Kiran Swaminathan (Bronze) followed by Mohammed Ghousse Alauddin (Gold), Mohammed El Homsani (Silver) and Jayesh K.P (Bronze) under NISAC. Under the categories of NIPEC and NISEC, the achievers were Akhil Thykoth (Gold), Ranju Krishnan (Silver) and Sadik Aboobakker (Bronze) and Rami Salah Osman (Gold), Emad Abdullah (Silver) and Jalal Nguildi (Bronze) respectively.

The Kuwait based contest was attended by senior management of the Al Babtain group including Al-Babtain Chief Human Resources Officer, Mr Abdul Mohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain, General Manager of Automotive division Mr Laurent Pernet and Nissan Regional Office delegates Ms Fatma Zenagui, Deputy General Manager Sales and Marketing, Mr David Graves, Director After-sales, Mr Surendra Acharya Deputy General Manager After-sales, Mr Pieter Maritz Customer Experience General Manager and Maria Fernandez, Customer Experience Deputy General Manager.

Al Tijari announces the winner Al-Najma prize program draw

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced the winner of the weekly draw as follows: Weekly Draw prize KD 5,000 - Aref Nasser Roiss Khalifah. The draw was conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Latifa Al Jeean. Al-Najma Account was recently revamped by adding several benefits to the prize program through which now the account provides its customers the chance to win the biggest annual cash prize offered by a bank in Kuwait and over the globe as much as 1 million and half Kuwaiti dinar (1,500,000) so that customers' dreams can easily turn to reality.

The bank stated that the account prizes this year is featured by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that Al-Najma Account will offer weekly prize of KD 5,000 & monthly prize of KD 20,000 and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 for which the draw will be held on 1st July 2018 in addition to the grand prize (the biggest prize in the world) of KD 1,500,000 for which the draw will be held in January 2019.

Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, where each KD 25 will give the customer one chance to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.



Now CBK existing customers can open Al-Najma Account through Al-Tijari Online and enter all draws without visiting the Bank branch. However, CBK non-customers can submit account opening application via the Bank's website where the Bank's Sales Unit will call them to arrange visit to the customers to complete the account opening formalities.

Customers can obtain further information on Al-Najma Account by either calling the Service Center or by visiting the Bank's website www.CBK.com and they can also visit their nearest CBK branch where the Bank staff will be ready to serve them and respond to their queries. It is known that all details & information related to the latest offers & services launched by the Bank is also available on the Bank's social sites.

Harley-Davidson to move some production out of US to avoid EU tariffs

MILWAUKEE: Harley-Davidson Inc said yesterday it would move production of motorcycles shipped to the European Union from the United States to its international facilities and forecast the trading bloc's retaliatory tariffs would cost the company \$90 million to \$100 million a year. The shift in production is an unintended consequence of US President Donald Trump's administration imposing tariffs on European steel and aluminum early this month, a move designed to protect US jobs.

In response to the US tariffs, the European Union began charging import duties of 25 percent on a range of US products including big motorcycles like Harley's on June 22. In a regulatory filing yesterday, the Milwaukee, Wisconsin-based company said the retaliatory duties would result in an incremental cost of about \$2,200 per average motorcycle exported from the United States to the European Union, but it would not raise retail or wholesale prices for its dealers to cover the costs of the tariffs.

The company expects the tariffs to result in incremental costs of \$30 million to \$45 million for the rest of 2018, the filing said. "Harley-Davidson believes the tremendous cost increase, if passed onto its dealers and retail customers, would have an immediate and lasting detrimental impact to its busi-

ness in the region," the company said.

Struggling to overcome a slump in US demand, Harley has been aiming to boost sales of its iconic motorcycles overseas to 50 percent of total annual volume from about 43 percent currently. In January, the company announced the closure of a plant in Kansas City, Missouri as part of a consolidation plan after its motorcycle shipments fell to their lowest level in six years.

In 2017, Harley sold nearly 40,000 new motorcycles in Europe which accounted for 14 percent of the company's sales last year. The revenues from EU countries were second only to the United States. Harley said ramping-up production at its overseas international plants will require incremental investments and could take at least nine to 18 months.

The company will provide more details of the financial implications of retaliatory EU tariffs and plans to offset their impact on July 24 when its second-quarter earnings are due, the filing said. Trump vowed to make the iconic motorcycle maker great again when he took office last year. In late April, Harley said Trump's metal tariffs would inflate its costs by an additional \$15 million to \$20 million this year on top of already rising raw material prices that it expected at the start of the year. — Reuters

Panasonic's ER-GK60 3-in-1 body trimmer takes male grooming to the next level

KUWAIT: The male grooming trend in Kuwait continues to evolve and Panasonic has unveiled the perfect tool that would not only appeal to the contemporary Kuwaiti men but also comprehensively address their hygiene and styling needs. Introducing Panasonic's ER-GK60 the 3-in-1 Body Trimmer, designed to tame your body hair while gently protecting your skin.

Developed with advanced precision technology, the ER-GK60 features an industry-first i-shape design for easy, precise shaving of hard-to-reach body areas. The trimmer's skin protective blade has a thickness of just 0.1mm, which allows users to trim closely to the skin for an extremely clean, smooth and comfortable feel. Its protective blades catch body hairs while preventing skin irritation.

The ER-GK60's fixed blade (bottom blade) guards the skin, helping to prevent the movable blade (upper blade) from the touching

the skin to protect it from injury. Moreover, the edges of the fixed blade are wide and rounded to ensure a minimum skin irritation, with its gaps purposely designed to be narrow, thus making it hard for skin to get accidentally caught when shaving.

Ken Kawamoto - General Manager, PMMAF said, "Kuwait continues to be a key market for us, especially with its growing tech-savvy consumer base. The ER-GK60, with its advanced features and innovative design, was developed with the needs of an impeccably groomed man in mind. We take pride in the superior Panasonic blade technology that takes inspiration from the Katana (the Japanese long sword of the Samurai). We have also combined craftsmanship and high-tech in grip design to help you enjoy your everyday style."

The ER-GK60 comes with three attachments to ensure users trim to the lengths they



want. There are the 3mm and 6mm comb attachments ideal for chest, arms and legs, as well as the attachment with rounded tips designed for areas around the groin. The trimmer's slim-line design and a sure-grip handle ensures easy trimming control, while its waterproof design allows for safe and convenient grooming even in the shower. The ER-GK60 3-in-1 Body Trimmer is now available in Kuwait at all Best Al-Yousifi Electronics Showrooms as well as all authorized distributors.

Rebooting Germany: Where Europe's most powerful economy is falling behind

MASSEN-NIEDERLAUSITZ: Until March of this year, goods arriving at family engineering firm Zemmler Siebanlagen in eastern Germany generated piles of paperwork and hours of manual cross checks. These days, stockman Ronny Mucha records deliveries on a specially designed tablet application that immediately updates other departments. It takes a fraction of the time.

The firm's founder, Heiko Zemmler, credits a government-backed scheme with "taking us through a psychological barrier" about digital technology. The inventory application is just a beginning, hopes Zemmler. One day he wants his welders and assembly line workers to be able to access design plans and lists of parts on a shared platform. That's all common enough in modern factories from California to South Korea. But there's a problem. Zemmler needs high-speed internet capable of carrying large quantities of data to make the switch. "Broadband has come to many people, but unfortunately not to us," he said at his plant in the Brandenburg region, not far from the Polish border.

Europe's most powerful economy, at the forefront of industrial innovation for decades, is struggling to adapt to the digital age, and its policymakers are worried. Zemmler's experience encapsulates two key obstacles to change here. It took a nudge by the government to get him to embrace digital technology in the first place. And, now that he has done so, his plans are being frustrated by a woeful broadband network.

A 2017 study by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) ranked Germany 29th out of 34 industrialised economies for fast internet connections. Japan and South Korea lead the pack. Chancellor Angela Merkel has made fixing Germany's digital deficiencies a priority for her fourth and likely final term, saying "our future prosperity depends on it." In interviews, company bosses and senior policymakers set out the scale of the challenge the government faces and explained why German firms have been slow to adopt digital technology to store and share data and manage workflow.

The paucity of high-speed internet was one barrier, they said. Others included government inefficiency and a reluctance among small and mid-size firms, Germany's "Mittelstand," to embrace new ways of working. Added to that, years of surveillance by the Nazis and then the Communists have left many Germans suspicious of data sharing. There's also a paradox at work: Germany's strong economy is blocking efforts to

modernize, they said, with firms too busy meeting orders today to plan for a digital future.

Government data shows the extent of the problem. A government fund created to expand Germany's broadband network managed to spend only three percent of the money available last year, figures in a Jan. 23 letter from the deputy finance minister at the time, Jens Spahn, to a fellow lawmaker showed. Spahn has since said Germany is up to 20 years behind U.S. competitors, with many managers stuck in the "fax age." Even Germany's car industry is feeling the threat. In the past, Chinese firms sought to learn from German car-makers. But on a trip to China in May, Merkel was so struck by China's progress in data processing that she asked for Chinese help to develop electric and autonomous vehicles. China has yet to commit.

To be sure, Germany has shown an enviable ability to adapt to political, economic and technological challenges over the decades. At the turn of the century, it was called "the sick man of Europe," with an inflexible labour market that weighed on productivity. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's government responded by shaking up the welfare system to encourage more people into the workforce. It turned out well: Germany regained competitiveness and profited from demand in the industrialising world for its high-end engineering products. Unemployment has fallen from above five million in 2005 to less than half that level now. "Germany has overcome much bigger problems before," said Carsten Nickel, managing director at consultancy Teneo Intelligence. "But it did so by not shying away from, at times, radical change. That, in turn, requires agency and political leadership. Schroeder ultimately lost his job over his economic reforms. It would probably be a stretch to claim that a comparable willingness for bold political leadership exists in Merkel's Berlin today." Indeed, Merkel has spent much of her political capital this year trying to defuse a row in her coalition over immigration policy.

Money to spend

Alexandra Horn's team at the BVMW Mittelstand association of small and mid-size firms worked with Zemmler to introduce the inventory application his company now uses. It is part of a government-backed scheme called "Digital Together." Horn says she has sometimes been met with laughter when taking this digitalization drive to firms outside the main cities like Berlin, where a healthy startup scene masks slow progress elsewhere. Because of poor internet speeds, "digital



INGOLSTADT: In this file photo taken on May 22, 2014 Martin Winterkorn (L), then Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the German car producer Audi and Volkswagen's CEO, and Audi CEO Rupert Stadler attend the company's annual general meeting. — AFP

business models cannot be implemented, plain and simple," Horn said.

According to the OECD, just 16 percent of German firms use cloud services, "a key productivity enhancer." That's well below the OECD average of 25 percent and far behind countries including Finland (57 percent), Sweden (48 percent) and Japan (45 percent). "If you don't have the infrastructure, you cannot have a successful digitalization of the economy," said OECD telecoms and internet expert Verena Weber.

Germany's coalition government has pledged to provide high-speed gigabit internet access across Germany by 2025. It aims to develop a fibre optic network to all corners of the country. Japan has 76 percent of its broadband via fibre, Latvia 62 percent and Sweden 58 percent, compared to just two percent in Germany, OECD data show. Efforts to upgrade Germany's internet with state-of-the-art fibre technology are coming late partly because Germany's telecoms industry regulator, BNetzA, allowed Deutsche Telekom, the former national network monopoly, to use an intermediate solution called "vectoring technology" to increase the bandwidth of existing copper lines instead of running fibre all the way into homes and offices.

Finance Minister Olaf Scholz said in May the government would use higher-than-expected tax revenues to start a digitalization fund into which his ministry would transfer 2.4 billion euros (\$2.85 billion) this year. The fund will be increased by revenues generated from the auction of 5G mobile licences. But throwing money at the problem is not guaranteed to fix it, as shown by the Jan. 23 letter from Spahn, the deputy finance minister at the time. It revealed that of the 689 million euros set aside by the government for broadband investment, only 22 million was used last year. Policymakers and company bosses complain that tender operations for subsidies can be so slow and complex that federal funds often go unused. Chancellor Merkel agreed, "We must speed up approval procedures" for investment, she said in May. — Reuters

Technology

As Facebook ages, teens are looking elsewhere to connect

'Today, their habits revolve less around a single platform'

SAN FRANCISCO: Manon, 17, has a Facebook account but to connect with her friends she turns to other social networks like Instagram or Snapchat. "I don't use it to post status updates or personal information," the San Francisco teen says. Manon maintains her Facebook account to be able to stay in touch with the large number of users on the huge social network and as a "gateway" to log into other apps.

"But to communicate with my friends, it's Snapchat," the high schooler said. "Everyone says Facebook is out of date. I think it's because all the parents are on Facebook." As Facebook has grown into a network of more than two billion people globally it has lost its luster for younger users who made up a core base. While Facebook has become one of the world's most valuable and powerful companies, it's no longer seen as a cool destination for teens, who are turning to Snapchat and Instagram, which is owned by Facebook.

According to a Pew Research Center survey this year, 51 percent of US teens ages 13 to 17 use Facebook, compared with 72 percent for Instagram and 69 percent who are on Snapchat. The survey found 85 percent used the Google video sharing service YouTube. The landscape has shifted since a 2014-15 Pew survey which found Facebook leading

other social networks with 71 percent of the teen segment.

"The social media environment among teens is quite different from what it was just three years ago," said Pew researcher Monica Anderson. "Back then, teens' social media use mostly revolved around Facebook. Today, their habits revolve less around a single platform." The breakup of teens and Facebook was occurring before the latest scandals which have hit Facebook over hijacked user data and propagation of misinformation.

According to a Forrester Research survey 34 percent of US online youth view Facebook "as a website for old people and parents." "US online youth regard Facebook as utility, while other networks that deliver niche value steal attention from Facebook's broad platform," said Forrester's Anjali Lai in a research note. "Established social networks face an image problem." A separate report by the research firm eMarketer came to a similar conclusion, estimating that Facebook would lose some two million US users under age 24 this year.

Still king globally

Facebook remains king of the social media space and is still growing, though more slowly than in past years. Its profit in the first quarter

of 2018 jumped 63 percent from a year ago to \$5 billion, and total revenues increased 49 percent to \$11.97 billion. And the California company has been moving to become more diversified, with its "family" of apps that include Instagram, Messenger and WhatsApp, and virtual reality gear from its Oculus division.

To connect with younger audiences, Facebook has launched a parentally controlled Messenger Kids app for those too young to have their own Facebook account, and recently expanded that to Peru and Canada. Facebook is also moving to challenge YouTube, and potentially other services like Netflix, with original video on its own platform and on Instagram, which now has one billion users.

With 2.2 billion users, Facebook still has a big lead over Snapchat, with 191 million users at the end of March, and Twitter with 336 million. "Snapchat has a lot of growing to do before it can really be a huge challenger to Facebook," said Debra Williamson, social media analyst at eMarketer. But the trends show services like Instagram and Snapchat, which has grown beyond its original offering of disappearing messages-have become the new, cool place for young smartphone users.



This file photo taken on March 21, 2018 shows Instagram logos on a screen in Kuala Lumpur. — AFP

With Snapchat, "you can add animation, special effects, that's what's interesting for my generation," said 16-year-old Charlotte, another San Francisco high school student.

Manon said she also likes Instagram because it is "more about creativity, people who make music or photography can post what they do." —AFP

Cisco releases new developer capabilities across its platform

DUBAI: Cisco announced that it has released new developer capabilities across its intent-based networking platform. These advancements underscore Cisco's continued progress in delivering an open, programmable platform that spans the entire network, from campus to data center, branch to edge. By providing an open network, Cisco is empowering 500,000 developers, 60,000 partners and three million network engineers to innovate upon the platform.

