



4 Kuwait's Health Minister sets prices of medicines



7 Migrant crisis continues to haunt European Union



24 Iraqi amputees take the plunge to forget horrors



28 Mobot, Olympic dreams as Asian Games ends



MPs up in arms over death of 2 cadets at military academy

Top military officers suspended; Reports show cadets died of dehydration

Amir to meet Trump

CAIRO: Kuwait's ruler will travel to Washington today and hold talks with US President Donald Trump, the state news agency KUNA announced yesterday. It was not immediately clear what the leaders would discuss, but HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has led mediation efforts to resolve a year-long dispute between Gulf Arab neighbors after Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt cut diplomatic, trade and transport ties with Qatar.

The four countries accuse Doha of supporting terrorism and cosying up to regional foe Iran. Doha denies those charges. US President Donald Trump publicly sided with the Saudis and Emiratis early on in the crisis but then began pushing for a resolution to restore Gulf unity and maintain a united front against Iran.

Reuters reported in July that the administration was quietly pushing ahead with a bid to create a new security and political alliance with six Gulf Arab states, Egypt and Jordan, in part to counter Iran's expansion in the region, citing US and Arab officials. The administration's hope is that the effort, tentatively known as the Middle East Strategic Alliance, might be discussed at a summit provisionally scheduled for Washington on Oct 12-13, the sources said, though the Qatar rift could present a big obstacle.—Reuters



DAMASCUS: Children return from school at the Jaramana Palestinian refugee camp in the Syrian capital Damascus. The UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) has been a lifeline for millions of Palestinians since it was set up nearly 70 years ago.—AFP (See Page 24)

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Lawmakers yesterday expressed outrage at what they described a "murder" of two cadets at the military academy during training and called for strict punishments to those who were directly responsible. Opposition Islamist MP Mohammad Hayef said that two cadets were "killed" in what he described as a "massacre" at the academy when they were forced to stand under the scorching heat of the sun for hours while carrying heavy weights during training.

He said several other cadets were suffering of injuries and one of them in a grave condition as the senior officers also refused to give them any water. Hayef said provisional medical reports have shown that the two cadets had died of dehydration and malfunction of vital organs. Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah cut short his treatment from cancer in Britain and returned to the country to lead investigations into the issue.

Sheikh Nasser ordered the formation of a committee from outside the ministry to probe the causes of the death of the two students and the injury of several others. The minister yesterday ordered the suspension of all officials linked to the incident and training while the chief of staff General Mohammad Al-Khadher ordered major changes to training programs at the academy.

But MP Hayef said that the suspension of the officers is not sufficient and they deserve to be sent to jail until the results of the investigations are published. He called on the relatives of the deceased and those injured to file

Continued on Page 24

Life upended for those left off Indian citizenship list

GUWAHATI: Nimai Hajong remembers almost nothing of the hills of eastern Bangladesh where he was born more than half a century ago, having fled as a small child to India where he has lived as a refugee ever since. The 58-year-old has been declared a foreigner - one of four million people effectively stripped of citizenship by the government of the northeastern state of Assam.

Their names have been left off a draft list of citizens published late July that rights groups say threatens to render millions stateless if they cannot prove they are Indian. The controversial registry includes only those able to show they were in Assam before 1971, when millions fled to the state to escape Bangladesh's war of independence, and their descendants.

However, many whose families arrived before 1971 say authorities have rejected their papers and left them off the list. Critics say it is the latest move by the right-wing government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to bolster



GUWAHATI, India: Nimai Hajong and his wife Sinibala Hajong sit in front of their house in Bamunigaon village in Assam's Kamrup district.—AFP

India's Hindu majority at the expense of minorities. India will hold a national election next year. Many of those left off the list are Muslims, but those of other minorities and faiths - including Hindus - have also missed out.

Assam, where one third of the population is Muslim, has for decades been wracked by tensions over migrants and is the only Indian state to compile such a register. Just over four million of the total Assam population of more than 30 million people who applied to be on the list were

Continued on Page 24

Iran boosts its defenses

DUBAI: Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said yesterday war was unlikely but called on Iran's armed forces to boost their defense capacities, according to his official website, as the country faces increased tension with the United States. On Saturday, Iran announced plans to boost its ballistic and cruise missile capacity and acquire modern fighter planes and submarines to boost its defenses following the US pull-out from Tehran's nuclear agreement with world powers.

"Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized that based on political calculations there is no likelihood of a military war but added that the armed forces must be vigilant ... and raise their personnel and equipment capacities," the website quoted Khamenei as telling commanders of Iran's air defense forces. "The Supreme Leader said ...the air defense units were a very sensitive part of the armed forces and on the front line of confronting the enemy, and emphasized the need to increase their readiness and capabilities," the website said in its report on the gathering, which was held to mark Iran's Air Defense Day.

Saturday's news of the military development plans came a day after Iran dismissed a French call for negotiations on Tehran's future nuclear plans, its ballistic missile



Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

arsenal and its role in wars in Syria and Yemen. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said last month the Islamic Republic's military prowess was what deterred Washington from attacking it. Separately, a senior Iranian diplomat met visiting UK Junior Foreign Minister Alistair Burt and urged swift European action on a planned package of economic measures to offset the U.S. pullout from the accord and the reimpositions of sanctions by Washington, the state news agency IRNA reported.

Continued on Page 24

Duterte eyes arms deals on Israel trip

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte yesterday left for a visit to Israel and Jordan, pursuing a pivot away from his nation's long-time reliance on American military hardware and support. The four-day visit to Israel will be the first by a Philippine leader in more than 60 years of diplomatic ties between the two nations, even though the links between their people go back to Manila's sheltering of Jews during the Holocaust.

Duterte's visit has generated much attention, powered both by his penchant for foul-mouthed statements - including likening himself to Hitler - and his internationally condemned drug crackdown that has killed thousands. Duterte, accompanied by an entourage including soldiers and police, will sit down with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and hold an event with some of the thousands of Filipino migrant workers in Israel.

"We assign great importance to this visit, which symbolizes the strong, warm ties between our two peoples," Israel's foreign ministry said in a statement. Duterte has pivoted the Philippines away from its former colonial master the United States and towards warmer diplomatic and business ties with China and Russia. The US and Canada have both seen military hardware deals fall apart with

Continued on Page 24

US to cancel Pakistan aid

WASHINGTON: The US military plans to cancel \$300 million in aid to Pakistan due to Islamabad's lack of "decisive actions" in support of American strategy in the region, the Pentagon said yesterday. The US has been pushing Pakistan to crack down on militant safe havens in the country, and announced a freeze on aid at the beginning of the year that an official said could be worth almost \$2 billion.

The Defense Department has sought to cut aid by \$300 million "due to a lack of Pakistani decisive actions in support of the South Asia Strategy," Lieutenant Colonel Kone Faulkner said in an email to AFP. "We continue to press Pakistan to indiscriminately target all terrorist groups," Faulkner said, adding that the latest aid cut request was pending Congressional approval. The announcement came days before US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is scheduled to visit Islamabad to meet new Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Pakistan has fought fierce campaigns against home-grown militant groups, and says it has lost thousands of lives and spent billions of dollars in its long war on extremism. But US officials accuse Islamabad of ignoring or even collaborating with groups, which attack Afghanistan from safe havens along the border between the two countries. The White House believes that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency and other military bodies have long helped fund and arm the Taliban for ideological reasons, but also to counter rising Indian influence in Afghanistan.



LAHORE: Pakistani demonstrators take part in a protest against US aid cuts in Lahore.—AFP

It also believes that a Pakistani crackdown could be pivotal in deciding the outcome of the long-running war in Afghanistan. "No more! US frustration has boiled over before: President Donald Trump's predecessor Barack Obama authorized drone strikes on Pakistani safe havens and sent US commandos to kill jihadist kingpin Osama bin Laden in his Abbottabad hideout. But Trump's aggressive language has especially

angered Pakistani officials. "The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools," Trump wrote on Twitter at the beginning of the year. "They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help.

Continued on Page 24

Local

Kuwaiti economist explains how Kuwait can benefit from Saudi's vision in new book

Foreign investors seek trustworthy markets governed by modern laws: Salloum

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Kuwait Times spoke with Abdullah Al-Salloum, a Kuwaiti economist and author. Recently, he published his book 'Kingdom of the Vision', which was a best-seller on both Amazon's Arabic books and Jamalon, the Middle East's largest online book retailer.

Kuwait Times: Tell us a little about yourself.

Salloum: I am a 37-year-old Kuwaiti economist, entrepreneur, investor and author in the fields of economics and information technology. I hold a master's degree in Business Administration and a bachelor's degree in Computer Science. As part of social responsibility, during the past five years I have been extensively active on social media channels, publishing field-related content. I have been speaking at conferences and seminars, giving educational courses, authoring books and publishing newspaper articles.

In addition, I utilize my solid software engineering background to originate new accounting techniques and tools that help entrepreneurs, investors and households to self-create qualified feasibility studies, self-generate expense rationalization studies and self-evaluate their current or other businesses for the purpose of sale or acquisition. These various techniques and tools are available online - for free - dedicated to the public domain with a CCO license as part of social responsibility.

'Kingdom of the Vision'

KT: Tell us about your book 'Kingdom of the Vision'. What is your vision of Saudi Arabia's economy?

Salloum: 'Kingdom of the Vision' is an economic book that extensively elaborates - in a macroeconomic perspective - Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 in six chapters. The first chapter, 'The Rent', visualizes the economy's direction if Saudi Arabia remains a rentier state - a state that depends on oil as the main source of income. The second chapter, 'The Vision', discusses the vision that led to extracting primary goals and the strategy used to achieve these goals. The third chapter, 'Housing', reasons the current housing difficulties, elaborates on them, and links the vision's strategy to solving those difficulties, such as introducing a 'white land tax'.

The fourth chapter, 'Saudi Aramco', shows the SWOT analysis of listing the Saudi giant oil company after changing it to an energy company. The fifth chapter, 'Citizens Pocket', introduces money concepts and how currency numbers do not matter, but value. The chapter discusses value-added and income taxes, in addition to the real impact of workforce nationalization and increase in expats' fees. The last chapter, 'Business and Investment', elaborates on new changes in direct investment policies, local business environment, giant projects like NEOM and the Red Sea project.

The book was published on the July 20,

2018, exactly a year after publishing 'The Currency of Mount Serenity'. 'Kingdom of the Vision' was ranked as a bestseller on Amazon (Arabic books category), Jamalon (the Middle East's largest online book retailer) and Jarir Reader (the Middle East's largest ebook store).

I am very optimistic that the strategy of Vision 2030 will be able to somehow achieve the majority of the set goals, thus creating a more modernized and sustainable economy within the next decade.

KT: Why did you choose to focus on the economy of Saudi Arabia in your book?

Salloum: Many believe I should be focusing on Kuwait's economy. Kuwait is a rentier state that depends mostly on oil exports. However, sooner or later, Kuwait's government has to consider sustainability in terms of the economy. This will not happen unless the increase in our GDP becomes very dependent on the increase to export manufactured locally, giving them more added value rather than exporting a natural resource - oil. Once that occurs, by default, Kuwait's economy will be attached to the closest largest economy; in our case, Saudi Arabia.

Therefore, focusing on Saudi Arabia can be more efficient. However, this does not mean we would disregard pushing Kuwait towards sustainability. On August 8, 2018, I started a new project called 'Kuwait of the Sustainability'. I will publish it online in November and present it to government if they like to adopt it - a project that introduces a new chapter every week out of 10 chapters that criticize Kuwait's Vision 2035 (New Kuwait) and give economic solutions and alternatives. The project speaks to the public to raise awareness standards, which is the basis for local politicians' desired direction. There is a very high likelihood that paperback and ebook editions of the project will be available when the 10 chapters are published.

Investment growth

KT: What is your outlook on investment growth in Kuwait? What do you suggest to attract foreign investors?

Salloum: The growth rate is obviously, comparably, very low. The reason behind this is that the local economy relies primarily on local investments. Foreign investments, once they start hitting the economy, would form a very high portion of total investments. Attracting foreign investors is not an easy task because they require the presence of modern business legislations and laws, which Kuwait lacks today. Such a task requires very professional cooperation between government officials and MPs, who are currently busy considering other less important matters, unfortunately.

Last year witnessed several fraud cases in the real-estate investment sector involving Ponzi schemes of high monthly returns that ended with stealing and bankruptcy. Why would a foreign investor be attracted to a market that has not yet legislated a clear law for fraud schemes which were first practiced

more than 150 years ago?

KT: E-commerce seems like a case where there is a lot of potential for progress. What do you think?

Salloum: It is a bit complicated, and in fact differs from sector to sector. Entrepreneurs who are targeting local cash-flow have proven themselves in terms of e-commerce modeling, operating and financing. They are doing a great job in terms of ideas, research and development and implementation as long as they are within the startup-to-small-business area. However, due to the absence of real business incubators and modern legislations, growing is very hard for them. Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat were very small projects that could easily attract investments that knew the path of profitable listing. This path cannot be easily found in Kuwait.

Those entrepreneurs will face a very difficult challenge once Kuwait moves towards sustainability, which - as a cost of strategy - will reduce the total local money supply. The entrepreneurs' challenge is to change their business strategy to attract foreign cash-flow. However, this takes several years to adapt due to its dependence on facilitate



'Economic shock' best approach to introduce taxes

customs matters, which is yet another political matter. Unlike e-government, e-banking is way ahead of international standards. Apps of Kuwaiti banks have proven themselves in terms of design, professionalism and services. However, if e-banking lacks the international link with global platforms like Amazon, Paypal, etc, then it would be due to issues with the Central Bank rather than the local financial institutions offering the e-banking services.

Tax system

KT: How do you see the most successful approach towards introducing a tax system? What about selective taxes and value-added tax?

Salloum: In terms of economics, I see an 'economic shock' approach, which introduces all the cuts, taxes, etc at once, as the most successful approach. Such an approach has a severe initial impact - creating a shock that hits all businesses and people that have been benefiting from rentier-state outcomes. Surely they will not enjoy it as it interferes with the economic culture they used to live with. Such a shock changes their habits, introducing a new culture that can live with the tax system strategy.

Introducing VAT on all or selected products and services should consider valid sta-

tistics on people's consumption of elastic vs inelastic and mandatory vs secondary products and services. Income tax is to be considered after VAT if statistics show a high rate of capital flight or rate of consumption abroad. In terms of politics, by default, the public does not like taxes. MPs - even if they believe it is of the public's interest - will not tend to lose their public favor over such a decision. Therefore, introducing such an approach requires raising the public awareness in this matter.

KT: Are you optimistic or pessimistic about Kuwait's economic future? What are your economic expectations?

Salloum: Very pessimistic as long as there is no political reform. I believe the economy of Kuwait will approach the 'no-return' point if it continues as is for the next 10 years. The current active generation is still able to drag the economy, making it sustainable. Younger generations, who have suffered culturally within the current state, will find it more difficult to fix what we have left unfixed, and so on, recursively, for the generations after that.

KT: How do you view the current situation of the banking sector and the role assigned to it under the economic conditions?

Salloum: Despite Central Bank ties, the banking sector's client-end is very advanced and professional. It is giving a great client experience. However, the back-end or at the groups of boards level, it is still bureaucratic and under political and big investors' interests. Recently, the public witnessed unusual - probably prohibited - actions in terms of disclosure and/or conflict of interest and/or insider trading.

Labor market

KT: Has Kuwait succeeded in reforming the labor market? Do you believe that the economic situation and plans in Vision 2035 will allow reducing the number of foreign workers and increase national labor?

Salloum: I have not witnessed any major reform but random decisions in the labor market. Such decisions cannot give a clear final goal but achieve small goals in favor of many others. In terms of Vision 2035, I do not believe what was announced suffices to be called a vision. A vision is a visualization of a future state. This future state clearly has to be advanced way ahead of its time. In other words, the projected economy of Kuwait in 2035 has to be way better than the economy in 2035 if things remain unchanged. Then, we must set primary goals whose achievement would create that 'way better economy'. Finally, we must set the main and sub strategies, by which we can achieve these goals.

Unlike Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, Kuwait's Vision 2035 has not followed the minimum standards of a vision concept. Instead, the government created a list of giant and large projects that are either completed, previously planned and being executed, or previously planned and not yet



Abdullah Al-Salloum

executed. The government then gathered the goals of those projects and made up its vision. As the projects were planned before the announcement of the Kuwait's Vision 2035 (New Kuwait), how would this vision give us a better economy in 2035? Whether this vision exists or not, the economy in 2035 will be the same because the goals are not new. Accordingly, the vision clearly has no strategy to follow, and there is no place for 'based on the vision's strategy'. The strategy, unfortunately, is to continue the rentier-state economy. Back to the labor force - not the vision itself, but the projects which were planned before the announcement of the vision, will definitely increase the total workforce, with a higher portion of national workforce. 'Kuwait of the Sustainability' project, which we are currently working on, will give the public a very clear visualization on this matter.

KT: What is the biggest challenge that GCC countries face in your opinion? How can investors be persuaded to invest?

Salloum: Politics. The GCC countries are in a very critical stage. The cases of Yemen, the Qatar blockade, Syria and Iran are creating very volatile GCC markets. Foreigners seek trustworthy-through-stability markets that are governed by modern financial laws. GCC countries should work on that to attract big investors first; the small ones will follow once they see real opportunity for them, financially and culturally.

KT: The Gulf economy is in general an oil-based economy - what are the most effective solutions for moving from the oil economy to a diversified economy?

Salloum: This solution differs from one state to another. The decision-making process in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and UAE is fully centralized. Therefore, following the leads of macroeconomic theories will be more than sufficient to have a diversified economy. On the other hand, having a diversified economy in Kuwait requires political maturity through political reform, which can lead to sufficient decision-making outcomes that do not interfere with the leads of those macroeconomic theories.

Primary, middle schools start today



KUWAIT: Ministry of Education and World Bank Group officials attend a course over the intricacies of the education sector, held in Kuwait yesterday. — KUNA

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Education said yesterday that it was ready and prepared to receive some 251,004 primary and intermediate school students today to begin the school year. According to ministerial statistics, the number of kindergarten students so far reached 43,413 students. They will be attending school tomorrow. The Ministry of Education extended enrollment dates for kindergarten year 2018 and 2019 as an exceptional period for parents to register their children from Sunday through Thursday until September 20.

Meanwhile, an official noted yesterday that courses offered by the World Bank Group (WBG) have proven effective in improving the quality of education. Such courses are akin to a roadmap to educa-

tional stability, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education's Undersecretary Haitham Al-Athari told reporters after meeting with WBG representatives on the sidelines of a course over the intricacies of the education sector.

On the four-day course, he said it represents a starting point for any plan designed to set in motion an education overhaul, expressing hope that the participants in the course are able to acquire new knowledge. Meanwhile, WBG's deputy manager Firas Raad underlined the international organization's mission of ensuring universal access to education, one of the pillars of sustainable development. He went on to say that the WBG will employ all resources at its disposal to bring that goal to fruition. — KUNA

Commerce Minister opens consumer protection center

KUWAIT: Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan opened yesterday the new Consumer Protection and Control Center at The Avenues shopping mall as part of the ministry plan to spread commercial awareness and consumer knowledge. The ministry of commerce will soon launch a smart application that will allow citizens to file a complaint without their actual attendance at the center, Roudhan said at the inauguration ceremony. The center will offer many services such as issuing license for carnivals, sales and event organizations in addition to a specialized department for customer's complaints with bilingual qualified and experienced staff, he added.

Assistant Undersecretary for the Commercial Surveillance and Consumer Protection Sector Eid Al-Rasheedi said in a statement that the Ministry plans to open more centers to serve and protect the consumer



Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan speaks to reporters.

from commercial fraud and issue licenses for festivals and events. It also plans to demolish 12 centers out of 21, which already exist and rebuild them as part of its expansion plan, Rasheedi noted. He clarified that this sector has already executed a seasonal plan, spreading inspectors at different markets in the country to investigate and control any violation of law. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Employees are seen at the new Consumer Protection and Control Center in the Avenues Mall. — KUNA

Local

Raising fuel prices helped Kuwait make \$1.2 billion surplus in two years

Bedoon students banned from joining private universities' councils

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Kuwait achieved financial surplus of \$1.2 billion in two years, as the annual surplus is estimated at \$600 million based on the price of oil barrel at \$60. The surplus in the budget became possible after Kuwait raised gas prices in September 2016 by reducing subsidies on fuel prices, and reducing incentives for government officials. Furthermore, the country seeks the implementation of selective tax next year, under the commitment to reduce the state's deficit in the 2018/2019 fiscal year which is estimated at KD 7 million. Kuwait's Ministry of Commerce and Industry Undersecretary Abdelghaffar Al-Awadhi had stated that raising oil prices, considering that average price of oil remains at KD 40 per barrel, will save KD 120 million during the first year of implementation.



Unionist defends manpower authority workers

from being nominated to student councils or unions. He explained that the ban comes at the instructions of the central department for remedying the status of illegal residents.

Fake employment

Director of labor inspection department at the Public Authority for Manpower Mohammad Al-Ansari said that as part of its coordination with the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program, the authority was informed about the results of inspection on Kuwaiti workers in the private sector to take legal action against fake employment cases, and to stop paying allowance for fake employees. Regarding violating companies, Ansari said that the department which handles violations of employers and companies coordinates directly with the misdemeanors and investigations departments at the interior ministry, which sends violations to the public prosecutor.

In other news, Head of the Workers Union at the Public Authority for Manpower Fahad Al-Osaimi made a scathing attack against a number of lawmakers, who he accused of insulting the authority's staff lately. He

expressed rejection to those "who want to belittle the staff members or marginalize their important role in organizing the market place." Osaimi said that workers at the authority have a vital role in implementing standards of international organizations that were ratified by Kuwait.

Osaimi was speaking during a press conference held yesterday morning at the Public Authority for Manpower, which he had called for in order to 'defend workers' and she light on their role in "safeguarding citizens' rights in the private and oil sectors."

"After the establishment of the manpower authority five years ago and its separation from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labors, workers were able to achieve unprecedented success in various administrative, legal and financial fields," Osaimi said, adding that the authority collected KD 67 million for the state though its budget is nearly KD 50 million. Lawmakers had recently criticized manpower authority workers during recent statements in which they slammed a government decision to merge the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program, which handles Kuwaitis' employment in private companies, with the Public Authority for Manpower, which organizes labor affairs in the private sector.

Nursery closed

Education Ministry Undersecretary Dr Haitham Al-Athari issued a decision to close down the building of



Al-Ikhlis nursery in Al-Qusoor area of Mubarak Al-Kabeer governorate. Students will be moved to Al-Manar nursery, located in block 2 of the same area.

Encroachment on state property

The Environment Public Authority, in cooperation with Kuwait Municipality and environment police, inspected a Sulaibiya site following complaints about environmental violations on state property there. Kuwait Municipality Director General Eng Ahmad Al-Manfouhi was present during the operation. Inspections revealed that several unlicensed stores were built and rented to companies. The violators were issued citations for not complying with the environmental law. Meanwhile, Kuwait Municipality removed the site because of encroachment on state property.

Army chief affirms importance of revising academy programs

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Army Chief of General Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khader affirmed yesterday necessity of revision and follow up of the Ali Al-Sabah Military Academy educational programs to make sure of their suitability for students. Khader checked in his meeting with the academy's command during an inspection tour on the process of the education and training of the college students who have recently joined the academy. He stressed importance of providing all services needed in the facility and emphasized its appropriateness for students' daily activities. His visit to the academy was by order of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh

Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah in which he stressed importance of tackling all obstacles that may hold back the educational process. Minister Al-Sabah also ordered to provide all basic needs and suitable atmosphere for the students to have a complete and regular military education. Khader was accompanied by Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Col Gen Abdullah Nawaf Al-Sabah.

Separately, Khader met yesterday with the Commander of the Peninsula Shield Joint Forces Major General Abdulaziz Ahmed Al-Balawi and his accompanying delegation. The two sides discussed issues of common interest particularly in military aspects, said the Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations of Defense Ministry in a statement. The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief of Staff Abdullah Nawaf Al-Sabah and Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Planning Major General Mohammed Al-Kandari. The joint Peninsula Shield forces delegation also met with Kandari, discussing aspects of military cooperation. The meeting was attended by a number of senior army officers. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Chief of Staff of Kuwait's Armed Forces Lieutenant General Mohammad Khaled Al-Khader meets with the Commander of the Peninsula Shield Joint Forces Major General Abdulaziz Ahmed Al-Balawi. —KUNA

No injuries in Mishref, Saad Al-Abdullah fires

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Firemen put out a blaze that burned a vehicle parked outside a building in Mishref yesterday. No injuries were reported. Meanwhile, firemen from two separate fire stations tackled a blaze that started in the kitchen of a Saad Al-Abdullah area house yesterday. No injuries were reported in the incident as well. Investigations were opened to reveal the causes of the two fires.

Pedestrian hurt

An American woman was hurt when a vehicle ran her over in Manqaf. The victim was taken to Adan hospital, while the driver, a Kuwaiti citizen, was to the

police station for questioning. The driver, who had made the emergency call following the accident, told police that he was surprised as the woman crossed the road, and tried to avoid hitting her but to no avail.

Theft

A man filed a case with Fintas police, saying that an unknown person spent KD 213 from his personal account on online shopping. In his statements to police, the Nepalese man said that he was surprised to receive a notification informing him that KD 213 was deducted from his account to pay for purchases made on an online store for sports products. He handed police a bank statement showing the transaction that was done in two parts. Investigations are underway.

Accident

Ahmadi authorities summoned a dentist for questioning over charges pressed by his female colleague, who accused him of kicking her in the foot. The doctor said that it was an accident, adding that the complainant rejected his apology and lodged a complaint.



KUWAIT: Firefighters extinguish a fire in a vehicle parked outside a building in Mishref.



The scene inside the kitchen of a Saad Al-Abdullah area house, where a fire was tackled yesterday.

THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Summer is waiting...

Subscribe now
or renew your subscription for 1 year
only K.D 30 & get K.D 39

4 Cards FREE
4.750 KD each

+

4 Coupons FREE
5.000 KD each

Enjoy

P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait | Tel: 24833199 - 24833358 - 24835616/7
Fax: 24835620 - 24835621 | E: info@kuwaittimes.net

Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: People fish at a fishing pier in Kuwait City. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Health Minister sets prices of medicines, pharmaceuticals

Ministry organizes 3rd Infectious Disease Conference

By A Saleh and Agencies

KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr Bassel Al-Sabah issued a ministerial decree yesterday setting the prices of a number of medicines and pharmaceuticals in Kuwait. The ministry did not make the actual price test available to the media. Meanwhile, the drugs and food supplements pricing committee at the Ministry of Health (MoH), headed by Assistant Undersecretary for Drugs and Food Control Dr Abdullah Al-Bader, took practical measures by having companies submit attested pricing certificate at regis-

tration, even if the registration has to do with MoH tenders.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Health announced yesterday organizing the third Infectious Disease Conference under auspices of Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah on the 22nd and 23rd of September 2018. In this regard, Director of infectious diseases hospital Dr Jamal Al-Duaij said in a statement, yesterday, that the conference, organized in cooperation with London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, aims at providing a platform to the audience to meaningfully connect and discuss new

developments and research in the field of infectious diseases. Conference Chairperson Dr Munther Al-Hasawi said the conference includes interactive panel discussions, keynote lectures, plenary talks, poster sessions, workshop, symposium by international, regional and local speakers. The conference will cover updates in different aspects of tropical medicine, that are commonly seen in GCC countries like imported malaria, leishmania, hydatid disease, brucellosis, leprosy, typhoid fever, neglected tropical diseases, infectious diseases in returned travelers, and HIV medicine, he added.



Dr Bassel Al-Sabah

FM88.8 announce new timing for popular show

KUWAIT: Nabd Al-Kuwait 'FM88.8' CEO Talal Al-Yaqout said that starting from yesterday, the 'Diwaniyat Al-Yaqout and Al-Ansari' program will be broadcast from 1 pm until 4 pm daily Sundays through Thursdays. Yaqout said the new decision was taken after surveys and studies by specialized companies



Talal Al-Yaqout

with a large sample of individuals of various ages, adding that those surveyed who included students, employees, businessmen homemakers and retirees, all said the 'Diwaniyat Al-Yaqout and Al-Ansari' program is the best in Kuwait, adding that the survey revealed that individuals want the program be broadcast starting at 1 pm instead of 12 noon, so that they can listen to it and participate by phone.