Intent-based networking represents a fundamental shift in the way networks are built and managed. Moving away from the manual, time-intensive methods by which networks are traditionally managed, these modern networks capture business intent and translate it into network policies. These policies are then automatically activated across the entire infrastructure, with the assurance that the business intent was delivered as planned.

"Intent-based networking represents the next generation of open, IP-based systems that we've seen can change the actual fabric of society," said David Goeckler, executive vice president and general manager of Cisco's Networking and Security Business. "Cisco is building an open architecture that will power an ecosystem to accelerate intent-based networking innovation. Already, our customers and partners are creating value from their networks in ways they thought weren't possible as recently as one year ago."

Announcing the DNA Center platform

Today, Cisco is releasing new developer tools and open APIs into Cisco DNA(tm) Center - the command and control center for campus, branch and edge intent-based networks. DNA Center turns the network from a combination of hardware devices into a single system. With the availability of network-wide APIs, Cisco now allows developers to easily program this system, tapping into all of the analytics and insight the network can provide.

With a rich API catalog, DNA Center allows customers to protect and inform their business like never before.

● Elevating network intelligence into business operations: DNA Center helps enable developers to program the network as a single system through intent-based APIs.



Now, developers can more easily create a new generation of network-aware applications, and partners can integrate the network into business processes.

● Streamline IT processes across functions: DNA Center helps enable network IT administrators to exchange information to automate processes across IT systems through software adapters. Now, IT can move resources from operation to innovation.

● Managing multi-vendor networks: DNA Center gives developers and partners the flexibility to support multi-vendor networks via a software developer kit (SDK). This allows customers to simplify the complexity of heterogeneous networks and manage them consistently, as a single system.

Already, 15 Cisco partners have built innovative solutions on the DNA Center platform and are demonstrating them at Cisco Live. Announcing the largest developer community for intent-based networking Cisco is also announcing that its developer community, DevNet, has surpassed 500,000 members. In building this large and active community, Cisco has introduced a new source of innovation as the network becomes increasingly programmable. Today, Cisco is announcing three new developer initiatives to fuel its innovation ecosystem:

● DevNet Ecosystem Exchange makes it easy to find and share an application or solution built for Cisco platforms.

Business leaders and developers alike can use this online portal to discover partner solutions that span all Cisco platforms and products. It contains over 1,300 solutions.

● DevNet Code Exchange gives developers a place to access and share software to quickly build next-generation applications and workflow integrations. A curated list of sample code, adapters, tools, and SDKs is available on GitHub and written by Cisco and the DevNet community. Code Exchange spans Cisco's entire portfolio and is organized according to Cisco platform and product areas.

● DevNet DNA Developer Center is a one-stop-shop for developers to build applications and integrations on the DNA Center platform. It provides comprehensive resources, capabilities, use cases and learning materials for developers.

Availability, Services and Support

● The new DNA Center capabilities are scheduled to be available during the summer of 2018. Customers can purchase these new capabilities from Cisco and its partners via existing subscription offers.

● DevNet's Ecosystem Exchange, Code Exchange, and DNA Developer Center are available now.

● Cisco and its partners offer a full lifecycle of services to help customers streamline the journey to truly intent-based networks.

YouTube offers creators new ways to earn money

SAN FRANCISCO: YouTube, often criticized for not compensating creators well enough, will allow them to set up paid channel memberships, the company said recently. Currently the vast majority of revenue at the Google-owned service comes from advertising and that will remain a focus, said Neal Mohan, YouTube's chief products officer. "But we also want to think beyond ads. Creators

should have as many ways and opportunities to make money as possible," he said.

Viewers will pay \$4.99 a month for channel memberships giving them access to exclusive content including livestreams, extra videos or shout-outs on channels with more than 100,000 subscribers. Creators will also be able to sell merchandise like shirts or phone cases directly on their channels, the company said. YouTube returns a small part of its advertising revenue to content creators who regularly accuse the platform of giving them only crumbs. The site is facing increasing competition from other platforms using more and more video. YouTube says it has more than 1.9 billion users but the figure only counts those who log in via their accounts. —AFP



WEST HOLLYWOOD: Missi Pyle attends a private party celebrating hit YouTube Originals "Cobra Kai", "Impulse" and "Ryan Hansen Solves Crimes On Television" at The London West Hollywood. — AFP

US plans limits on Chinese investment in US technology firms

WASHINGTON: The US Treasury Department is drafting curbs that would block firms with at least 25 percent Chinese ownership from buying US companies with "industrially significant technology," a government official briefed on the matter said on Sunday. The official, whose comments matched a report by the Wall Street Journal, emphasized that the Chinese ownership threshold may change before the restrictions are announced on Friday.

The move marks another escalation of President Donald Trump's trade conflict with China, which threatens to roil financial markets and dent global growth. Tariffs on \$34 billion worth of Chinese goods, the first of a potential total of \$450 billion, are due to take effect on July 6 over US complaints that China is misappropriating US technology through joint venture rules and other policies.

The Treasury investment restrictions are expected to target key sectors, including several China is trying to develop as part of its "Made in China 2025" industrial plan, the US official said. Among its objectives, the plan aims

to upgrade China's capabilities in advanced information technology, aerospace, marine engineering, pharmaceuticals, advanced energy vehicles, robotics and other high-technology industries.

The Wall Street Journal also said the US Commerce Department and National Security Council were proposing "enhanced" export controls to keep such technologies from being shipped to China. Spokespersons for the Treasury, Commerce Department and the White House did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment on the proposed restrictions. The government official said the Treasury would invoke the International Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977 (IEEPA) to devise the restrictions.

The act gives the president sweeping authority to restrict assets based on national security concerns. IEEPA was invoked broadly after the 9/11 attacks in 2001 to cut off financing for terrorist networks. The Journal said the administration would look only at new deals and would not try to unwind existing ones, adding that the planned investment bar would not distinguish between Chinese state-owned and private companies.

The White House on May 29 said the Trump administration would press ahead with restrictions on investment by Chinese companies in the United States as well as "enhanced" export controls for goods exported to China, with details to be announced by June 30. It also said it would unveil a revised list of Chinese goods for tariffs, which it did on June 15. —Reuters

China's Didi steps up challenge to Uber with Australia push

MELBOURNE: Chinese ride-sharing giant Didi has intensified its drive for global business, launching in Melbourne Monday as it joins rivals Uber, Taxify and Ola in Australia's taxi market. Didi Chuxing claims to be the world's leading mobile transportation platform with more than 450 million users, and its latest expansion is part of attempts to rival American behemoth Uber.

The Beijing-based firm launched in Mexico this year and entered the Brazilian market when it bought 99 Taxis. It is also in partnership with other players covering more than 1,000 cities around the world. "Didi's entry into Australia marks a new milestone in its outreach to global communities," the company said in a statement. Didi-which last year became Asia's most valuable start-up company-has been in a fierce battle with Uber in the growing ride-hailing market. The US firm sold its operations in China in 2016 in return for a stake in Didi's business, which says it has more than 21 million drivers on its platform globally. Uber has also retreated from Southeast Asia, selling its business in the region in March to rival Singapore-based Grab. — AFP



MELBOURNE: Jian Lu from Chinese ride-sharing giant Didi Mobility demonstrates the Didi app on his smartphone. — AFP

Uber battles to keep London license in court appeal

LONDON: Uber went to court yesterday to overturn a decision stripping it of its license in London after being ruled unfit to run a taxi service in its most important European market. Regulator Transport for London (TfL) shocked the Silicon Valley firm last September by refusing to renew its license, citing failings in its approach to reporting serious criminal offences and to background checks on drivers.

Uber, backed by Goldman Sachs and BlackRock among others and valued at over \$70 billion, has faced protests, bans and restrictions around the world as it challenges traditional operators and angers some unions. In London, the firm has made several changes to its business model since losing its license, including the introduction of 24/7 telephone support and the proactive reporting of serious incidents to the city's police. It has also changed its senior management and apologized for mistakes.


Uber's lawyer Thomas de la Mare said the company accepted the September ruling and the focus of the appeal should be on the reforms it had made since then. "It's no part of our case to say it was wrong. We accept it was right," de la Mare told Westminster Magistrates Court in London. "It's that acceptance that has led to wholesale change in the way that we conduct our business." While the appeal process is ongoing, Uber can continue to operate in London. The appeal is due to be heard over three days and will hear from witnesses including Uber's UK Chairman Laurel Powers-Freeling, UK Head of Cities Fred Jones and TfL's Interim Director of Licensing Helen Chapman. After its application for a five-year license was rejected last year, the company is now seeking an 18-month one to prove to the authorities that it has reformed. —Reuters

CLINIC
PAGE






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استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



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What's On

China's Guangxi Cultural and Art Troupe performs during Kuwait Int'l Music Festival

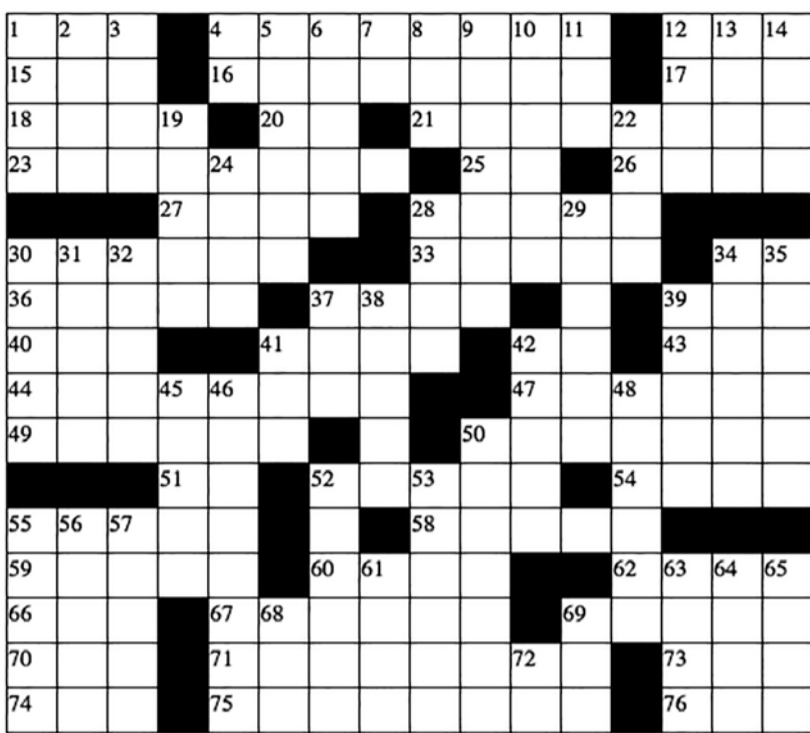


Members of China's Guangxi Cultural and Art Troupe performed during the Kuwait International Music Festival, at the Abdulhusain Abdulredha theater in Salmiya Sunday night. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



Stars

CROSSWORD 1943



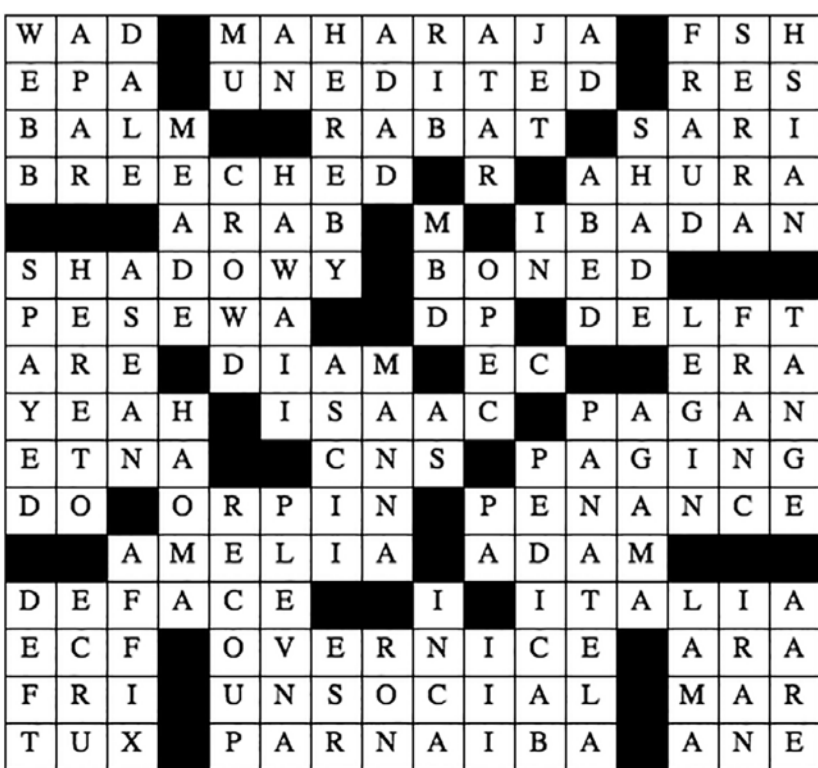
ACROSS

- The federal agency that insures residential mortgages.
- A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
- Increase in extent or intensity.
- A city in northern India.
- (Alkkadian) God of wisdom.
- Scarabaeid beetle considered divine by ancient Egyptians.
- Any of various fissiped mammals with nonretractile claws and typically long muzzles.
- A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
- A strong solution of sodium or potassium hydroxide.
- Of or relating to apnea.
- An inhabitant of ancient Thebes.
- The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
- Pompous or pretentious talk or writing.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- United States physiologist (born in Germany) who did research on parthenogenesis (1859-1924).
- Any of numerous low-growing cushion-forming plants of the genus Draba having rosette-forming leaves and terminal racemes of small flowers with scapose or leafy stems.
- An open jar of glass or porcelain used as an ornament or to hold flowers.
- Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
- A submarine gun operated by gas pressure.
- Of or relating to a dialect of Sotho or the Bantu people who speak it.
- A theatrical performer.
- Come to pass.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of the Bronze Age culture of Crete.
- A genus of Hirundinidae.
- The seat within a bishop's diocese where his cathedral is located adv.
- A genus of Ploceidae.
- The system of numbering pages.
- A machine-readable version of a standard dictionary.
- Genus of large deciduous nut-bearing trees.
- The capital and largest city of Liechtenstein.
- Held in slavery.
- Anneal or toughen by a process of gradually heating and cooling.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Israel or its people.
- An ax used by mountain climbers for cutting footholds in ice.
- Of or relating to the spleen.
- Treated with wax.
- A cruel wicked and inhuman person.
- A formation of people or things one beside another.
- A feeling of intense anger.
- An organic compound that contains a hydroxyl group bonded to a carbon atom which in turn is doubly bonded to another carbon atom.
- (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- A fatal disease of cattle that affects the central nervous system.
- Half the width of an em.