Yaqout said this move comes at the request of listeners, and to keep 'Nabd Al-Kuwait' station in contact with its listeners for a longer period as the school year starts, with the usual traffic jams at this time of year, it also comes at the rush hour, as government employees were not able to listen because they leave at 3 pm. "Our program hits the nail in any subject we discuss and has interest with citizens and expats openly and without bias," Yaqout said. "I would like to thank all companies that believed in our program and remain the main sponsors through their ads on the diwaniya."

Leaders Group, Hospitality Services announce 'Horeca Kuwait 2019'

KUWAIT: Leaders Group for Consulting and Development (LGCD) in cooperation with the Lebanese Hospitality Services Company will organize the eighth edition of Horeca Kuwait Exhibition 2019 for hospitality, food industry and hotel supplies. The event takes place from January 13 to January 16, 2019 at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds (Hall 8) in Mishref.

"The continued growth of this exhibition since 2012 solidifies its position as a reference for the hospitality, food and hotel supplies industries in Kuwait," Leaders Group General Manager Nabila M Al-Anjari said. She added that 'Horeca Kuwait 2019' will be held with more momentum, which is already evident in reservations for participation that started as soon as the previous exhibition ended in January 2018.

Anjari added that Leaders Group is keen on the growth of all indicators of this unique exhibition in the country. "Horeca Kuwait is known for boosting the contents of the hospitality and tourism sectors with for more than 20 years," she said. "This is reflected on the types of services our company presents, and in making domestic, Arab and international partnerships

to develop each of those services."

Anjari said that 'Horeca Kuwait' has already gained wide-scale fame in Kuwait and the region as a whole, as "it gathers major companies and establishments active in the hospitality, food and hotel supplies industries, as well as those that deal with hospitals, resorts and restaurants, besides experts, and investors."

Meanwhile, Hospitality Services Company Managing Director Joumana Dammous Salame spoke about the developed partnership with Leaders Group and its General Manager. "Eight years of our joint cooperation in organizing 'Horeca Kuwait', reflect the professionalism and credibility of this partnership, so continuity was achieved, in which we are confident in the exhibition's positive effects on hospitality and tourism in Kuwait and the region," she noted.

She said the 'Horeca' brand in Lebanon and other countries in the region became a partner in the growth of many commercial, industrial and marketing sectors related to hospitality. "This makes us shoulder the responsibility of achieving continued development to meet the requirements and hopes of exhibitors and specialists, as the hospitality sector is witnessing increased competition between several markets and hundreds of trademarks at all levels, under the international trade openness, as well as exchange of experiences and cross borders and continents industries," she indicated.

Salame said Kuwait is distinguished with having a major growth in hospitality, as the number of hotels rose to around 100, and investments in restaurants surpassed KD 600 million according to some sources,



KUWAIT: Leaders Group General Manager Nabila Al-Anjari (left) and Hospitality Services Company Managing Director Joumana Dammous Salame shake hands after signing the agreement to organize 'Horeca Kuwait 2019'.

so organizers of Horeca Kuwait is well aware of the importance of its commercial, technical and organizational role.

Comedy nights festival opens on Al-Dasma stage

KUWAIT: Under Auspices of Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri, 'Layali Masrahiya Comedia' (comedy nights) festival kicked off at Al-Dasma

Theatre on Saturday evening. The opening ceremony saw the honoring of Dawood Hossein - a celebrated Kuwaiti comedian and other celebrities as well as theater companies. The ceremony also saw the performance of 'Al-Orgoha' (the Swing) play directed by Nassar Al-Nassar. Hussein is a talented artist who has a long record of invaluable theatrical works, Dr Bader Al-Dowais, acting secretary-general of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), said in statements. "This is the fourth edition of the festival: it features

performing four comedies until Sunday, September 9," Dr Dowais said. "This festival is on the agenda of NCCAL activities this year," he added, welcoming the large participation by eminent theatre troupes. Director of the festival Tareq Dahrab praised the level of competing comedies, artists and arbiters. The agenda of the festival includes offering the plays 'Wahsh Al-Fardous' (monster of paradise), "Mashrou' Saghir' (small project), 'Derbeg Khidr' and 'Saleh Ya'oud' (Saleh is coming back). —KUNA



Talal Al-Yaqout and Khaled Al-Ansari

COMFORT™

 LEXUS
EXPERIENCE AMAZING



Comfort and sensory exhilaration while driving a Lexus is one of our commitments. Our models are designed to bring a pure, visceral, joyful experience. We employ the same philosophy when you enter our showrooms, which is based on the ancient Japanese philosophy of Omotenashi. Comfort is our trademark, now it can be yours.

MAKE YOUR MARK ON THE WORLD

LEXUS

International

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2018



US commando takes
helm of forces
in Afghanistan

Page 8

Page 9

Thousands mourn the murdered Ukraine rebel 'hero'



BERLIN: Supporters of the Seebuecke (sea bridge) movement pile up life vests during a demonstration for unhampered sea rescue of refugees in the Mediterranean Sea and for secure escape routes for migrants that was titled "Seebuecke creates safe harbors" yesterday in front of the Brandenburg Gate. — AFP

Migrant crisis continues to haunt EU

3 years later, Merkel's decision has left Germany vulnerable

BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel won accolades for her stunning call on September 4, 2015 to keep open Germany's doors to hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers, many fleeing war-torn Syria or Iraq. Three years on, scenes of far-right protesters chasing down foreigners in a German city have shocked the world. All of Europe has seen a sea-change since the migration crisis erupted.

Britain is now just months away from quitting the European Union, the far-right is sharing power in both Italy and Austria, while right-wing extremist group AfD has become the biggest opposition party in Germany's parliament. If there is a common denominator for these upheavals in European politics, it is the migration crisis seized upon by pro-Brexiters and far-right forces across Europe as the public enemy in their campaigns.

Despite her "we can do it" rally cry, Merkel has since agreed to toughening restrictions to curb new arrivals, while the EU as a bloc is seeking to stop migrants landing on its soil. As a result, the influx has slowed considerably. In Germany, which recorded 745,545 asylum applications in 2016, just 93,316 were registered for the first half of this year. Some headway also appears to have been made on integration. One in four asylum seekers who arrived in Germany since 2015 have since found work, according to data released in May by the employment ministry's think-tank IAB. Nevertheless, "migration remains the biggest

challenge" for the bloc, noted Stefan Lehne, visiting professor at Carnegie Europe. "While the numbers of arrivals are down, the hysteria is up, as populist movements and a growing number of mainstream politicians are building their business model on anti-migration sentiments."



The influx has slowed considerably

In the most recent illustration of the deep-seated resentment against newcomers, hundreds of mostly white men gathered swiftly in the eastern German city of Chemnitz, some attacking foreign-looking people, after news circulated that a German man was stabbed to death last Sunday, allegedly by an Iraqi and a Syrian. Across the Atlantic, US President Donald Trump in June also poured fuel on the burning topic: "Big mistake made all over

Europe in allowing millions of people in who have so strongly and violently changed their culture!"

'Fatal solvent of the EU?'

Some analysts warn that not only was Europe's migration crisis not over, it could yet be the undoing of the EU itself. Offering a pessimistic reading of the situation, British historian Niall Ferguson wrote: "Far from leading to a fusion, Europe's migration crisis is leading to fission. Increasingly I believe that the issue of migration will be seen by future historians as the fatal solvent of the EU," the professor at Harvard predicted.

"In their accounts Brexit will appear as merely an early symptom of the crisis." EU member states' reaction to the refugee influx has been dramatically different to that of the financial crisis, which was marked by countries sacrificing controls over the banking system to save the euro, Lehne noted. "The response to the recent refugee crisis was just the opposite," with countries turning instead to national measures. "This logic of re-nationalization, combined with the rise of xenophobia and identity politics in many EU countries, now hampers the development of robust collective instruments to deal with migration challenges," he said.

'Nationalist international'

The migration crisis has also unearthed a key fault-line

between western European nations and the former communist bloc, with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban leading the east in flatly refusing to take in refugees. "Ten years ago, the biggest problem in Europe was that western Europeans were unhappy about EU expansion as they fear job losses," said Bulgarian political scientist Ivan Krastev in an interview with Die Welt daily. "Today, eastern Europeans feel they are the biggest losers."

But he nevertheless voiced support for Merkel's fateful decision because leaving frontline nations Italy and Greece alone to deal with the crisis in 2015 "would have been the end of the EU". Italy's far-right interior minister Matteo Salvini has repeatedly accused Europe of abandoning his country. Ahead of next year's European parliament elections, the hardline minister has also aligned himself with the right-wing "Visegrad" countries of the Czech Republic, Poland, Austria and Hungary to form an anti-migration camp.

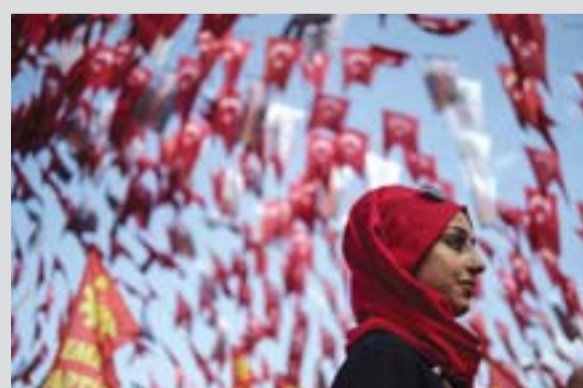
"The appearance of a 'nationalist international' will hopefully trigger a counter-mobilisation of pro-European political forces," said Lehne, noting that this could in turn spark a necessary healthy debate on the future of the EU. "Such a debate involves risks, as major parts of the public remain alienated from the EU, but it also could turn into a catalyst for positive change. Some storms are necessary to clear the air and provide a better view on what the future holds." — AFP

Turkish mothers' protest for disappeared blocked

ISTANBUL: Police in Istanbul on Saturday blocked a weekly demonstration by Turkish mothers demanding state accountability over the fate of relatives who disappeared in the 1980s and 1990s. The women known as the "Saturday Mothers" have gathered almost every week since 1995. But on Saturday police put up barricades near their regular Galatasaray Square meeting place and on the famous Istiklal Avenue to stop them assembling following a ban by the Istanbul governor, an AFP photographer said.

Istanbul authorities had said the rally was banned after calls to attend were made through social media channels linked to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). As the mothers held carnations and images of the disappeared, a press statement was read out describing the ban as "arbitrary", the photographer added. Activists say hundreds disappeared allegedly at the hands of the state, at a time when Turkey was fighting Kurdish militants as well as left-wing extremists.

The action by police came after security forces forcibly dispersed the demonstration last week using water cannon and fired tear gas. Dozens were detained as



ISTANBUL: A woman attends a rally during the World Peace day yesterday at Bakirkoy district. — AFP

the mothers marked their 700th weekly demonstration. They were later released. The group is mainly made up of mothers of victims. Their main demands include access to documents in state archives to shed light on what happened to their relatives and for the statute of limitation to be removed on political murders and forced disappearances. The disappearances happened during political instability following a 1980 military coup when many were detained for political activism and also during the 1990s insurgency by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) for self-rule in the Kurdish-dominated southeast. — AFP

Long reach of US sanctions hits Syria reconstruction

BEIRUT: As Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad attempts to turn military success into postwar reconstruction, Western sanctions are a major obstacle that could scare off foreign companies. Syria has suffered immense physical destruction, while millions of workers have fled, been conscripted or killed. A UN agency estimates the war has cost \$388 billion.

Extensive reconstruction still looks far off. Assad's allies Russia and Iran, as well as China, have made some investments in the country, but they cannot afford the cost of rebuilding and want other countries to share the burden. Western countries say they will not approve reconstruction funding for Syria, or drop sanctions, without a political settlement. Meanwhile, sanctions are making it hard for foreign companies to work there.

Although some have managed to do business in Syria, the wide scope of the sanctions and broad US powers to enforce them mean companies risk inadvertent breaches. Most Western companies are steering clear. One that hopes for future work in Syria, German pipe manufacturer Ostendorf Kunststoffe, exhibited at an international trade fair in Damascus and is building relationships with potential customers. However, it has not agreed any contracts yet and its local representative, Nabil Moughrabie, based in Beirut, said the company was waiting for the political climate to

clear. "We have obstacles. There isn't any direct shipping from Germany to Syria. There are Syrian banks that cannot receive any money from Europe, and European companies that are afraid to receive any more from Syria," he said.

US sanctions on Syria predate the crisis, but were extended after Assad's crackdown on protests in 2011 and again as the country slid into war. The sanctions have frozen the assets of the Syrian state and hundreds of companies and individuals, including government figures, military and security personnel and others accused of involvement in making or using chemical weapons. They ban exports, sales or supply of services, along with any new investments, into Syria by any US person. They also bar any dealings by US persons in Syrian oil and hydrocarbon products, or their import into the United States.

US persons cannot finance or facilitate any transactions by foreigners that would fall under sanctions if done by Americans. European Union sanctions were imposed in May 2011, for Syria's "brutal repression and violation of human rights", and have been updated several times since. They are not as sweeping as the US sanctions, but are still extensive and include asset freezes, travel bans, trade restrictions, financial sanctions and an arms embargo.

They bar trade in items that could be used militarily or for repression, luxury goods, precious stones and metals and equipment or technology for some oil and gas sectors including exploration and production, refining and gas liquefaction. The European sanctions also target Syria's electricity network, banning EU companies from building power plants, supplying turbines or financing such projects. US and EU sanctions include exceptions for humanitarian supplies, and for items needed by United Nations missions in Syria. — Reuters

International

No face-to-face meetings set for Yemen peace talks

Talks to focus on a prisoner exchange deal and the fate of a key port

ADEN: Yemen's warring parties will not meet directly at UN-brokered peace talks in Geneva this week, likely to focus on a prisoner exchange deal and the fate of a key port, government officials said yesterday. The United Nations has invited Yemen's government and the Iran-backed Houthi rebels to Geneva for talks which open Thursday.

Both parties have confirmed they are sending high-level delegations to the talks, but officials say expectations of a breakthrough are low. UN envoy Martin Griffiths has said the talks are aimed at charting a path forward to revive UN-backed negotiations which broke down in 2016. The Yemeni government says the meetings will likely focus on a prisoner exchange deal and the fate of embattled Hodeida, the rebel-held port city that is now the frontline of the Yemen war.

Yemen's Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Yamani told AFP the meetings "will not be face-to-face and depend on how well the UN envoy manages the two sides". "The consultations will be indirect, unless there is some progress that can be made directly," said Abdullah Al-Olaimi, head of Yemen's presidential office and a member of the Geneva delegation.

Prisoner swap deal

Yemen's government has openly said it has low expectations for the talks, blaming the Houthis for refusing to make concessions. "Our expectations are limited to the possibility of progress in the question of prisoners and detainees," Yamani said. "I think this is the chance to succeed in securing the release of prisoners, and I believe the other party is also willing and ready."

The United States, a major ally of Saudi Arabia, on yes-

terday said it "fully supported" Griffiths' efforts. "It is imperative that all parties work toward a comprehensive political solution to avoid further harm to the Yemeni people," said state department spokesperson Heather Nauert. "The aim of this first round of consultations is to better understand how committed both parties are to the framework for formal negotiations... and to come to some conclusions about how those negotiations may start," said UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

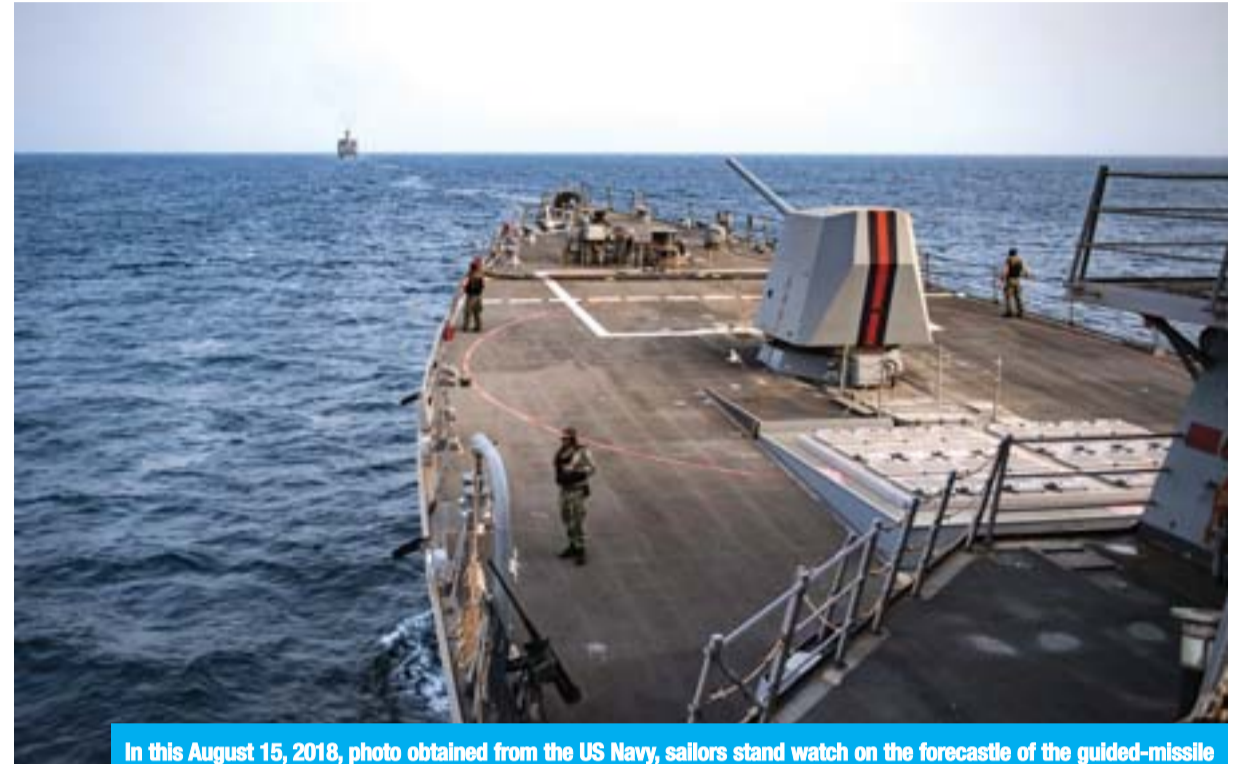
In July, the Yemeni government demanded the release of all prisoners held by the Houthis as a condition for the start of peace talks. Speaking on condition of anonymity, a government source said the delegation would demand the release of 5,000 prisoners while the rebels were hoping for the liberation of 3,000 of their

fighters. Rights group Amnesty International in July said it feared violations in a string of Yemeni prisons could amount to war crimes. The prisons, according to Amnesty, are run by the UAE, the Yemeni government's most powerful partner on the ground. The UAE has denied involvement in any prisons in Yemen.

Fiscal fight

The Geneva talks will also look at the economy in Yemen, long the Arab world's most impoverished country. In 2014, the Iran-backed Houthis overran the capital, driving out the government of President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi and setting up a parallel government in Sanaa. The rebels, however, have been unable to pay the salaries of many civil servants for months, according to reports from the capital.

Yamani said the government could step in to help pay the overdue salaries, a move likely aimed at strengthening



In this August 15, 2018, photo obtained from the US Navy, sailors stand watch on the forecandle of the guided-missile destroyer USS Jason Dunham as the ship escorts the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie (rear) transiting the Bab Al-Mandeb strait. — AFP

the state's grip on the national economy and boosting its standing in rebel-held areas. The foreign minister accused the Houthis of failing to turn in their revenues, which he estimated at 45 billion riyals (\$113 million), to help bolster Yemen's economy.

Backed by Saudi Arabia and its allies, Hadi's government has battled the Houthis for more than three years in

what is widely seen as a proxy war between Riyadh and Tehran. The conflict has killed more than 10,000 people since 2015 and triggered what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Government forces backed by the Saudi-led coalition in June launched a major offensive to capture Hodeida from the Houthi rebels, sparking fears of a fresh humanitarian crisis. — AFP

Copts attacked in Egypt's south over homes used as churches

CAIRO: Egyptian villagers have attacked and looted the properties of Coptic Christians in the southern province of Minya in protest at the use of homes and halls for worship, the region's archdiocese said Saturday. "Four Coptic homes were attacked Friday by residents from the village and other nearby areas," said Bishop Makarios of Minya, about 250 kilometers south of Cairo.

In a statement posted on its Facebook page, the archdiocese of Minya said "extremists" had attacked the village of Demshaw Hashem because of the "existence of a church". It said Christian residents of the village use homes and halls for prayer. "Extremists attacked Copts, stole quantities of jewelry and money, destroyed household appliances and set fire to property," it said. Three people including a firefighter were injured.

"There have been reports for several days about the intention of extremists to carry out the attack," it said. Authorities were informed of the threats but security forces arrived to the village after the assault, it added. A security official said 38 suspects had been arrested. Copts, who make up about 10 percent of Egypt's nearly 100 million people, have long complained of discrimination and intermittent sectarian attacks.

The Coptic minority has been targeted by a series of bloody attacks over the past two years, most claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group. On August 11, an attempted suicide attack on a church in northern Cairo was foiled when the presence of security forces prompted the assailant to detonate his explosive belt on a bridge some 200 meters from the house of worship, according to security sources.

Many churches are built illegally in Egypt due to administrative obstacles. Authorities hailed as a breakthrough a law passed in 2016 on the construction and restoration of churches. But in late 2017, a church around 100 kilometers south of Cairo was attacked by a crowd chanting hostile slogans and calling for the building's demolition. — AFP

Protesters at Nahr Bin Omar oilfield

BASRA: Police used tear gas to disperse around 150 protesters at the main entrance to Iraq's giant Nahr Bin Omar oilfield yesterday, police sources said, amid growing unrest in southern cities over poor public services and corruption. Officials at the field in the southern oil hub of Basra said operations were running normally.

Production from Nahr Bin Omar, which is operated by the state-run Basra Oil Co., now stands at around 44,000 barrels per day, oilfield officials said. On Friday, hundreds of Iraqi protesters stoned and tried to break into the provincial government headquarters in the southern oil hub of Basra demanding better public services and an end to pervasive corruption.

Protesters threatened to break into the field if the government did not respond to their demands to improve basic services and address their complaints over Basra's drinking water, which residents say is undrinkable due to high salt levels. "We will not allow the oilfield to operate unless we get clean water. No services, no jobs and now no clean water. We are fed up," said Hassan Ali, a protest organizer.

Iraqi political blocs are attempting to form a coalition government after a May 12 parliamentary election tainted by allegations of fraud. Oil exports from Basra account for more than 95 percent of OPEC producer Iraq's state revenues. Any potential disruptions to production could severely impact Iraq's limping economy. — Reuters

Blasts at Syrian airbase near Damascus kill two: Monitor

BEIRUT: At least two pro-government forces were killed overnight in a string of explosions at a military airport near the Syrian capital, a monitoring group said yesterday. Syrian state media also reported the blasts at the Mazzeh airbase, on the western outskirts of Damascus, but did not mention any casualties. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said Mazzeh was hit by a "possible Israeli missile, which hit a munitions store setting off successive explosions".

"It left two pro-regime fighters dead and wounded another 11, some of them in critical condition," said Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman. He could not specify their nationalities or whether they belonged to militias or government forces. An Israeli military spokeswoman declined to comment on yesterday.

AFP's correspondents in Damascus heard multiple blasts overnight, one of which lit up the sky in a deep red hue, but reported calm yesterday morning. A Syrian military source said the Mazzeh airbase "was not the target of Israeli aggression", according to the official SANA news agency. "The explosions heard were due to an explosion at a munitions deposit close to the airport which was due to an electrical short circuit," the source said, without mentioning any casualties.

The Mazzeh airbase houses Syrian Air Force intelligence, and in early 2017 the Syrian government accused its neighbor Israel of bombing the base. Israel has sought to avoid direct involvement in the conflict but acknowledges carrying out dozens of air strikes in Syria to stop what it says are deliveries of advanced weapon-

Suicide bomber kills three in Somali capital

MOGADISHU: A suicide car bomb killed three security guards and injured several more people in the heart of the Somali capital Mogadishu yesterday, authorities said. Islamist extremists of the Al-Shabaab movement immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. "There was a car bomb blast targeting the district administration offices and three people died and several others wounded," Mogadishu administration spokesman Salah Hassan Omar told reporters at the scene.

He said the dead were security guards at the building's main entrance where the blast occurred. Witnesses said the explosion destroyed the building. "The blast was very huge, it affected several nearby buildings including a Koranic school and a mosque," said witness Abdulkadir Dahir. "Eight people were wounded among them several students who stayed at a nearby madrasa," he added.

The militants' claim came in a brief statement posted on a pro-Shabaab website. "The Mujahedeens attacked the headquarter of the apostate administration... using a vehicle loaded with explosives, there are



MOGADISHU: A Somali soldier is seen at the car bomb scene. — AFP

casualties," it said. Somalia suffered the worst terror attack of its history in October last year. More than 500 people were killed in Mogadishu in a truck bombing attributed to Al-Shabaab. The Islamists, forced out of the capital in 2011, are fighting to

overthrow the internationally backed government. They still hold sway over vast rural areas. A 20,000-strong African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was deployed in 2007 under a UN mandate to shore up the government. — AFP

Iran parliament drops plan to impeach education minister

TEHRAN: Iran's parliament called off a planned vote to impeach the education minister yesterday, Iranian media reported, offering some respite for the embattled government of President Hassan Rouhani. Twenty-nine lawmakers signed a motion last Wednesday to impeach the minister, Mohammad Bathaei, but all of them withdrew their signatures.

"Given the imminent opening of schools (on September 23), those requesting the impeachment have withdrawn their request," said Ahmad Amirabadi, a member of parliament's presiding board, according to the semi-official news agency ISNA. Rouhani has faced mounting pressure from lawmakers over his handling of an economic crisis, partly triggered by the withdrawal of the United States from the 2015 nuclear deal and re-imposition of sanctions.

Parliament sacked his labor and economy ministers last month, and Industries Minister Mohammad Shariatmadari has also been targeted for impeachment, though it is not clear if that will still go ahead. Rouhani himself was summoned to parliament to answer questions from lawmakers last Tuesday, a first in his five years in power, and only the second time for a sitting president.

Economic grievances played a role in Bathaei's planned impeachment, with lawmakers criticising the reduced budget for education and school renovation, though senior officials pointed out that the minister has no power over budgets. Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei last week welcomed the pressure on Rouhani's cabinet, saying it was a sign of the strength of Iran's democracy. But he also warned that differences between officials should not be overly emphasized "because the people would become worried". — AFP

International

Tens of thousands mourn the murdered Ukraine rebel 'hero'

Praised as a 'brother' and a 'hero' by an aide of Vladimir Putin

DONETSK: Tens of thousands of mourners thronged the streets in Ukraine's rebel stronghold of Donetsk yesterday to pay their final respects to an assassinated separatist leader, who was praised as a "brother" and a "hero" by an aide of Vladimir Putin. Crowds of admirers — many clutching flowers and in tears — clapped and shouted "spasibo" (thank you) as the flag-draped casket of Alexander Zakharchenko, the 42-year-old chief of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, was driven through the streets en route to a cemetery.

Zakharchenko was killed in a bombing at a Donetsk cafe on Friday, becoming the four-year conflict's most prominent victim from the Moscow-backed side. His bodyguard also died and 12 more people were injured. At least 100,000 mourners came to pay their respects to Zakharchenko, whose body had lain "in state" at a theatre for several hours, the authorities said.

Several members of Russia's ultra-nationalist bikers' club Night Wolves including their leader Alexander Zaldostanov were in attendance. The head of Georgia's breakaway statelet, South Ossetia, Anatoly Bibilov, and Russian lawmaker Natalia Poklonskaya also turned out. In a statement carried by the Donetsk republic's news agency, Russian President Putin's aide Vladislav Surkov called the separatist a "brother". "You are a cool guy, a true hero and it's a huge honor to be your friend," said Surkov, calling Zakharchenko Sasha, a diminutive form of his first name. Armed men in fatigues cordoned off the city centre and public transport was temporarily suspended.

“A huge honor to be your friend”

Personal loss

Huge billboards erected in the city centre were plastered with pictures of Zakharchenko and his quotes. "All of us have one Motherland — Russia", read one. "They have taken away a part of our soul," said one mourner, 41-year-old Oksana, who declined to give her last name. "He was like a member of the family. It's a personal loss for me." Many blamed Ukraine for the bombing.