DOWN

- (heraldry) An ordinary consisting of a broad horizontal band across a shield.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may experience a sense of importance, emotional depth, and power in your relationships today. Be sure to let others know how you truly feel and what they mean to you. You have a strong desire for intimacy and need to know you are needed. You also need to remember you have needs too. It is okay to be vulnerable and share this with those close to you. This vulnerability could lead to a much deeper connection with someone close to you. You may find your ideas and thoughts to be creative and bold today. This is a great day for you to make some awesome choices regarding your future.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You have done well. You work hard, you love hard and you have developed a desire for the finer things in life. Financially, this is a very good time for you. Be conservative with your spending and resist the urge to bring home everything that catches your eye. Today may be the day the answer to that big decision you have been trying to make seems to slap you in the face. You seem to not only be completing in touch with your emotions but also the emotions of those around you. You are content and extremely happy with your position in life and where you are headed. Hard work pays off, Taurus, and you seem to be currently reaping the benefits of yours.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may find yourself desiring a solid foundation and examining all aspects of your life to ensure this. You may find the desire to reduce the clutter, as you see it. To rid your life of all that is superficial. You may well find yourself not only cleaning out your closet but also cleaning out your emotional closet. Ridding your life of all the extras that are not conducive to your growth and success. This is a great time for reflection. Decide what led you to this point in your life. You may ask yourself if this is where you want to be and what direction you want to go. You may find the answers to these questions come to you clearly today.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You seem to be placing more focus on the finer things in life. Actually, a desire to obtain and enjoy these things. Whether it is love, money, or art your desires are becoming irresistible. You may find you have an admirer. Someone drawn to you and very appreciative of all you have to offer. You may greatly benefit from this relationship. You are learning self-love. You appreciate the gifts and talents you have been given and each of these play an important role in your life. You may find yourself quick-witted and talkative today. Cancer: This is a day to enjoy!



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Clear your mind and take a breath of fresh air. Today will be a great day for a long walk. Take time to find yourself and find understanding of what drives you. Break away from your routine and live a little. You may find this escape is just the distraction you need to clear your mind and discover solutions to problems that have been bothering you. You may cross paths with someone today that is experiencing a very similar situation as you and find great satisfaction while talking to someone who can empathize and understand.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your mind seems to be in overdrive. New ideas are flowing, you are creative, and your insight ability is strong. You are in top form and seems all is coming together for you. You may find yourself in the limelight, the center of attention, and the recipient of much praise and admiration. Enjoy this time in your life and be sure to take note of just what life decisions and steps you took to get here. This will not only make you a more appreciative person but will come in handy in the future when someone younger turns to you for advice.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You feel as though you can accomplish anything you set your mind to. You are driven and focused. You don't meet a stranger. People are drawn to you and you make friends easily. You are a people person. You may find yourself in a position where you are led to take step out of your comfort zone and take a chance on an emotional level that may lead to a great reward. Deep reflection into your past and emotions may find you with a new outlook on life and love and find you at peace with all around you. You find yourself at peace with who you are as a person and find that others are drawn to you as a result. This is a wonderful time in life for you.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may feel as if you are encountering negativity and not everyone is supportive when it comes to very sensitive issues you are dealing with in your life. These issues are very personal, and you may just be sharing with the wrong people. You will find someone close to you who will serve as a confidant who is extremely understanding and supportive of all that makes you unique. Scorpio, now is a great time to think outside of the box and follow that new path or project that is calling your name.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may be feeling a need for change. A deep desire for emotional security takes hold now and you feel your most content when surrounded by family and those closest to you. Relationships are a priority in your world now. You feel as if things in your life are monotonous and you are ready to spice things up. This may mean a shiny new car purchase, a vacation, or simply surrounding yourself with a new group of friends. Any direction you choose, this will be a time of excitement and give you a fresh start and a more focused outlook. We all need a bit of change from time to time. Keep life interesting and exciting.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may have been so focused lately you have been missing out on a social life. Today is a great day to get out and about. Hit the town but choose your company wisely as not to experience any conflict while doing so. Surround yourself with like-minded friends. Choose friends who are positive and share your love of life. You may find yourself experiencing a real spiritual awakening and the desire to share this with others. You should be pleasantly please at how receptive your friends are. A great day for you where the lines of communication open in all aspects of your world.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Today spending time really getting to know those around you could very beneficial to you. You are longing for deep personal relationships and this could be a great way to progress toward the development of just that. You find yourself being very sensitive when it comes to the needs of others. You may find yourself being very understanding today and find it very easy to communicate your ideas and feelings to those around you. Aquarius, this is a time of growth for you in many ways. You are well on your way to a new and improved version.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may have never put much thought into how you love. It has always just been an emotion or feeling that came natural to you. You may have an experience that leads you to see things in a different light. You may experience a sense of awakening that opens your eyes not only to the way you express love but to the way others close to you need to be loved. This may develop stronger bonds and relationships in your life and bring much harmony and passion into your world. To love and to be loved has always been a strong desire for you and you are entering a time and learning a lesson that will bring you to new levels in your close relationships. Pisces, enjoy the peace and harmony this brings into your world.

Wordsearch Puzzle

SCUBA Diving

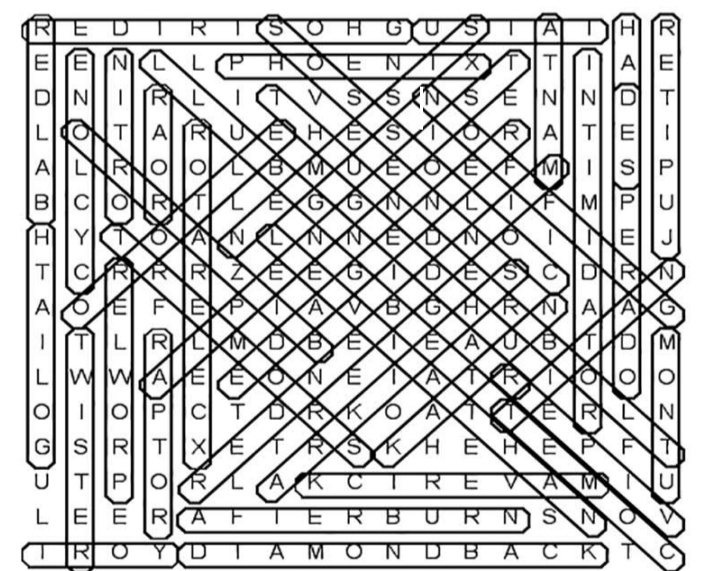
Find and circle all of the SCUBA Diving words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the meaning of the letters of SCUBA.



- | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| AIR PRESSURE | CURRENT | HYPOTHERMIA | RECOMPRESSION | TIDE |
| ALTITUDE DIVING | DECOMPRESSION | LEEWARD | REGULATOR | TOXICITY |
| ANOXIA | DEPTH GAUGE | LUNGS | SCOOTER | TRIMIX |
| ATMOSPHERE | DIVE COMPUTER | MASK | SEA LEVEL | UNDERSEA |
| BAROTRAUMA | DIVE FLAG | MEMBRANE | SHAERS | UNDERSUIT |
| BOOTS | DIVE MARSHAL | MULTIPIECE | SHOAL | UNDERTOW |
| BOUNCE DIVE | DRYSUIT | NARCOSIS | SILICONE | VALVE |
| BUBBLES | EDDY | NEOPRENE | SNORKEL | VISION |
| BUDDY SYSTEM | EMBOLISM | NITROGEN | SPEAR GUN | VOLUME |
| BUOYANCY | GAS CYLINDER | NITROX | STROBE | WATER |
| C CARD | GAS MIXTURE | OCEAN | SWIM FINS | WEIGHT BELT |
| COMPASS | GIANT STRIDE | HELIOX | OXYGEN | WEIGHTS |
| COMPRESSOR | HELIUM | HOSE | PANIC | WETSUIT |
| CORAL REEF | | | REBREATH | WINDWARD |

Yesterday's Solution

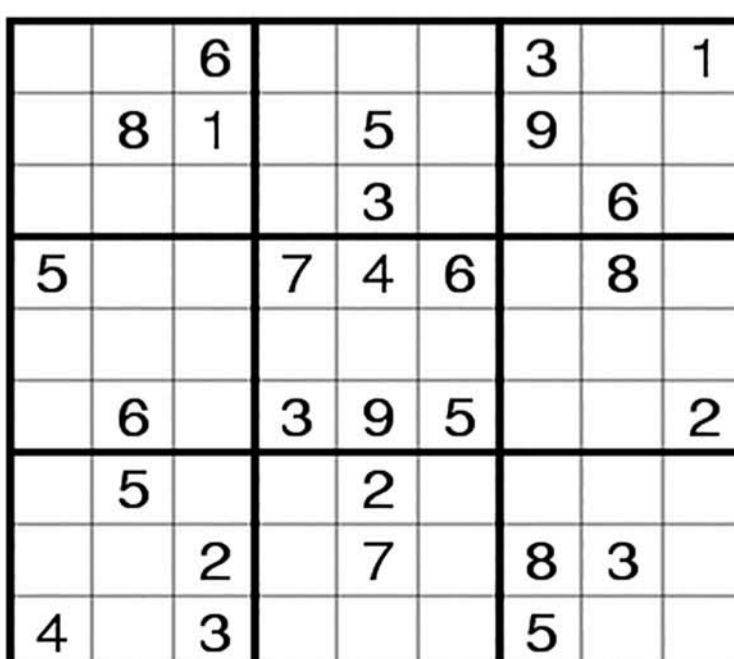
Roller Coasters



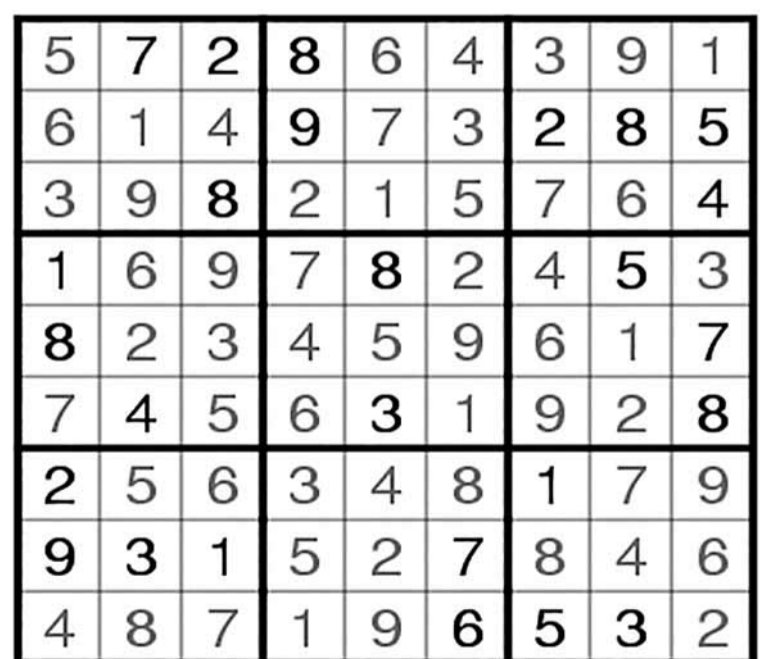
- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| AFTERBURN | GHOSTRIDER | MIND BENDER | SHEIKRA |
| ALPENGEST | GOLIATH | MONTU | TATSU |
| BALDER | GRIFON | NEMESIS | THUNDERBOLT |
| BIZARRO | HADES | NITRO | TITAN |
| COLOSSOS | INTIMIDATOR | PHOENIX | TREMORS |
| COMET | JUPITER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

The hidden message is: LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 2018



Dancers from China's Guangxi Cultural and Art Troupe perform during international music festival, at the Abdulhusain Abdulredha theatre in Kuwait City on June 24, 2018. — AFP

Bodybuilding:

The pursuit of beauty in war-torn Kabul

Hindi music pumps from the speakers as dozens of Afghan men grunt and sweat their way through a workout beneath the watchful eye of a young Arnold Schwarzenegger, whose muscle-bound image hangs from the wall. The scene inside this Kabul gym is repeated at venues all-round the capital, where bodybuilding has become ubiquitous since the fall of the Taliban regime. The sport has a long tradition in Afghanistan, and was even tolerated by the Taliban when they ruled the country from 1996-2001 — so long as the men wore long trousers as they lifted. But as security deteriorated and the initial euphoria after the US invasion dissipated into stress, trauma and loss, more and more young men took to the gym.

"Everyone, everywhere in Afghanistan, wants to have a beautiful body shape, and this sport is a favorite sport for every young man," says Hares Mohammadi, a law and political science student turned champion bodybuilder who is also a trainer at one gym in Kabul. The 25-year-old, dressed in grey, strikes different poses showing off his carefully honed muscles, and warms up his chest and shoulders ahead of a regional bodybuilding competition.

Despite a surge in bombings and suicide attacks, life goes on, he says, and young Afghans want to "make their mark". One way is through sporting success. So, along with Schwarzenegger, other stars from Hollywood and Bollywood such as Sylvester Stallone and Salman Khan are held up as heroes, and the gyms stay busy for hours, filled with music and camaraderie as men tone their bodies to perfection.

The old days

It was not always so. Afghan bodybuilding legend Aziz Arezo reminisces about his time as a teenage lifter, when there were "very, very few people" in the capital who knew anything about the sport. He himself was only inspired to take it up after seeing movies and posters featuring foreigners such as Schwarzenegger. "Arnold was my... role model," he says, smiling as he remembers how expensive postcards featuring the star were. Speaking to AFP between lifting weights at his small gym in Kabul, Arezo's physique not quite what it was in his glorious bodybuilding past-reels off his long list of accolades, including being named Afghanistan's first master sport bodybuilder



Afghan bodybuilders competing in a bodybuilding and fitness contest in Kabul.

by the country's Olympic Committee in the 1970s.

It is a long career, and at times a lonely one. Though now a trainer himself, guiding hundreds of Afghan youths through lifts and crunches, he never had the guidance of one. Years ago he made the equipment and dumbbells in his gym from spare car parts as there was no place to buy them. "I have been a teacher of myself," he says, adding that his dumbbells are "more efficient than foreign dumbbells".

Under Taliban rule, he worked for four months in Kabul before eventually fleeing again, fearing their restrictions despite their views on bodybuilding.

"Nowadays, bodybuilding clubs are everywhere in the city, and everyone has made a gym of his own," he says. He has trained hundreds of bodybuilders in his career, but is suspicious of new methods employed by many young Afghans, including taking protein supplements to boost their abilities. "I believe if you do sport or exercise naturally, it is better than protein," he says, warning of detrimental side effects. "Before my workout... I was drinking carrot and banana juice, and post-training, I was taking two eggs, three glasses of milk, one bowl of beans and lentils, and it was everyday food for me," he says. "Today's bodybuilding is not natural."

“ Arnold was my.. role model ”



An Afghan bodybuilder posing after competing in a bodybuilding and fitness contest in Kabul. — AFP photos



Afghan bodybuilders warming up as they prepare to compete in a bodybuilding and fitness contest in Kabul.



Afghan bodybuilders warming up as they prepare to compete in a bodybuilding and fitness contest in Kabul.

Stress and frustration

Regardless of the method, sport can help ease the psychological trauma of nearly four decades of war, says Ali Fitrat, a psychology professor at Kabul University. Afghans are stressed socially, culturally, financially and politically, he said, citing fighting, insecurity and poor economic conditions as some of the most devastating factors. As such, he says sports such as bodybuilding can play a "vital role". But, like Mohammadi, he also suggests that young men in particular have a strong desire to make their mark.

"They want to show their bodies, they want to attract the attention of the people, and they want to have different looks and to look different than the others," he said. However, security continues to deteriorate in Kabul, where both the Taliban and the Islamic State group have stepped up their attacks. Many fearful residents now limit their movements. Arezo says his gym's membership has shrunk. "Nowadays people are concerned about fleeing the country rather than taking up sport," he says. — AFP

Lifestyle | Music & Movies



Bollywood film producer Boney Kapoor (center) receives the award for best performance in a leading role - female in behalf of his late wife and actress Sridevi for her role in 'Mom' while Bollywood actress Kriti Sanon (right) and Tarun Garg (left) executive director Maruti Suzuki and executive vice president of Nexa looks on during the IIFA Awards of the 19th International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) festival at the Siam Niramit Theatre in Bangkok on June 24, 2018.



Bollywood actress Rekha (center orange dress) performs with other actors and actresses at the closing of the IIFA Awards. — AFP photos



Bollywood actress Rekha (center) performs.



Konkona Sensharma (left) receives the Best Debutante Director award while directors Nitesh Tiwari (center) and Anurag Kashyap (right) looks on during the IIFA Awards.



Bollywood actress Kriti Sanon (center) receives the Most Stylish Icon award from Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana (left) and Deepika K, director of brand marketing Myntna.com looks on during the IIFA Awards.

'BOLLYWOOD OSCARS' HONORS DROWNED SUPERSTAR

Bollywood superstar Sridevi Kapoor was honored for her final role at India's movie awards in Bangkok, winning best actress at the celebration of dance, music and film just months after her shock death. Sridevi was considered one of the most influential Bollywood actresses of all time. Her death from accidental drowning in a Dubai hotel room bathtub aged 54 in February left the nation in stunned grief. "I have mixed emotions today. I miss her every minute and second of my life," her widower Boney Kapoor said as he collected the gong on her behalf at the Indian Film Academy's (IIFA) annual awards ceremony.

"I still feel she is around... I want you all to support Janhvi like you supported her mother," the Bollywood producer said in an emotional speech quoted by Indian media, referring to the eldest of Sridevi's two daughters who is set to make her Bollywood debut. With an audience of

more than 850 million, the IIFA Awards-dubbed Bollywood's Oscars by some in the industry-is India's biggest media event. It is also one of the world's most-watched annual entertainment shows, held outside India to demonstrate Bollywood's global appeal.

Sridevi "was the queen of grace and worthy of every praise", read a message from the IIFA's Twitter account. The ceremony saw India's biggest stars descend on the Thai capital late Sunday for a riotous evening filled with glamour and stunning dance routines. But it was given an additional tinge of sadness as best actor went to Irrfan Khan, known internationally for his roles in blockbusters "Life of Pi" and "Slumdog Millionaire", in his absence. Earlier this year the Indian actor, who was also in the 2016 film "Inferno" alongside Tom Hanks and is one of Bollywood's most globally recognized exports, revealed he has a rare tumor and is being treated in London.

Outstanding Achievement Award

Khan bagged the award for his role in "Hindi Medium", a film highly critical of India's class divide in which he plays a father trying to get his daughter into a prestigious school. The subject of Sridevi's last film "Mom" also touched a sensitive topic in India-that of rape, with the actress portraying a mother seeking to avenge a sex attack on her stepdaughter. The event saw veteran actor Anupam Kher honored with the "IIFA Award for Outstanding Achievement in Indian Cinema". The Indian star is known abroad for his roles in "Bend It Like Beckham" and "Silver Linings Playbook". Best picture went to "Tumhari Sulu" which stars Vidya Balan as a housewife who becomes a DJ offering relationship advice on a late-night radio show. Saket Chaudhary scooped best director for "Hindi Medium". The ceremony saw veteran actress Rekha, 63, roll back the years as she belted out

vintage hits in a rare public performance, as well as routines from the likes of Ranbir Kapoor and Kriti Sanon.

Organizers opted for a green carpet instead of red to raise awareness of environmental issues and it was graced by stars like Varun Dhawan, Konkona Sen Sharma, Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Arjun Kapoor. However the National Film Awards, established in 1954, are still considered India's most prestigious film awards ceremony. IIFA will be broadcast worldwide on television on July 29. "The fact that we are 1.2 billion people in India helps" boost the audience, said Sabbas Joseph, the event's organizer, adding that viewing figures are also strong in the Middle East and in countries with large Indian communities. — AFP

Date	Time (GMT)	Time KSA	Matches	What to watch on OSN
24 Jun 18	12:00 PM	3:00 PM	England vs Panama	Spend the day with your favorite reality family: Keeping Up With The Kardashians S14 Episodes 1-6 starts at 1:30PM - 7PM on EI
	3:00 PM	6:00 PM	Japan vs Senegal	Watch brand new episode of The Fosters S5-B at 9PM KSA on OSN Series First HD
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Poland vs Columbia	Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life (new) Discovery Family 6:30PM KSA
25 Jun 18	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Uruguay vs Russia	Kindig Customs (new) Season 4 Discovery Channel @ 6:40PM KSA Followed by award winning series, Deadliest Catch, S9
	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Saudi Arabia vs Egypt	Watch Passengers at 5PM KSA on OSN Movies First HD
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Iran vs Portugal	Watch The Fearless Chef at 9PM KSA on OSN Living HD
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Spain vs Morocco	
26 Jun 18	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Denmark vs France	Watch Westworld S1-2 on OSN Play and OSN On Demand
	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Australia vs Peru	
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Nigeria vs Argentina	Ladies Night on Comedy Central @ 9:30PM KSA Double Bills Broad City Another Period Teachers
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Iceland vs Croatia	Watch War for the Planet of the Apes on OSN Movies First HD from 8:30PM KSA
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Switzerland vs Costa Rica	BBC Night! Call the midwife EastEnders (new) Death In Paradise
27 Jun 18	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Mexico vs Sweden	Watch Transformers: The Last Knight on OSN Movies First HD at 9PM KSA
	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	South Korea vs Germany	
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Serbia vs Brazil	Ireland v India, 1st T20I, OSN Sports Cricket HD, live, 6PM
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Switzerland vs Costa Rica	BBC Night! Call the midwife EastEnders (new) Death In Paradise
28 Jun 18	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Japan vs Poland	Watch premiere Snatched on OSN Movies First HD at 10PM KSA
	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Senegal vs Columbia	Anime Block on Syfy starting at 9PM KSA The Heroic Adventures of Arslan S2
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	England vs Belgium	Vintage Syfy on Syfy: Smallville @ 4:50PM Killjoys @ 5:40PM The Flash @ 6:30PM
	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Panama vs Tunisia	

Want to watch great entertainment during the World Cup? OSN scores with perfect alternative line up of outstanding content

The World Cup fever has arrived, and OSN is building on the excitement by offering even more ways to stay entertained with a compelling line up of programming for all the family. Featuring everything from series 1 to 7 of Game of Thrones, Oscar-nominated movies like Get

Out, the drama of UFC Fight Night with Cowboy vs Edwards, and plenty more, OSN is scoring a few winning goals of its own.

For each day and each match of the month-long football tournament, OSN has a bumper choice of content that can be enjoyed on over

150 channels, OSN Play and OSN on Demand, making it as easy as ABC to watch great alternative entertainment while the World Cup is on.

Please see the full schedule (left) covering all shows and timings:



In this file photo Beyonce (left) and Jay-Z perform during a Get Out the Vote (GOTV) performance in support of Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton at the Wolstein Center in Cleveland, Ohio.



(From left) Musicians Michael Clifford, Calum Hood, Luke Hemmings and Ashton Irwin of 5 Seconds of Summer attend the 2015 American Music Awards at the Microsoft Theater at LA. — AFP photos

Australian rockers end Jay-Z, Beyonce No 1 debut streak

Australian pop band 5 Seconds of Summer stunned Beyonce and Jay-Z by opening Sunday at the top of the US album chart, with the couple's surprise collaboration ending the superstars' streak of number one debuts. 5 Seconds of Summer had stepped up promotion of their album "Youngblood" after Jay-Z and Beyonce dropped "Everything Is Love," with the Australians telling fans they were in a close race for number one and encouraging listeners over social media to stream their songs continuously to drive up their totals.

"Youngblood" wound up selling 142,000 copies or the equivalent in downloads and streams in the week through Thursday, edging out "Everything Is Love" which clocked up 123,000 copies, tracking service Nielsen Music said. 5 Seconds of Summer, who emerged in

2011 as YouTube sensations when the then students in Sydney uploaded covers of popular songs, becomes the first Australian act to top the Billboard 200, the benchmark US chart, with three different albums. Jay-Z and Beyonce, two of the biggest names in US pop culture, put out "Everything Is Love" with no warning on June 16 after a concert in London.

A musical celebration of their marriage, "Everything Is Love" initially came out only on Tidal, the fledgling streaming service led by Jay-Z, but went out widely including on rival Spotify on June 18 — the fourth day of the counting period for the latest weekly chart. "Everything Is Love" becomes the first solo studio album by Beyonce not to debut at number one. All of Jay-Z's studio albums have also opened at number one since 1998's "Vol. 2... Hard Knock Life" with the exception of a

poorly reviewed 2002 collaborative album with R&B singer R. Kelly.

Beyonce and Jay-Z both opened at number one with their last solo albums, "Lemonade" and "4:44" respectively, despite refusing to stream them on Spotify. Number three on the latest US album chart is "?" by the controversial rapper XXXTentacion, with interest spiking after he was shot dead on June 18 at age 20. "?" which sold 94,000 copies in the week, had opened at number one in March. XXXTentacion's success took the music world by surprise with his songs full of references to suicide and the rapper awaiting trial on charges of beating his pregnant former girlfriend. — AFP

Lifestyle | Awards



Nigerian singer-songwriter Davido accepts the award for best Best International Act during the BET Awards at Microsoft Theatre in Los Angeles, California.



In this file photo Meek Mill performs onstage. — AFP photos



Michael B Jordan (left) and director Ryan Coogler accept Best Movie for 'Black Panther' onstage.



SZA receives the award for Best New Artist.



US rapper Snoop Dogg (left) blows a kiss next to host Jamie Foxx onstage.

FREED MILL TAKES ON POLICE BRUTALITY AT BET AWARDS

Rapper Meek Mill, free after a controversial jail sentence, returned to the stage Sunday with a vigorous attack on police brutality as he premiered a song at the BET Awards. The awards of Black Entertainment Television, broadcast live from Los Angeles, recognize the best of African American music and film and the blockbuster "Black Panther" won Best Movie. Mill was one of the night's most memorable performers as he debuted his song "Stay Woke." The 31-year-old rapper in April won his freedom five months after a judge jailed him over violations of probation stemming from a 2008 arrest, a decision that triggered protests charging that it was overly harsh and racially biased.

Mill performed "Stay Woke" on a set designed as a street scene in his native Philadelphia—a neighborhood that is unkempt yet also full of life with children playing. Police swarm onto the scene with force and a shot is heard. The song pauses and a little girl who was jumping rope is revealed to have been killed, her body then draped with an American flag.

"How can I pledge allegiance to the flag / When they killing all our sons and dads?" Mill raps. The singer Miguel contributes the chorus, which says, "Though it was designed for us to lose / Nothing, nothing, nothing's impossible / Believe it, we're still undefeated."

Nicki Minaj put on the raciest and perhaps most physically grueling performance of the night as she sported a skin-tight latex red dress, emerging with a dancing squad from a smoke-filled Chinese archway for her martial arts-themed song "Chun-Li." She crawled while twerking on stage and spread her legs to the sky in a medley that transitioned to her song "Rich Sex" and also featured YG, 2 Chainz and Big Sean. While many of the music awards were presented off camera, hard-living trap trio Migos won Best Group and the R&B singer and emerging feminist icon SZA took Best New Artist.

Honoring 'Spiderman,' young activist

The BET Awards presented a special "humanitarian heroes" award to six people including Mamoudou Gassama, the Malian migrant in Paris who saved a child hanging off a balcony by scaling an apartment block with



US/Trinidadian rapper Nicki Minaj performs onstage.

his bare hands. Gassama, who smiled and saluted the crowd in Los Angeles, was nicknamed "Spiderman" and awarded French residency even though he was in the country illegally. Other award recipients included Naomi Wadler, the 11-year-old who gained wide attention with her poised speech before the March for Our Lives in Washington urging

more attention to violence against women of color, and Anthony Borges, the high school student in Parkland, Florida who took five bullets as he rescued 20 classmates during the February massacre.

Award presenter John Legend, the singer known for his left-wing activism, contrasted the winners' actions with the politics of President Donald Trump's administration including separations of migrant children from arrested parents. "We honor these heroes and thank them for giving us hope and reminding us that everyone has an opportunity to do something extraordinary," Legend said. "Black Panther," the superhero movie about a fictional African king that has become the third highest-grossing film ever in North America, unsurprisingly took the top prize for cinema. Actor Jamie Foxx, the BET Awards' host, made a subtle dig at Trump as he hailed the film: "We don't need a president right now, because we've got a king." — AFP



Host Jamie Foxx speaks onstage.



US singer-songwriter Anita Baker accepts the Lifetime Achievement Award onstage.



US singer-songwriter Janelle Monae performs onstage.



US rapper Snoop Dogg performs onstage.



(From left) Takeoff, Quavo and Offset of Migos perform onstage.



BET Salutes Humanitarian Heroes James Shaw Jr, Anthony Borges, Naomi Wadler, Shaun King, Mamoudou Gassama and Justin Blackman.



US hip hop trio Migos accepts the award for Best Group.



Volunteers of Clean Futures Fund (CFF) hold a stray puppy outside the improvised animals hospital just near the Chernobyl power plant.



A volunteer of Clean Futures Fund (CFF) calms a stray dog after it was operated in the improvised animals hospital just near the Chernobyl power plant. — AFP photos

CHERNOBYL'S STRAY DOGS OFFERED NEW LIFE IN US

The restricted zone around Chernobyl is eerily quiet but one building near the scene of the world's worst nuclear disaster is full of barking and whining. The long, one-storey structure once served as a makeshift medical center for workers from the plant to receive

the "Dogs of Chernobyl" adoption and vaccination scheme after being surprised by the number of canines still in the area.

Dog-lover Hixson himself adopted a pet from the exclusion zone in 2017, which he named "Dva"—the Ukrainian word for "two" as it was the second dog to have been adopted from Chernobyl. Both animals now live in the US. "One of the first things that you notice when you go to the plant is the dogs," he told AFP. "The dogs can't read radiation signs—they run, they go where they want," he added. About 1,000 stray dogs live in the zone where people are not allowed to reside, according to numbers from the Clean Futures Fund (CFF), the US organization that oversees the dog adoption project.

Some 150 live in the area of the power plant, another 300 in the city of Chernobyl, and the rest at checkpoints, fire stations and villages where a few hundred people are thought to have unofficially moved in. These dogs have to endure severe winters, snow and rain, not to mention disease and lingering radiation. And as the wildlife recovers in this almost human-free spot, the dogs face another serious threat—wolves.

Future American citizen

There are currently 15 puppies in the hospital and after medical examination they will join other young dogs at Slavutych, a city some 50 km from Chernobyl that was built mainly for workers of the plant after the explosion. The puppies will stay in Slavutych for up to six weeks and then travel to new homes in the US. CFF has partners in the US

who help find the new homes and provide all the necessary things to transfer the dogs to their new families. The US-based volunteers spend time with the puppies after they arrive from Ukraine, too, and later help them get used to their new owners.

The "Dogs of Chernobyl" program, which started last year, offers dogs under one year-old up for adoption in the US, while adult dogs are given vaccinations, sterilized and sent back to the area where they were caught. People who want to adopt the dogs fill out an online application form before a number of interviews and even home inspections by the fund and its representatives in the US. And the response has been good, with 300 offers for the initial 200 puppies in a short period of time, Hixson said.

Hixson says the aim is to find families for 200 puppies over the next two years and to treat as many dogs as possible. "This one is almost an American citizen," said Nataliya Melnychuk, a dog trainer at the Slavutych shelter. The black and white puppy she was referring to is waiting for special documentation and will soon be transferred to Chicago. In the shelter, these puppies have a strict schedule—between walks and meals they have extra exercises, massages and even a so-called beauty salon. "These are probably the most treated dogs in Ukraine," Hixson said.