"We will never forget this tragedy, we will never forgive," said Sergei Kapustin, 35. Zakharchenko will be buried next to two prominent rebel commanders known by their noms de guerre, Givi and Motorola. Putin on Friday swiftly sent condolences to Zakharchenko's family and residents of east Ukraine.

Celebration in Kiev

In the capital Kiev, several dozen political activists celebrated the demise of the pro-Kremlin crooner Iosif Kobzon who also died this week. The portraits of the camouflage-clad Zakharchenko and Kobzon — who once sang together — were crossed out with red paint. The activists threw chicken bones at the photographs. Moscow and rebel authorities have said Kiev was behind the assassination, while Ukraine links the bombing to internal feuding and Russia's desire to control the territory. Russia has said the murder was a provocation and would derail the long-stalled, Western-brokered peace process. Zakharchenko had led Russian-backed insurgents in the rebel region for the last four years. In

Western authorities' arch-enemy by setting up a table in front of the Russian embassy. They drank sparkling wine and ate chicken in front of portraits of Putin, Zakharchenko and iconic pro-Kremlin crooner Iosif Kobzon who also died this week.

The portraits of the camouflage-clad Zakharchenko and Kobzon — who once sang together — were crossed out with red paint. The activists threw chicken bones at the photographs. Moscow and rebel authorities have said Kiev was behind the assassination, while Ukraine links the bombing to internal feuding and Russia's desire to control the territory. Russia has said the murder was a provocation and would derail the long-stalled, Western-brokered peace process. Zakharchenko had led Russian-backed insurgents in the rebel region for the last four years. In



DONETSK: Pall bearers carry the coffin during the funeral ceremony for assassinated leader of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic Alexander Zakharchenko. — AFP

November 2014, he was elected the first president of the Donetsk republic and earlier that year took part in the storming of the regional administration building that launched the conflict. More than 10,000 people have been killed since the insurgency broke out in the eastern

Donetsk and Lugansk regions in April 2014 following Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine. Kiev and the West accuse Russia of funneling troops and arms across the border. Moscow has denied the claims despite evidence to the contrary. — AFP

Taken to the USSR, French 'children' forgotten in Belarus

GRODNO: When she set out on a boat for the USSR with her family some 70 years ago, Yanina Stashko had no idea she would never see her native France again. Like millions of others, mainly from continental Europe but also Britain and the United States, Stashko's family was tempted "home" to the Soviet Union by a post-war propaganda drive. But when they got there they lost their previous nationality, found themselves impoverished at best and victims of political repression at worst.

"Of course I could have done much more in France than I did here. But obviously it is too late to go back," the 88-year-old told AFP at the farm where she lives in the west of Belarus. In the 1920s, Stashko's father had moved from what is now western Belarus to France along with his wife. There he worked in the mines in the north of the country which at the time were crippled by strikes. "In France we lived well. We had a house that my father was given from the mine," said Stashko, who was born shortly after her parents' arrival in the country.

Millions like us

But after World War II, her father lost his job. The region from where in Belarus his family originated had become a part of the USSR — at home, they would read Soviet newspapers, which were full of propaganda, and talk about what life would be like on the other side of the Iron Curtain. At the time, the Soviet Union was on a major repatriation drive with immigrants, exiles, "White Russians" who had opposed the Bolsheviks in the Civil War, as well as other refugees from the conflict encouraged to come back.

Soviet statistics from 1952 say as many as 4.3 million people returned from around the world. "In the end, my father said that he wanted to go 'home'. But nobody asked my opinion," said Stashko, who was a teenager and working as a seamstress in France. In 1948, the family set out from the French port of Marseille to Odessa, southern Ukraine, with around 2,800 others, according to only child Stashko. "We travelled as workers, in third class. The people in first and second class took cars with them, their belongings, some of them were leaving behind their businesses in France. "There were doctors, engineers, teachers," the now widowed mother-of-two remembers.

But when they arrived, the passengers in the top two classes were immediately confronted with the realities of Joseph Stalin's regime. "They were arrested and their belongings were confiscated," Stashko said. Her own family saw their French passports confiscated and they were transported in cattle wagons to Belarus. There, her father began work in a kolkhoz, or collective farm, but he was sentenced to a year in prison for "subversion" after an argument with the leader of the collective. "During that time, we tried just to keep our heads down. I used to send letters to France but then I stopped because we were scared."

One last journey home

Thanks to a sewing machine brought with them from France, which they were miraculously able to keep, the family earned enough to survive on meager post-war rations. Up until the 1970s, Stashko would make dresses in the French 1940s style. In 1973, the French state tracked down her father and gave him a comfortable pension for his work in the mines, which then passed to his wife when he died. But after the Soviet Union broke up in the early 1990s, the link to France was lost again. In January this year, the Belarussian press picked up the family's story, and in the summer, Stashko was invited to the French Embassy in Minsk with a dozen other "children of France" and their descendants. The ambassador promised the former seamstress one last journey to the village where she was born in the north of the country. But, at almost 90, there is no guarantee Stashko will be able to make the trip. "I would love to go back to the country and find our house again. And maybe see Paris — I've never seen Paris," she said. — AFP

Tory members sparks fears of right-wing takeover

LONDON: As internal divisions over Brexit plague Britain's ruling Conservative Party, a recent surge in membership has left some fearing the new recruits have ulterior motives. The Tories have seen thousands of new members apply to join its ranks this summer, according to lawmakers and reports. But this newfound popularity has not been welcomed by all within the centre-right bastion of British politics.

"There clearly is a movement of people joining the Conservative Party but for exactly what purpose it's impossible to say," Dominic Grieve, a pro-European MP, told AFP. In his constituency in southeast England it has grown by around 100 people to 1,200 members in recent months — alongside his suspicions. "I'm sure there's a deselection agenda by some members of my association towards me," he added. "The Conservative Party's always been a broad church and tolerant of difference. But I'm afraid at the moment we're going through a political crisis which is reducing tolerance."

MPs who back remaining in the European Union — so-called Remainers — suspect hardcore Brexit supporters

from the right-wing UK Independence Party (UKIP) are joining the Tories to remake its leadership. Their concerns stem from businessman Arron Banks, the single largest bankroller in the 2016 EU referendum campaign, calling for the roughly 90,000 members of his Leave. EU group and its 1.4 million social media followers to join the Conservatives.

He admits wanting to ensure the party's next leader — and therefore prime minister — is a hardliner if Theresa May is ousted amid fierce opposition to her plans for a post-Brexit "common rulebook" with the EU. Under Conservative rules new members are able to vote in leadership contests within three months of joining.

"The best way to secure Brexit and our country's future is via the Conservative Party," Banks wrote in last week's Sunday Times, noting "it is in government and, for now, calls the shots." A grassroots rebellion in the Tory party is possible. In the right conditions a new leader can be swept to power, and sanity can prevail. Our aim is to unite the right," he added.

'Extremist infiltration'

Conservatives last month rejected Banks' own bid to join, reportedly judging he would likely bring them into disrepute. "He is not a Conservative and he supports a rival political party," pro-Remain MP Anna Soubry said in welcoming the move. She urged Tory Chairman Brandon Lewis "to show the courage and determination to stop the extremist infiltration".

Brexit lawmakers disagreed and said

18 injured in German protests for and against migrants

CHEMNITZ: Eighteen people were injured as the anti-migrant far-right and counter-protesters held opposing rallies in the German city of Chemnitz, which was hit by xenophobic demonstrations last week. Chemnitz has been in the spotlight after violent protests erupted over the fatal stabbing of a German man, allegedly by a Syrian and an Iraqi last Sunday.

On Saturday, thousands of people answered a joint call by far-right party AfD and Islamophobic PEGIDA street movement to descend once again on the streets of the former communist city which was in the erstwhile East Germany. But an equally large contingent of counter-protesters, including Green party and Social Democratic Party MPs, also converged to take a stand against racism.

According to police estimates, more than 11,000 demonstrators turned up for the separate protests. Local police, backed up by officers from across Germany, were out in force to keep both sides from clashing. But as the rallies cleared, scuffles took place among small groups. SPD MP Soeren Bartol said on Twitter that his group from Marburg were "attacked by Nazis" while they were heading for the bus.

"All SPD flags destroyed and some were also physically attacked," he wrote, adding that police had arrived swiftly to halt the assault. In all, 18 people were injured, including three police officers, said in a statement Sunday, doubling their earlier injury estimate. Police are also examining at least 37 possible offences, including bodily harm, property damage and resistance against law enforcement officers. Away from Chemnitz city centre, a 20-year-old Afghan man suffered light injuries after he was assaulted by four masked men. Police said they were investigating if the perpetrators counted among demonstrators.

'Get up from our sofas'

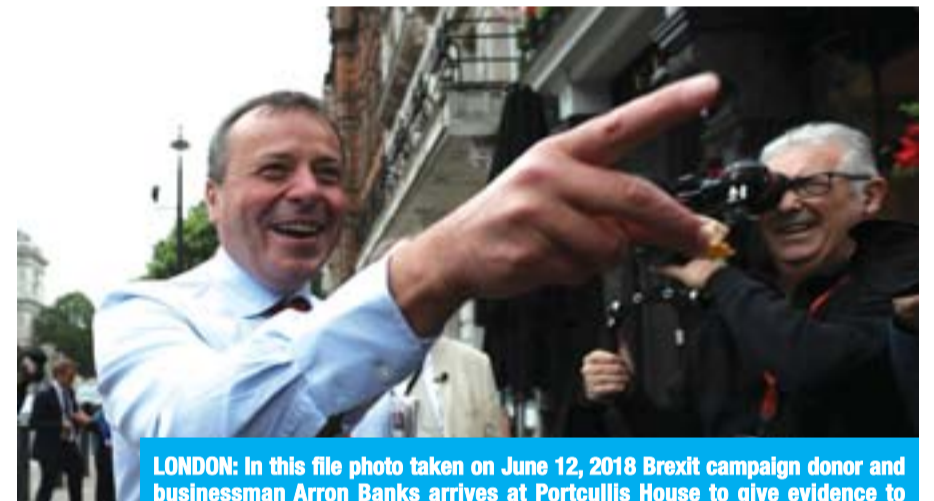
Two smaller demonstrations are planned for Sunday. One is titled "Chemnitz residents sending a democratic signal against violence and xenophobia" while the second is organised by the Protestant church. Another major event is expected today, when German punk band Die Toten



CHEMNITZ: Police move in water cannons during protests by right wing demonstrators on August 27, 2018 in Chemnitz, eastern Germany, following the death of a 35-year-old German national who died in hospital after a "dispute between several people of different nationalities", according to the police. — AFP

Hosen leads a free concert against racism. Foreign Minister Heiko Maas called on Germans to take a stand against xenophobia. "We have to get up from our sofas and open our mouths," he told Bild am Sonntag, stressing that "all of us have to show the world that we democrats are the majority and the racists are the minority." "The silent majority must get louder," he said.

The tensions in Chemnitz have underlined the divisions in Germany over Chancellor Angela Merkel's decision three years ago to keep Germany's borders open to asylum seekers, many fleeing war in Syria and Iraq. Misgivings run particularly high in Saxony state, where Chemnitz is located, over the arrival of more than a million asylum seekers since 2015. The far-right AfD party has won strong support in the region through its campaign against migrant arrivals, and surveys suggest that it is poised to become Saxony's second biggest party in next year's regional elections. — AFP



LONDON: In this file photo taken on June 12, 2018 Brexit campaign donor and businessman Arron Banks arrives at Portcullis House to give evidence to Parliament's Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Committee. — AFP

they welcome the converts, noting Banks was a member as recently as 2013. Conservative Party headquarters declined to comment on Banks or provide new member numbers. A party source said: "We have been driving up membership steadily through a recruitment drive." Insiders added the spike was anticipated due to a new centralized membership system and nationwide campaign managers working to recruit.

Lawmakers like Grieve and Soubry cannot see the national picture, they said. George Evans, 64, of Wirral in northwest England, is among the new members from UKIP but insisted he is a lifelong Tory voter and "far from being a subversive nega-

tive influence". He briefly left the party "to put pressure on them" to hold the 2016 referendum, and rejoined in August to influence Brexit "if there is a leadership challenge". Evans said the growing campaign for a second referendum spurred his decision as much as Banks. "My vision of Brexit is being lost to a Remainer PM (prime minister). Remainer cabinet and majority-Remainer Parliament," he said.

Tim Bale, politics professor at Queen Mary University of London, said a spike in ardent Brexiters joining the Conservatives was "almost inevitable". "If it is being coordinated in some way then that will help the process along," he added, noting its sign-up criteria is "pretty loose". — AFP

Amsterdam stabbing suspect had terror motive

AMSTERDAM: An Afghan man shot by police at Amsterdam's central station on Friday after stabbing two American tourists had a "terrorist" motive, city officials said on Saturday. The suspect, who was identified as a 19-year-old Afghan with a German residence permit, was questioned on Saturday in hospital where he was being treated for gunshot wounds to his lower body.

"First statements made by the suspect indicate he had a terrorist motive," Amsterdam city council said in a statement. German police searched the man's house at the request of their Dutch colleagues and seized several data carriers, the authorities said. The suspect, who is being held in solitary confinement, will be brought before a judge on Monday to decide whether he should remain in custody.

The two people injured in the incident were US citizens, the US ambassador to the Netherlands said in a statement on Saturday. Ambassador Pete Hoekstra said the pair were tourists visiting the city. They remained in hospital on Saturday with serious injuries, local police said. Earlier this week, Dutch police arrested a 26-year-old man suspected of threatening to attack far-right politician Geert Wilders over his plan to hold a contest of cartoons depicting Islam's Prophet Mohammad.

Wilders on Thursday cancelled the contest citing security risks, as thousands of people in Pakistan marched in protest of his plan, while the Taliban in Afghanistan called for attacks on Dutch troops serving in the country. The National Coordinator for Counter-terrorism and Security Policy said the national threat level in the Netherlands was unchanged at "substantial", or one notch below the highest. — Reuters

International

US commando takes helm of forces in Afghanistan

The handover comes at a sensitive time in the 17-year war

KABUL: General Scott Miller took command of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan yesterday, as worsening violence erodes hopes for peace in the war-torn country. Miller, who has commanded special operations units in Afghanistan since 2013, succeeds General John Nicholson, who is rotating out of the post after more than two years.

The handover comes at a sensitive time in the 17-year war that has seen little progress by Afghan or US forces against the Taliban, Afghanistan's largest militant group. Afghan and international players have been ratcheting up efforts to hold peace talks with the Taliban, which was toppled from power by US-led forces in 2001.

An unprecedented ceasefire in June followed by talks between US officials and Taliban representatives in Qatar in July fuelled hopes that negotiations could bring an end to the fighting. But a recent spate of attacks by Taliban and the smaller but potent Islamic State group that left hundreds of security forces and civilians dead has almost extinguished that optimism.

"This is a tough fight," Miller acknowledged during an outdoor change of command ceremony in Kabul attended by top Afghan officials and foreign diplomats. "There's no room for status quo, we cannot afford to be complacent. We must be aware of bias and easy conclusions—they don't exist here." In a WhatsApp message to reporters, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid warned Miller would "fail like the other commanders".

For the past two years Miller has headed up the

secretive Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) and has lengthy experience working with some of America's most elite fighters. Nicholson, who will return to the Pentagon, is the longest-serving US commander of NATO and American Forces in Afghanistan.

There had been concerns that militants would shower Kabul with mortar or rocket fire to spoil yesterday's handover, as they did during Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's speech on the first day of the Eid Al-Adha holiday last month. But the ceremony passed off uninterrupted. Miller takes up his new role more than a year after US President Donald Trump unveiled his Afghanistan strategy, which increased the US troop presence and now includes a renewed push to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table.

But there are fears that Trump is growing frustrated with the pace of progress in the country. The Taliban have long insisted on direct talks with Washington and refused to negotiate with the Afghan government, which they see as illegitimate. There is speculation that another meeting between US and Taliban representatives could be held this month. "We know the military component is only one part of this conditions-based strategy," Miller said.

He added that it was necessary to "create space for the political process" to end the war. Separately, Miller confirmed in a statement that a US airstrike in the eastern province of Nangarhar on August 25 killed the leader of the Islamic State group in Afghanistan. Abu Saad Orakzai, also known as Saad Arhabi, was among

“
There's no room
for status quo
”

'Australia's Guantanamo' looms over Pacific summit

NAURU: Pacific leaders meet in Nauru to discuss regional challenges this week, with the host nation keen to deflect attention from its Canberra-funded migration detention camp dubbed "Australia's Guantanamo" by critics. Official talks at the 18-nation Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) will centre on the threat climate change poses to island states and China's rising influence in the region.

But the presence of the detention centre looms large as the four-day meeting opens today, amid calls from rights groups such as Amnesty International to close a facility it calls "a stain on the region". "Pacific island leaders cannot ignore this issue any longer and need to ensure that it is at the very top of the forum's agenda," Amnesty said after releasing an open letter co-signed with 80 other non-governmental organizations.

The camp houses around 220 asylum-seekers, including more than a dozen children, who have tried to reach Australia by boat. Under Canberra's headline immigration policies, such people are processed in remote facilities on Nauru and Papua New Guinea to prevent them setting foot on the Australian mainland. The UN Human Rights Commission says they face indefinite detention, labeling their treatment "harsh and cruel". However, Australia says offshore processing is needed to stop the deaths that occur when people-smugglers cram asylum-seekers into rickety boats for the treacherous sea voyage. The camp is an economic lifeline for Nauru, which has a population of 11,000 and scant natural resources.

Kathmandu airport scare after plane skids off runway

KATHMANDU: Nepal's only international airport had to be closed for some 11 hours after a domestic aircraft skidded off the recently repaired runway, officials said yesterday. The Jetstream 41 was flying in to Kathmandu from Nepalgunj in southern Nepal late Saturday with 21 passengers onboard when it suffered a runway excursion before coming to a halt onto the adjoining grassland.

Nobody was hurt in the incident but incoming and outgoing flights to Nepal's sole international air gateway were diverted while authorities tried to remove the aircraft, which had become stuck in mud. The airport reopened at 8 am yesterday after the aircraft was moved. The incident comes amid mounting safety concerns over cracks on the runway's surface, which was repaired only recently.

"An investigation committee will look into the cause of the incident. Other flights have safely landed, we don't believe the runway was an issue," the airport's general manager Raj Kumar Chettri told AFP. Nepal has a poor air safety record and Nepal-based airlines are banned from flying in European Union airspace. In April a Malaysian jet with 139 people on board aborted its takeoff and skidded off the runway. In March, a US-Bangla Airways plane crashed near the airport, killing 51 people. The Himalayan nation has some of the world's most remote and tricky runways, flanked by snow-capped peaks with approaches that pose a challenge for even accomplished pilots. —AFP

Climate change 'greatest threat'

In unprecedented restrictions, the government has warned visiting journalists covering the PIF it will revoke their visas if they report on the asylum-seeker issue. "You are only authorized to report on, or take photos or videos of the PIF. Any other subjects must be approved by the RON (Republic of Nauru)," it said.

Such heavy handed tactics have only taken the spotlight off other concerns raised by PIF members in the lead-up to the summit-chief among them climate change. "Climate change represents the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of our people," PIF Secretary General Meg Taylor said.

Some of the PIF's small island nations fear they will sink beneath rising seas, while others are regularly battered by devastating storms fuelled by the changing climate. A major aim of this year's summit is establishing a \$1.5 billion fund to help the region respond to climate change, as well as disasters such as earthquakes. Known as Biketawa Plus, it would be used to strengthen essential infrastructure such as hospitals, power stations and ports that are vulnerable in disasters.

It will also cement existing security arrangements involving the PIF's largest members, Australia and New Zealand. Reports in Australia said the move was seen as a way to counter China's influence in the region, which has grown dramatically in recent years as its foreign aid programme has expanded. Canberra and Wellington have boosted their Pacific aid contributions in response and will be working frantically on the sidelines of the summit to ensure they maintain support in a region they regard as their backyard. Other issues on the table include fighting obesity in the world's fattest region and managing economically important tuna stocks. Yet in a country with an area of just 21 square kilometers — the world's smallest island nation—it will be difficult for delegates to ignore the asylum-seeker camp. One visitor who has taken a keen interest in the refugees is New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, whose offer to accept 150 of them has been rejected by Australia and Nauru.

Bangkok struggles to stay afloat with rising sea levels

BANGKOK: As Bangkok prepares to host climate-change talks, the sprawling city of more than 10 million is itself under siege from the environment, with dire forecasts warning it could be partially submerged in just over a decade. A preparatory meeting begins Tuesday in Thailand's capital for the next UN climate conference, a crunch summit in Poland at the end of 2018 to set rules on reducing greenhouse emissions and providing aid to vulnerable countries.

As temperatures rise, abnormal weather patterns—like more powerful cyclones, erratic rainfall, and intense droughts and floods—are predicted to worsen over time, adding pressure on governments tasked with bringing the 2015 Paris climate treaty to life. Bangkok, built on once-marshy land about 1.5 meters above sea level, is projected to be one of the world's hardest hit urban areas, alongside fellow Southeast Asian behemoths Jakarta and Manila.

"Nearly 40 percent" of Bangkok will be inundated by as early as 2030 due to extreme rainfall and changes in weather patterns, according to a World Bank report. Currently, the capital "is sinking one to two centimeters a year and there is a risk of massive flooding in the near future," said Tara Buakamsri of Greenpeace. Seas in the nearby Gulf of Thailand are rising by four millimeters a year, above the global average. The city "is already largely under sea level", said Buakamsri.

In 2011, when the monsoon season brought the worst floods in decades, a fifth of the city was under water. The business district was spared thanks to hastily constructed dikes. But the rest of Thailand was not so fortunate and the death toll passed 500 by the end of the season. Experts say unchecked urbanization and eroding shorelines will leave Bangkok and its residents in a critical situation.

'Venice of the East'

With the weight of skyscrapers contributing to the city's gradual descent into water, Bangkok has become a



KABUL: Incoming General Scott Miller (C), commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan gestures as he speaks during a change of command ceremony at Resolute Support. — AFP

several people killed in the strike. IS first emerged in Afghanistan around 2014. Currently there are about 14,000 US troops in Afghanistan, providing the main component of the NATO mission there to support and train local forces.

Longest War

Like Nicholson, Miller spent years in Afghanistan before assuming command of US and coalition forces there and his career has followed the different stages of what is now America's longest war. He was among the

first US troops to arrive in 2001 as part of the campaign to topple the Taliban following the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

Almost a decade later, he served during the "surge" ordered by President Barack Obama, which saw more than 100,000 NATO troops in Afghanistan in a bid to crush the insurgency, as well as in 2013-14 as most international troops were withdrawn. Washington has accepted that a purely military victory is not possible and has focused on forcing the Taliban to the negotiating table. — Agencies



NAURU: Locals attend a game of Australian Rules football in Aiwo on the Pacific island of Nauru on September 1, 2018. — AFP

Ardern has not ruled out visiting the camp while she is in Nauru. "I have a hope, an expectation at least, that I will at least be given an opportunity to be exposed to some of the issues around refugees on the island," she told reporters. "What form that takes is not yet clear." Ardern's newly installed Australian counterpart, Scott Morrison, has decided against attending the summit after taking power in the wake of a bitter internal revolt that ended Malcolm Turnbull's tenure as leader. Lowy Institute foreign policy specialist Euan Graham said Morrison's absence risked undermining Australia's bid to revive its diplomatic ties in the Pacific. "Downgraded representation at the PIF would be especially damaging, given that the point of Canberra's 'step up' in the Pacific is all about demonstrating momentum behind Australia's renewed commitment to the region," he told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. — AFP



BANGKOK: This file photo taken on November 10, 2011 shows aircraft on a flooded tarmac at the Don Muang airport in Bangkok, when the year's monsoon season brought the worst floods in decades with a fifth of the city under water. — AFP

victim of its own frenetic development. Making things worse, the canals which used to traverse the city have now been replaced by intricate road networks, said Suppakorn Chinvanho, a climate expert at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. "They had contributed to a natural drainage system," he said, adding that the water pathways earned the city the nickname 'Venice of the East'. Shrimp farms and other aquacultural development—sometimes replacing mangrove forests that protected against storm surges—have also caused significant erosion to the coastline nearest the capital. This means that Bangkok could be panned in by flooding from the sea in the south and monsoon floods from the north, said Chinvanho.

"Specialists anticipate more intense storms in this region in the years to come." Narong Raungsri, director of Bangkok's Department of Drainage and Sewage, admitted that the city's "weaknesses" stem from its small tunnels and the hyper-development of neighborhoods. "What used to act as water basins are now no more," Raungsri said. "Our system can only handle so much—we need to enlarge it." Today, the government is scrambling to mitigate the effects of climate change, constructing a municipal canal network of up to 2,600 kilometers with pumping stations and eight underground tunnels to evacuate water if disaster strikes. — AFP

China police arrest 46 after protest over schooling

BEIJING: Police in central China said yesterday they arrested nearly 50 people after a violent protest sparked by dissatisfaction with the local school system. More than 600 protesters gathered outside a police station in Leiyang city in Hunan province around midnight Saturday after security personnel stopped a protest earlier in the day, police said in a statement on their website.

They said they arrested 46 people who "attacked" the station, throwing bottles and bricks at local officials attempting to address the crowd. Many cars had been destroyed, the statement added. Apparent videos of the protests on Twitter showed an angry crowd violently clashing with police in riot gear. AFP could not independently confirm the video. Trouble began after parents of some middle school students were told they would have to move their children into dormitories at a local private school, resulting in a dramatic increase in tuition fees, according to posts on Chinese social media.

Additionally, commenters complained that unsafe levels of formaldehyde had been detected in some middle schools' newly renovated dormitories. Posts about the incident had been removed from Chinese social media by yesterday afternoon but were preserved by the anti-censorship website Free Weibo. In a statement on its website, the local education department said it would test the dorms' formaldehyde levels immediately. Violent protests are not uncommon in China, where citizens have limited channels for addressing their frustrations with government. Problems affecting children's health and education are particularly sensitive subjects in the country, where government policy for decades limited parents to only one child. —AFP

Malaysia seeks pair to testify in Kim murder trial

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian police are seeking two Indonesian women to appear as witnesses in the trial of the murder of Kim Jong-nam, the estranged half-brother of the North Korean supreme leader. A Saturday police statement said Raisa Rinda Salma, 24, and Dessy Meyrisinta 33, had their last address recorded at a hotel in the city of Ampang just outside Kuala Lumpur and that they could not be reached.

It called for anyone who knew the two women or had information about them to contact the authorities. Police did not give any indication of what the two women might have witnessed or how they could help shed light on the case. Siti Aisyah from Indonesia and Doan Thi Huong from Vietnam are the two women accused of smearing the toxic nerve agent VX on Kim at a busy Malaysian airport, killing him in February last year in a Cold War-style hit that shocked the world.

They were arrested shortly after Kim was assassinated as he waited to board a flight to Macau. Kim, who had lived in exile for years, was once seen as an heir to the North Korean leadership and rival to current leader Kim Jong-un. A Malaysian court ruled in mid-August that there was sufficient evidence to support a murder charge against the pair. The trial is set to resume in November with Siti, 26, set to take the stand when proceedings start, followed by Doan, 30, in January. —AFP

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian GulfTHE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYANEditor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYANEDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Aid cuts embolden Israel but hurt the peace prospects

US President Donald Trump's swingeing cuts to aid for Palestinians will advance Israel's interests but risk compromising a US-led peace push and raise tensions in the Middle East, analysts and diplomats said Saturday. The US administration announced Friday it would no longer provide any funding to the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), a week after cutting over \$200 million (170 million euros) in separate aid to Palestinians. They were the latest in a series of controversial moves by the Trump administration that have thrilled Israel's government but caused shock and dismay among international powers and Palestinians, making their dream of an independent state more distant than ever.

The cuts come as the international community seeks to reach an agreement to deliver significant humanitarian aid to the poverty-stricken Gaza Strip, where most residents rely on external handouts. The US has long been the largest single donor to UNRWA, providing more than \$350 million a year. The agency provides support to Palestinians who fled their homes in the 1948 war surrounding the creation of Israel, as well as their descendants. Israel and the US object to the fact that Palestinians can pass refugee status to their children, and want the number of refugees covered by UNRWA to be sharply reduced.