Screen for radioactivity

The volunteers admit some of the older dogs are too wild to be adopted, and so they can only be offered medical treatment and then released

back into the wild. None of the puppies caught in the zone were radioactive, but some adult dogs were. "We screen every dog before it comes into our hospital," Hixson explains. If the volunteers do find some contamination, they wash the dogs, decontaminate them with a special powder and, if necessary, shave their fur off. "By the time the dog gets out, it's just as clean as any other dog," the American said.

Nadiya Apolonova, the representative of the Clean Futures Fund in Ukraine, said the life expectancy of a dog in the disaster zone is just five years, and not only because of the weather conditions and diseases in the wild. Over the last few years, wolves have been responsible for around 30 percent of dog deaths. The volunteers believe that the program also helps to inform people about the reality of Chernobyl. "There are a lot of perceptions about Chernobyl that are not realities," Hixson underlines.

While people might imagine deformed creatures living in the exclusion zone, the puppies born there are just like any other. "People who have never been here expect to see something without ever coming and looking for themselves," he says. He stops for a moment and smiles: "These are the healthiest and smartest dogs I've ever seen." — AFP



Stray dogs walk near the Chernobyl Nuclear power plant.

assistance after the 1986 disaster. Today it is a hospital for the stray dogs that remain in the 30-kilometre (19-mile) exclusion zone long after its human residents were evacuated following the meltdown. Lucas Hixson first came to the Ukrainian disaster site from the United States in 2013 to work as a radiation specialist but set up

On NY's rooftops, old-style wooden water tanks hang tough

They are part of New York's skyline and millions of people unknowingly depend on them: behold, the venerable rooftop water tank, made of plain old wood. And forget about technology and innovation and all that. The tanks are more popular than ever in this city of skyscrapers. Here, any building higher than six stories must be fitted to pump water to the roof for the higher floors, where it is stored in a tank. That's because the pressure in the city water system is too weak to get it up there. Gravity takes over for it to flow back downward.

On this spring day, a tank-building foreman named Terrance Stokes and his crew are at work at a posh building on Lexington Avenue on Manhattan's Upper East Side. In seven hours, they will take down one four-meter-high depository and replace it with a new one. Their employer is Isseks Brothers, one of three companies that share the rooftop water tank market in the most populous American city. In total, there are around 10,000 tanks.

The tools they use have evolved a bit, but for the most part, a water tank is set up today the same way it was in 1890, when the Isseks brothers, immigrants from Poland, founded their company. "That's the beautiful thing. It's so simplistic," said David Hochhauser, a co-owner of the firm. Wooden water tanks—which also serve as protection against fire—have lots of advantages over tanks made from other materials, even atop a 1,300-foot-tall (400-meter-high) building. The cost is reasonable—between \$35,000 and \$100,000 — as compared to what a tank made from fiberglass or steel goes for—double or triple

that much. They are also quicker to install—just one day as opposed to at least a week for the other kinds.

Not in any books

Up on the rooftops, Stokes is following in the footsteps of his father, who retired three years ago, and overseeing the work of a crew whose very specific skill is the company's main asset. "It's a very dangerous job. At all times, you have to be aware of what you're doing," said Stokes, a native of St Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean. This particular building on Lexington Avenue is just nine stories high.

But Isseks Brothers has also installed tanks atop the old World Trade Center and the new one known as the Freedom Tower, which soars 1,776 feet into the air, as well as many other Big Apple skyscrapers. The team works pretty much nonstop and by 3:00 pm, water is flowing into the tank. It leaks a bit but that's expected—it will take the Alaskan cedar used to build the tank two or three days to swell and become watertight. The tank lasts around 25 years.

Isseks Brothers' supplier is the Hall-Woolford Wood Tank Company in Philadelphia, which provides it with the carefully cut boards that make up a water tank. The 160-year-old supplier's workshop employs just seven people, and some of the machines are older than the people operating them. Nothing is automated. Everything is guided by the human eye. "As far as getting it right, there is no book that can teach you that. It's from generation to generation, from one worker to the other," said manager Jack

Hillman. As with the Hochhausers and the Stokes, Hill-Woolford is a family affair. Hillman's son works at the company, as does 71-year-old Robert Riepen, whose father and grandfather did so before him. "It's in my blood, Hands on. Family-oriented. I love the business," said Riepen, who has been at it since age 13 and left only to join the Marines and serve as a helicopter mechanic in the Vietnam war.

Wood is in fashion

"The people that work for us are very special and there's no way that they're being replaced by robots or mechanized machines," said Hochhauser. Business is good, says Hillman, although he is cautious. He recalls how rooftop water tanks fell into disuse in Philadelphia, where as recently as the 1970s, they were all over the place. "The wood tank people didn't push as much as the New York people did. And so the pump industry took over," said Hillman.

Now, Philadelphia moves its water with pipes and electricity, Hillman says he is confident that wood tanks have a future, as wood is in fashion these days. "Some people don't care about the cost. They want a wood tank. They want a natural look," he said. In fact, boards from old tanks are resold to make furniture or floor covering. Indeed, says Hillman, the industry "will last longer than I will." — AFP



In this file photo South African photographer David Goldblatt poses at Henri Cartier-Bresson Foundation in Paris, on the eve of the start of his exhibition 'TJ 1948-2010' (for Transvaal Johannesburg). — AFP

S African anti-apartheid photographer David Goldblatt dies at 87

South African photographer David Goldblatt, whose work documented the abuses and divisions of apartheid, died in his sleep yesterday, a leading gallery announced. He was 87. "He passed away peacefully in his sleep at 5:37 am (0337 GMT) in his home in Johannesburg," Liza Essers, the director of the Goodman Gallery, told AFP. He will be buried today in Johannesburg. For millions of people outside South Africa, Goldblatt work's lifted the veil on the nightmare of apartheid, under which the white-minority government's enshrined racial divisions under law from 1948.

In 1988, he was the first South African to be given a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York. A year later he founded the Market Photography Workshop in Johannesburg in 1989, which has since become a hub for developing young talent in the city. In post-apartheid South Africa, he remained a revered figure and even turned down a national honor in protest against a proposed state secrets bill in 2011.

Two years later then president Jacob Zuma refused to sign the bill, which would have imposed penalties of up to 25 years in prison for the release of top secret documents, and sent it back to parliament. "We have lost yet another of our own celebrated photographers, who through the lens built a reputation as one of the country's leading documenters of the struggles of our people," President Cyril Ramaphosa said in a statement. "He captured the social and moral value systems that portrayed South Africa during a period of the apartheid system in order to influence its changing political landscape," said the president. South African art conservator Monique Vajifdar described Goldblatt as "one of South Africa's most accomplished social chroniclers." "A great tree has fallen and we have lost one of our national living treasures," said Vajifdar. He is survived by his wife Lily, three children and grandchildren. — AFP



A water tank can be seen on a Manhattan building in New York. — AFP



Water tanks can be seen on upper east side buildings.

Classifieds

Tuesday, June 26, 2018



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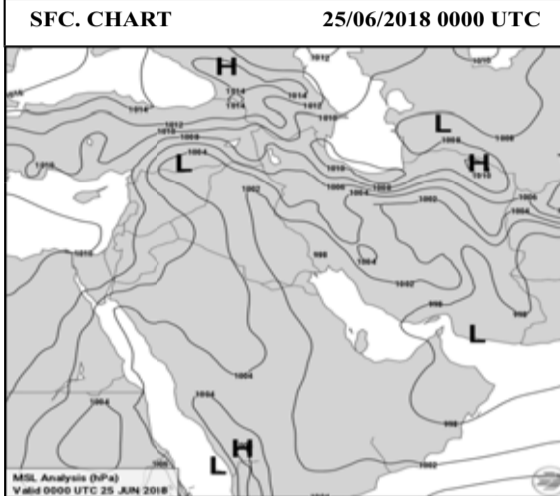
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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot with light to moderate north westerly wind to variable wind, with speed of 10 - 38 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 42 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 25/06/2018 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	33 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	46 °C	33 °C		
ABDALY	47 °C	30 °C		
BUBYAN	--- °C	--- °C		
JAHRA	47 °C	32 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	44 °C	29 °C		
SALMIYAH	43 °C	32 °C		
AHMADI	43 °C	35 °C		
NUWAISIB	43 °C	31 °C		
WAFRA	45 °C	31 °C		
SALMY	44 °C	26 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	06/26	Very hot + rising dust	48 °C	35 °C	NW	20 - 45 km/h
Wednesday	06/27	Very hot + Dusty	48 °C	36 °C	NW	25 - 65 km/h
Thursday	06/28	Very hot + Dusty	48 °C	36 °C	NW	25 - 55 km/h
Friday	06/29	Very hot + rising dust	47 °C	37 °C	NW	20 - 45 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:15
Sunrise	04:50
Zuhr	11:50
Asr	15:24
Sunset	18:51
Isha	20:23

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	44 °C
MIN. Temp.	27 °C
MAX. RH	25 %
MIN. RH	09 %
MAX. Wind	NW 46 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

Required

Female workers

required for superb lady salon (Nail Spa)

Sabah Al-Salem area with experience & transferable visa. Good Salary. (Preferably Filipinas)

Tel.: 99203234

Required

Receptionist

required for superb lady Salon (Nail Spa)

Sabah Al-Salem area with experience, good English and Arabic & transferable visa. Good Salary.

Tel.: 99203234

WARNING ANNOUNCEMENT



We hereby announce to all that Mariappan Palpandy, of Indian nationality, holding civil ID 273013004143, was employed by us and fled Kuwait on 21/02/2018 after appropriation of a large amount of money. A case has been filed against him at Sharq Police Station for breach of trust. We warn anyone against dealing or employing him. All our legal rights (penal and civil) towards him or any third party who deals with him shall be reserved as of the date of publishing this announcement.

Any person who has any information on his whereabouts should please contact Tel: 90099983

CHANGE OF NAME

MATRIMONIAL

I Buseneni Kumar S/o Busineni Ramachandriah, holder of Indian Passport Number L4907858 and Civil ID 281051204453 have changed my name as Busineni Sivaprasad S/o Busineni Ramachandriah. Hereafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5403) 24-6-2018

RC boy from Trichur working as Accountant in Kuwait, seeking suitable alliances from qualified girls who work in Kuwait, preferably preparing for marriage in July or August. 30 years old, height 5.7, B.Com., MBA. For details E-mail: jkumarath@gmail.com (C 5404) 26-6-2018

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

Flight Schedule

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Airlines	Arrival Flights on Tuesday 26/6/2018	ETD	0995	Abu Dhabi/Bahrain	13:00	MSC	501	Alexandria	23:10	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
THY	772 Istanbul	00:15	JZR	1543	13:05	WAN	874	Istanbul	23:25	WAN	975	Baku	12:10
WAN	886 Sarajevo	00:20	AXB	393	13:10	MSR	2614	Cairo	23:30	WAN	965	Tbilisi	12:10
DLH	625 Dammam	00:50	JZR	779	13:45	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
KAC	102 London	00:50	FEG	341	13:50	JZR	241	Amman	23:40	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
JZR	539 Cairo	01:00	KAC	672	13:55					MSC	412	Asyut	13:30
PGT	858 Istanbul	01:15	KAC	618	14:10					THY	767	Istanbul	13:40
RJA	642 Amman	01:35	QTR	1078	14:10					JZR	144	Doha	13:55
UAE	853 Dubai	01:40	KNE	233	14:10					MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
KLM	446 Bahrain	01:45	GFA	221	14:15					JZR	124	Bahrain	14:00
THY	1464 Istanbul	01:50	WAN	312	14:15					JZR	552	Alexandria	14:05
KKK	1268 Istanbul	02:00	FDB	059	14:20					JZR	562	Sohag	14:05
AKB	395 Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	516	14:20					AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10
JZR	267 Beirut	02:10	KAC	286	14:25					UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
GFA	211 Bahrain	02:15	SVA	500	14:45					FEG	342	Sohag	14:50
ETH	620 Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	788	14:50					ETD	9890	SGN	15:00
QTR	1086 Doha	02:30	ETD	303	15:05					KNE	234	Riyadh	15:00
KAC	414 Bangkok	02:40	KAC	304	15:05					GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
THY	768 Istanbul	02:40	KAC	562	15:20					KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
JZR	553D Alexandria	02:50	OMA	645	15:20					FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
JZR	607 Kochi	02:55	ABY	127	15:35					QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	418 Manila	03:05	KAC	502	15:35					WAN	873	Istanbul	15:15
ETD	305 Abu Dhabi	03:05	UAE	857	15:45					SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
OMA	643 Muscat	03:05	SAW	705	16:00					KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
MSR	606 Luxor	03:05	MSR	575	16:10					KAC	783	Jeddah	16:00
KAC	382 Delhi	03:10	QTR	1072	16:15					KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
MSR	612 Cairo	03:15	QTR	8511	16:15					KAC	563	Amman	16:10
PGT	860 Istanbul	03:25	FDB	051	16:20					KAC	619	Doha	16:15
QTR	1076 Doha	03:30	KAC	118	16:20					ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
JAI	572 Mumbai	04:00	WAN	416	16:25					ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	346 Cairo	04:00	FEG	241	16:25					OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
KAC	152 Ahmedabad	04:15	NIA	361	16:45					KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
KAC	1544 Istanbul	04:20	JZR	125	16:50					MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:55
KAC	784 Jeddah	04:30	KAC	542	17:00					SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
JZR	609 Hyderabad	04:30	SVA	510	17:15					FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
MSC	403 Asyut	05:00	JZR	777	17:30					QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
FDB	069 Dubai	05:05	GFA	215	17:30					UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
THY	1414 TZX	05:05	JZR	777	17:35					QTR	8512	Doha	17:45
DHX	170 Bahrain	05:10	JZR	145	17:40					FEG	242	Alexandria	17:45
THY	770 Istanbul	05:15	QTR	1080	18:10					KAC	381	Delhi	17:50
JZR	603 Mumbai	05:25	JZR	535	18:20					KAC	362	Alexandria	17:50
KAC	332 Trivandrum	05:40	JZR	483	18:20					KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
JZR	561 Sohag	05:55	MSR	620	18:30					KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
KAC	362 Colombo	06:00	WAN	966	18:30					KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
BAW	157 London	06:10	RJA	640	19:00					SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
WAN	338 Alexandria	06:25	GFA	217	19:05					JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
KAC	284 Dhaka	06:25	UAE	875	19:05					GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	204 Lahore	06:30	FDB	063	19:10					JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
THY	6376 Istanbul	06:30	KAC	744	19:10					JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	678 Dubai	06:45	ABY	123	19:10					JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	18:30
WAN	342 Sohag	06:55	KAC	156	19:25					JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
KAC	302 Mumbai	07:00	NIA	0161	19:30					JZR	266	Beirut	19:15
JZR	605 Ahmedabad	07:05	KAC	776	19:35					QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
JZR	143 Doha	07:20	RBG	555	19:40					MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	529 Asyut	07:30	KAC	674	19:40					GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	122 CMN	07:35	FDB	057	19:50					FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	358 Kochi	07:40	KAC	178	19:55					RJA	641	Amman	20:00
FDB	053 Dubai	07:50	KAC	616	19:55					ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
WAN	352 Luxor	08:00	KAC	616	19:55					RBG	556	Alexandria	20:20
KAC	384 Dubai	08:05	DLH	624	20:00					JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
UAE	855 Dubai	08:25	OMA	647	20:05					NIA	0162	Cairo	20:30
ETD	301 Abu Dhabi	08:55	JZR	563	20:15					FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
ABY	125 Sharjah	09:00	MEA	402	20:15					UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
QTR	1070 Doha	09:30	KAC	620	20:15					KAC	153	Istanbul	20:45
IRA	675 Lar	09:40	KAC	166	20:25					DLH	624		



VOLGOGRAD: Saudi Arabia's forward Salem Al-Dawsari celebrates scoring his team's winning goal during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group A football match between Saudi Arabia and Egypt at the Volgograd Arena in Volgograd yesterday. — AFP (See Page 27)

'Because I can': Ride-hailing app welcomes Saudi women drivers

RIYADH: Reem Farahat waited for a ride request. Her phone pinged. "I've already cried twice," she said, heading out to work as one of Saudi Arabia's first female drivers for Careem. The Dubai-based ride-hailing app, along with global behemoth Uber, reacted to Saudi King Salman's September announcement of an end to the kingdom's ban on female motorists by saying it would hire women in the conservative kingdom.