The Palestinians accuse the US of blatant bias and of seeking to strip them of their rights. A week earlier, the US government ended Palestinian funding by USAID, which amounted to more than \$200 million a year. In December, the US recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, breaking decades of international consensus that the status of the disputed city should be negotiated between Israelis and Palestinians. The May opening of the US embassy in the city triggered Palestinian protests that saw dozens of demonstrators in Gaza shot dead by Israeli forces.

A European diplomat said Saturday the US moves, taken in conjunction with an American pledge to veto any motions criticizing Israel at the UN Security Council, were emboldening Israel's government, considered the most right-wing in the country's history. Israel is increasingly convinced it has a free hand to accelerate settlement growth and even advocate for annexing parts of the West Bank, the diplomat said. Alan Baker, a former Israeli diplomat-turned-analyst, said the government would be thrilled by the aid cuts. "The UNRWA thing is very logical as it has become an anachronistic organization - maintaining the refugee status rather than trying to solve it."

No leverage with Palestinians

Baker said the aim of the cuts was also to force the Palestinians back to the negotiating table, though others said that was unlikely. Trump's team, led by his son-in-law Jared Kushner and Middle East envoy Jason Greenblatt, has been pushing for what the US leader has called the "ultimate deal", but the Palestinians have boycotted his administration since its Jerusalem announcement. The cuts mean the US is providing very little aid to Palestinians, and another European diplomat said the move weakened Trump's hand. "When you have no money left to threaten them with, you have reduced your leverage," he said.

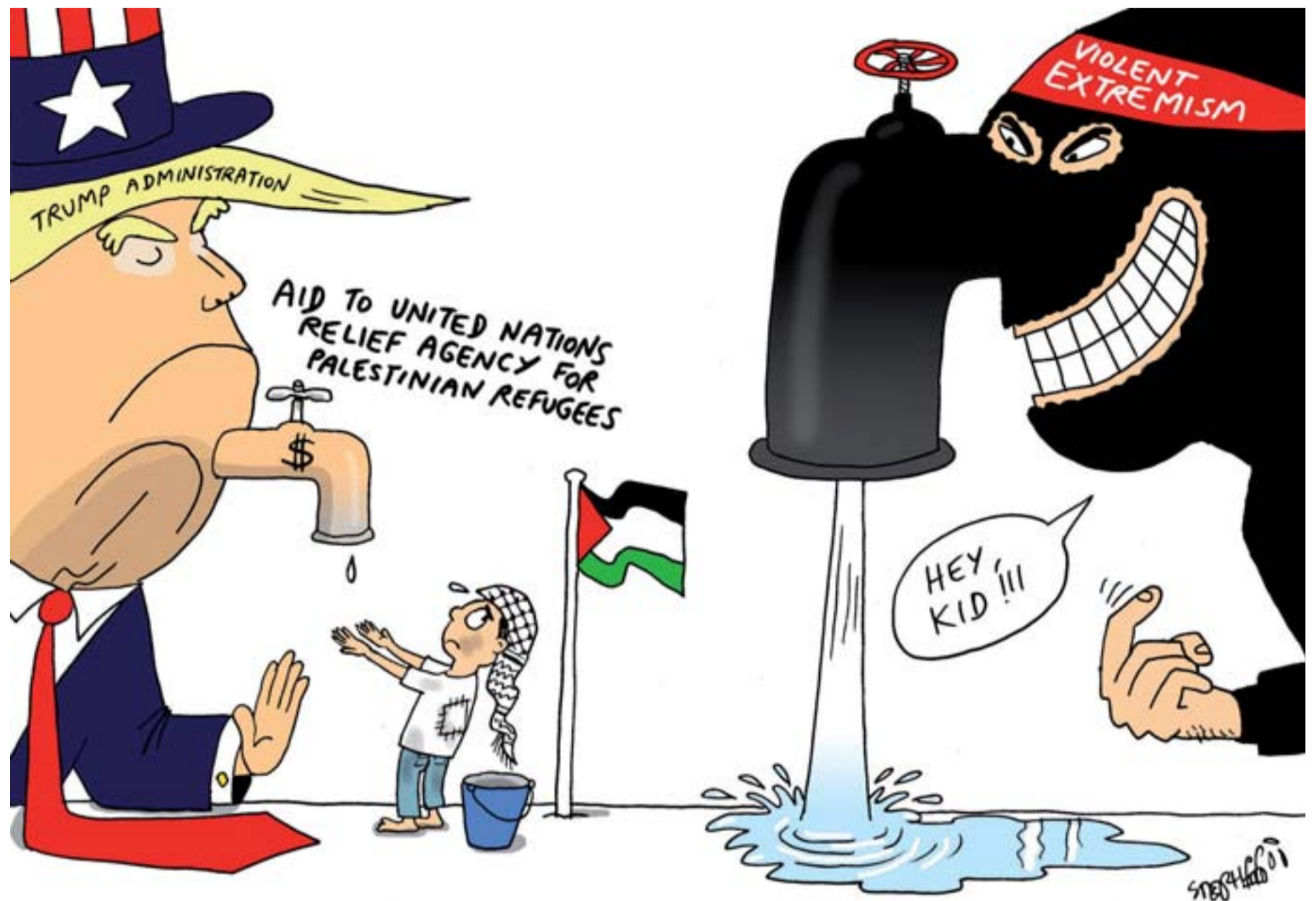
Palestinian economist Nasser Abdel Kareem told AFP the cuts would hurt Palestinians but have little impact on the government. Unlike some European states, the US does not provide direct budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority. The only part of US funding that goes directly to the PA - for security coordination with Israel - was not cut. The cut "will not harm the treasury of the Palestinian Authority," Kareem said. Nadia Hijab, president of the Palestinian think tank Al-Shabaka, said returning to negotiations would be extremely unpopular among Palestinians.

But she fears that with full US support, Israel will have free reign to increase settlement growth. "If the PA goes back and talks to the Americans it is giving them a green light to do whatever they want to do, and if they don't go back, they are going to do what they want to do," she said. "At the moment it is a lose-lose situation." Hugh Lovatt, of the European Council on Foreign Relations, agreed. "If anything, the Palestinians will now double down on their current approach, which is to boycott the US administration and attack the yet-to-be unveiled US peace plan," he said.

Regional fears

Hijab and many Palestinians do not believe the US is seeking to get the Palestinian leadership back to the table. Instead, she said, they believe the US is trying to help Israel "end the conflict on its terms and legalise its occupation". That would mean stripping refugees across the region of their rights, specifically the idea they could one day return to historic Palestine. In both Jordan and Lebanon, Palestinian refugees have fewer rights than citizens and rely on UNRWA services for education, health-care and other basic services.

In Gaza, run by the Islamist movement Hamas, the majority of the two million residents are refugees, meaning the UNRWA cuts will hit particularly hard. Job losses for a few hundred of the agency's staff have already sparked major protests. The Gaza Strip suffers from desperate poverty and is largely sealed off by both Israel and its other land neighbor, Egypt. Hamas and Israel have fought three wars since 2008. Some in the Israeli security services quietly express concern that immediate cuts to UNRWA could increase tensions with Israel in Gaza and the West Bank. —AFP



In Venezuela, new cryptocurrency is nowhere to be found

To hear Venezuela's leftist President Nicolas Maduro tell it, this remote hamlet of 1,300 souls is perched on the cutting edge of an innovation in cryptocurrency. Located in an isolated savanna in the center of the country, Atapirire is the only town in an area the government says is brimming with 5 billion barrels of petroleum. Venezuela has pledged those reserves as backing for a digital currency dubbed the "petro," which Maduro launched in February. This month he vowed it would be the cornerstone of a recovery plan for the crisis-stricken nation.

But Atapirire residents say they have seen no efforts by the government to tap those reserves. And they have little confidence that their struggling village has a front-row seat to a revolution in finance. "There is no sign of that petro here," said homemaker Igdalia Diaz. She launched into a diatribe about her town's crumbling school, pitted roads, frequent blackouts and perpetually hungry citizens.

It turns out that Venezuela's petro is hard to spot almost anywhere. Over a period of four months, Reuters spoke with a dozen experts on cryptocurrencies and oil-field valuation, traveled to the site of the pledged oil reserves and scoured the coin's digital transaction records in an effort to learn more. The hunt turned up little evidence of a thriving petro trade. The coin is not sold on any major cryptocurrency exchange. No shops are known to accept it. The few buyers Reuters could locate were those who had posted about their experiences on online cryptocurrency forums. None would identify themselves.

One complained of being "scammed." Another told Reuters he had received his tokens without problem; he blamed US sanctions against Venezuela and "awful press" for hurting the petro's debut. Senior government officials have given contradictory statements. Maduro says petro sales have already raised \$3.3 billion and that the coin is being used to pay for imports. But Hugbel Roa, a cabinet minister involved in the project, told Reuters on Friday that the technology behind the coin is still in development and that "nobody has been able to make use of the petro ... nor have any resources been received."

The Superintendence of Cryptoassets, the government agency that oversees the petro, is a mystery. Reuters recently visited the Finance Ministry, where the Superintendence is supposed to be housed, but was informed by a receptionist that it "does not yet have a physical presence here." The Superintendence's website is not functioning. Its president, Joselit Ramirez, did not respond to messages on his personal social media accounts. Phone calls to the Industry Ministry, which oversees the agency, went unanswered. The Information Ministry did not reply to emails seeking comment.

Maduro added to the confusion this month by announcing that salaries, pensions and the exchange rate for Venezuela's decimated currency, the bolivar, are now pegged to the petro. That move stirred bewilderment on Venezuela's streets and among economists and cryptocurrency experts who say the petro-bolivar tether is unworkable. "There is no way to link prices or exchange rates to a token that doesn't trade, precisely because there is no way to know what it actually sells for," said Alejandro Machado, a Venezuelan computer scientist and cryptocurrency consultant who has closely followed the petro.

The chaos speaks to the desperation and disorganization that are gripping Maduro's government as Venezuela melts down. The petro was supposed to help his administration weather the hyperinflation that has rendered the bolivar all but worthless. He vowed that a cryptocurrency, which allows financial operations to be carried out anonymously, would enable Venezuela to undermine U.S. financial sanctions and raise hard currency.

The government pegged the value of the

petro to the price of one barrel of Venezuelan oil - currently around \$66 - and promised to back it with crude reserves located in a 380-square-kilometer area (147 square miles) surrounding Atapirire. US President Donald Trump in March banned Americans from buying or using the petro. Analysts are skeptical of Maduro's claims that the petro has already brought in billions in hard currency. They say digital records associated with the initial coin offering, or ICO, do not provide enough information to determine how much, if anything, has actually been raised.

"This certainly doesn't look like a typical ICO, given the low level of transaction activity," said Tom Robinson, chief data officer and co-founder of Elliptic, a London-based blockchain data company. "We have found no evidence that anyone has been issued a petro, nor of it being actively traded on any exchange." A visit by Reuters to the area around Atapirire, meanwhile, showed little oil-industry activity. The only visible rigs were small and aging machines installed years ago. Several were abandoned and covered in weeds.

In an opinion piece posted August 19 on Aporrea, an online Venezuelan commentary and analysis site, former Oil Minister Rafael Ramirez estimated it would take at least \$20 billion in investment to tap the reserves, money that Venezuela's troubled state-owned oil company PDVSA does not have. "The petro is being set at an arbitrary value, which only exists in the government's imagination," Ramirez wrote. He oversaw the nation's oil industry for a decade under late President Hugo Chavez. Ramirez is now in exile in an undisclosed location after being accused of corruption by the Venezuelan government, allegations he denies. PDVSA did not respond to an email seeking comment.

'We got scammed'

In contrast to buyers of well-known cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin or Ethereum, holders of petros are difficult to find. One gathering place is an online cryptocurrency forum called Bitcointalk, where enthusiasts began posting messages in early 2018. Some initial posts were bullish. But that optimism soured as time went on. Several participants groused about a lack of information and delays in getting their coins. One complained of being unable to transfer or sell the tokens. "As of now we've got scammed, time will tell if it was a good investment or not," a forum participant identified as cryptoviagra wrote on June 25.

Another buyer, the only one to respond to questions from Reuters, said via social-media messages that his experience purchasing petros "worked pretty well overall." He blamed the U.S. ban for depressing petro sales, along with what he considered negative media coverage. He asked that his name be withheld because he feared "persecution" by the US government, adding that "I don't consider Reuters to be a honest news organization." Reuters could not independently confirm whether any forum participants had invested in the petro.

Cryptocurrencies gained popularity over the last decade, led by proponents who said they would lower financial transaction costs, give citizens alternatives to commercial banks and protect them from inflation induced by central-bank policies. Transactions are validated by a network of computers and recorded on a public ledger called a blockchain. Individual operations are available for anyone to see on the internet, but the identities of those involved are kept secret. The operations are secured by cryptography, the computerized encoding and decoding of data.

Fervent purchases of crypto assets in 2017 drove Bitcoin's price to nearly \$20,000. Its success fueled a wave of coin offerings by other startups, including scams that raised millions of dollars before being broken up by authorities. Cryptocurrency issuers seeking to provide transparency in fundraising use blockchain



PACARAIMA: Venezuelan refugees walk out the Brazilian Immigration Point in the border city of Pacaraima, Roraima, Brazil. Residents of Pacaraima drove out Venezuelan immigrants from their improvised camps, amid growing regional tensions. —AFP

ledgers to show each individual purchase of the new currency. That gives potential investors a sense of how much money is flowing in, and provides a relative gauge of demand. The Venezuelan government, in contrast, has not provided a purchase registry.

The petro's "white paper," a public document that describes the conditions of the offer to prospective buyers, says the principal platform for the coin is NEM - a decentralized blockchain network promoted by a Singapore-based non-profit. Owners of NEM accounts are anonymous, but can disclose their identities in the description of their coins if they wish. In March, a NEM account claiming to be operated by the Venezuelan government issued 82.4 million tokens as part of an ICO associated with a digital coin described as the petro. Those appeared to correspond to a set of "preliminary" coins described in the white paper that buyers could later swap for petros once the ICO was complete.

Around 2,300 of those tokens were transferred to 200 anonymous accounts in small quantities in early May, NEM records show. That time frame is consistent with comments posted by participants on the Bitcointalk forum who said they were buying petros. If sold at the price set by Maduro based on oil prices at the time, the sale of those tokens could have raised about \$150,000, according to Reuters' calculations. In April, another anonymous NEM account issued a different set of tokens that it described as part of a separate phase of the petro aimed at major investors.

That account in June transferred a total of around 13 million tokens to about a dozen anonymous accounts, NEM records show. The sale of those tokens could have raised about \$850 million at official prices. But there is no way to verify that those were sales, and no large investors have admitted to taking a position in the petro. Roa, the higher education minister, oversees a state agency called the Venezuelan Blockchain Observatory. He appeared to validate analysts' suspicions that the petro, at present, doesn't exist as a functioning currency.

Reuters spoke with him briefly on the sidelines of a petro event in Caracas last week. Roa described the NEM transactions as "early models," adding that Venezuela was now working on its own blockchain technology. He said buyers have made "reservations" to purchase petros, but that no coins have been released. What is clear is that the petro does not trade on any major cryptocurrency exchange. Hong Kong-based Bitfinex, one of the world's largest exchanges by volume, in March said it never intended to list the petro due to its "limited utility." It officially banned the token from its platform following US sanctions.

Three other major exchanges - San Francisco-based Coinbase, Seattle-based Bittrex and San Francisco-based Kraken - declined to comment or did not respond to questions as to why they have not listed the petro. Maduro on April 26 announced that 16 exchanges had been "certified" to trade the petro, adding "they begin operating as of today." Most are little-known in the crypto world. Reuters could not locate seven of the exchanges, which had no internet presence. Seven others did not respond to requests for comment.

Italcambio, an established Venezuelan currency exchange that Maduro said would trade the coin, does not manage or sell petros, its president Carlos Dorado said in an emailed response to Reuters. The only exchange that has publicly discussed plans to list the petro is India's Coinsecure. In an interview with Reuters earlier this month, CEO Mohit Kalra said Coinsecure within two months would provide Venezuela with an exchange for trading petros, along with technology to operate it, and that Venezuela would pay royalties for its use. Kalra did not answer calls seeking additional information.

What is a petro?

Oil is the heart of Venezuela's economy. In choosing to back its petro with petroleum, the country has joined a small but growing number of cryptocurrency issuers linking the value of their tokens to physical commodities. The Royal Mint, which produces coins for the United Kingdom, in 2017 announced a gold-backed digital coin called RMG. Other tokens have emerged that are backed by diamonds.

The big difference is those cryptocurrencies are tied to physical assets that can be readily traded. In contrast, Maduro promised that the petro would be backed by oil reserves that still lie deep underground near Atapirire in a bloc known as Ayacucho I. The government says the area holds 5.3 billion barrels, citing an "independent international certification agency." PDVSA did not answer an email seeking details. No matter how much oil it holds, the area lacks crucial infrastructure to get it out of the ground, including roads, pipelines and power generation, said Francisco Monaldi, a native of Venezuela who now teaches Latin American energy policy at Rice University in Houston. "There is no investment plan for this area and no reason to think it would be developed before other fields with better conditions," he said. Just locating the bloc requires significant effort. PDVSA employees who agreed to take a reporter there confused it with a different bloc. Reuters had to map Ayacucho I with GPS software using coordinates published by the government as part of the petro's creation. —Reuters

Business

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2018

12 Dollar edges lower as trade tensions ease; US in NAFTA deal with Mexico**13** MTN affair casts shadow over Nigeria's troubled economy**14** Huawei launches Kirin 980, first commercial 7nm SoC

The 'One Belt, One Road' Initiative, unveiled by Xi in 2013, envisages linking China with Africa, Asia and Europe through a network of ports, railways, roads and industrial parks. — AFP

China's 'Silk Road' project runs into debt jam

Xi says project is 'open and inclusive', but some countries begin to grumble

BEIJING: China's massive and expanding "Belt and Road" trade infrastructure project is running into speed bumps as some countries begin to grumble about being buried under Chinese debt. First announced in 2013 by President Xi Jinping, the initiative also known as the "new Silk Road" envisions the construction of railways, roads and ports across the globe, with Beijing providing billions of dollars in loans to many countries.

Five years on, Xi has found himself defending his treasured idea as concerns grow that China is setting up debt traps in countries which may lack the means to pay back the Asian giant. "It is not a China club," Xi said in a speech on Monday to mark the project's anniversary, describing Belt and Road as an "open and inclusive" project. Xi said China's trade with Belt and Road countries had exceeded \$5 trillion, with outward direct investment surpassing \$60 billion.

But some are starting to wonder if it is worth the cost. During a visit to Beijing in August, Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said his country would shelve three China-backed projects, including a \$20 billion railway. The party of Pakistan's new prime minister, Imran Khan, has vowed more transparency amid fears about the

country's ability to repay Chinese loans related to the multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Meanwhile the exiled leader of the opposition in the Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed, has said China's actions in the Indian Ocean archipelago amounted to a "land grab" and "colonialism", with 80 percent of its debt held by Beijing. Sri Lanka has already paid a heavy price for being highly indebted to China.

Last year, the island nation had to grant a 99-year lease on a strategic port to Beijing over its inability to repay loans for the \$1.4-billion project.

'Ambiguous partner'

"China does not have a very competent international bureaucracy in foreign aid, in expansion of soft power," Anne Stevenson-Yang, co-founder and research director at J Capital Research, told AFP.

"So not surprisingly they're not very good at it, and it brought up political issues like Malaysia that nobody anticipated," she said. "As the RMB (yuan) becomes weaker, and China is perceived internationally as a more ambiguous partner, it's more likely that the countries will

take a more jaundiced eye on these projects."

The huge endeavor brings much-needed infrastructure improvements to developing countries, while giving China destinations to unload its industrial overcapacity and facilities to stock up on raw materials.

But a study by the Center for Global Development, a US think-tank, found "serious concerns" about the sustainability of the sovereign debt in eight countries receiving Silk Road funds.

Those were Pakistan, Djibouti, Maldives, Mongolia, Laos, Montenegro, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

The cost of a China-Laos railway project — \$6.7 billion — represents almost half of the Southeast Asian country's GDP, according to the study. In Djibouti, the IMF has warned that the Horn of Africa country faces a "high risk of debt distress" as its public debt jumped from 50 percent of GDP in 2014 to 85 percent in 2016.

Africa has long embraced Chinese investment, helping make Beijing the continent's largest trading partner for the past decade. On Monday, a number of African leaders will gather in Beijing for a summit focused on economic ties which will include talks on the "Belt and Road" program.

'Not a free lunch'

China bristles at criticism. At a daily press briefing on Friday, foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying denied that Beijing was saddling its partners with onerous debt, saying that its loans to Sri Lanka and Pakistan were only a small part of those countries' overall foreign debt.

"It's unreasonable that money coming out of Western countries is praised as good and sweet, while coming out of China it's sinister and a trap," she said.

Stevenson-Yang said China's loans are quoted in dollar terms, "but in reality they're lending in terms of tractors, shipments of coal, engineering services and things like that, and they ask for repayment in hard currency." Standard & Poor's said Beijing structures the infrastructure projects as long-term concessions, with a Chinese firm operating the facility for a period of 20 to 30 years while splitting the proceeds with the local counterpart or government. The head of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, raised concerns about potential debt problems in April and advocated greater transparency. "It's not a free lunch, it's something where everybody chips in," she said. — AFP

RBS says 'planning for worst' in Brexit

LONDON: The Royal Bank of Scotland warned yesterday that it is planning "for the worst" amid increased talk of no deal over Brexit. Chief executive Ross McEwan said RBS is setting up a new European subsidiary in Amsterdam to serve customers on the continent, but is awaiting for approval of its licenses.

With Britain and the European Union yet to agree on what their future relationship should look like, McEwan told the BBC that RBS may lose business without a deal.

"If we don't get the right licenses, and we don't get them in time, that could create major problems for our customers and for the bank," McEwan said. "We are planning, unfortunately, for the worst."

McEwan said RBS had already deployed 150 staff to Amsterdam, and if regulators failed to approve trading licenses for the operations, it would stop offering services to some of its European customers.

"In the next couple of months, we're going to have to make some decisions... we're going to have to think about which European customers we may not be able to bank," he said. Britain is set to leave the EU on March 30, 2019.

The two sides want to reach a divorce deal by October or November to give their parliaments time to endorse it. In July, Prime Minister Theresa May put forward a blueprint for future trade ties that envisages a free trade area for goods, agriculture and food through a customs agreement and common rulebook.



But the plan calls for looser ties in banking and financial services, which the City of London said would deal a "real blow" for the hugely important sector.

May's vision has also attracted fierce opposition from her own ruling Conservatives, who think it keeps Britain too closely aligned to the EU. It sparked the resignations of former Brexit Secretary David Davis and then Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson.

Davis criticized the proposal again yesterday, saying May's plan was "actually almost worse than being in" the EU and vowed to vote against it if it goes to parliament. Meanwhile, International Trade Secretary Liam Fox dismissed warnings from Chancellor Philip Hammond over the long-term impacts of a no-deal Brexit on government borrowing and gross domestic product.

"This idea that we can predict what our borrowing would be 15 years in advance is just a bit hard to swallow," he told the BBC. "I don't believe it is possible to have a 15-year time horizon on predictions on GDP," he said. — AFP

Trump threatens to exclude Canada from NAFTA deal

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Saturday threatened to exclude Canada from a new NAFTA agreement after negotiations to rewrite the pact ended without an agreement the night before.

"There is no political necessity to keep Canada in the new NAFTA deal. If we don't make a fair deal for the U.S. after decades of abuse, Canada will be out," he tweeted.

"Congress should not interfere with these negotiations or I will simply terminate NAFTA entirely & we will be far better off." US-Canadian trade talks are set to resume on Wednesday, and Ottawa and Washington still have time to reach an agreement that would keep Canada in the 25-year-old trade pact with Mexico.

But Trump's tweet seemed designed to ramp up pressure on Canadian negotiators. Earlier in the week, officials appeared close to reaching a deal that would rewrite the North American Free Trade Agreement, but leaked inflammatory comments from Trump — seen by some Canadians as suggesting he was bargaining in bad faith — threatened to upend the talks. Trump has repeatedly denounced NAFTA as "one of the worst trade deals ever made," language he repeated on Saturday.

'If it is willing'

The US and Mexico had announced a breakthrough accord on Monday, potentially leaving Canada out in the cold, but Ottawa's foreign minister Chrystia Freeland insisted that a "win-win-win" agreement was within reach.

The White House notified Congress on Friday of its "intent to sign a trade agreement with Mexico — and Canada, if it is willing — 90 days from now." The White House now has 30 days to present the full text of a new agreement to Congress, which will give Ottawa and Washington time to iron out differences. Trump's caution to Congress to "not interfere with these negotiations" appeared to refer to one potential obstacle: the fact that lawmakers have empowered him to reach a so-called "fast track" agreement with both NAFTA partners, not just Mexico.

It is unclear how that will be sorted out. In a second tweet Saturday, Trump suggested that the United States would be better off with no trade agreement than with a flawed NAFTA deal.

"We were far better off before NAFTA... We make new deal or go back to pre-NAFTA!" he said.

Sounding a more optimistic note, Freeland had said late in the week that "with good will and flexibility on all sides, I know we can get there." But she repeated that Canada would only sign an agreement that was in its national interest. "Our officials are continuing to work toward agreement," US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said in a statement, stressing the benefits to US workers and businesses. — AFP

Business

NBK Weekly Money Markets Report

Dollar edges lower as trade tensions ease; US in NAFTA deal with Mexico

Negotiations with Canada hit a roadblock

KUWAIT: President Trump announced last Monday that the US and Mexico had reached an agreement on NAFTA (The North American Free Trade Agreement), and suggested that Canada would be excluded from the trade pact if the country did not agree to certain terms.

The agreement with Mexico resulted in a revamping of NAFTA, with adjustments made to aspects such as the digital economy, automobiles, agriculture, and labor unions. The main function of the trade pact - to allow American companies to operate in Mexico and Canada without tariffs - remains unchanged. What remains unclear is how Trump will sell the trade deal to Congress, and whether or not Canada will get on board. Meanwhile, US farmers are about to receive \$4.7 billion in government aid in September to compensate for losses due to Trump's ongoing trade war with China.

The Canadian NAFTA deal was planned to come into fruition on Friday, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and US President Donald Trump both said that a deal on revamping NAFTA by Friday was within reach. Talks in Washington intensified to salvage a three-way agreement between the US, Canada, and Mexico, in light of the agreement reached between the US and Mexico. "We recognize that there is a possibility of getting there by Friday, but it is only a possibility, because it will ultimately hinge on whether there is ultimately a good deal for Canada," Trudeau said, and he added "No NAFTA deal is better than a bad NAFTA deal." Trump on the other hand said "Canada wants to be part of the deal, and we gave until Friday and I think we're probably on track. We'll see what happens."

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and US President Donald Trump failed to reach the Friday deadline set by Congress on a revamped NAFTA agreement. US and Canadian negotiators insist that progress is being made, announcing talks would resume on Wednesday after four days of negotiations ended with no final agreement. Congress has now set a 30-day deadline, placing the administration under pressure to

provide a full text of the agreement by then.

The deadline for a deal to revamp NAFTA loomed, as President Trump faces a decision on expanding tariffs on Chinese imports. He threatened to pull the US out of the World Trade Organization saying: "If they don't shape up, I would withdraw from the WTO," during an interview with Bloomberg News on Thursday. Trump had previously demanded better treatment from the WTO, complaining that it infringes on US sovereignty and the US does not always prevail in dispute settlement cases.

In the same interview with Bloomberg, President Trump hinted at pushing ahead with the next phase of tariffs on USD 200bn worth of imports from China, he also accused China again of working to a formula and devaluing its currency. In fact president Trump did not stop with China, he included the EU in his remarks on FX manipulation.

On the currency front, the US dollar index continued its downward momentum that began on August 23. Since the beginning of the summer, the Dollar was gaining ground due to escalating trade tensions. However, with last week's theme of cooling down on the trade front, the greenback lost some of its safe haven demand. The US dollar managed to recover some of its losses on the last trading day of the week, supported by strong economic indicators.

Stellar consumer confidence

The US consumer confidence index soared to 133.4 for the current month, a figure not seen in nearly 18 years. The latest data was broad based as both the Present Situation component and the Future Expectations component rose. In details, the Present Situation Index rose from 166.1 to 172.2, meanwhile the Expectations Index increased from 102.4 to 107.6. The above readings are historically high and may continue to support healthy consumer spending in the short-term. On the labor front, individuals expecting more jobs grew from 21.7% to 22.6%, while the sum of people projecting a job market contraction decreased from 15.2% to 14.1%. Optimism in the US econo-

my is significantly high with economic indicators continuously improving, while some nations around the globe witnessed much weaker readings this year than in 2017.

Rapid GDP Growth supports Interest Rate Hikes

US gross domestic product data revealed a rise of 4.2 percent in the second quarter, marking its most rapid growth since 2014. Such figures can be linked to massive tax cuts for companies amounting to \$1.5 trillion, creating a considerable stimulus for the economy. The data is likely to support the US Federal Reserve's plan to raise interest rates next month, in line with its plan for two more hikes this year. The preliminary Q2 PCE rose 1.9 percent, while the preliminary core PCE price index remained at 2 percent meeting expectations. However, fears regarding trade tensions may potentially weigh on the economy in the near future.

Declining oil inventories

The US Energy Information Administration announced that US crude inventories fell by 2.6 million barrels last week, surpassing analysts' expectations of a 686,000-barrel decrease. Oil prices climbed as the West Texas Intermediate was up 1.7 percent to \$69.710 per barrel, and Brent, considered an international benchmark, was up 1.84 percent to \$77.33 per barrel. The multi-week highs were due to US sanctions targeting Iran along with a larger than expected decline in crude stockpiles.

Euro English Trade deal

EU's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier announced on Wednesday that he was close to offering the UK a unique trade deal. He was quoted saying, "We are prepared to offer a partnership with Britain such as has never been with any other third country". The sterling shot higher in reaction to the news, breaking the 1.30 level for the first time in weeks. However, Barnier added that the UK must respect the core structures of the EU as the single market, insisting that this aspect is non-negotiable. The pound



was up more than 1 percent on Wednesday and it closed the market at 1.2961.

The concerns over Brexit have been affecting the European equity market, where the European equities extended their third-longest streak of net redemptions in the latest week. The outflows are driven by Brexit concerns, investors withdrew \$446m from funds that specialize in UK equities in the week to Wednesday.

Eurozone CPI

In the Eurozone, CPI data has come in weaker than expected. Core CPI rose 1.0 percent yoy missing market expectations of 1.1 percent, while headline CPI increased 2.0 percent yoy also missing the expected 2.1 percent. The ECB is scheduled to wrap up its EUR 2.6 trillion asset-purchase scheme in December. However, it's unclear when the ECB will raise interest rates. ECB policymakers have been somewhat vague on the issue, saying that rates will not rise until after next summer. German retail sales came in at -0.4 percent, missing the estimate of -0.1 percent. This marked the second decline in three months. EUR/USD showed little movement

in the Friday session. The pair closed the week at 1.1599.

Chinese manufacturing

The Chinese manufacturing sector growth picked up in August, purchasing managers' index published by China's National Bureau of Statistics inched up by one-tenth of a point to 51.3 in August, and production growth picked up 0.3 points for a reading of 53.3 in August. On the other hand, new export orders contracted at the fastest pace in six months, according to a sub-index which fell 0.4 points to 49.4. At the same time, total new orders edged down only one-tenth of a point from July's level to 52.2. The official non-manufacturing PMI also climbed 0.2 points to 54.2 in August, with a sub-index for the services sector rising 0.4 points to 53.4. For the service sector this marks as a partial recovery from the slowest pace of growth in eleven months seen in July.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar
USD/KWD opened at 0.30280 yesterday morning.

'Lehman Weekend': The biggest bankruptcy in American history

WASHINGTON: It was "Lehman Weekend." The moment in September 2008 when the 150-year-old investment bank Lehman Brothers collapsed, precipitating the worst global economic crisis since the 1930s. After failing to find buyers for the troubled financial giant, that was weighed down by risky debt holdings made up of at subprime mortgages, US authorities declined to offer a bailout and allowed the institution to fail.

Monday, September 15, 2008, at 1:45 am, Lehman Brothers filed for bankruptcy, taking the world by surprise leaving well over \$600 billion in debt, as well as 25,000 employees in shock.

It was the biggest bankruptcy in American history. On Wall Street, the Dow Jones plunged 500 points, the largest drop since the attacks of September 11, 2001. Stunned traders streaming out of the building carrying boxes of their belongings became a symbol of the crisis.

Some were caught by surprise. But others, like Lawrence McDonald, a former trader and co-author of a 2009 book on the collapse - "A Colossal Failure of Common Sense: The Incredible Inside Story of the Collapse of Lehman Brothers" - said management had long been alerted to the excessive risks they took to increase short term profits. The top Lehman leadership, housed on the bank's 31st floor, "drove us 162 miles (261 kilometers) an hour...right into the biggest subprime iceberg ever seen," he told AFP in 2009.



NEW YORK: In this file photo taken on September 15, 2008 two men hug outside of Lehman Brothers headquarters in New York. It was "Lehman Weekend." The moment in September 2008 when the 150-year-old investment bank Lehman Brothers collapsed, precipitating the worst global economic crisis since the 1930s. — AFP

"It was 24,992 people making money and eight guys losing it," he said, lamenting that the management "bet the ranch" on toxic assets. From 2005 to 2007, at the height of the real estate bubble, when mortgages were given to many homebuyers who could not afford them, and then packaged into securities and sold off, Lehman Brothers bought several mortgage brokerages and posted record profits.

But in mid-2007, the losses began to build. The knockout punch came nine months later, March 16, 2008, with the near bankruptcy of another investment bank, Bear Stearns. — AFP

Steve Eisman, the 'big short' investor who bet on the crash

NEW YORK: The global financial crisis devastated American communities, wiped out savings and brought banking giants to their knees. But it also enriched a handful of investors who had bet that the financial house of cards behind American real estate lending would collapse.

Steve Eisman is among this exclusive circle of Wall Street Cassandras, with a bank account and investment portfolio that grew as bankruptcies piled up among homeowners who had taken out adjustable-rate subprime mortgages.

His audacious gamble is recounted in the 2015 movie "The Big Short," in which the actor Steve Carell plays a Mark Baum, a fictionalized version of Eisman.

Between 2004 and 2007, Eisman, who is married to an ex-banker, ran an investment portfolio at the hedge fund FrontPoint Partners. His job was to invest wealthy clients' money in the banking sector, which was riding high on the success of lending to higher-risk, or "subprime," borrowers.

The banks spread this risk across the world, selling

pieces of it in the form of complex instruments known as collateralized debt obligations, or CDOs, and securities backed by residential mortgages.

But, even with a Harvard Law degree, Eisman understood little about such exotic financial products with bewildering acronyms. And at a 2004 conference in Las Vegas, he learned he was not the only one. He soon learned, after traveling next to Florida, California, Nevada and Arizona, epicenters of the subprime crisis, about the loose lending standards applied by mortgage originators and banks.

With graying hair and a square, athletic build, the middle-aged financier's frank talk contrasts sharply with the typical Wall Street jargon.

Shorting against the world
"How could someone make a mortgage loan when the customer can only afford to pay for the first 3 years?" he asked during an interview with AFP at the Manhattan offices of Neuberger Berman, his new employer. He reached out to the ratings agency Standard & Poor's, which had stamped its vaunted 'AAA' rating, the highest possible, on CDO and RMBS (residential mortgage-backed securities) assets.

They said their models did not include negative scenarios. But Eisman identified a set of dubious loans and decided to bet they would fall, convincing Goldman Sachs and Deutsche Bank to issue Credit-Default Swaps, which are insurance policies against borrower defaults. — AFP

Tunisia govt raises fuel prices, fourth hike this year

TUNIS: Tunisia's government raised fuel prices on Saturday by about 4 percent, the fourth hike this year, in an effort to rein in its budget deficit and meet reforms requested by the country's international lenders. The price of a liter of petrol will rise to 1.985 Tunisian dinars from 1.925 dinars, starting Sunday, the industry ministry said in a statement. The three previous increases this year were in March, January and June.

Fuel subsidies this year will rise from an expected 1.5 billion dinars to

4.3 billion dinars with the rise of world oil prices, officials said. The IMF has been pressing Tunisia to trim its budget deficit and increase fuel and electricity bills to offset a rise in oil prices that is pressuring already-strained public finances.

"Staying the course on reducing the fiscal deficit this year and next is critical to stabilize debt and reduce excessive demand for imports given the recent increase in global oil prices," the IMF said on Friday after a mission visited the country. The two sides reached an initial, or "staff level", agreement on the next reforms, the IMF statement added.

Tunisia has forecast that the budget deficit will fall to 3.9 percent in 2019 versus 4.9 percent of gross domestic product expected in 2018. The country has dropped into a deep economic slump following the overthrow in 2011 of autocratic leader Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali. — Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.387179	0.401079
Czech Koruna	0.005762	0.015062
Danish Krone	0.043499	0.048499
Euro	0.345424	0.359124
Georgian Lari	0.137682	0.137682
Hungarian	0.001144	0.001334
Norwegian Krone	0.032434	0.037634
Romanian Leu	0.065015	0.081865
Russian ruble	0.004487	0.004487
Slovakia	0.009062	0.019062
Swedish Krona	0.029319	0.034319
Swiss Franc	0.307399	0.318399
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.210694	0.222694
New Zealand Dollar	0.195277	0.204777
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.227731	0.236731
US Dollars	0.299500	0.304800
US Dollars Mint	0.300000	0.304800
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.002990	0.003791
Chinese Yuan	0.043044	0.046544
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036933	0.039683
Indian Rupee	0.003830	0.004602
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000016	0.000022
Japanese Yen	0.002657	0.002837
Korean Won	0.000261	0.000276
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070806	0.076606
Nepalese Rupee	0.002625	0.002965
Pakistan Rupee	0.001956	0.002726
Philippine Peso	0.005608	0.005908
Singapore Dollar	0.216759	0.226759
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001519	0.002099
Taiwan	0.010417	0.010597
Thai Baht	0.008967	0.009517
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.790203	0.806703
Egyptian Pound	0.014335	0.020053
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000200	0.000260
Jordanian Dinar	0.423906	0.432906
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000156	0.000256
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022420	0.046420
Omani Riyal	0.782253	0.787933
Qatar Riyal	0.079101	0.084041
Saudi Riyal	0.079673	0.081173
Syrian Pound	0.001287	0.001507
Tunisian Dinar	0.106360	0.114360
Turkish Lira	0.041406	0.052906
UAE Dirhams	0.081234	0.082934
Yemeni Riyal	0.000987	0.001067

Business

MTN affair casts shadow over Nigeria's troubled economy

Govt decision could sour investment sentiment

LAGOS: Nigeria's decision to order South African telecoms giant MTN to repay billions of dollars that it had allegedly illegally repatriated over a period of eight years could sour investor sentiment towards the country as it still struggles to recover from a deep recession two years ago, analysts say.

In a shock announcement last Wednesday, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) ordered MTN to repay \$8.13 billion because it had not obtained the necessary permission to repatriate the funds between 2007 and 2015.

The four banks involved in transferring the funds from MTN's bank accounts in Nigeria to those in South Africa were fined a combined 5.87 billion nairas (\$16.2 million, 14 million euros). With the economy still fragile after a deep recession in 2016 and elections looming early next year, many private sector players in Nigeria believe the move could dent investor sentiment at an already difficult time for foreign investment in the country, analysts said.

"Anything of that magnitude, particularly given the timing ahead of an election... is certainly going to raise suspicions from international investors," said Alastair Jones, analyst at London-based New Street Research.

For Peter Takaendes, Cape Town-based

portfolio manager at Mergence Investment Managers, the situation was untenable. "Investors want certainty in terms of laws. There's no way MTN will find \$8 billion to put in Nigeria. There has to be a resolution," Takaendes said.

For the time being, MTN does not appear to have any intention of reviewing its pres-

investment of 180 billion nairas (\$497 million) this year for the expansion of its network. "Of course, Nigeria is their biggest market, they can't leave today," said Nonso Obikili, a Nigerian economist based in South Africa. Nevertheless, the CBN order to repay the cash could give MTN pause for thought and could even at some point persuade them to reconsider, the economist suggested.

"The message they're (the CBN) sending to possible investors is a bigger loss and at some point MTN will say 'this is the end,'" he said. South Africa-based independent telecoms expert Spiwe Chireka pointed out that another South African telecoms giant, Telkom, had also experienced difficulties in trying to move into the Nigerian market.

Telkom "went in and spent who knows how many billions and ended up having to sell it for \$10 million and having to get out of there," he said. Telkom acquired a majority stake in the private Nigerian operator Multi-Links in 2007 and then bought full control in 2009. But the Nigerian firm has never made a profit, compelling Telkom to make massive writedowns on its investment. Chireka said that while Nigeria "has a lot of business potential, it is one of the most difficult mar-



MTN not in a mood to quit Nigeria now

ence in Nigeria, which is by far its biggest individual market and makes up a huge chunk — 27 percent—of its revenues.

It boasts double-digit growth rates there and has more than 52 million subscribers in 2017 — 42 percent of the Nigerian market.

'Can't leave Nigeria'

MTN Nigeria has already earmarked



LAGOS: The decision by Nigeria's central bank to order telecoms group MTN to repay \$8 billion could hit investor sentiment in the country, analysts say.— AFP

kets to operate in." Riddled with corruption, offering little legal protection, and burdened by protectionist economic policies inherited from various military dictatorships, Nigeria ranks 145 out of a total 190 on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business index.

The CBN decision is not the first time that

MTN has been sanctioned by the Nigerian authorities. In 2015, MTN was fined \$5.2 billion by Nigeria's telecoms regulator NCC for failing to disconnect unregistered SIM cards on its network. The fine was later reduced to \$1.7 billion after a series of negotiations with the Nigerian government.— AFP

Amid US trade war, China's Xi reiterates reform pledge

BEIJING: China is still determined to reform and wants to work with all parties to build an open world economy, Chinese President Xi Jinping said yesterday, reiterating Beijing's message amid a bitter trade war with Washington. The two countries have been rolling out a series of tariffs on each other's exports as US President Donald Trump's administration seeks to tackle a range of issues from the large trade imbalance with China to forced technology transfers.

China has criticized the United States for resorting to protectionist and unilateral measures and says it will keep opening up its economy, providing a fair and transparent environment for foreign businesses.

Meeting UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in Beijing ahead of a major China-Africa summit, Xi made no direct mention of the trade tensions with the United States, referring instead to "unilateralism and protectionism rearing its head".

"China's determination to fully deepen reforms will not change," China's Foreign Ministry paraphrased Xi as telling Guterres. "We are willing to use practical actions to drive all parties to jointly adhere to trade liberalization and facilitation and build an open world economy," Xi added.

The ministry's statement did not elaborate. US and Chinese officials ended two days of talks last month without a major breakthrough as their trade war escalated with the activation of a further round of tariffs on \$16 billion worth of each other's goods.

The two countries have now targeted \$50 billion of each other's goods and threatened duties on most



NAIROBI: In this file photograph, Chinese workers stand on a track of Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) at the SGR Nairobi-Naivasha Phase 2A project in Nairobi, China, Africa's largest trading partner, convenes a China-Africa summit in Beijing today which will be largely dominated by economic cooperation.— AFP

of the rest of their bilateral trade, raising concerns that the conflict could dent global economic growth. Trump administration officials have been divided over how hard to press Beijing, but the White House appears to believe it is winning the trade war as China's economy slows and its stock markets falter. Economists estimate that every \$100 billion of imports hit by tariffs would reduce global trade by around 0.5 percent.

Singapore pact

Singapore's trade minister said on Saturday that broad agreement on the world's biggest trade deal should be reached at a summit of leaders from partic-

ipating nations in the city-state in November, six years since talks began. Called the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the trade accord includes the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia, India, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand and the world's No.2 economy, China.

The deal does not include the United States, which is locked in a trade spat with China and pulled out of another broad, international trade agreement in 2017 called the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The White House said on Friday that US President Donald Trump would skip the November gathering of leaders in Singapore.— Reuters

Saudi sovereign fund appoints ex-CEO of Dow as special adviser

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's sovereign fund has named Andrew Liveris, the former chairman and chief executive of Dow Chemical, as a special adviser, in its highest-profile appointment of any global manufacturing executive, Liveris will work closely with the Public Investment Fund (PIF) on matters of strategic importance, assist the fund in efforts to boost the value of its portfolio, and ensure the contribution of PIF companies to Saudi Arabia's economic vision program 2030, the fund said in a statement yesterday.

His appointment comes as the PIF, chaired by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, is negotiating the sale of its majority stake in Saudi Basic Industries (SABIC) to oil company Aramco.

Liveris joined the Aramco board on July 1. The PIF said Liveris had extensive experience working in Saudi Arabia over the last two decades and under his leadership, Dow DuPont worked with Aramco to develop the Sadara Chemical petrochemical complex.

The PIF, which manages more than \$250 billion in assets, aims to increase its asset portfolio to \$400 billion by 2020. More than half of its assets are tied up in large Saudi companies, but the PIF has also made substantial overseas commitments. This included a \$45 billion agreement to invest in a giant tech fund led by Japan's Softbank and another \$20 billion committed to an infrastructure investment fund planned with Blackstone.— Reuters

Premier Brands

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

GRAND SALE

<p>84 / 139 (KWD)</p> <p>OR-49UEX30S SMART TV 4K ULTRAH D</p>	<p>199 / 259 (KWD)</p> <p>OR-65UEX30S SMART TV 4K ULTRAH D</p>	<p>139 / 199 (KWD)</p> <p>LED-55U5A11T SMART TV 4K ULTRAH D</p>
---	--	---

Credit: Start from SKD • Up to 48 month • Instafirst approval

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

1809 809

Business

Beleaguered Argentina placing faith in IMF meeting tomorrow

Economy minister off to Washington to thrash out revised loan deal

BUENOS AIRES: Argentina's Economy Minister Nicolas Dujovne heads to Washington today to thrash out a hastily revised loan deal with the International Monetary Fund to help revive South America's second-largest economy. Dujovne will need to outline a convincing austerity program to restore investor confidence that has plummeted along with the nation's currency, analysts say.

The minister said at the weekend his mission was to "continue to progress" talks with the IMF "on additional disbursements in 2019."

The talks scheduled for tomorrow follow a surprise announcement by President Mauricio Macri last week that Argentina would seek faster disbursement of its \$50 billion credit line with the IMF.

That set off alarm bells among investors, concerned Argentina will default on government borrowing, and triggered a run on the peso, which plunged 20 percent in two days before recovering slightly by Friday's close.

The currency has lost half its value against the dollar since January.

A first \$15 billion tranche of the loan has largely gone to propping up the peso in recent months.

Argentina's Central Bank hiked its baseline interest rate to 60 percent last week in a further bid to stabilize the currency.

Low investor confidence

Ratings agency S&P said Macri's government must now show clear steps to improve low investor confidence. "Exchange rate volatility, as shown by recent pressure on the Argentine currency, could jeopardize the effective implementation of economic adjustment measures, absent further steps to boost investor confidence," it said in a statement on Friday. S&P sees hope in Macri's austerity

measures however, which has seen his government slash energy subsidies and shed 95,000 public service jobs since January. It suggested that IMF help, coupled with continued austerity measures, could help gradually reduce inflation, which despite being a government priority, is still running at more than 20 percent.

The IMF said its goal was to "rapidly conclude these talks and submit the revised economic plan to the Executive Board."

'Strong commitment'

Spokesman Gerry Rice said the Washington-based lender was "confident that the strong commitment and determination of the Argentine authorities will help the country overcome the current difficulties."

However, analysts at Capital Economics warned in a report that "investor confidence is fragile," adding that failure to deliver a convincing austerity plan on Monday would trigger further turmoil.

The market's response exposed the magnitude of the crisis of confidence in the Argentine government and its ability to pay off borrowing. Dujovne is expected to provide details of the new proposals on Monday before heading to Washington for tomorrow's meeting with IMF officials.

Macri will be hoping to ride out a domestic storm from a public sector incensed at his austerity drive to maintain Argentina's access to capital markets, which it was excluded from for over a decade.

However, Argentines point to increasing food, transport and energy prices, saying they are paying an unacceptable price under Macri's austerity program.

A recent poll by the Center for the Study of Work and Development showed that one in two employed people



BUENOS AIRES: Currency exchange values are displayed in the buy-sell board of a bureau de exchange in Buenos Aires on Friday. — AFP

fear losing their job. Argentina has a bitter history with the IMF, which it last called on in 2001. Many Argentines view

the tough conditions imposed by the crisis lender then as having made the crisis all the harder to bear. — AFP

Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, the second largest in terms of assets, announced yesterday the names of the daily draw winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a cash-prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners are:

1. Abdulrazzaq Mohamed Abdulrazzaq Albuti
2. Mohammad Abdullah Ahmed Alsharqawi
3. Amnah Eissa Radhwan Alradhwan
4. Hagop Khatchadour Astor
5. Huda Fahad Saud Almadhaf

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a quarterly draw with more chances to win higher rewards, offering the chance to one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers daily and quarterly draws, wherein the quarterly draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for two months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win.

Huawei launches Kirin 980, world's first commercial 7nm SoC

KUWAIT: In his IFA 2018 keynote titled "The Ultimate Power of Mobile AI", Huawei Consumer Business Group CEO Richard Yu introduced the Kirin 980, the system on a chip (SoC) that will bring about the next evolution of mobile AI. As the world's first commercial SoC manufactured with Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturer Company's (TSMC) 7nm process, the Kirin 980 combines best-in-class performance, efficiency, connectivity features, and Dual NPU AI processing power.

"Last year, we showed the world the power of On-Device AI with the Kirin 970, and this year, we've designed an all-round powerhouse that not only features outstanding AI capabilities, but also brings cutting-edge raw performance to consumers," said Yu. "Equipped with all-new CPU, GPU and Dual NPU, the Kirin 980 is the ultimate engine to power next-generation productivity and entertainment applications."

Absolute superiority

The cutting edge TSMC 7nm process technology enables Kirin 980 to pack 6.9 billion transistors within a 1 sq cm die size, 1.6 times of the previous generation. Compared to the 10nm process, the 7nm process delivers 20 per cent improved SoC performance and 40 per cent improved SoC power efficiency.

The Kirin 980 is also the first SoC to embed Cortex-A76 based cores, which are 75 per cent more powerful and 58 per cent more efficient compared to their previous generation. The Kirin CPU subsystem uses an intelligent Flex-scheduling mechanism that creates a 3-level energy efficiency architecture consisting of two super-big cores based on Cortex-A76, two big cores based on Cortex-A76, and four little cores Cortex-A55. Compared with the traditional big.LITTLE design, this solution designates the large high-performance cores to handle immediate, intensive workloads; the large, high-efficiency cores to provide sustained performance; and ultra-efficiency cores to tackle everyday, light activities with extreme power efficiency. Running at higher clock speeds compared to the prior generation, Kirin 980 enables quicker app launch times, better multi-tasking and a generally smoother user experience.

As graphics in mobile games have become more and more sophisticated in recent years, Huawei has integrated the Mali-G76 GPU into the Kirin 980 to deliver unparalleled gaming experiences. Debuting with the Kirin 980,



Mali-G76 offers 46 per cent greater graphics processing power at 178 per cent improved power efficiency over the previous generation. Mali-G76 also features an innovative clock boosting technology that utilizes AI to intelligently identify gaming workloads and adjust resource allocation for optimal gaming performance.

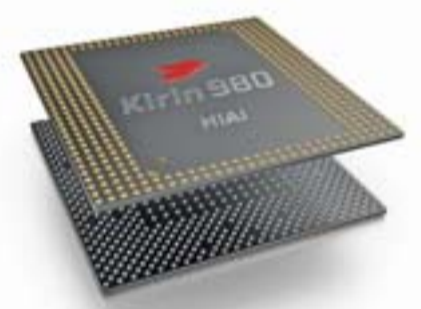
Industry's First "Dual-Brain" Power

The latest Kirin SoC represents a new era of On-Device AI. The Dual NPU Kirin 980 elevates the On-Device AI experience with greater processing power and intelligence. The synergy between the Dual NPU results in an image recognition capability that is greater than the sum of two—the Kirin 980 can recognize up to 4,500 images per minute, up 120 per cent compared to Kirin 970, further demonstrating Huawei's industry leadership in the On-Device AI space. Additionally, Kirin 980 supports common AI frameworks such as Caffe, TensorFlow and TensorFlow Lite, and provides a suite of tools that simplifies the difficulty of engineering On-Device AI, allowing developers to easily tap into the leading processing power of the Dual NPU.

Full-featured ISP

In pursuit of the best smartphone photography experience, Huawei integrated its proprietary fourth-generation ISP into the SoC. In addition to a 46 per cent increase in data throughput compared to its predecessor, the new ISP also provides better support for multi-camera configurations, as well as an all-new HDR color reproduction technology that can manipulate picture contrast to highlight objects on various parts of an image. In addition, Kirin 980 utilizes the Multi-pass noise reduction solution that accurately removes artifacts without scrubbing away image details, resulting in better quality on images taken in low-light scenarios. Another new feature of the ISP is improved motion tracking.

When a user attempts to snap a photo of a moving person, the ISP can still recognize the subject with 97.4 per cent accuracy, so any user can capture fleeting moments with ease. The rise of video-centric social media platforms



brought together with it a surge of demand for video capture features. Kirin 980 adopts a new pipeline dedicated to processing video captures, allowing the camera module to shoot videos with 33 per cent shorter delay.

World-class connectivity

To deliver the best connectivity to users of Kirin 980-powered devices, Huawei integrated the world's first modem supporting LTE Cat.21 with a peak download speed of 1.4Gbps. Additionally, the Kirin 980 supports carrier aggregation, even across frequency bands, so users are free to choose their mobile operators and still enjoy the same premium connectivity experience, regardless of where they are.

Inspired by nature

At IFA 2018, Huawei also announced the launch of two new gradient variants for the HUAWEI P20 Series: Morpho Aurora and Pearl White, expanding its range of gradient colors to four. When creating these two unique hues, Huawei once again turned to nature for inspiration. The Morpho Aurora was inspired by the Morpho butterfly, while the Pearl White exudes the same elegance as the iridescent mother-of-pearl. The next-generation AI experience is around the corner. Stay tuned for the launch of the first Kirin 980-powered Mate Series device, which is scheduled to arrive in October.

Al-Tijari announces winners of Al-Najma new prize program

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced the winners of the weekly and monthly draws as follows:

Monthly draw prize- KD 20,000 - Fadel Reda Mohammed Ali

Weekly draw prize -KD 5000 - Shruti Sarin

The draw was conducted in the presence of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Abdulaziz Ashkanani. 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 KD 1 million and half (KD 1,500,000) so that customers' dreams can easily turn to reality.

The bank stated that the account prizes this year are featured by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that Al-Najma Account will offer a weekly prize of KD 5,000 and 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.

ABK announces second summer promotion winners

KUWAIT: Under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce,

Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held its second draw for its summer promotion titled "6 Million Skywards Miles, 120 winners", in partnership with Emirates Skywards. The draw was held at the ABK head office and 40 lucky customers won 50,000 Skywards Miles each.

The Skywards Miles will be credited to the customer's Emirates Skywards membership account (EK number). The Miles can be redeemed for reward flights and upgrades on Emirates, as well as luxury hotel stays, fun-filled family days out with Emirates Skywards' wide range of partners, or even tickets to a wide range of sporting and cultural events across the globe

July winners

FAISAL MISHARI ALANJARI	RONY ANS KFOURY	MAITHAM ALI	ABDULRAHMAN ALDERHEEL
FEDA HADI	HUDA BUHAMAD	MAZEN ALTARAZI	RUSSELL GRAHAM BYRNE
GEORGE ABUZULOF	TALAL ANWAR ALMULLA	FAHAD ALMUKHAZIM	FAHAD ALABDURAZZAQ
IBRAHIM MOHAMMED	ALI REZA EMADI	MOHAMMAD ALGHANEM	REEM SALMAN SAAD
AMEER RIDHA	NASSER ALOTAIBI	HUSAIN ALSOWAYEL	EMAD JAWAD BUKHAMSEEN
YOUSUF HABEIB KEHAL	FAHAD HADI ALMAZZEDI	MONA T A ALMAWEID	HAWRA YOUSUF ALMANSOUR
ABDULHAMID GHADNFAR	STANY SANCTS	AHMAD ALHERZ	AHMAD HUSSAIN
OUDAH ABER ALBATHALI	ABDULLAH ALIBRAHIM	AHMED FARAH	MUNA H A ALBASEERI
ADEL ALBULOUSHI	HANI ALQALAF	MOATH ALOTHMAN	ADEL ASHKANANI
INDIRA ABHLASH	YOUSUF ALGABANDI	QASEM ALHAREERI	KHLOUD MUBARAK

Iraq oil exports hit 2018 peak in August

BAGHDAD: Iraq's oil exports for August hit their highest monthly figure this year, the oil ministry said Saturday, with nearly 112 million barrels of crude bringing \$7.7 billion to the war-torn country's ailing economy. "In August, exports of crude reached 111.6 million barrels and revenues were \$7.7 billion," on an average

price of \$69.59 per barrel, it said in a statement.