On Sunday, when the king's decree took effect, nearly a dozen Careem "captainahs"—all Saudi women—were ready to pick up riders. "This morning, when I got in the car, I felt the tears coming," Reem said as she stocked her car with chilled water bottles for her riders. "I pulled the car over and cried. I could not believe that we now drive... It's a dream. I thought it would be totally normal, I'd just get in the car and go. I was surprised by my own reaction." She took a long pause. "I didn't expect it," she said. "I'm doing this because I can. Because someone has to start."

'It's you'

Seventy percent of Careem's customers in Saudi Arabia are women, according to company statistics, a figure largely attributable to the kingdom's now-obsolete ban on women driving. Uber puts its equivalent figure closer to 80 percent. At Careem's offices on Sunday, staff gathered to celebrate the women's first day on the job. Farahat's first ride request came just hours after the ban was officially lifted. "This is my first ride. I'm excited. I'm excited to know who I'm picking up, what their reaction is going to be," she said.

The driver—who also works with her father as a quality control consultant, is training in life coaching, and scuba dives with her sister off the Red Sea city of Jeddah—picked up Leila Ashry from a local cafe.

Erdogan wins sweeping new...

Continued from Page 1

"The new regime that takes effect from today is a major danger for Turkey... We have now fully adopted a regime of one-man rule," Ince, a veteran CHP lawmaker, told a news conference. The secularist CHP draws support broadly from Turkey's urban, educated middle class. It won 23 percent in the new parliament and the pro-Kurdish HDP nearly 12 percent, above the 10 percent threshold needed to enter parliament.

The HDP's presidential candidate, Selahattin Demirtas, campaigned from a prison cell, where he is detained on terrorism charges he denies. He faces 142 years in prison if convicted. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, a rights watchdog, said high voter turnout, at nearly 87 percent, demonstrated Turks' commitment to democracy. But the OSCE also cited some irregularities and echoed opposition complaints about heavy media bias in favour of Erdogan and the AKP. "The restrictions we have seen on fundamental freedoms (due to the state of emergency) have had an impact on these elections," Ignacio Sanchez Amor, head of the OSCE observer mission, told a news conference in Ankara.

The MHP takes a hard line on the Kurds, making it less likely that Erdogan will soften his approach to security issues in mainly Kurdish southeast Turkey and neighboring Syria and Iraq, where Turkish forces are battling Kurdish militants. The Turkish lira and stocks sagged after initial gains, and economists said the outlook was uncertain. "Any rally could quickly go into reverse if President Erdogan uses his strengthened position to pursue looser fiscal and monetary policy, as we fear is likely," said Jason Tuvey, senior emerging markets economist at Capital Economics.

The lira is down some 19 percent since January

Walking towards the car, Leila spotted Reem, did a little jump of joy on the sidewalk, and was already chatting as she opened the door. "Oh my god I can't believe it's you. I can't believe you're here. I can't believe I'm here," Leila said. "I've been tweeting to my friends that my ride is coming and it's a woman! And you're so pretty! And I can sit in the front now—wait, can I actually sit in the front next to you?"

'We automatically understand'

Some 2,000 women have signed up to get their Careem licenses since September, said Abdulla Elyas, co-founder and CPO—"chief people officer"—of the ride-hailing app. They are all Saudi women, from their 20s to their 50s. Uber also plans to introduce women drivers to their service this autumn. "They come from completely different backgrounds," Elyas said. "We have women who have degrees, a master's degree. We have women who have no degree at all. We have women who want to do this full time. We have women who want to do this part time (for) an additional income, who are already working."

Most of those who had been licensed by Sunday, like Reem, had permits from foreign countries, enabling them to skip driving courses and take the final exam for a Saudi license. The "captainahs" can pick up any customer, man or woman. Both the driver and rider have the right to end the ride at any point. Leila, a young medical student with a pixie cut and bright smile, says she would still choose a woman. "This automatically feels a lot safer... being a female and dealing with sexism on a day-to-day basis. There's just something about it that feels wonderful. But it's not only that. It's also women joining the workforce," she said.

Sitting in the front passenger seat, she recalled previous rides with male drivers. "Before, sometimes they would stare at me from the mirror," she said. "It's just like that thing we share with women, where we just automatically understand what it's like to be in that position where you feel their eyes on you but you can't say anything, you can't do anything against it." She turned to chat to Reem, and sang a riff from a West Side Story tune before saying: "If you can do it, then I can do it." "See? That's what I was talking about," Reem said. "It's that ripple effect." — AFP

and investors fear Erdogan, a self-declared "enemy of interest rates", may pressure the central bank to cut recently hiked borrowing costs to stimulate economic growth despite double-digit inflation. Seeking to reassure investors, Erdogan's chief economic adviser, Cemil Ertem, told Reuters the new government would focus on economic reforms and budget discipline. He added that the central bank's independence was "fundamental".

The EU's executive Commission said it hoped Erdogan would "remain a committed partner for the European Union on major issues of common interest such as migration, security, regional stability and the fight against terrorism". Turkey's years-long EU accession bid stalled some time ago amid disputes on a range of issues, including Ankara's human rights record, especially since the post-coup crackdown. Russian President Vladimir Putin called Erdogan to congratulate him but there were no reports of Western leaders doing so, underlining the chill in relations between Ankara and its traditional NATO allies.

Amir calls Erdogan

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah called Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, congratulating him on his re-election for a new term. His Highness the Amir noted the trust bestowed by the Turkish people on President Erdogan, which reflect appreciation of the Turkish people of the leadership in the country. His Highness also praised the historic relations between the two countries and stressed the common desire to strengthen and develop the bonds to serve mutual interests of the two friendly countries, wishing him well-being, and the Republic of Turkey and its people all prosperity and development. For his part, President Erdogan expressed his sincere gratitude and appreciation for the good wishes of His Highness the Amir, praising his phone call which reflects the deep ties between the two friendly countries. Erdogan wished Kuwait and its people progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir. — Agencies

Qatar's new friends find rich openings

DOHA: Six months ago Serkan Ucar arrived in Doha to scope out business opportunities - away from his usual patch. The mission looks set to pay off handsomely, as the Turkish entrepreneur expects to win a first contract to help build an iconic 2022 World Cup stadium. Since several Arab countries launched an economic boycott of Qatar a year ago, the tiny Gulf state has had to find alternative partners for trade and investment. Aided by its massive natural gas wealth, it has rapidly made new friends.

A year ago Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt cut transport and trade links with Doha, accusing it of backing terrorism - a charge it strongly denies. The boycott disrupted Qatar's shipping routes through the Gulf and blocked imports across its only land border with Saudi Arabia, previously the route for its perishable food supplies and construction materials.

In the bitter diplomatic and economic chill, Ankara sided with Qatar. Ucar, 28, saw openings. "They've been extremely welcoming for Turkish companies after the blockade," Ucar told Reuters at a hotel where he was about to interview engineers for jobs at his new office in Doha. His family business Referans Holding expects to sign a contract soon to supply scaffolding and aluminum and fit out Lusail Stadium, where the

2022 World Cup final will take place. Many Turkish contractors are bidding for projects as Qatar pushes ahead with infrastructure for the tournament, said Joseph Abraham, chief executive of Commercial Bank of Qatar.

World Cup boom

Huge construction projects are under way for the World Cup. Seven new stadiums are being built, along with other infrastructure, sucking in building materials from far afield. Gypsum, used to make drywall, is being newly imported from Iran, said a construction manager who declined to be named. Gabbro, used to make asphalt and concrete, was now being imported from Oman instead of the UAE. While the World Cup means sporting drama and global prestige, the early stages of the boycott were all about urgent shortages of basic products.

When dairy, fresh milk and eggs disappeared from stores, Doha airlifted in more than 3,000 cows on state airline Qatar Airways and imported eggs from Oman, which kept its shipping route with Qatar open when Dubai halted shipments to Doha. In Qatar's supermarkets, Turkish brands like Ulker and Pinar soft cream cheeses are doing well.

"The Turkish market is very important to us," said Saleh bin Hamad al-Sharqi, director general at the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "It's geographically close logistically, high quality and has competitive prices." Imports from Turkey between June and December 2017 grew to \$523 million, 48.2 percent higher than in the same period the previous year. From Oman they jumped 150 percent to \$575 million, according to International Monetary Fund data. — Reuters

When a text can trigger lynching...

Continued from Page 1

helped to trigger mass beatings of more than a dozen people in India - at least three of whom have died. In addition, fake messages about child snatchers on Facebook, as well as some texts on WhatsApp, also led to the lynching of two men in eastern India earlier this month.

Whatsapp's biggest market

With more than 200 million users in India, WhatsApp's biggest market in the world, false news and videos circulating on the messaging app have become a new headache for social media giant Facebook, already grappling with a privacy scandal. In India, a country with over a billion phone subscribers with access to cheap mobile data, false news messages and videos can instantly go viral, creating mass hysteria and stirring up communal tensions.

Those tensions can be high between the Majority Hindu community and the minority Muslim population but also within the rigid Hindu caste hierarchy where the so-called Dalits at the bottom of the pyramid have faced attacks for trying to improve their position in society. In 2017, at least 111 people were killed and 2,384 injured in 822 communal incidents in the country, according to the federal home affairs ministry. It is unclear whether any of these incidents were triggered by fake news messages. WhatsApp said it is aware of the incidents in India through media coverage.

"Sadly some people also use WhatsApp to spread harmful misinformation," WhatsApp said in a statement. "We're stepping up our education efforts so that people know about our safety features and how to spot fake news and hoaxes." Group texts, where fake news spreads most easily, are still a minority: 90 percent of messages are between two people, and the average group size is six people, according to the messaging platform. WhatsApp also said it is considering changes to the service. For example, there is now a public beta test that is labeling any forwarded message.

The company is not planning any changes to its encryption, which ensures messages are not read by anyone except the sender and the recipient. Facebook did not respond to a request for comment. Two senior Indian government officials told Reuters that New Delhi had engaged with WhatsApp on the issue but they are

not allowed to discuss the matter publicly. WhatsApp declined to comment on possible contact with Indian government officials. Indian ministries of IT, home affairs and information and broadcasting did not respond to requests for comment.

Privacy concerns

A deluge of hoax news incidents, several with fatal consequences, may bolster the Indian government's attempts to get social networks to share more user data so that police can track down those spreading rumors. That concerns privacy advocates who fear the authorities will use such access against activists and political opponents, and not just against those spreading malicious information. "Government restrictions on dissemination of false news are too often an attempt to shroud government intentions of restricting freedom of expression and criticism," according to David Kaye, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression.

India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has also recently floated a tender for a firm to scrutinize social media posts of Indian users and identify fake news. The Indian authorities have been signaling they will take an increasingly harsh line with foreign companies who are providing Internet services in India. India's central bank in April issued a directive compelling all payments firms operating in the country to store payments data locally within six months for "unfettered supervisory access". Separately, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is working on a data protection law that could force all foreign tech firms to store key Indian user data locally.

"There is a distinct link between fake news and laws being proposed undermining privacy," said Apar Gupta, a co-founder of advocacy Internet Freedom Foundation. Meanwhile, the inflammatory hoax news messages keep coming. One floating in Bengaluru last month warned parents to take "extra measures towards the safety" of children during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan as they remain busy with prayers and shopping.

More than 500 kidnappers have entered the southern state of Karnataka from western Rajasthan state and the cities of Chennai and Hyderabad, the message said. WhatsApp messages on organ thieves or child abductions are just the tip of the iceberg though - fake reports can range from incorrect medical advice to news about top jobs. A recent message circulating in India's north-east starts by saying the deadly brain-damaging Nipah virus has arrived in Shillong city and advises parents to keep children away from lychees, a popular summer fruit. No confirmed cases of Nipah have been found yet outside of southern Kerala state — Reuters

Sports



Japan defy doubters to home in on World Cup last 16

Senegal coach admits Asians were the better side

YEKATERINBURG: Attack-minded Japan have defied sceptics who said they would flop at the World Cup and instead go into their final group game on Thursday needing just a draw to reach the last 16. Japan sacked their coach just two months before the World Cup, throwing their preparations for Russia into chaos.

Following a series of poor friendly results and reported clashes with senior players, the Japan Football Association (JFA) gambled in getting rid of Vahid Halilhodzic and replaced him with JFA technical director Akira Nishino. The move in April was deeply controversial, coming so close to the World Cup, even if not quite on the scale of the risk taken by Spain, who dumped their coach on the eve of the tournament.

Philippe Troussier, a former coach of the Asian side, told AFP before the tournament that a team bereft of confidence had "no chance" of reaching the knockout stages. Japan may still fail to get out of Group H, but they have surpassed expectations and play already eliminated Poland with their fate in their own hands.

It has been a roller-coaster few weeks for Japanese fans. Friendly defeats to Ghana and Switzerland following Nishino's appointment deepened the sense of foreboding, although Japan did beat Paraguay just before the World Cup. From there they became history-makers when they beat 10-man Colombia 2-1 in their opening game, the first Asian side to defeat a South American team at a World Cup. They followed that up with a 2-2 draw against Sadio Mane's Senegal on Sunday, a game in which Japan had

enough chances to win but ended up twice chasing the match because of poor defending.

Even Senegal coach Aliou Cisse admitted the Asians were the better side. In the Colombia victory in particular Japan were rewarded for Nishino's adventurous approach. On the eve of the Senegal showdown, in which Japan were again the underdogs, Nishino revealed that at half time against Colombia some of his players wanted to settle for 1-1. "But I said that we could win and we will win so we went for victory and that is why I gave them attacking tactics and that is why we are top of the group," said Nishino. Behind the rather dour demeanour, Nishino has shown himself to have a dry wit.

Asked before the Senegal match how he would counter their strength and height advantage, he replied tongue-in-cheek: "For the past several days I have been telling my players to gain five centimetres and five kilos, but it failed, so we need other measures." Unfortunate to be 2-1 down on 71 minutes, Nishino made what turned out to be a masterstroke against Senegal. He immediately hauled off the ineffectual Borussia Dortmund attacking midfielder Shinji Kagawa and replaced him with 32-year-old Keisuke Honda in a like-for-like change.

He also replaced midfielder Genki Haraguchi with Leicester City forward Shinji Okazaki as he went for broke. Six minutes after coming on, Honda equalised. Knowing that victory would effectively seal a spot in the next round, Nishino threw on attacking midfielder Takashi Usami in the dying minutes. Japan looked more likely to



KAZAN: Japan's defender Tomoaki Makino (C) attends a training session in Kazan yesterday during the Russia 2018 World Cup football tournament. — AFP

win, though Nishino said he was content with a point.