In August last year Iraq earned \$4.6 billion from the sale of 99.7 million barrels of crude oil. Iraq's sole source of foreign currency, oil revenues have pumped more than \$60 billion into state coffers since January. Baghdad's economy has been hit hard by the war against the Islamic State jihadist group which had seized a third of Iraq's territory in 2014 before being ousted in a vast government offensive last year. Iraq suffers from persistent corruption and many Iraqis complain that the country's oil wealth is unfairly distributed. — AFP

'Free jewelry maintenance' by Malabar Gold & Diamonds

KUWAIT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the leading jewelry retailer globally with a strong retail network of over 225 retail outlets spread across nine countries unfurled the details of its exclusive and unique campaign - 'Free Jewelry Maintenance' giving the customers a golden opportunity to restore & repair jewelry possessions for free. The jewelry chain will do free maintenance even if the jewelry is bought from other jewelers as well. This campaign will run from 29 August to 22 Sept.

To add more glitter to this season, they have also unveiled the latest collection of jewelry in gold, diamonds and precious gems to suit the tastes of their multicultural and multinational customers. Malabar Gold & Diamonds has incorporated these designs as a part of various brands presented at Malabar Gold & Diamonds' namely Ethnix - Handcrafted Designer Jewelry, Era - Uncut Diamond Jewelry, Mine - Diamonds Unlimited, Divine- Indian Heritage Jewelry, Precia - Gem Jewelry and Starlet - Kids jewelry. All the stores in GCC and Far East also feature masterpieces from India, Pakistan, Bahrain, Turkey, Italy and Singapore with unique exchange offers and buyback policies. The jewelry chain also offers lifetime free repair and maintenance service for all their products.

Technology

Robotel: Japanese hotel staffed by robot dinosaurs

Robot dinosaurs man front desk at Henn na Hotel



URAYASU, Japan: Robot dinosaurs wearing bellboy hats welcome guests from the front desk at the Henn-na Hotel in Urayasu, suburban Tokyo. — AFP photos



URAYASU, Japan: A robot fish swims in a water tank displayed at the entrance of the Henn-na Hotel.

URAYASU, Japan: The reception at the Henn na Hotel east of Tokyo is eerily quiet until customers approach the robot dinosaurs manning the front desk. Their sensors detect the motion and they bellow "Welcome." It might be about the weirdest check-in experience possible, but that's exactly the point at the Henn na (whose name means "weird") chain, which bills itself as offering the world's first hotels staffed by robots.

The front desk staff are a pair of giant dinosaurs that look like cast members of the Jurassic Park movies, except for the tiny bellboy hats perched on their heads. The robo-dinos process check-ins through a tablet system that also allows customers to choose which language—Japanese, English, Chinese or Korean—they want to use to communicate with the multilingual robots.



Robo-dinos process check-ins

The effect is bizarre, with the large dinosaurs gesticulating with their long arms and issuing tinny set phrases.

Yukio Nagai, manager at the Henn na Hotel Maihama Tokyo Bay, admits some customers find it slightly unnerving. "We haven't quite figured out when exactly the guests want to be served by people, and when it's okay to be served by robots," he told AFP.

But for other guests the novelty is the charm: each room is staffed with mini-robots that look a bit like spherical Star Wars droid BB-8, and help guests with everything from changing channels to playing music. Even the fish swimming in the lobby run on batteries, with electric lights in their articulated bodies flickering on and off as they work their way around giant tanks.

"The dinosaurs looked intriguing, and I thought my son would love it," said Chigusa Hosoi, who was at the hotel with her three-year-old. "My son is really happy. There's

an egg-shaped robot inside the room. He was playing with it a lot." The first Henn na Hotel opened in Nagasaki in 2015, and was certified the following year by Guinness World Records as the world's first hotel with robots on its staff. The travel agency group that operates the chain now runs eight hotels across the country, all with robots on the staff, some of them dinosaurs, but others taking a more humanoid shape. Some humans are also on call to intervene in case of glitches, which customer reviews online suggest are a not infrequent problem at check-in.

But Nagai said relying on robots for everything from front desk duty to cleaning had proved an efficient choice in a country with a shrinking labor market. "It's becoming difficult to secure enough labor at hotels. To solve that problem, we have robots serving guests."—AFP

Medtech firms get personal with digital twins

HEIDELBERG, Germany: Armed with a mouse and computer screen instead of a scalpel and operating theatre, cardiologist Benjamin Meder carefully places the electrodes of a pacemaker in a beating, digital heart. Using this "digital twin" that mimics the electrical and physical properties of the cells in patient 7497's heart, Meder runs simulations to see if the pacemaker can keep the congestive heart failure sufferer alive - before he has inserted a knife.

The digital heart twin developed by Siemens Healthineers is one example of how medical device makers are using artificial intelligence (AI) to help doctors make more precise diagnoses as medicine enters an increasingly personalized age. The challenge for Siemens Healthineers and rivals such as Philips and GE Healthcare is to keep an edge over tech giants from Alphabet's Google to Alibaba that hope to use big data to grab a slice of healthcare spending.

With healthcare budgets under increasing pressure, AI tools such as the digital heart twin could save tens of thousands of dollars by predicting outcomes and avoiding unnecessary surgery. A shortage of doctors in countries such as China is also spurring demand for new AI tools to analyse medical images and the race is on to commercialize products that could shake up healthcare systems around the world.

While AI has been used in medical technology for decades, the availability of vast amounts of data, lower computing costs and more sophisticated algorithms mean revenues from AI tools are expected to soar to \$6.7 billion by 2021 from \$811 million in 2015, according to a study by research firm Frost & Sullivan. The size of the global medical imaging analytics software market is also expected to jump to \$4.3 billion by 2025 from \$2.4 billion in 2016, said data portal Statista. "What started as an evolution is accelerating towards more of a revolution," said Thomas Rudolph who leads McKinsey & Company's pharma and medical technology practice in Germany.

GPS of healthcare

For Siemens Healthineers and its traditional rivals, making the transition from being mainly hardware companies to medical software pioneers is seen as crucial in a field becoming increasingly crowded with new entrants. Google has developed a

raft of AI tools, including algorithms that can analyse medical images to diagnose eye disease, or sift through digital records to predict the likelihood of death.

Alibaba, meanwhile, hopes to use its cloud and data systems to tackle a shortage of medical specialists in China. It is working on AI-assisted diagnosis tools to help analyse images such as CT scans and MRIs. Siemens Healthineers, which was spun off from German parent Siemens in March, has outpaced the market in recent quarters with sales of medical imaging equipment thanks to a slew of new products. But analysts say the German firm, Dutch company Philips and GE Healthcare, a subsidiary of General Electric, will all come under pressure to prove they can save healthcare systems money as spending becomes more linked to patient outcomes and as hospitals rely on bulk purchasing to push for discounts.

Siemens Healthineers has a long history in the industry. It made the first industrially manufactured X-ray machines in 1896 and is now the world's biggest maker of medical imaging equipment. Now, Chief Executive Bernd Montag's ambition is to transform it into the "GPS of healthcare" - a company that harnesses its data to sell intelligent services, as well as letting smaller tech firms develop Apps feeding off its database. As it adapts, Siemens Healthineers has invested heavily in IT. It employs some 2,900 software engineers and has over 600 patents and patent applications in machine learning. It is not alone. Philips says about 60 percent of its research and development (R&D) staff and spending is focused on software and data science. The company said it employs thousands of software engineers, without being specific.

Medical revolution

Experts say the success of AI in medical technology will hinge on access to reliable data, not only to create models for diagnosis but also to predict how effective treatments will be for a specific patient in the days and years to come. "Imagine that in the future, we have a patient with all their organ functions, all their cellular functions, and we are able to simulate this complexity," said Meder, a cardiologist at Heidelberg University Hospital in Germany who is testing Siemens Healthineers' digital heart software. "We would be able to predict weeks or months in advance which patients will get ill, how a particular patient will react to a certain therapy, which patients will benefit the most. That could revolutionize medicine." To this end, Siemens Healthineers has built up a vast database of more than 250 million annotated images, reports and operational data on which to train its new algorithms. In the



MOSCOW: People release paper planes, symbol of the Telegram messenger, during a rally in protest against court decision to block the messenger because it violated Russian regulations, in Moscow. — Reuters

example of the digital twin, the AI system was trained to weave together data about the electrical and physical properties and the structure of a heart into a 3D image.

One of the main challenges was hiding the complexity and creating an interface that is easy to use, said Tommaso Mansi, a senior R&D director at Siemens Healthineers who developed the software. To test the technology, Meder's team created 100 digital heart twins of patients being treated for heart failure in a six-year trial. The computer makes predictions based on the digital twin and they are then compared with actual outcomes.

His team hopes to finish evaluating the predictions by the end of 2018. If the results are promising, the system will be tested in a larger, multi-centre trial as the next step to getting the software approved by regulators for commercial use. Siemens Healthineers declined to say when the technology might eventually be used by clinics or give details on how its digital heart, or models of other organs it is developing such as the lungs and liver, could be monetized.

In data we trust

Both GE and Philips are also working on versions of digital heart twins while non-traditional players have been active too. Drawing on its experience of making digital twins to test bridges and machinery, French software firm Dassault Systemes launched the first commercial "Living Heart" model in May 2015, though it is only currently available for research. Philips sells AI-enabled heart models that can, for example, turn 2D ultrasound images into

data that helps doctors diagnose problems, or automatically analyse scans to help surgeons plan operations.

Its vision, like Siemens Healthineers, is to add more complexity to its existing heart models by pulling together scans, ECGs and medical records to create a model that can predict how a heart will respond to therapy in real life. For now, such software is still in the early stages of development and companies will have to work with regulators to thrash out how predictive models can be approved before doctors are willing to trust a diagnosis generated by a machine.

Access to high-quality data with enough variation will be crucial, as will be the ability to interpret that data and turn it into something medical professionals can use, say experts. In particular, models will have to be trained on rare cases as they get closer to perfection, said Vivek Bhatt, chief technology officer at GE Healthcare's clinical care solutions division. "It's going to be extremely critical to have an ongoing process for getting more data, getting the right kind of data and getting data with those unique cases," he said.

The established medtech players say their long-running relationships with hospitals and research institutes and vast networks of installed machines will give them an edge over new tech entrants. Siemens Healthineers, GE Healthcare and Philips say their databases are fed with a mixture of publicly-available data, data from clinical trials or from collaborations with hospitals - as well as some data from customers. All the data is made anonymous and only used with patients' consent, they say. —Reuters

Russia tries more precise technology to block Telegram messenger

MOSCOW: Russia is experimenting with more precise technology to block individual online services after an attempt to shut down banned messaging service Telegram failed, but Moscow has yet to find a way to shut it down without hitting other traffic, Telegram, which has 200 million global users and has been popular in countries including Russia and Iran, has been banned in Russia because it refused to comply with a court order to give security services access to users' encrypted messages.

Russia's authorities started trying to block the service in April but they inadvertently blocked Russian users' access to a slew of unrelated online services, including

voice calls on the Viber messaging service, cloud-based applications for Volvo cars, and apps that control Xiaomi video cameras. Because of that hiccup, the attempt to block Telegram was put on hold, and the service is still accessible to Russian users.

Since Aug 6, Russian state communications watchdog Roskomnadzor and state security agency the FSB have been testing systems designed to allow more precise blocking of individual services, according to the minutes of a meeting between officials to discuss the plan. Anton Pinchuk, co-owner of Russian technology company Proxi, which according to the minutes was invited to take part in the testing, confirmed to Reuters the testing was taking place. He said his firm has declined to take part. The earlier attempt to block Telegram involved targeting Internet Protocol addresses operated by Amazon, Google and others that hosted Telegram traffic. The problem was that these IP addresses often also hosted traffic for multiple other services which were also affected. —Reuters



HEIDELBERG, Germany: A three-dimensional printout of a human heart is seen at the Heidelberg University Hospital in Heidelberg, Germany. — Reuters

Twitter to verify those behind hot-button US issue ads

SAN FRANCISCO: Twitter on Thursday started requiring those behind hot-button issue ads in the US to be vetted as part of the effort by the social network to thwart stealth campaigns aimed at influencing politics. The tightened ad policy included requiring photos and valid contact information, and prohibited state-owned media or national authorities from buying political ads to be shown on Twitter outside their home countries.

Those placing these Twitter ads will need to be "certified" by the company and meet certain guidelines, and the ads will be labeled as political "issue" messages. "The intention of this policy is to provide the public with greater transparency into ads that seek to influence people's stance on issues that may influence election outcomes," Twitter executives Del Harvey and Bruce Falck said in a blog post.

The new ad policy came as major technology firms including Facebook, Google and Twitter battle against misinformation campaigns by foreign agents. Facebook, Twitter, Google and Microsoft recently blocked accounts from Russian and Iranian entities which the companies said were propagating misinformation aimed at disrupting the November US elections.

The new ad policy at Twitter applies to paid messages that identify political candidates or advocate regarding legislative issues of national importance. Examples of issue topics provided by Twitter included abortion, civil rights, climate change, guns, healthcare, immigration, national security, social security, taxes and trade. The policy did not apply to news agencies reporting on candidates or issues, rather than advocating outcomes, according to Harvey and Falck. Silicon Valley executives are set to take part in a September 5 Senate hearing about foreign efforts to use social media platforms to influence elections. — AFP

Apple expected to unveil new iPhones

SAN FRANCISCO: Apple on Thursday sent out invitations to a September 12 event at which it is expected to unveil new additions to its money-making iPhone line-up. In typical enigmatic style, Apple offered scant clues to what it has in store for the presentation to take place in the Steve Jobs Theater at its spaceship campus in the Silicon Valley city of Cupertino.

Invitations had the words "Gather round" under a large golden circle. Apple has historically held September events to show off new iPhone models, and this year the company is expected to stay true to that course. Speculation includes talk that Apple introduce three new iPhone models, infusing some with features from a premium iPhone X that debuted last year with a \$1,000 price tag.

Apple's event comes a month after smartphone leader Samsung unveiled its latest flagship handset, the Galaxy Note 9. Although the California tech giant is the world's most valuable company with a market capitalization that recently topped \$1 trillion, it has slipped to third place in the global smartphone market behind Chinese-based Huawei, according to surveys. — AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

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

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

Salmiya, Belajat Street, Tel: 1881122

@Malhajry

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

ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

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

SPECIALIZED IN:

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

SHARQ, Ahmad Aljaber st., Building 54, Floor 13.
Tel: (+965) 22060777
@DrFahadS, @FahadSabb, @decdonabb
Email: drfahadmed@beautybeyond.com.kw

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

All general and specialized surgeries such as:

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

**Global Medical Center, Bneid Al-Qar
Bour Saeed Street, Block-1, Building-128.**

Telephone: 1871111 @globalmedcenter
www.globalmed-center.com

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

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

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

daralshifa

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

Specialized in:

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

alsalam.int.hospital

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

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

Specialized in:

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

alsalam.int.hospital

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

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

Dr. Hani Haider
General Surgery Consultant

http://www.international-clinic.com Tel: 1886677 ic_kwt

Scope of Clinical Practice:

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

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

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

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

daralshifa
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

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

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

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

Academic Certificates - Training

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

Scope of clinical Practice.

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

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

Travel



Where to go in September

Is there a better time to hit the road than September? The great shoulder season of travel offers prime conditions for exploring a vast array of big-name destinations spanning Barcelona to Beijing. So whether you want to laze on uncrowded European sands, venture through South American rainforests in full bloom or circle sacred peaks in Central Asia, September offers something to suit every type of explorer.

...for food and drink

Travelers with a fondness for fish dishes should make a pilgrimage to West Sweden's Bohuslan Coast come September, for the start of lobster season. The region is famed for producing the country's finest seafood, and visitors here can spend days canoeing between rickety fishing villages sampling fresh prawns, oysters and, of course, those coveted crustaceans. Top-notch seafood dishes also await in Lima, one of South America's culinary capitals, where ceviche (lime-marinated fish) is an essential eat.

A visit in September also coincides with the city's Mistura food festival, with cooking demos and restaurant awards - plus stacks of free samples - showcasing the best of Peruvian cuisine. A more civilized prospect is on offer in Provence, as September marks the start of the annual vendange (grape harvest). Local festivals, fresh produce and fine weather mean plenty of chances to sample a flute of the region's renowned rose.

...for culture

Come September it's another series of historic venues that take centre stage as the Dublin Fringe Festival rolls into town, bringing with it an exciting mishmash of off-the-wall theatre, film and art installations. A more active cultural soiree awaits in Tibet, where the summer rains have eased and conditions are perfect for joining devotees on the kora (pilgrimage circuit) of holy Mt Kailash.

Weather conditions are also highly favorable in Beijing during September, a period locals refer to as 'tian gao qi shuang' - 'The sky is high and the air is fresh'. Visits to historical highlights including the Forbidden City, Summer Palace and Great Wall - which is set against autumnal colours of scarlet, orange and gold - are far

more breezy than the hot and busy summer months. Less crowded too are the honey-hued English villages of The Cotswolds, where thatched cottages and medieval stone churches hark back to a bygone era.

...for relaxation

Europe's beaches are generally quieter come September, but those seeking serious seclusion should head to northern Cyprus, home to some of the Med's most unspoilt sands. A visit in September also provides the opportunity to see turtles hatching as part of one of Protection of Turtles' eco-sensitive night tours. Placating wildlife experiences are similarly on offer among the emerald-ringed islands that make up The Whitsundays in Australia. Snorkel in the bath-warm waters to spot dolphins, dive to glimpse manta rays or simply count sheep while dozing on some of the world's most celebrated shorelines.

For many of us, tranquility is often found at the dinner table, and a visit to Italy's Puglia region is good for both the soul and, historically, the finances. Pugliese cuisine is known in Italy as cucina povera (poor kitchen), but despite this handle the Italian region's specialties are real treasures - think thick urrata cheese, orecchiette pasta and endless varieties of breads. Memorable dining experiences are also on the menu in Corsica, home to family-run restaurants in remarkable cliff-perched towns and time-frozen villages. After lunch stroll to one of the island's scenic viewpoints or take to the



water with a boat tour around the island's blissful bays.

...for the journey

Shrouded in old-world allure, the Silk Road is one of the classic routes for travelers seeking off-the-beaten-path adventure. September is an optimum month to get your fill: not meltingly hot in Turkmenistan's deserts, not too snowy in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan and largely free of tourist crowds around the grand tiled medressas

of Uzbekistan. Equally as intrepid, though opposite in its geography, Guyana's rainforests are magnificent at this time of year. A hike to Kaieteur Falls, an awing 226m waterfall, is the big-ticket attraction, but with local cultures to experience and serious wildlife to spot, there's something here to satisfy every adventurer.

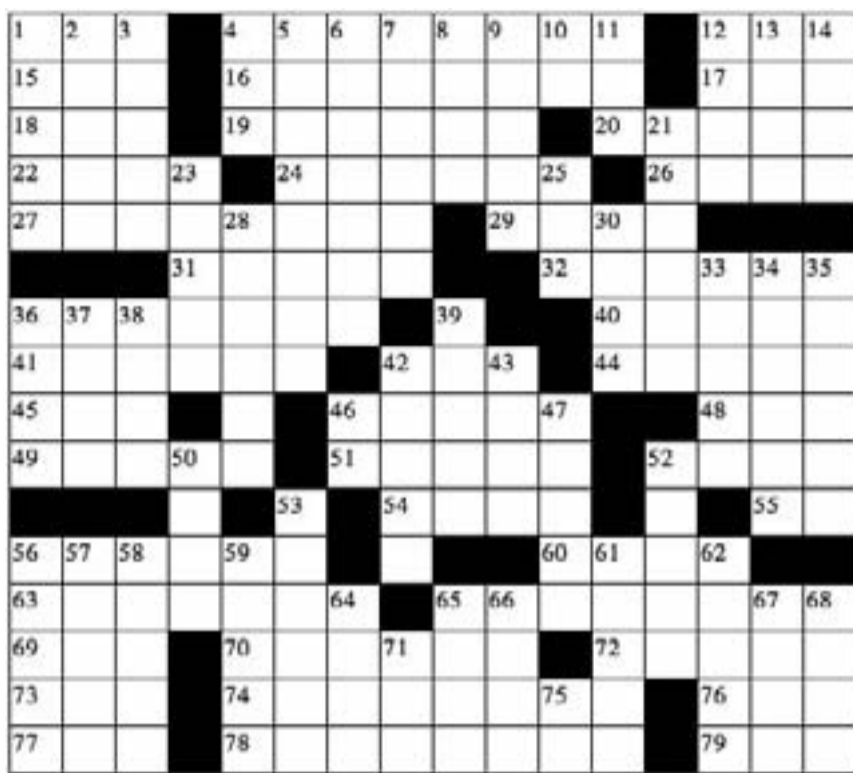
Over in Europe, two aquatic odysseys are primed for the undertaking during September. The recently way-marked Moselsteig footpath, which runs along the

banks of the Moselle river, takes travelers on a tantalizing tour of Germany's terraced vineyards, riverside hamlets and medieval castles. Meanwhile in Greece, September poses the perfect time to hop around the Aegean. Skip the tourist ferries and catch the old cruisers to some of the region's lesser-frequented isles and you'll likely find a golden stretch of sand and traditional taverna all to yourself. — www.lonelyplanet.com



Stars

CROSSWORD 1999



ACROSS

1. A very small circular shape.
4. The act of removing the contents of something.
12. A communist nation that covers a vast territory in eastern Asia.
15. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
16. A Formosan language.
17. To an excessive degree.
18. (slang) A gangster's pistol.
19. Serving temporarily especially as a substitute.
20. State in northeastern India.
22. Bite or chew on with the teeth.
24. Desire strongly or persistently.
26. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
27. Being of the same opinion.
29. A Hindu prince or king in India.
31. Something that bulges out or is protuberant or projects from a form.
32. Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
36. A republic in northwestern Africa on the Mediterranean Sea.
40. The capital and largest city of Liechtenstein.
41. Equipped with or connected by gears or having gears engaged.
44. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
45. An ugly evil-looking old woman.
48. 100 puls equal 1 afghani.
49. Jordan's port.
51. Lower in esteem.
54. Long nerve fiber that conducts away from the cell body of the neuron.
55. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
56. Remove offensive capability from.
60. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
63. Liquorice-flavored seeds or oil used in cookies or cakes or pickles.
69. The compass point that is midway between north and northwest.
70. A small hand tool with a handle and flat metal blade.
72. Any oily organic compound insoluble in water but soluble in organic solvents.
73. A beverage made by steeping tea leaves in water.
74. An intense and irresistible love for yourself and concern for your own needs.
76. A doctor's degree in education.
77. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.
78. (Babylonian) The chief Babylonian god.
79. A recurring sleep state during which dreaming occurs.

DOWN

1. Relatively nontoxic South African herb smoked like tobacco.
2. Large long-armed ape of Borneo and Sumatra having arboreal habits.
3. A member of the Mongolian people of central Asia who invaded Russia in the 13th century.
4. A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
5. Wingless insect living in dark moist places as under dead tree trunks.
6. Brazilian tree with spicy red fruit.

7. Sudden sharp painful emotion.
8. An American who lives in the North (especially during the American Civil War).
9. A member of western Finnish people formerly living in the Baltic province where Saint Petersburg was built.
10. A hard malleable ductile silvery metallic element that is resistant to corrosion.
11. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
12. An anxiety disorder associated with serious traumatic events and characterized by such symptoms as guilt about surviving or reliving the trauma in dreams or numbness and lack of involvement with reality or recurrent thoughts and images.
13. Taking place over public roads.
14. A state of deep and often prolonged unconsciousness.
21. The upper house of the parliament of the Republic of Ireland.
23. A unit of magnetic flux equal to 100,000,000 maxwells.
25. A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
28. A copper-nickel alloy with high electrical resistance and a low temperature coefficient.
30. An island in Indonesia south of Borneo.
33. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
34. A man who has been castrated and is incapable of reproduction.
35. Any of numerous ornamental shrubs grown for their showy flowers of various colors.
37. An accidental hole that allows something (fluid or light etc.) to enter or escape.
38. Mentally or physically infirm with age.
39. Become less tense.
42. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
43. In addition.
46. A state in northwestern United States on the Pacific.
47. Any of various plants of the genus Senna having pinnately compound leaves and showy usually yellow flowers.
50. Slanting diagonally across the grain of a fabric.
52. Port city in the United Arab Emirates on the Persian Gulf.
53. Come out into view, as from concealment.
57. Located inward.
58. The ninth month of the civil year.
59. Desert shrub of Syria and Arabia having small white flowers.
61. Muslim name for God.
62. The topmost one of two.
64. A swinging or sliding barrier that will close the entrance to a room or building.
65. (of persons) Highest in rank or authority or office.
66. The inner and longer of the two bones of the human forearm.
67. An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
68. Severe diabetes mellitus with an early onset.
71. The United Nations agency concerned with the international collection of meteorological data.
75. Being nine more than ninety.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

It seems as if a need for nurturing is stronger than usual in your life. You feel a strong desire to not only care for others, but to have others care for you in return. You have a gift when it comes to sensing the needs of others. Finding someone who is the friend to you that you are to them is a deep desire for you. This is a time you may feel as if some changes need to be made in your world. Out with the old and in with the new seems very appealing to you. This is a time when you feel at your best when you are on the go.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Out with the old and in with the new. Your focus is on ambition, security, and responsibility are areas in your life where you have placed major focus. There are big decisions in your life concerning these areas that need to be made. Knowing you have fallen short of goals in the past has you extremely determined at this point in your life. The easy way is not always the best way. You may reap great reward from your determination. Remember, you can only count on yourself to accomplish your goals. We live in a "what's in it for me" kind of world.



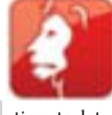
Gemini (May 21-June 20)

This is a time of emotional change for you. You may feel two ways at once. You will not be fully committed to either way of thinking. You do know you have a deep desire for change. A change of habits or a change of surroundings. You may feel like hitting the road and taking a little road trip. A clear mind and a soothed soul may be just what the Dr. ordered. You are happiest when you are on the go. Do it. There is nothing to hold you back today, Gemini. Enjoy the ride.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are feeling some financial stress. That's because you have trouble distinguishing between "Needs" and "Wants." Solve the problem by listing your expenditures in the two categories. To assure objectivity, you may want to enlist the help of a friend to verify the lists. (Utilities are Needs, that new purse is a Want.) Set aside money for Needs, including payments on current debts. Allow yourself the balance to spend on wants. Resisting the temptation to spend more than you have will be difficult at first, but it will soon become habit. And you will be surprised at how quickly you will feel freer, less stressed.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Today finds you talkative and ideas are flowing freely. What a great time to let your creative juices flow! You may find yourself feeling overloaded with ideas and others may not be able to keep up or totally understand what you have to say to them. Don't forget to step back and take a breath. You may find yourself easily excitable and over emotional as these ideas run through your head. Even though your communication skills may not be on point today and you may find yourself at odds with those close to you, your day will be very productive and self-satisfying. Leo, Today would be great for writing or journaling. These are ideas you value and want to make note of.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are special to many. You may feel as if your good deeds go unnoticed. This is a time you have a deep desire to be noticed, admired, and loved. You may ask yourself if you are the friend you want others to be to you. If so, you are on the right track. If the answer is no, strive to become that person. We tend to receive what we give in life. Choose your company wisely and surround yourself with positive people. This is a time in your life where taking a chance can bring great reward. Make a plan and go for it.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Deep thought and meditation may be in order. The easy way is not always the best way. You may have learned the biggest rewards come with the biggest challenges. All work and no play also can cause your sensitivity to be stifled. Work on finding a balance between your personal life and career. We all need to step back and take a deep breath sometime. This is your time to breathe. Personal growth is a priority. Do not let pursuit of wealth and your career stand in the way of this.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may find yourself over confident today. You could easily find yourself taking on more than you can handle. You may experience what is best defined as an inner peace today. You find your clear mind and level of peace make it very easy to solve problems in the workplace and make very clear decisions. You are focused and determined and may find others seeking your advice. Today is a very good one. You will be able to find a sense of clarity in the big scheme of things. You will really be able to discover what drives you. This may be the beginning of much progress for you as you have a deeper understanding of what you truly desire.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You are making a difference in the lives of more people than you realize. You could qualify as a CREEP! That's a good thing, a compliment. It is an acronym for Constantly Ready to Encourage Every Person. You tend to focus on the other person, not on yourself. You send the message "You are enough." Don't change the way you relate to people. Keep doing what you are doing. You don't have to work at it. It comes naturally for you. You are the friend others wish to have in their lives.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Understanding is a good word to represent what today may bring to you. A deep understanding of yourself, your thoughts, and your moods! A day of understanding of those who surround you. An ability to communicate and captivate all who are in your presence. Life is becoming uncomplicated and simple to you. From dreams to the super natural all these things stir deep emotions within you Capricorn. Today is a great day to let your creativity flow. The more you open up to others the more they seem to be willing to open up to you.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Just because something is easy doesn't mean it is the right thing to do or the right way to handle a situation. You may find yourself involved in a situation you need to put great thought into before you act. Actions have consequences. Be sure you are ready to face them. Hard work and determination will help you acquire your goal. Remember, avoid taking the easy way out.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Do you want to be right or do you want to be happy? You may find that the quickest way to peace and happiness today may involve agreeing to disagree.