"I suggested some improvements and I thought we could go for the win and I told them that (at half time)," said Nishino, a former Gamba Osaka coach criticised in

the past for his buccaneering approach. "In the second half we wanted to win and after twice equalising I put on Usami. There was an option to put on a defender, but I chose to attack." — AFP

Zlatan on the mind for wistful World Cup Swedes

YEKATERINBURG: Zlatan Ibrahimovic retired from international football two years ago but Sweden's former talisman looms over their World Cup campaign like only he can. It is only too tempting for Sweden fans to wonder what might have been had the former Paris Saint-Germain player been in the side for Saturday's match against Germany, which ended in a painful last-gasp defeat. Or allow themselves to imagine what impact Ibrahimovic could have had this Wednesday, when Sweden face Mexico in a make-or-break final group game in Yekaterinburg.

Now 36 and in the twilight of his career at LA Galaxy, the giant forward hit 62 goals in 116 games for Sweden before quitting the international scene in 2016. There was speculation in the build-up to the World Cup that he might make a dramatic return and the much-travelled Ibrahimovic, who also played for Manchester United and Barcelona, mischievously dropped numerous hints. But Sweden coach Janne Andersson did not court him—"Zlatan is very welcome to call me"—and Ibrahimovic ended up being in Russia only for commercial reasons.

Swedish fans began trickling into Yekaterinburg, the most eastern city at the World Cup, yesterday and mention of the swaggering Ibrahimovic brought wistful smiles. "Everyone misses Zlatan, but he does not fit into our new team," said Maria Bronk.

Companion Ditte Helwig, sporting a yellow hat, yellow shirt and blue leggings with the word SWEDEN, disagreed. "I think he fits, but I think he's had enough of it. He's not too old, but I think he does not want to be here. It



MOSCOW: Former Swedish international footballer, Zlatan Ibrahimovic, gestures ahead of the Russia 2018 World Cup Group F football match between Germany and Mexico at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow. — AFP

is he who said 'no.' Helwig and Bronk are such big Ibrahimovic fans that they will travel to the United States in September to see him in action. Helwig, playing the Pokemon Go game on her smartphone as she ambled in the sunshine, said Sweden would have at least drawn with Germany had Ibrahimovic been on the pitch.

"I think so because he's the best scorer in Sweden of all time so it would have been a better result with Zlatan," Peter Jonsson, freshly arrived from watching the agonising loss to Germany in Sochi, said it was time to move on. "We have a new team with a new spirit. Zlatan of course is a

goal is to guarantee first place and two results will allow that," Deschamps told reporters at the Luzhniki Stadium yesterday.

"I would never say to my team that we're playing for a draw. I want my team to go out onto the pitch without any ambiguity and to do everything to win this match."

"I'm sure Denmark will also be playing to win." Deschamps admitted he could rest players in danger of suspension, with midfield trio Paul Pogba, Blaise Matuidi and Corentin Tolisso all a booking away from missing the next match.

"If I can preserve them, it's now," Deschamps said. "I won't be able to that after that." Real Madrid defender Raphael Varane looks likely to captain the side, with Steve Mandanda expected to start in goal ahead of regular skipper Hugo Lloris.

"I have 23 players, they can all have a role to play and start a match," Deschamps added. "There are no risks, if they're here it's because they're ready to play."

Denmark coach Age Hareide made some unflattering

remarks about France in the build-up to the tournament, calling them "nothing special".

"Everyone is free to say what they want and accept responsibility. It wasn't a very nice thing," said Deschamps. "The players read and listen more than me. They know very well what the coach said. "That's not what's going to fire up the players that are going to start tomorrow." Title contenders France have yet to hit top gear in Russia, churning out a 2-1 victory over Australia before scraping past Peru 1-0. Varane believes there is much more to come from the team, particularly going forward.

"I think we have progressed compared to the beginning of the competition," Varane said. "We have improved which is great and we need to carry on."

"In attack I think we can still progress, we can still hurt the opponent more," he added. "We saw it in different phases during our last game but we can do better. We have the quality to tear defences apart." — AFP

Deschamps says France won't offer Denmark any favours

MOSCOW: France coach Didier Deschamps said his team will be going all out to win their final World Cup group game against Denmark today as they look to wrap up first place.

Deschamps is expected to make several changes for the encounter in Moscow with France guaranteed a spot in the last 16 following wins over Australia and Peru. Denmark require just a point to join France in the knockout stages, and could even pip Les Bleus to top spot in Group C with a victory.

"We are not going to give them a helping hand. Our

'Crazy' or in love, Russia dances to Latin World Cup beat

MOSCOW: Latin American countries have sprung a World Cup surprise by filling Russia's 11 host cities with tens of thousands of fans from Mexico and Colombia to Peru and Argentina. And some of the Europeans who did show up said their friends back home told them they were crazy to go. The contrasting cast of supporters at the biggest event in sport reflects Russia's progressive creep away from Europe in the 18 years of President Vladimir Putin's rule.

Moscow is now embracing new allies that happen to worship football and where damning—and often exaggerated—media stories about Russian hooligans and poisoning cases are rare. This mix and the added ingredient of a more evenly spread-out global middle-class with the means to travel the world has the streets of Russia dancing to a decidedly Latin beat.

"We didn't expect it to be this beautiful and the people are amazing," Mauricio Miranda said as he waved a Colombian flag on the edge of Red Square in Moscow. "We will definitely come back," said the 30-year-old.

Belgian public relations consultant Jo De Munter does not necessarily disagree. It is his friends who do. "I think Europeans are a bit afraid," the 46-year-old said while staring in the direction of Lenin's Mausoleum. "In Belgium, everybody told me I was crazy to go to the football."

World Cups come in all shapes and sizes and comparing ticket sales rarely tells the whole tale. Europeans and Latin Americans are naturally more inclined to attend World Cups held in their regions because of the easier travel arrangements and familiarity.

South Africa in 2010 may provide a better example because it was a frontier football country with specific security and logistical risks. Yet FIFA figures showed almost 50 percent more Britons bought tickets for the African continent's first World Cup than this maiden one in eastern Europe.

Australians were in third place then but are just ninth in Russia. Germany and England bought the fourth- and fifth-most number of tickets. France was ninth. But France dropped out of the top 10 in Russia while Britain slipped down to last place. Germany remained fourth.

The United States has long led purchases among non-hosting countries because of its massive economy and large communities from football-mad Mexico and other Central American communities.—AFP

Sports

Sale dazzles with 13-strikeout as Boston Red Sox blank Mariners

Tampa Bay complete three-game sweep of New York Yankees

BOSTON: Chris Sale struck out 13 in seven innings as the Boston Red Sox defeated the visiting Seattle Mariners 5-0 on Sunday afternoon at Fenway Park. Sale (7-4) allowed only four hits and walked one. Mitch Moreland homered for the Red Sox, who took two of three games in the weekend series after splitting a four-game set last week in Seattle. Joe Kelly and Matt Barnes each pitched a perfect inning of relief for the Red Sox to complete the shutout. Sale didn't reach a three-ball count on a batter until walking Guillermo Heredia with two outs in the seventh. Seattle left-hander Marco Gonzales (7-5) matched Sale for the first four innings before running into trouble in the fifth and taking the loss.

REDS 8, CUBS 6

Pinch hitter Jesse Winker smashed a three-run homer and Joey Votto hit a go-ahead, RBI double as host Cincinnati rallied to win its seventh straight game and sweep a four-game series from Chicago. The Reds won the game with a seven-run seventh inning that included RBI hits by Winker, Votto, Tucker Barnhart and Jose Peraza, who had two run-scoring plate appearances in the frame with a single and a walk. The Reds scored a run earlier as pitcher Michael Lorenzen hit a pinch-hit solo homer. It was his third career homer. Chicago, which blew a five-run lead, was swept in a four-game series by the Reds for the first time since April 1983.

RAYS 7, YANKEES 6 (12 INNINGS)

Rookie Jake Bauers homered on the first pitch in the bottom of the 12th inning as host Tampa Bay completed a three-game sweep of New York in St. Petersburg, Fla. Bauers lifted a fastball from Chasen Shreve (2-2) over the center field fence. It was his second career homer and Tampa Bay's first hit since the third inning. It also occurred after Bauers nearly hit a grand slam off Shreve in Saturday's 4-0 win, and four innings after Giancarlo Stanton hit a game-tying homer off Vidal Nuno.

INDIANS 12, TIGERS 2

Jose Ramirez had a home run among his three hits, Edwin Encarnacion hit a grand slam, and Adam Plutko gave up two runs over six innings in his return to the rotation as host Cleveland extended its winning streak to seven games by beating Detroit. Ramirez extended his on-base streak to 31 games as the Indians moved to a season-best 10 games over .500 with the three-game sweep. Francisco Lindor and Jason Kipnis also hit home runs. Tigers starter Matthew Boyd (4-6) lasted just three-plus innings as Detroit saw its losing streak reach five games.

DODGERS 8, METS 7 (11 INNINGS)

Justin Turner capped a homer-happy game for Los Angeles by hitting a solo shot in the 11th inning to beat host New York at Citi Field. Enrique Hernandez and Cody Bellinger hit two solo homers apiece for the Dodgers, who swept the three-game series and have won nine of 12, while Max Muncy and Joc Pederson had a solo shot apiece. The seven homers tied for the second-highest single-game total in team history, and the seven solo shots matched the major league record. Kevin

Plawecki had a homer and a career-high four RBIs for the Mets, who have lost six straight and 18 of their past 22.

BRAVES 7, ORIOLES 3

Nick Markakis had two hits and drove in a run against his former team to help Atlanta defeat visiting Baltimore. Markakis, who played for the Orioles from 2006-14, was 2-for-4 and went 6-for-14 against the Orioles in the three-game series. Brandon McCarthy (6-3) earned the win in his first start since June 15 as the Braves salvaged a game in the weekend series. The big right-hander allowed three runs on five hits in five innings, striking out five. He gave up home runs to Trey Mancini and Mark Trumbo.

TWINS 2, RANGERS 0

Jose Berrios struck out a career-high 12 batters during seven shutout innings as host Minnesota snapped Texas' seven-game win streak. Berrios (8-5) allowed just three hits in picking up his fifth win in his past six decisions. He walked two and left after throwing 107 pitches, 70 of which were strikes. Robbie Grossman and Eddie Rosario each had two hits for the Twins, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Fernando Rodney struck out the side in the ninth to pick up his 17th save.

CARDINALS 8, BREWERS 2

Jose Martinez capped a five-run fourth inning with a three-run home run, sending St. Louis past host Milwaukee. Luke Weaver (4-6) struck out nine in 5 2/3 innings, limiting Milwaukee to two runs as the Cardinals gained a split of the four-game series. Christian Yelich homered for the Brewers, who had allowed three or fewer runs in eight of their previous 10 games.

WHITE SOX 10, ATHLETICS 3

Oakland set a major league record for consecutive road games with a home run, but host Chicago erupted with two big innings for the win. Yoan Moncada went 2-for-4 with a double, a home run and a career-high six RBIs for the White Sox. Chicago scored five runs in the fifth inning and five more in the sixth to salvage a series split. Mark Canha's blast in the fifth gave Oakland a home run in 25 games in a row on the road. That surpassed the previous mark of 24 straight road games with a homer, which was set by a 1996 Baltimore Orioles squad that featured Brady Anderson, Rafael Palmeiro, Bobby Bonilla and Cal Ripken Jr.

ASTROS 11, ROYALS 3

Yuli Gurriel recorded three extra-base hits, including a grand slam to cap an eight-run second inning, pacing host Houston in the rubber match of the three-game series with Kansas City. Gurriel finished 3-for-5 with two doubles and two runs, but it was his second career grand slam that turned the tide fully in favor of the Astros. He struck the decisive blow in the two-out rally against Jason Hammel (2-9), posting his fourth home run of the season and second in as many days to double the Houston lead to 8-0 in the second. Astros right-hander Gerrit Cole (9-1) struck out eight while throwing five innings of one-run ball.



BOSTON: Mitch Moreland #18 of the Boston Red Sox hits a two-run home run against the Seattle Mariners in the sixth inning at Fenway Park on Sunday in Boston, Massachusetts. — AFP

GIANTS 3, PADRES 2 (11 INNINGS)

Hunter Pence connected on his second career walk-off hit against San Diego closer Brad Hand, a bases-loaded, two-run double in the bottom of the 11th inning to give host San Francisco the win. The Giants responded after Manuel Margot celebrated a return to the leadoff spot by walking and scoring the go-ahead run on a two-out single by Cory Spangenberg in the top off the 11th, giving the Padres a 2-1 lead. Seeking his 22nd save of the season, Hand (1-4) struck out Brandon Belt to start the 12th before Andrew McCutchen laced a double. The Padres intentionally walked Buster Posey, but Hand hit Brandon Crawford in the back to load the bases with one out. Pence then sliced a liner past Padres first baseman Eric Hosmer.

BLUE JAYS 7, ANGELS 6 (10 INNINGS)

Kendrys Morales' two-out, pinch-hit home run in the top of the 10th inning lifted Toronto over Los Angeles in Anaheim, Calif. Morales was pinch-hitting for Aledmys Diaz, who homered earlier in the game. Angels reliever Hansel Robles threw a 2-1 slider that Morales hit into the right field bleachers for his eighth homer of the season. The Blue Jays hammered four homers in the game, also getting long balls from Devon Travis and Curtis Granderson. Justin Smoak chipped in with three hits, including two doubles. Ryan Tepera (5-2) got

the win, and Tyler Clippard pitched the 10th for his fourth save.

MARLINS 8, ROCKIES 5

Derek Dietrich homered for the third straight game and tied a career high with four hits, and visiting Miami overcame the loss of starter Caleb Smith to beat Colorado. Dietrich matched his career high with four hits, first accomplishing the feat earlier this month at St. Louis.

Nolan Arenado and Gerardo Parra homered for the Rockies. The start of the game was delayed 1 hour, 31 minutes when heavy rain and hail hit Coors Field shortly before first pitch. Smith exited in the second inning due to left shoulder tightness. He is day-to-day. Drew Rucinski (2-1) tossed 2 2/3 innings for the win, and Kyle Barraclough earned his seventh save.

DIAMONDBACKS 3, PIRATES 0

David Peralta and John Ryan Murphy hit early homers to power Arizona to a four-game series sweep of host Pittsburgh. After a strong start, Arizona's Clay Buchholz (2-1) left after five innings because of tightness in his left side. He gave up two hits while striking out five and walking none. Buchholz later said he hoped he would be ready for his next scheduled start. Brad Boxberger pitched the ninth inning for his 17th save. — Reuters

Allen ekes out hurdles win over Holloway

IOWA: Devon Allen beat collegiate champion Grant Holloway by two-thousandths of a second to win the 110m hurdles, and world indoor champion Sandi Morris took women's pole vault honors at the weather-hit US championships in Iowa on Sunday.

Olympian Allen eked out the victory in 13.452 seconds to Holloway's 13.454 in the final event of the four-day championship that was halted by rain and lightning for more than three hours. "It came down to a race off the last hurdle and I came out on top," Allen told reporters.

"I've been working on my speed so I knew if I was in the race the last hurdle I would have a chance and that's what it came down to." World record holder Aries Merritt finished fourth in 13.52, just behind Jarret Eaton (13.51) in a race run into a head wind.

Morris had just missed her only attempt at a 2018-leading 4.94m when the competition was halted because of

the impending storm and she decided to call it a day. "All day we had a toss up with the weather," the world silver medalist told NBC Sports after winning the event at 4.80m.

An anticipated challenge by Jenn Suhr fizzled early as the 2012 Olympic champion went out at 4.60m to finish behind Katie Nageotte (4.70). Wind played a big role in the performances, Morris said.

"We had swirling winds and head winds, which really affect you in the pole vault because your pole is pretty much like a sail," she said "You catch the wind and it messes up your un a little bit." A large field did not help either. "It took an hour and a half before I even took my first jump," Morris said.

"Then I got in a really good roll," she said of five consecutive first-attempt clearances. "Then at the end I had to be cut short." Her only miss before the failure at 4.94m came on her first attempt at 4.55m. Before the rains came, former world silver medalist Shamier Little posted the second best women's 400m hurdles time of the year (53.61 seconds).

Iowa native Shelby Houlihan, who won the 1,500m on Saturday, gave the small Des Moines crowd something else to cheer about by winning the 5,000m in 15:31.03. — Reuters

Indian prodigy chess champ at 12

NEW DELHI: A 12-year-old Indian boy described as "unstoppable" by his proud father has become the world's second youngest chess grandmaster ever. Rameshbabu Pragganandhaa, the son of a bank employee from the southern city of Chennai, achieved the feat with some aggressive play at an event in northern Italy that ended Sunday.

Pragganandhaa-whose 17-year-old big sister Vaishali Rameshbabu is also no slouch at the game, being a two-time youth chess champion-was aged 12 years, 10 months and 13 days when he won the title.

But this was too old to beat the current record-holder, Sergey Karjakin of Ukraine, who was 12 years and exactly seven months when he made the grade in 2002. Pragganandhaa's father said that his son, who practices six hours a day and watches past matches online, was not even four when he first started taking an interest in chess. However he said the family could not afford to pay for extra travel and training for both the boy and his sister. "But the passion in him to play chess was unstoppable, I had to give in and put him in coaching classes. And he has been unstoppable since," the 53-year-old, who has the same name as his son, told Indian media.

"He was just six years old when he came second in the under-eight national championship. That is when I knew that I can't hold him back because of our financial situation," he told online paper The News Minute. A predecessor to chess is thought by some to have originated in India in the sixth century AD, from

where it spread to Persia and developed into the "Game of Kings" it is today.

However in modern times it only achieved major popularity in India when Vishwanathan Anand became the country's first grandmaster aged 18 in 1988 and dominated the game in the 2000s. On Sunday the five-time world champion congratulated Pragganandhaa.

"Welcome to the club & congrats Pragganandhaa!! See u soon in Chennai," he wrote on Twitter. "He plays other outdoor sports too when he wants to relax his mind," the prodigy's father said. "When his focus is not on the board, he is quite a handful. But he saves most of his aggression for the chessboard," he said. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, India's sports minister, said Monday that the government was awarding Pragganandhaa 400,000 rupees (\$5,900) plus 100,000 rupees from the National Sports Development fund for training. — AFP



Kuwait awarded membership of FIP

KUWAIT: Kuwait obtained membership of the Federation of International Polo (FIP) and authorized for organization and arbitration of the sport, head of the Kuwaiti polo committee Houssam Al-Kharfai said yesterday. He lauded that national committee for the achievement amid the "tough circumstances" the Kuwait sports are facing on the international scene. After a year of hard work and relentless endeavors, FIP's President Nicholas Colquhoun-Denvers announced the committee, an affiliate of the Kuwait Olympic Committee (KOC), as a full member in the federation

as of June 18. Polo is relatively a new sport in Kuwait, Kharfai said, noting that FIP includes 86 mem—KUNA



FIB - Head of the Kuwaiti polo committee Houssam Al-Kharfai.



SNIPPETS



Saudis stun Egypt 2-1 in World Cup farewell despite Salah strike

Egypt finish in last place with no points

VOLGOGRAD: Saudi Arabia pulled off a last-gasp 2-1 win over Egypt as the two sides departed from Russia yesterday, with the Saudis notching their first World Cup victory since 1994 and adding to the misery of Egypt's prolific striker Mohamed Salah.

The Liverpool forward put Egypt ahead but wasted a golden opportunity to double the lead, giving Saudi Arabia the chance to claw their way back into the game that was settled by a 95th-minute winner by midfielder Salem Al-Dawsari.

The result meant Saudi Arabia finished third in Group A as they scored their only goals of the tournament and vastly improved on a 5-0 thrashing by hosts Russia in their opening game. Egypt finished in last place with no points, a result likely to heap pressure on Argentine coach Hector Cuper.

It was a sad send-off for Salah who missed the opening game of the tournament with the injury he picked up during Liverpool's Champions League final defeat to Real Madrid in May. Both sides were already packing their bags before they met in the heat of the Volgograd Arena, having failed to pick up a single point between them in their previous group matches.

Nonetheless, Egypt's hordes of supporters roared on Salah whenever he got near the ball and he opened the scoring in the 22nd minute when he raced on to Abdallah Said's long pass and kept his cool to lob Saudi goalkeeper Yasser Al-Mosailem.

That was Salah's second goal in the two games he has played in Russia and he should have had another almost immediately but somehow missed when put clean through. He was made to pay for the wasted opportunity deep into first-half stoppage time when Colombian referee Wilmar Roldan



VOLGOGRAD: Saudi Arabia's forward Salem Al-Dawsari (L) is held back by Egypt's defender Ahmed Fathi during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group A football match between Saudi Arabia and Egypt at the Volgograd Arena. — AFP

awarded Saudi Arabia a penalty and Salman Al-Faraj converted from the spot.

Minutes earlier, Egyptian keeper Essam El-Hadary had marked his record-breaking appearance as the oldest player to play at a World Cup at 45 years of age with a spectacular save from another penalty, diving to his right and sticking out

his left hand to shove Fahad Al-Muwallad's strike on to the bar and away. Saudi Arabia pressed for a winner in the second half but the game appeared to be heading for a 1-1 draw - which would have meant Egypt finished third in the group - until Abdullah Otayf teed up Al-Dawsari to angle his shot past El-Hadary. —Reuters

Uruguay punish sluggish Russia to top Group A

SAMARA: Uruguay burnished their World Cup credentials with a 3-0 victory over 10-man Russia yesterday, finishing top of Group A with a perfect record while dampening the hopes of the tournament hosts, who had to settle for second.

Luis Suarez grabbed his second goal of the tournament to open Uruguay's account with a free kick after 10 minutes and they doubled the lead with an own goal from Russia's Denis Cheryshev soon after.

That silenced a vociferous home crowd who had been in party mode after Russia's opening two victories and were not expecting their final group contest to be effectively ended in the 36th minute when Igor Smolnikov was sent off for a second booking.

Edinson Cavani bundled home a third goal for Uruguay at the death to wrap up their third straight victory, ensuring they finished above the Russians, who will now have to face the winners of Group B in the last 16. Uruguay, who kept their sixth straight clean sheet, will face the runners-up from Group B, which will be decided when Spain, Portugal and Iran battle it out for two last-16 spots later. While Russia had confounded those who predicted a group stage exit with resounding victories over Saudi Arabia and Egypt, there was still a question mark over how they would perform when they faced stronger opposition.

Twice World Cup winners Uruguay offered them the chance to show they truly belonged among the elite, but it was an opportunity wasted, merely serving to give ammunition to their doubters.

"I believe that when we had 10 people in the pitch we were running and wanted to attack more," said Russia coach Stanislav Cherchesov. Yet while Smolnikov's sending off may have ended Russia's hopes, in truth the encounter had already swung



SAMARA: Russia's forward Artem Dzyuba heads the ball with Uruguay's midfielder Lucas Torreira (L) during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group A football match between Uruguay and Russia at the Samara Arena in Samara yesterday. — AFP

decisively against them. They went behind in sweltering conditions at the Samara Arena when Suarez struck a low free kick into the bottom corner that should have been easy pickings for Russia keeper Igor Akinfeev. Sadly for the home fans, who had created a deafening din in the opening minutes, Akinfeev inexplicably vacated his bottom left corner, moving back to the side of the goal his wall was guarding and leaving space for Suarez to stroke the ball home.

It was Suarez's second of the tournament and seventh World Cup goal overall for Uruguay, with only

Oscar Miguez having scored more for the South Americans with eight. Russia doubled their lead in the 23rd minute when Diego Laxalt's shot from the edge of the area deflected off Cheryshev, leaving Akinfeev wrong-footed. It should have been 3-0 before Smolnikov departed, but Akinfeev made a good save to deny Rodrigo Bentancur when the midfielder was played through by Suarez. With qualification already assured, Cherchesov had made three changes to his starting line-up with Smolnikov among those drafted in. —Reuters

No mercy for Messi, promise Nigeria ahead of WCup showdown

SAINT PETERSBURG: Nigeria will take delight in ending potentially Lionel Messi's last World Cup for Argentina despite their love and admiration for the five-time world player of the year, promised Super Eagles coach Gernot Rohr.

Victory for the Africans in Saint Petersburg today will send Argentina home in disgrace after failing to win a game in Russia and send Nigeria into the last 16. "We love this great player, Messi, everybody loves him," said Rohr yesterday. "The question is not if it is the last World Cup for him or not, the question is for us to be qualified."

"We are not here to watch him playing. We are

here to make a result, we are professionals. "We are here to defend the colours of Nigeria and we know in football there is no mercy, no pity, everybody wants to win and we cannot make any gifts even if we like very much this player."

Messi carried Argentina through a troubled qualifying campaign but has so far failed to fire in Russia, missing a penalty in a 1-1 draw with Iceland before Croatia thrashed the two-time world champions 3-0.

Nigerian defender Brian Idowu admitted he would love Messi's shirt as a memento, but also insisted he wants to send Argentina packing. "Our main goal is that it will be Messi's last World Cup game, as much as footballers we love watching him play," said Idowu, who was born in Saint Petersburg and still plays his club football in Russia for Amkar Perm.

"I would love of course to swap jerseys with him but I would love to swap jerseys with many players in the Argentinean side. "They have many very good players and I watch them all play on TV, so it is not just Messi."

Nigeria moved into second place in Group D behind already qualified Croatia by beating Iceland 2-0 thanks to an Ahmed Musa double. However, that victory came at a cost as captain John Obi Mikel suf-

fered a fracture in his left hand that means he will be forced to wear a cast if he is to face Argentina. "The captain has a fracture of the third metacarpal of the left hand. It's not so big fracture, it's a little one, but he has to play with a cast," added Rohr. "We have to ask to the referee to accept, but it is hard plastic so I think it is ok. (He has) not so many pains and he will be ready I think." — AFP

WORLD CUP 2018			
Today's Matches (All local timings)			
Denmark	17:00	France	
Australia	17:00	Peru	
Nigeria	21:00	Argentina	
Iceland	21:00	Croatia	

25 Zlatan on the mind for wistful World Cup Swedes



26 Sale dazzles with 13-strikeout as Boston Red Sox blank Mariners



27 Saudis stun Egypt 2-1 in World Cup farewell despite Salah strike



Iran snatch late draw with Portugal

European champions will meet Uruguay in round of 16



SARANSK: Portugal's forward Cristiano Ronaldo and Iran's goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand (C) vie for the ball during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group B football match between Iran and Portugal at the Mordovia Arena in Saransk yesterday. — AFP

SARANSK: Portugal advanced to the World Cup round of 16 behind Spain from Group B after Ricardo Quaresma's stunning strike on the stroke of halftime was cancelled out by a dramatic stoppage-time penalty by Iran's Karim Ansarifard yesterday.

Portugal finished tied on five points with Spain, who drew 2-2 against Morocco to top the group by scoring more goals, and set up a second round clash with Group A toppers Uruguay in Sochi on Saturday.

Making his World Cup debut at the age of 34, Quaresma played a one-two with Adrien Silva to cut in

from the right flank and curled the ball past the outstretched hands of goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand with the outside of his boot.

Iran were awarded a penalty in stoppage time after Paraguayan referee Enrique Caceres used the video assistant referee (VAR) system to rule that Portugal's Cedric Soares had handled the ball in the box.

Ansarifard converted the penalty to make it 1-1, pushing Portugal to second spot in the group behind Spain. Portugal were left to rue a missed penalty by Cristiano Ronaldo in the 51st minute after Beiranvand

pulled off a heroic save to deny the European champions a 2-0 lead.

Caceres consulted with VAR to award the penalty for Morteza Pournajm's foul on Ronaldo amid vociferous protests from the Iranians and their numerous supporters at the Mordovia Arena.

The Real Madrid forward, however, failed to convert, also losing the chance to tie England's Harry Kane at the top of the scorers' list on five goals. Iran, needing a win to have any realistic chance of advancing to the knockouts for the first time, were well organised at the

back and defended stoically but did not have enough men going forward.

Carlos Queiroz's men relied mostly on counter attacks and while forward Sardar Azmoun showed plenty of glimpses of his talent, it was not enough to deny the Portuguese. Portugal had faced a lot of criticism for their lacklustre display and inability to hold possession in their 1-0 win against Morocco but they appeared determined to set that right against the Asian powerhouse. Spain will meet hosts Russia at Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium on Sunday. — Reuters

Last-gasp Aspas sees Spain draw 2-2 with Morocco

KALININGRAD: Iago Aspas scored a VAR-assisted equaliser in injury time as Spain scrambled a 2-2 draw with Morocco yesterday in a dramatic finale to their Group B campaign. Aspas' winner, initially disallowed but awarded after intervention from the Video Assistant Referee, saw Spain stumble into the last 16 as group winners. The Spaniards will now face World Cup hosts Russia in the second round after Portugal were held to a 1-1 draw by Iran in the night's other game. Spain survived a real scare from a spirited Morocco side who had been leading 2-1 when the 90th minute began. Aspas' clever flick from a wide free kick was initially adjudged by the assistant referee to have been offside.

But after intervention from VAR it was given as a goal, much to the consternation of the Moroccan players and substitutes, some of whom stormed the pitch in protest. Morocco coach Herve Renard said before the game his team, the first to be eliminated this tournament, had been victim to "total injustice" in their opening 1-0 losses. The North Africans, who had yet to score a point or even a goal before Monday, started brightly, compact without the ball and breaking at speed. Morocco took the lead on 14 minutes when Boutaib took advantage of a horrible mix-up

between Sergio Ramos and Andres Iniesta to race through and slide the ball calmly through David De Gea's legs.

Spain were level five minutes later when some crisp passing sent Iniesta free inside Morocco's box. He cut back with the outside of his right boot to Isco, who fired into the roof of Monir El-Kajoui's net from six yards. The Real Madrid playmaker was at the heart of every Spain attack, caressing clever passes to teammates and weaving past wrong-footed defenders. Boutaib missed a glorious chance to restore the advantage when he found Spain's centre backs sleeping off a quick throw only to fluff the one-on-one with De Gea.

But La Roja should have gone in ahead at half-time, with Iniesta's square pass missing Diego Costa's outstretched right boot by millimetres from point blank. Morocco sat back in the second period and invited Spain to try to break them down. When they regained possession they broke with pace and purpose, and nearly took the lead after 55 minutes when Noureddine Amrabat's right-foot scorch from distance cannoned off the crossbar.

Isco's header on the hour mark forced a goal-line clearance from Ghanem Saiss, chosen by Renard to start over captain Mehdi Benatia. Morocco were aggrieved not to be awarded a penalty 10 minutes from time when the ball struck Pique's fist in the area. They weren't complaining minutes later, however, when substitute Youssef En-Nesyri headed home the corner that followed to the rapture of the Moroccan supporters. But Aspas' late equaliser took some of the gloss of what had been a spirited and well-drilled performance. — AFP



KALININGRAD: Morocco's midfielder Mbarek Boussoufa (L) vies with Spain's midfielder Thiago Alcantara during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group B football match between Spain and Morocco at the Kaliningrad Stadium in Kaliningrad yesterday. — AFP