Wordsearch Puzzle

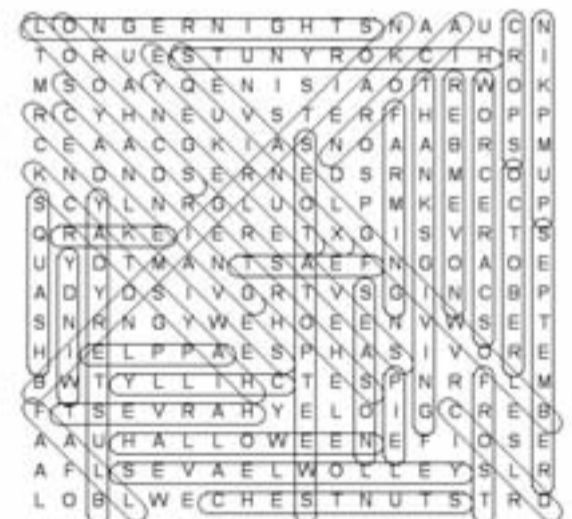
Baby

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 50 letters spell a secret message.



- ALERT
- AWAKE
- BLANKET
- BOOBSUIT
- BOOSTER SEAT
- BOTTLE
- BOWL
- CAR SEAT
- CARRIER
- COLIC
- CREAM
- CRIB
- CRYING
- DADDY
- DIAPER
- DROOL
- FEED
- FORMULA
- GIGGLE
- GRIN
- HIGHCHAIR
- HOODIE
- INFANT
- INNOCENT
- JUMPER
- LAUGH
- LULLABY
- MILK
- MOBILE
- MOMMY
- MONITOR
- NURSERY
- ONESIE
- PACIFIER
- PARENTS
- PLAY
- POWDER
- RASH
- RATTLE
- RUBBER DUCK
- SIPPY CUP
- SKIN CARE
- SLEEP
- SMALL
- SMILE
- SPOON
- STROLLER
- SWING
- TEDDY BEAR
- TEETHER
- TIRED
- WIPES

Autumn



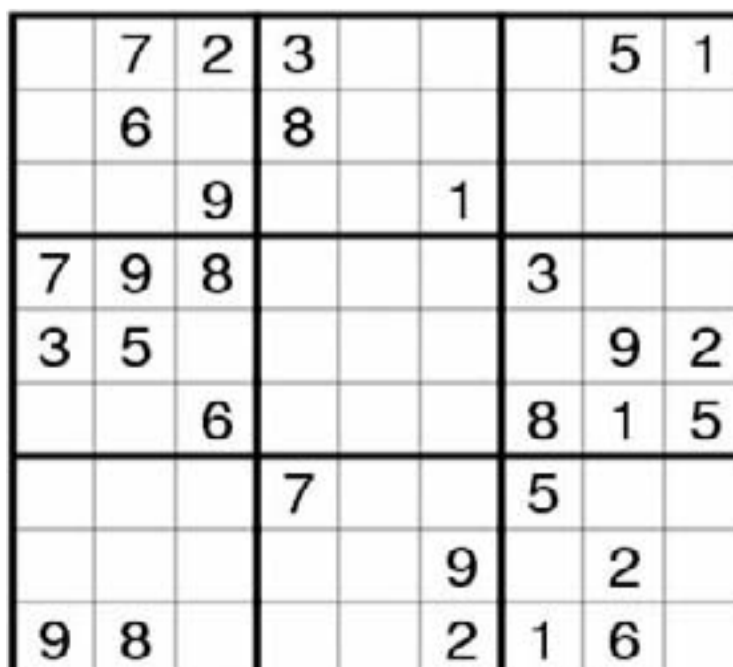
- ACORN
- APPLE
- BIRD MIGRATION
- BLOWING LEAVES
- BLUSTERY DAY
- CANNING
- CHESTNUTS
- CHILLY
- COLD
- CROPS
- EQUINOX
- FALL
- FARMING
- FEAST
- FROST
- HALLOWEEN
- HARVEST
- HAYSTACK
- HICKORY NUTS
- LONGER NIGHTS
- NOVEMBER
- OCTOBER
- ORANGE LEAVES
- PIE
- PUMPKIN
- RAKE
- RED LEAVES
- SCARECROW
- SCHOOL
- SEASON
- SEPTEMBER
- SHORTER DAYS
- SQUASH
- SWEET POTATOES
- THANKSGIVING
- TURKEY
- WINDY
- YELLOW LEAVES

The hidden sentence is: AUTUMN IS A SECOND SPRING WHEN EVERY LEAF IS A FLOWER.

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2018



A woman sits near street art graffiti on a wall in the Balat district, near the golden horn, in Istanbul. —AFP

In Kenya, rubbish reborn as art



Kenyan "junk artist" Evans Ngure shows collected materials that he uses for his works at a dumpsite in Nairobi. — AFP photos



Kenyan "junk artist" Evans Ngure creates objects made with collected materials in his workshop in Nairobi.

In a room that is both home and studio, Evans Ngure works on a sculpture, a fantastical fish fabricated from found objects: wooden spoons, broken scissors and an old machete. Long before upcycling became a hipster mantra, Ngure turned his Nairobi apartment into a workshop, and junk into art, his choice of artistic expression echoing a

necessary developing world culture of re-use. After trying his hand at painting and graphic design, Ngure became a "junk artist" as an act of reciprocity and community.

"My goal is to have an impact on society, from the ground where I live to everybody that comes in contact with my art," he says. Sometimes he forages for raw materials himself, sometimes his neighbors bring him items, sometimes buyers hand over bits and pieces. People "end up seeing my work, they relate to it, so they take part by giving me stuff that I can use," he says.

The artist's imprint is clear on the roof of the four-storey apartment building where he lives in the north of the Kenyan capital: reclaimed art is scattered about, a strip curtain made from hundreds of buttons leads inside. To live from his art, Ngure makes and sells everything from small items of jewelry, to large pieces of art. Wire pendants, earrings and bracelets sell for \$5-20 (4-17 euros) while bigger works and sculptures cost hundreds. "Mostly it is the Kenyans that buy from me, especially the jewelry," he says, of his clientele, who visit him at home.

He takes out a brooch from a paper bag. It

consists of a two-euro coin hanging from a golden wire, with beads and a miniature Eiffel Tower. These are quick to produce and Ngure can make them in a matter of hours, but sculptures can take several days. Ngure imagines himself resurrecting unwanted objects, and is constantly on the lookout, whether wandering downtown or scouring a rubbish dump. "I collect them from different areas, I collect them from the ground even when I am walking in town, I get them from friends as donations or from my customers. I also have a landfill where I go to collect, even around here I have a place where I collect," says the 29-year-old.

Closest by is an informal dump spilling across a dirt road between a pair of buildings near to his home. Here, Ngure salvages discarded plastic toys and tin cans, leaving with his arms full. "I am collecting whatever material I find... This is part of a motorcycle, so, by the look of this, it will end up as a very amazing sculpture," he says, with an enthusiastic smile, weighing the dented metal in his hands.

Give things a second chance

Determined by the random chance of what

Ngure finds, his sculptures have a sometimes surreal style. "All my life I have been that kid that loves collecting stuff but it never blossomed until I went to campus where we started creating artwork from unconventional materials," says Ngure, who studied painting at Nairobi's Kenyatta University. "I started adding things into my paintings, like buttons and cutouts from clothes, so that evolved into full collages entirely made from found objects."

As an example, he reaches for a peacock, its body made entirely from strips of old leather belts with cutlery for a train. Recycling has become such a core element of Ngure's life and work that he can't but anthropomorphize the components of his art. "It is not only people that need second chances but also objects that cannot speak for themselves, they need that second chance: before you trash them, just re-think about them," he says.

The artist also wants to raise awareness about the protection of wildlife by making collages representing animals such as butterflies or ladybugs which he exhibited, with other works, at the British Institute a few months ago. — AFP



Kenyan "junk artist" Evans Ngure shows earrings made with collected materials at a dumpsite in Nairobi.



Kenyan "junk artist" Evans Ngure collects materials that he uses for his works at a dumpsite in Nairobi.



Kenyan "junk artist" Evans Ngure creates objects made with collected materials in his workshop in Nairobi.

U2 cancels Berlin show after Bono loses his voice



In this file photo Bono of the Irish rock band U2 performs during the "Experience + Innocence" tour at the United Center in Chicago. —AFP

Irish rock group U2 was forced to cut short a concert in Berlin before thousands of fans after performing only a few songs when lead singer Bono lost his voice. "We're so sorry for tonight's cancellation," the group said in a statement on its website about the Saturday night show. "Bono was in great form and great voice prior to the show and we were all looking forward to the second night in Berlin, but after a few songs, he suffered a complete loss of voice." "We don't know what has happened and we're taking medical advice."

It was the second and last concert by the group in the German capital as part of its "Experience + Innocence" tour. After the first few songs Bono appeared to have a problem with his voice. Several times, the 58-year-old stopped singing to drink from a thermos flask. A video posted on Twitter by lifestyle magazine EFTM showed Bono finally telling the audience that "I think we can't go on". "It's not right for you. It's useless," he said, as the band broke off the show to "consult".

The concert was eventually cancelled, and the audience told they could return for another U2 show at a future date. "As always, we appreciate our audience's understanding and all our fans' support in Berlin and those who travelled from afar. We will update you very soon," the statement said. US actress Ashley Judd wrote on Twitter that Bono had been "singing his guts out" before his voice "left him abruptly." "The crowd so felt for him," she added.

U2 is due to play their next show on Tuesday in Cologne. At the first Berlin show on Friday, Bono condemned the recent far-right violence in the eastern German city of Chemnitz. During the concert, the slogan #wirsindmehr (we are more) used by counter protesters in Germany against the far-right was also projected on the stage, to cheers from the crowd. Under the slogan, German punk band Die Toten Hosen will be playing a free concert in Chemnitz yesterday. —AFP



Singer and actress Lady Gaga arrives for the premiere of the film "A Star Is Born" presented out of competition during the 75th Venice Film Festival at Venice Lido. — AFP

Thunderstorm halts Lady Gaga's movie debut

Lady Gaga has been called a force of nature but a spectacular thunderstorm pulled the plug on the gala premiere of her big acting debut at the Venice film festival. An hour into the screening of "A Star Is Born" late Friday a violent electrical storm rolling across the Venetian

lagoon left the cinema in the dark for 20 minutes. Earlier the superstar made mimed prayers on the red carpet so that she could reach her seat in her fluffy pink Valentino gown without being soaked.

While the gala was something of a washout, the film itself and the singer's performance earned rapturous reviews. Variety called the second remake of the 1937 classic "a transcendent Hollywood movie", heaping praise on Lady Gaga and her co-star Bradley Cooper, who also directed the film. Critic Owen Gleiberman hailed as "luminous" its story of a waitress who climbs to fame after falling in love with an alcoholic country singer on the slide. He said Gaga's "ebullient and winningly direct performance never lets her own star quality get in the way of the character."

The talented "ugly" girl who thinks her nose is too big and hides behind layers of outrageous makeup when she goes on stage, had obvious autobiographical echoes for the US star. Lady Gaga told reporters she "always dreamed of being an actor", and channeled her own difficult early experiences in the music business into her performance. And it clearly worked. The Hollywood Reporter declared it a "captivating debut in a big-screen leading role". "There's a lot to love in Bradley Cooper's film, it added, even if "at times it becomes pedestrian as it follows her conquest of superstardom". — AFP



Singer and actress Lady Gaga and director and actor Bradley Cooper arrive for the premiere of the film "A Star is Born" presented out of competition.

Modern dance giant Paul Taylor dies at 88

Paul Taylor, a towering figure of US modern dance who imbued his choreography with joyful, poetic exuberance, has died, his eponymous company said Thursday. He was 88. Taylor, who died Wednesday, brought a radical new approach to the art form in the 1950s, creating a bridge between early modern masters like Martha

artistic director Michael Novak. "We are grateful for your love and support as we begin to carry on his legacy with the utmost fidelity and devotion," added Novak, a dance company member who Taylor picked earlier this year to serve as his successor. In a particularly provocative 1957 concert of seven works, Taylor's "Duet" had him standing motionless while his partner reclined looking "calm in an exciting way" before the curtain closed.

Most of the audience left, Graham dubbed him a "naughty boy" and Dance Observer published a review featuring four square inches (26 square centimeters) of blank paper. That daring, convention-breaking spirit paved the way for the postmodern dance greats who emerged out of the Judson Dance Theater in the early 1960s like Trisha Brown, Steve Paxton and Yvonne Rainer.

Taylor collaborated closely with artists both avant-garde and established, including multiple pieces with designs by Robert Rauschenberg, others with music composed by John Cage and a decades-long collaboration with painter Alex Katz.

Through it all, Taylor kept a sense of humor, with a twinkle in his eye. Among his roster of illustrious company designers was one named George Tacit. It was only recently that Taylor admitted-some-what tacitly-that he was in fact Tacit, having shied from making it known that he had designed costumes for a company that already bears his name.



Graham and Isadora Duncan and experimental contemporary dance. He is one of the last giants of modern dance to pass away, after Graham, Merce Cunningham and Pina Bausch. His dance company was one of the first from the United States to tour around the world.

"Paul Taylor was one of the world's greatest dancers, and his passing deeply saddens not only those of us who worked with him, but also people all over the world whose spirits have been touched by his incomparable art," said Paul Taylor Dance Foundation



'Great storyteller'

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on July 29, 1930 in the wake of the Great Depression, Taylor grew up in the US capital and surrounding region. While attending Syracuse University on a swimming scholarship, he discovered dance in books he read at the library and transferred to the Juilliard School in New York. He assembled a small group of dancers in 1954, performing himself until focusing more exclusively on choreography 20 years later. Taylor, who danced in his early years for Graham, Cunningham and George Balanchine—considered the father of American ballet-brought technical prowess and physicality to the art form, often coupled with chirpy, colorful movements, scores and costumes.

He gained national and international renown with pieces like "Aureole" (1962), initially intended to upset modern dance purists but ultimately celebrated by modern ballet companies with its accessible, upbeat Handel score and lightly swaying costumes. Showing his versatility, a year later he created the bleak "Scudorama," where eight dancers shrouded beneath multicolored beach towels crawl across the floor-set to a score that Taylor commissioned asking that it have the same tempo as Igor Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring."

In 1980, Taylor created a riotous work with a two-piano arrangement of the "Rite" score, the storyline featuring gangsters and a kidnapping. "He was a great storyteller through his dance, and he was America's master modern choreographer," Bodyvox dance company co-artistic director Ashley Roland told AFP. "He created a strong dance vernacular, especially through men, in pieces like 'Arden Court' and 'Cloven Kingdom.' He was a swimmer, and his arm movement drove his dance with power and grace." Matthew Bourne, the British choreographer known for his all-male take on the Russian ballet classic "Swan Lake," mourned "a great loss," adding that Taylor's "influence and sense of pure joy in movement continue to be an inspiration to dancers worldwide."

Prolific

Taylor created more than 140 dances since 1954, performed by Paul Taylor Dance Company, its smaller ensemble Taylor 2 as well as other dance companies around the world. Since 2014, his dance company has called Lincoln Center—the performing arts hall in the heart of New York City—its second home for a three-week season each year. It's a rare honor for a modern dance troupe. Paul Taylor American Modern Dance, as the initiative is known, presents both works from Taylor's own repertoire as well as new pieces by leading contemporary choreographers. — AFP

Stung by critics (and low sales), Eminem releases surprise album

Less than a year after his last album was panned by critics and snubbed by some fans, the American rapper Eminem caught the entertainment world off guard with the surprise overnight release of a new album called "Kamikaze." It was the Detroit rapper's 10th solo album, and it came just eight months after "Revival," which had his worst sales to date. The eight-month gestation of "Kamikaze" was the quickest in which Eminem has recorded any album.

"Revival" had both critics and fans grumbling that the rapper also known as "Slim Shady" had gone too commercial, surrounding himself with pop stars like Ed Sheeran and Beyonce whose musical world is in a different universe. The artists collaborating with Eminem on "Kamikaze" are less well-known, but they lend the short album (13 titles) greater coherence and restraint.

In the album's expletive-laden introduction, an irritated-sounding Eminem—real name, Marshall Mathers—says he wants to "punch the world" the face. The 45-year-old rapper again lashes out at his favorite targets: the critics, rappers who have shunned him and US President Donald Trump. The album, recorded in secret and produced by Eminem and his long-time mate Dr Dre, was released at midnight (04H00 GMT Friday) on streaming platforms. The record's cover illustration, showing an album crashing into a mountain, pays tribute to the 1986 Beastie Boys album "Licensed to Ill," a rap classic. The New York rappers infused their music with a punk spirit that seems to still inspire Eminem. — AFP



File photo shows Eminem walking on stage to accept the Video of the Year Award at the MTV Video Music Awards in New York. — AFP

First Paris attacks feature film shown at Venice

Did not talk to survivors

First reviews of the film were generally positive, with the Hollywood Reporter calling it a "quietly moving celebration of human resilience" even if its "tasteful understatement" was sometimes too low-key for its own good. The producers admitted that Hers did not "sit down and talk to the survivors one-on-one but he read all their official testimonies".

"He didn't want to make a direct comparison between his characters and the experiences of the victims," a spokesman told AFP. Hers said the film "fits into a much bigger picture of a period when people are tormented by an awareness of our fragility". Sociologist Gerome Truc, author of "Shell Shocked: The Social Response to Terrorist Attacks", who worked with the film, said it was more a portrait of the "Bataclan generation" in post-attacks Paris.

While the aftermath of a fictional attack in Paris is briefly shown, the film is "about all terrorist attacks and the ordeal that an attack represents", he said. The main focus of the story is the relationships between the young uncle and his niece (Vincent Lacoste and Isaure Multrier), and his wounded musician girlfriend played by Stacey Martin. "The story of David and Amanda is set in Paris, but it could be London, Baghdad or Bombay," Truc said. Netflix screened a documentary mini-series, "Attack on Paris", in May based on testimony from dozens of survivors, and the bestseller "You Will Not Hate My Hate", a moving rebuke to the attackers by Antoine Leiris, the husband of one of the victims, has been adapted for the stage. — AFP

Neil Armstrong film accused of being unpatriotic

Neil Armstrong's sons and the director of a new biopic on the space hero are hitting back against criticism that the film is unpatriotic because of the lack of a flag-planting scene. In a statement issued on Friday, Rick and Mark Armstrong said "First Man," starring Ryan Gosling, was intended to depict their father's journey to the moon and delve into "the man behind the myth."

"This story is human, and it is universal," the brothers said in their statement issued jointly with "First Man" author James Hansen. "Of course, it celebrates an American achievement. It also celebrates an achievement for all mankind," as it says on the plaque Neil and Buzz (Aldrin) left on the moon." The trio added they did not feel the movie was "anti-American in the slightest." "Quite the opposite," they said. "But don't take our word for it. We'd encourage everyone to go see this remarkable film and see for themselves." Gosling, who portrays Armstrong in the film, and director Damien Chazelle also hit back at criticism the movie was un-American for not depicting the iconic flag-planting. "In 'First Man' I show the American flag standing on the lunar surface, but the flag being physically planted into the surface is one of several moments of the Apollo 11 lunar EVA that I chose not to focus upon," he said in a statement carried by Variety. "To address the question of whether this was a political statement, the answer is no."

"My goal with this movie was to share with audiences the unseen, unknown aspects of America's mission to the moon—particularly Neil Armstrong's personal saga and what he may have been thinking and feeling during those famous few hours." Among those who have criticized the film is failed presidential candidate and Republican senator Marco Rubio. "This is total lunacy," he tweeted on Friday in reference to the absence of the flag planting. "And a disservice at a time when our people need reminders of what we can achieve when we work together. The American people paid for that



In this file photo director Damien Chazelle poses during a photo call for the film "First Man" prior to its premiere in competition at the 75th Venice Film Festival at Venice Lido. — AFP photos

mission, on rockets built by Americans, with American technology & carrying American astronauts. It wasn't a UN mission." "First Man" opened the Venice Film Festival this week and is set for release in US theatres on October 12. — AFP

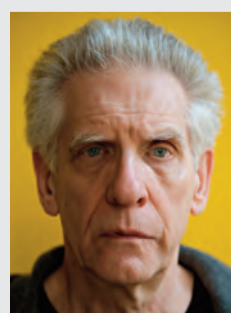


In this NASA handout file photo taken on July 20, 1969 US astronauts Neil Armstrong and "Buzz" Aldrin deploy the US flag on the lunar surface during the Apollo 11 lunar landing mission.

Cinema-going is over, says director Cronenberg

Hollywood director David Cronenberg has predicted that cinema-going will die out—and says he "does not care" in the least. The maker of "The Fly", "Crash" and "Naked Lunch" told a talk at the Venice film festival Saturday that "television screens are getting bigger and bigger and therefore the difference between theatre and domestic viewing has become really flimsy." But the Canadian auteur said cinema itself would survive streaming giants like Netflix and Amazon and that it was "just evolving."

He also revealed that he is working on a new television series himself, but said that he "can't talk about it yet". Cronenberg said the visual language directors were using now was also moving away stylistically from the big screen.



"The rule used to be that close-up shots were only done for TV, and not for movies. But today that's no longer the case," Variety reported him as saying.

In July Cronenberg told students at a Toronto university that streaming was "shattering the big screen into many little screens. This is causing much stress amongst movie-nostalgia hardliners. It does not matter to me. In fact, it pleases me." The Cannes film festival has found itself locked in conflict with Netflix over the last two years for its support of cinema owners. It demanded that the streaming giant show the films it wanted to premiere at the festival on the big screen before releasing them online. Rival Amazon often gives films it finances a cinema run before they are streamed. — AFP

Lifestyle | Features

Taiwan graffiti artist swaps spray for ink in epic tattoos



Tattoo artist Bobo Chen (right) displaying a tattoo design template to his client.



Tattoo artist Bobo Chen displaying design templates at his workshop.



Tattoo artist Bobo Chen retouching the tattoo on the back of his client Micky Peng in Taipei. —AFP photos



Tattoo artist Bobo Chen displaying tattoo equipment.



Micky Peng, a client of tattoo artist Bobo Chen, displaying his inked chest and arms during an interview.



Tattoo artist Bobo Chen inspecting the inked back of his client Micky Peng.

In a small workshop down a narrow alleyway in Taipei's Ximending district, tattoo artist Bobo Chen is refreshing a scene from a Japanese epic with new ink on a client's back. The vivid image depicts a fictional Japanese hero fighting a tiger and dragon, symbolic of strength and protection. A former graffiti artist, Chen, 35, switched to tattooing five years ago after learning the craft in Thailand. On the walls of his studio are pictures of historical Japanese drawings, which he takes as inspiration for his body art. Taiwan was ruled by Japan for 50 years until 1945 and the island's design aesthetic often still reflects Japanese style.

"I like Japanese culture and traditions," says Chen. "I take inspiration from them for my work because I'd like to play a small part in handing them down." It also pays the bills—Chen does mostly large-scale tattoos and charges over Tw\$3,000 (\$100) per hour. A large tattoo costs as much as Tw\$300,000. He does not advertise, but says he has plenty of clients through word of mouth. Chen says the trend of having larger scale tattoos has grown more popular in Taiwan in recent years

as people become less conservative about the way they look.

He talks through the process with clients before going ahead, adding that often they decide to have tattoos when they are suffering "frustration or disappointment" in life. Micky Peng, 30, who sports the epic back design Chen is touching up, as well as a tiger pattern on his chest, said receiving tattoos had been cathartic for him. He first started when his father fell ill ten years ago and said it was a way to release emotional stress. "I feel like I am being protected by the hero tattoo on my body," says Peng, who runs a tofu dessert shop in central Taichung city. "I think I'm addicted to it. Getting new tattoos makes me happier and feel that I am more unique." —AFP



Micky Peng, a client of tattoo artist Bobo Chen, displaying his tattooed back during an interview.



Tattoo artist Bobo Chen displaying a design template at his workshop.



Tattoo artist Bobo Chen displaying various tattoo needles at his workshop.

Women cheer as Swedish man-free music festival opens



Women attend the Statement Festival at Bananpiren in Gothenburg, Sweden. —AFP photos



Swedish artist Jenny Wilson performs during the Statement Festival at Bananpiren in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Matilda Hagerman laughs with her friends as she queues at a man-free music festival, which kicked off in Sweden on Friday in protest against a wave of sexual assaults at festivals in recent years. "This festival was necessary because of everything that happened during festivals last year," says the 27-year-old student with long pink hair and purple lipstick as her friends nod in agreement. Held in Sweden's second-largest city of Gothenburg, the two-day Statement Festival, forbids men but not transgender people. It was announced last year after police received four rape and 23 sexual assault reports at Sweden's largest Bravalla Festival, which was cancelled this year as a result.

"What do you think about us creating an awesome festival where only non-men are welcome until ALL men learn how to behave?" Swedish comedian Emma Knyckare, who founded the Statement

Festival, tweeted at the time. Located inside an industrial building in Gothenburg's harbor, only female bands are performing and neither male security guards nor journalists are allowed to enter. Rebecka Ljung, spokeswoman for the festival, told AFP "thousands" of women were expected to attend the festival. Under cloudy skies, the festival got started with women holding beers and smiling and walking harmoniously in groups.

With two main stages for the mainly Swedish women performers, there was plenty of space to rest outside on pink coloured seats at the center of the site, turning the festival into a convivial place in contrast to traditional festivals. "This place feels like a safe-zone where women can just get together and have fun and celebrate ... especially in light of the assaults that have happened at other festivals," said Julia Skonneby, a 34-year-old performer. "It feels like a certain tension is

gone... we're here to make a statement together." Hanna Gustavsson, a 31-year-old designer, chimed in.

Statement, launched after raising more than 500,000 kronor (47,000 euros, \$54,000) through crowd funding, defines a transgender person as "a person who does not identify with the sex assigned to them at birth". This means transgender women born as men are allowed to attend. Only men who identify with the sex they were born with, also called cis men, are banned.

Discriminatory?

The Scandinavian country is one of the most gender equal countries in the world. After receiving several complaints, the Equality Ombudsman (DO), a government agency that promotes equal rights and handles discrimination complaints, has asked the festival to specify what it means by "cis men". "We want to examine whether the festival is compatible with discrimination

laws," the agency's spokesman Clas Lundstedt told AFP, adding it would take a couple of weeks to reach a conclusion.

Festival-goer Gustavsson said she thought it was fair to bar men. "I don't believe in complete separatism but I think it's very important to have this festival right now." According to the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, 4.1 percent of women reported that they had been the victim of a sexual crime compared to 0.6 percent of men in Sweden.

Knyckare told AFP that the MeToo wave exposing sexual assault unveiled "serious problems" in Sweden, one of the most gender equal nations in the world, at not only festivals but several institutions. "It seems like men have woken up to how huge the problem with sexual violence is," she told AFP. —AFP



Lison Petit (left) and Celia Sorel from France attend the Statement Festival at Bananpiren in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Hong Kong dim sum favorite faces uncertain future



Diners share tables as they eat dim sum at the Lin Heung Tea House in Hong Kong. —AFP photos



Bamboo steamers containing raw dim sum are taken out of a fridge before being steamed in the kitchen of the Lin Heung Tea House in Hong Kong.



Diners stand around a trolley of bamboo steamers containing freshly steamed dim sum dishes at the Lin Heung Tea House in Hong Kong.



Diners share tables as they eat dim sum at the Lin Heung Tea House in Hong Kong.



Diners watch as a trolley lady passes them with bamboo steamers containing dim sum dishes at the Lin Heung Tea House.

Impatient diners crowd around carts of steaming dim sum steered by fierce "trolley aunts" at Hong Kong's Lin Heung Tea House, one of the city's most famous restaurants, now fearing for its future. Lin Heung's traditional homemade dishes, including cha siu bao (barbecue pork buns), har gow (shrimp dumplings) and ma lai go (Cantonese sponge cake), have earned a loyal following from locals with a taste for nostalgia, as well as inquisitive tourists. The two-storey restaurant in the bustling Central district has multiple top listings in global travel guides and serves customers from 6:00 am until 10:00 pm, seven days a week.

Diners sit elbow-to-elbow at shared round tables, metal spittoons still tucked beside them, the walls hung with decorative bird cages and traditional Chinese numerals used for menu prices. But the restaurant says the building's new owner has not yet contacted them about renewing their lease, despite it expiring early next year, and they feel in the dark about the landlord's intentions. That has sparked fears that Lin Heung will be the latest Hong Kong culinary treasure to fall foul of the city's thirst for redevelopment.

The building's landlord, CSI Properties, told AFP it could not comment on the case. Lin Heung's possible demise has been widely reported by local media and worried regulars say they are visiting as much as they can in case it closes. Retiree Mr Yip, 80, says he is coming more often to enjoy his favorite dish of pork liver siu mai—a kind of dumpling—and freshly made tea. Dim sum is often paired with a cup of Chinese tea in a tradition known as "yum cha", literally "drink tea". "It's my habit to sip a cup of Chinese tea and greet everyone here every week. The tea is special and the people too," Yip told AFP. "I feel comforted when I see the staff. It feels like home."

'Sense of belonging'

The city's housing market was crowned the most

expensive in the world in 2017 — the most recent figures available—according to US-based Demographia and developers clamor for prime real estate. The selling off of older buildings, as well as spiraling rents, has spelled the end for a number of family-run neighborhood favorites across Hong Kong. Lin Heung is one of the city's oldest Cantonese restaurant businesses and is run by the Ngan family, who arrived from the southern Chinese province of Guangdong and set it up in 1926. It now has three outlets in Hong Kong and has moved its restaurants around over the decades. The Central venue on Wellington Street is its main restaurant and has been in the same spot for 22 years.

Restaurant spokesman Terence Lam said the current lease would end in March 2019 and he hoped the restaurant would not have to close. "It's not only a business. It embodies the legacy of the past," Lam told AFP. "It represents the hardship of our ancestors." Local food writer Wilson Fok said the evolution of "yum cha" culture was intertwined with Hong Kong's history as numerous mainland dim sum chefs fled to the former British colony in the 1950s after civil war ravaged China. He describes the atmosphere inside restaurants like Lin Heung as a "piece of history". "Going to 'yum cha' is not just a cultural habit where people consume food, but also a way of life that shapes our identity," said Fok. "Some of these old traditions are often lost in our fast-paced society," he added.

Tourists visiting the tea house said they appreciated the restaurant's traditional approach—a rarity now in Hong Kong. "We usually sit with family or friends in China. But here, we share tables with people we don't know," said 20-year-old mainland Chinese visitor Wu Yutung. Brazilian tourist Marcelo Garcia, 47, who said he had never before eaten dim sum, described Lin Heung as "an environment with a huge amount of energy". "People probably come here again because they feel a sense of belonging," he said.—AFP



Bamboo steamers are used to cook dim sum in the kitchen of the Lin Heung Tea House in Hong Kong.



A customer (center) gestures to choose her dish as other diners hold their order sheets in order to catch the attention of an employee (right) while they crowd around her trolley of bamboo steamers containing freshly steamed dim sum dishes at the Lin Heung Tea House in Hong Kong.

Boat cuisine: Superchef Ducasse takes to the water

Still smarting from being kicked out of his Michelin-starred restaurant halfway up the Eiffel Tower, France's most famous chef Alain Ducasse is pressing on instead with a new restaurant almost directly underneath it—and, he boasts, it floats. Ducasse, who has won a total 21 Michelin stars—more than any other chef alive—will be dishing up lobster and duck foie gras onboard an electric boat on the River Seine from September 10. "It's accessible, contemporary French high gastronomy—on a boat," he told AFP at a table for two onboard the 130-seat Ducasse Sur Seine, which will trundle along the river as diners tuck in.

"It's surely the most extraordinary architectural and cultural trip you can have on a river anywhere in the world," he said. It is perhaps cruel that the 38-metre (125-foot) boat docks just in front of the French capital's most famous monument, given that Ducasse went to court this month to challenge his eviction from its one-star Jules Verne restaurant. He was said to be livid after fellow star chefs Frederic Anton and Thierry Marx won a ten-year tenure to run the Eiffel Tower's gastronomic restaurant, where he cooked for US President Donald Trump during his visit last year. Asked about the setback, Ducasse's communications chief tried to stop him answering. But the chef insisted on addressing a defeat which he is still struggling to digest. From his boat, "I see the Eiffel Tower and more—I can see all the monuments of Paris," he said pointedly. "The Eiffel Tower is in a fixed location. Another beautiful story is just beginning."

Greener and healthier

In court, Ducasse's lawyers argued that the 61-year-old was "the most-starred chef in the world" after the death this month of fellow culinary legend Joel Robuchon, and accused the consulting company used for the Eiffel Tower tendering process of a conflict of interest. He has suffered setbacks before in a four-decade career that has spawned some 30 restaurants around the globe: his first New York venture Essex House flopped upon its launch in 2000 amid ridicule about its astronomical prices. Lunch onboard the glass-walled boat, an idea Ducasse first dreamed up five years ago, will start at 100 euros (\$117), and dinner from 150 euros.

Both will feature a one-and-a-half hour loop of the Seine, past monuments including the Louvre and Notre Dame cathedral, timed at night to bring diners back for the sparkling of the Eiffel Tower's lights upon the hour.



Dressed tables are seen at French chef Alain Ducasse's new boat restaurant, the "Ducasse sur Seine".



A waiter stands at French chef Alain Ducasse's new boat restaurant, the "Ducasse sur Seine".

Some critics complain that Ducasse, who became a citizen of low-tax Monaco in 2008, is rarely in the kitchen himself. The boat will be no different: he has charged his former sous-chef Francis Fauvel with the food. The menu will be "a celebration of the seasons and local products"—even taking its honey from Parisian hives—and with less of the meat and heavy sauces traditionally associated with fine French cooking.

"We decided to take out the sugar, the salt and the fat, to be in sync with a society that's changing," he said, naming "a very beautiful turbot in a champagne sauce" as one of his favourite dishes. Aside from local sourcing, Ducasse



French chef Alain Ducasse (center) poses with his team on his new boat restaurant, the "Ducasse sur Seine".



A dressed table is seen at French chef Alain Ducasse's new boat restaurant, the "Ducasse sur Seine".



French chef Alain Ducasse (center) poses with his team on his new boat restaurant, the "Ducasse sur Seine".

boasts of his electric boat's green credentials and how silently it cuts through the Seine. "The direction the world is going in is not to pollute, not to make noise," he said.

Ducasse, who has sent food to astronauts onboard the International Space Station, is dismissive of the idea that producing haute cuisine might prove more difficult on a boat than on dry land. A 36-strong team of chefs and pastry cooks will prepare everything either on the jetty or in kitchens in the belly of the 300-tonne vessel,

which has a wine cellar kept to standard temperatures. Known for his fastidious attention to detail—even fretting over whether the curtain rods of his restaurants are right—he is at pains to distinguish his flashily decorated new eatery from the existing river boats offering dinner cruises along the Seine. "I was a consultant on the boats of Paris, and I think that has made me want to do better," he said. "It's a floating restaurant, not a boat or a barge where you get fed." —AFP

Classifieds

Monday, September 3, 2018

Kuwait Times
 Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

STATE OF KUWAIT
 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate freshening over western areas north westerly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 12 - 40 km/h causing rising dust over western areas.

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 02/09/2018 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	45 °C	36 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	47 °C	29 °C			
ABDALY	48 °C	28 °C			
BUBYAN	--- °C	0- °C			
JAHRA	48 °C	33 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	44 °C	27 °C			
SALMIYAH	39 °C	35 °C			
AHMADI	39 °C	35 °C			
NUWAISIB	43 °C	29 °C			
WAFRA	47 °C	26 °C			
SALMY	46 °C	28 °C	SFC. ANALYSIS (0000 UTC) 02 SEP 2018		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Monday	09/03	Hot and Humid	43 °C	28 °C	NW-SE	15 - 40 km/h
Tuesday	09/04	Hot and Humid	44 °C	27 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h
Wednesday	09/05	Hot and Humid specially over coastal areas	45 °C	30 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h
Thursday	09/06	Hot and Humid specially over coastal areas	46 °C	31 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 30 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:04
Sunrise	05:26
Zuhr	11:48
Asr	15:21
Sunset	18:09
Isha	19:29

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	49 °C
MIN. Temp.	30 °C
MAX. RH	32 %
MIN. RH	08 %
MAX. Wind	N 39 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

REQUIRED

For Chocolate Shop

SALES LADY

- Expert & Creative
- Design, package & display chocolate
- Responsible and presentable
- Have a transferable (18) visa.

Send C.V / Contact/ WhatsApp
97286044

Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
Jet Airways	22087426
FlyDubai	22924455
Qatar Airways	22414400
KLM	22423888
Royal Jordanian	22425747
British Airways	22418064/5/6
Air France	22425635
Emirates	22430224
Air India	22921555
Sri Lanka Airlines	22438184
Egypt Air	22424444
Swiss Air	22421578
Saudia	22421516
Middle East Airlines	22426306
Lufthansa	22423073
PIA	22422493
Bangladesh Airlines	22421044
Indian Airlines	22452977/8
Oman Air	22456700
Turkish Airlines	22958787
Aeroflot	22453820/1
	22404838/9

CHANGE OF NAME

I Aleixo Fernandes, Flat No. ET-4, Residency Dondrem Bhatt, St. Paul, Taleigao, Caranzalem. Would like to correct my name from Aleixo Cosme Fernandes to Aleixo Fernandes and also my wife's name from Fatima Maria Conceicao Fernandes to Fatima Maria Conceicao Viegas.

LOST

Original document police No. 633003907 - 5 to Mr. Fayyaz Ahmed Fayyazi, DV the State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan, Gulf Zone is reported to have been lost. Anyone finding the same or claiming any interest in it should communicate with the Manager Kuwait State Life Office - Ph: 22452208. (C 5416)

CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAJA, holder of Indian Passport No. M7063824, issued at Kuwait on 04/08/2015 resident of Rampur and presently residing at Apt #2, 1st floor, street 3, block 12, Salmiya, Kuwait, do hereby change my name from Raja to Rameez Raja Mirza with immediate effect. 3-9-2018

Original document policy No. 633004440 - 4 Raja Ghulam Qamar, DV the State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan, Gulf Zone is reported to have been lost. Anyone finding any interest in it should communicate with the Manager Kuwait State Life Office - Ph: 22452208. (C 5417) 3-9-2018

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Arul Susai Raj Dass, Passport No: N-1651409, Civil ID 254032601601, changed my name to Abdul Majid Dass. (C 5414) 29-8-2018

It is notified for the information that my original qualifying examination certificate of main secondary examination of year 2014 and Roll No. 8105633 issued by CBSE has been actually lost. Name of the candidate BADER MAHMOUD CHAMMOU, address: Hawally, Phone 66844674. (C 5415) 31-8-2018

ACCOMMODATION

For Filipino only Farwaniya block 1, near gulfmart. Available 25 of August, Contact 94418396 or 69972330 29-8-2018

EMERGENCY

☎ 112

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

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Monday 3/9/2018				Departure Flights on Monday 3/9/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
FEW	441	Asyut	00:05	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
KAC	102	London	00:50	JZY	767	Istanbul	13:40
KAC	504	Beirut	00:50	KAC	144	Doha	13:55
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
WAN	976D	Baku	00:55	IRA	666	Esfahan	14:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	PIA	645	Amman	14:15
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	FEG	342	Sohag	14:50
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	14:55
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
THY	768	Istanbul	02:40	JZR	124	Bahrain	15:40
THY	1404	AYT	02:45	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
JZR	651	Lahore	02:55	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
JZR	607	Kochi	02:55	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
MSC	415	Sohag	03:10	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	KAC	121	AGP	16:20
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	KAC	191	Tbilisi	16:45
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	PGT	861	Alexandria	16:55
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
JZR	1541	Cairo	04:35	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:20	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	NIA	362	Alexandria	17:50
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
BAW	157	London	06:10	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
RBG	559	Alexandria	06:50	JZR	266	Beirut	19:15
WAN	342	Sohag	06:55	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20
JZR	143	Doha	07:20	KAC	151	Istanbul	19:25
JZR	529	Asyut	07:30	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	JZR	552D	Alexandria	20:05
IAW	157	Al Najaf	08:30	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
SAW	703	Damascus	09:30	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00
IAW	157	Al Najaf	10:00	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
MSC	405	Sohag	10:15	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
WAN	312	Asyut	10:20	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KAC	1543	Cairo	22:15
JZR	1539	Cairo	11:05	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	THY	1413	TZX	22:25
WAN	134	Doha	12:20	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:25
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	JZR	604	Ahmedabad	22:40
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
JZR	239	Amman	13:00	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
IRA	667	Esfahan	13:15	SVA	515	Riyadh	23:30
RJA	644	Amman	13:20	WAN	337	Alexandria	23:40
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:30	SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45	JZR	560	Sohag	23:45
FEG	341	Sohag	13:50				
KAC	672	Dubai	13:55				

Germany far-left leaders launch 'Stand Up' grassroots movement

Tens of thousands sign up online

BERLIN: Its battle cry is "Stand up", its public face is a divisive anti-capitalist politician who supports limiting immigration, its aim is to build a populist leftwing movement to shake up Merkel-era Germany. Tomorrow, Sahra Wagenknecht, 48, will launch the grassroots project which borrows from the campaigns of British Labor's Jeremy Corbyn, French Socialist Jean-Luc Melenchon and US Democrat Bernie Sanders. Its aim is to energize followers of her far-left Die Linke party, the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) and ecologist Greens-but also to win back disenfranchised working-class voters who have drifted to far-right protest parties.

Its website launched in mid-August cites reggae singer Bob Marley's chant "get up, stand up!" and declares boldly that "no politician, no party will solve our problems if we don't do it ourselves". Tens of thousands have signed up online to join the fight for secure jobs and pensions, good education, protecting the environment, disarmament and "a true democracy not ruled by banks, corporations and lobbyists". The jury is still out on whether it will spark a political revolution or quickly fizzle out.

Unsurprisingly, party leaders across the left, including Wagenknecht's own comrades at Die Linke, have rejected the Stand Up ("Aufstehen") guerilla campaign as divisive and unhelpful. The leader of the SPD, Germany's traditional

labor party, Andrea Nahles, quipped that she "wasn't losing any sleep over it". Others have greeted the effort to re-energize the left as a challenge to Merkel's centrist coalition government and the rise of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD). News weekly Der Spiegel said that, after populist anger over immigration swept the AfD into parliament last year, "it is high time to launch a movement of rallying the left".

'Open borders unrealistic'

But even backers of the idea have wondered whether it is being led by the right people. Wagenknecht, 48 and hailing from the former communist East Germany, is a lawmaker and polarizing TV talk show star, married to a firebrand leftist SPD defector, ex-finance minister Oskar Lafontaine. Known as rhetorically brilliant but awkward with voters, she is frequently critical of the EU and defends Vladimir Putin's Russia. She argues that the SPD has sold out its principles and failed to fight back against unbridled capitalism and Merkel's neo-liberal policies.

As Germany has absorbed a mass influx of migrants and refugees, which has sparked a far-right backlash, Wagenknecht has also broken with the left's traditional orthodoxy on immigration. "The idea of 'open borders for all' is unrealistic," she said in a recent interview. — AFP



BEIT LAHIA: Palestinians protest on a beach along the Gaza sea barrier on the border with Israel near Kibbutz Zikim, north of Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday. — AFP

Israel PM lauds US funding halt to UN agency

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday lauded the US decision to halt funding for the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, arguing the body perpetuates the problem instead of solving it. "The US has done a very important thing by halting the financing for the refugee perpetuation

agency known as UNRWA," Netanyahu said while visiting a school for the start of the academic year.

"It is finally beginning to resolve the problem." He added that the money "must be taken and used to genuinely help rehabilitate the refugees, the true number of which is much smaller than the number reported by UNRWA". The United States announced Friday it was ending funding to UNRWA, or the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees. Washington has long been the largest single donor to the agency, providing more than \$350 million a year.

The decision followed another one by Washington on August 24 to cancel more than \$200 million in bilateral aid to Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

Palestinian leaders have harshly condemned the US moves, accusing US President Donald Trump's administration of seeking to "liquidate" their cause. Trump's recognition of the disputed city of Jerusalem as Israel's capital in December had already led Palestinian leaders to cut off contact with the White House.

The aid cuts have led to concerns over the future of the UN agency that provides services to Palestinian refugees and their descendants, with some five million people eligible.

Its services include operating 711 schools for 526,000 pupils in the Palestinian territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The cut in bilateral aid will affect humanitarian programs in areas such as

health care, particularly in the impoverished Gaza Strip, among others.

The issue of Palestinian refugees has long been a major sticking point in peace efforts. More than 750,000 Palestinians fled or were expelled during the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation. They and their descendants are now classified as refugees who fall under UNRWA's remit. Palestinian leaders continue to call for at least some of them to be allowed to return to their former homes now inside Israel under any peace deal. Israel says Palestinians must give up the so-called right of return and that allowing descendants of refugees to inherit their status only perpetuates the problem instead of solving it. — AFP

Iraq's amputees take the plunge to forget horrors of Islamic State

ARBIL: With artificial limbs in the place of legs they lost to jihadists, a group of Iraqis plunged into a swimming pool for a special race aimed at helping them overcome the horrors of war. Abdel Zahra Kazem, a soldier from southern Iraq who was wounded in an attack in Baghdad, said getting back in the pool had helped him to rediscover one of his passions in life. "I've swum since I was a child and today I can start again," he said by the poolside at a hotel in Arbil, capital of the autonomous Kurdistan region of northern Iraq.

Rabie Abdellatif lost a leg in an attack by the Islamic State (IS) jihadist group in Iraq's second city Mosul, which was left in ruins by the government's battle against the jihadists. Thanks to his artificial limb, he said he has recovered "80 percent of my capabilities from life before". "I can drive my car. I can work," he told AFP, his swimsuit and cap still dripping wet. By the side of the pool, half a dozen men with artificial legs waited in the shade for their turn splashing in the water.

They were watched by officials from Kurdistan and Kuwait, which has provided funding for the rehabilitation of civilians and fighters from Iraqi Kurdish and federal forces. The aim, said Arbil governor Nawzad Hadi, is to "give life and hope" to victims of IS. Tens of thousands of Iraqi security personnel were wounded in the three-year battle against IS, which at its peak controlled nearly a third of the country as well as swathes of neighboring Syria. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have also been wounded in attacks perpetrated for years by extremist groups across Iraq, which declared victory over IS in December. — AFP

MPs up in arms over death of...

Continued from Page 1

complaints to the Public Prosecution and to the National Assembly Human Rights Panel over the incidents. The lawmaker said that when the panel receives the complaints, it will summon the chief of staff and other

senior army commanders for a meeting.

He held the chief of staff responsible for what happened now and also in previous similar incidents when ministry investigations blamed such deaths to natural illness of the students. MP Osama Al-Shaheeb praised the actions taken by the Defense Minister so far especially the suspension of 11 top military officers but demanded that the investigation should also include previous similar cases. MP Riyadh Al-Adasani praised the minister's actions but he said that he will continue to monitor the outcome of the investigation and will decide his next course of action.

repeatedly blamed Pakistan's participation in the US-led anti-terror campaign for the surge in terrorism on home soil over the last decade and has vowed to rebalance Islamabad's relationship with Washington.

He has also shown a willingness to hold talks with militant groups and sought support from religious hardliners in the run-up to elections last July - moves that prompted critics to christen him "Taleban Khan". Some analysts warn there may be no real way to pressure Islamabad and say a suspension in aid could see the US lose crucial influence over Pakistan which will instead look to other countries for support, particularly its longtime ally China.

Despite the provocations, the US does not want to completely rupture its relationship with Pakistan, where anti-American sentiment already runs high. Washington's footprint in Afghanistan is much smaller than it was at the height of the war, but it needs access to Pakistan's supply lines and airspace. Pakistan is still believed to have the strongest influence over the Taleban, making its cooperation necessary for peace talks. — AFP

to secure Iran's interests under the nuclear agreement," Kharrazi said. "(Burt) said Britain's position is different from that of the United States and we are looking for a European mechanism to make the nuclear accord successful," IRNA reported. Burt, on the first visit by a British minister since US President Donald Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal, earlier met Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Saturday the talks with Burt had involved "access to banking resources and the sale of oil". Iran has been seeking commitment from European signatories of the nuclear deal that it will be able to access the Western banking system and continue to sell oil despite US sanctions. In a statement before his visit, Burt said: "As long as Iran meets its commitments under the deal, we remain committed to it as we believe it is the best way to ensure a safe, secure future for the region." — Reuters

US to cancel Pakistan aid

Continued from Page 1

No more!" Pakistani leaders disputed the \$33 billion figure, insisting that around half of the money relates to reimbursements, and the prime minister's office accused Trump of ignoring the great sacrifices the country has made to fight extremism. In March, a senior US official said that Pakistan has "done the bare minimum to appear responsive to our requests," and concerns over a lack of action by Islamabad against militant groups still persist.

Loss of US influence

The announcement came weeks after Pakistan's new Prime Minister Imran Khan took office amid concerns he would remain tolerant of terror groups including the Taleban and the notorious Haqqani network. Khan has

Iran boosts its defenses

Continued from Page 1

"The imposition of (US) sanctions and pressures and the lack of rapid action by Europe to fulfill their commitments will have serious consequences," Kamal Kharrazi, a former foreign minister who heads a top foreign policy council, told Burt. IRNA reported, Iranian officials have said they would decide whether to quit the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers after studying the European package of economic measures that could help offset US sanctions. "European countries have not been able yet to take necessary measures

Deadly strike on bus 'unjustified'

RIYADH: A Saudi-led coalition in Yemen said it accepted that an air attack last month that killed dozens of people, including children travelling on a bus, was unjustified and pledged to hold accountable anyone who contributed to the error. The rare concession follows mounting international pressure, including from allies, to do more to limit civilian casualties in a 3-1/2 year civil war that has killed more than 10,000 people and pushed the already impoverished country to the brink of famine.

The Western-backed alliance fighting the Iranian-aligned Houthi group in Yemen said at the time that the Aug 9 air strikes at a market in Saada province had targeted missile launchers used to attack southern Saudi Arabia a day earlier and accused the Houthis of using children as human shields. The Joint Incident Assessment Team (JIAT), an investigative body set up

by the coalition, said on Saturday that the strikes had been based on intelligence indicating the bus was carrying Houthi leaders, a legitimate military target, but delays in executing the strike and receiving a no-strike order should be further investigated.

"There was a clear delay in preparing the fighter jet at the appropriate time and place, thus losing (the opportunity) to target this bus as a military target in an open area in order to avoid such collateral damage," JIAT legal advisor Mansour Ahmed Al-Mansour told reporters in the Saudi capital. "The team believes that the coalition forces should immediately review the application of their rules of engagement to ensure compliance," he added. The coalition later announced that it accepted those findings and pledged to hold accountable anyone who was proven to have made a mistake. "The Joint Forces Command of the Coalition expresses regret over the mistakes, extends its sympathies, condolences and solidarity to the families of the victims," said a statement carried by the Saudi state news agency SPA. — Reuters

Duterte eyes arms deals on Israel trip

Continued from Page 1

the Philippines due to concerns over Duterte's drug war. But so far sales with Israel have gone smoothly. "(The visit) is for President Duterte to look for an alternative market for... weapons for our armed forces as well as for the police," Henelito Sevilla, an international relations expert at the University of the Philippines said. Israel is among the world's top arms dealers, with nearly 60 percent of its defense exports going to the Asia-Pacific region, according to Israeli defense ministry data.

Two-state solution

The Philippines emerged as a significant new customer in 2017 for Israel, with sales of radar and anti-tank equipment worth \$21 million. Manila says the trip is expected to yield agreements on defense as well as labor, which is one of the Philippines' top exports. Some 10 million Filipinos work abroad and send home money that is a lifeline for the econo-

Life upended for those left...

Continued from Page 1

excluded from the draft, according to the registrar general of India. State officials say no "genuine" Indians need to worry about being left off the list, and there are avenues for appeal. But for Nimai - who fled persecution in Bangladesh as a five-year-old on his mother's back - his world has been upended once more.

Where do we go now?

His family are Hajong, a Hindu indigenous people from the Chittagong Hill Tracts bordering India and Myanmar, a region wracked by decades of ethnic conflict. They were shocked to discover their names left off after submitting the same paperwork to authorities that had allowed them to remain in India for more than 50 years. "What do we do now? We have accepted this land as our home since 1964, and we have nowhere to go," Hajong told AFP in the small settlement of Bamunigaon, roughly 30 kilometers from Assam's capital Guwahati.

"We have lived here all these years as refugees, but I want to die an Indian." The list will not be finalized until December, and state and federal governments have sought to allay concerns about the process. But that has done little to ease the anxiety of those excluded from the draft, who fear a life of limbo - or even deportation to Bangladesh. "I was told there was a massacre there, forcing my parents to flee with others

my. Manila is keen to sign agreements on protections for the workers. Although the Philippines has a special bond with Israelis for giving refuge to some 1,300 Jews fleeing the Holocaust, Duterte drew global condemnation for comparing himself to Hitler in 2016.

"Hitler massacred three million Jews. Now there are three million drug addicts (in the Philippines). I'd be happy to slaughter them," he said. Most mainstream historians say six million Jews died in the Holocaust. Duterte later apologized for his remarks, which he said were aimed at critics who had likened him to the Nazi leader. Just over a year later the Philippines abstained from a UN vote rebuking the United States for moving its embassy to Jerusalem. Palestinians see the eastern part of the disputed city as the capital of their future state.

Duterte yesterday expressed support for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "We shall be guided by our constitution and laws as well as our international commitments in support of efforts and initiatives including the two-state solution," he told reporters. Netanyahu says he wants the Palestinians to govern themselves, but has recently declined to specify whether that would mean an independent Palestinian state or some diluted form of autonomy, which many right-wing Israelis advocate. Duterte heads to Jordan on September 5, where he is expected to meet King Abdullah II. — AFP

from their village," said Gunamoni Dalu, a Hajong woman whose family fled Bangladesh half a century ago to India. She was born in India in 1968, but was left off the list. "Since the death of my father, I have lived alone here," she said, fretting about her future. News of the draft register sparked opposition protests in the national parliament and outrage in Assam, where the state government brought in 25,000 extra security forces in case of trouble. Assam, known for its lush tea estates and cool hill climate, has witnessed terrible violence between indigenous tribes and settlers. About 2,000 suspected migrants were butchered in a single day in Nellie in 1983. Nearly all were Muslim, and many were children.

Local tensions

Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party won control of Assam in 2016 after promising to expel illegal immigrants and protect the rights of indigenous groups. Millions fled Bangladesh during its 1971 war of independence from Pakistan, but waves of refugees including the Hajong and the Buddhist Chakma had also escaped persecution to come to India before that. Many settled in Assam, which shares a long border with Bangladesh.

Migrants have since been accused of illegally entering the state and taking land and jobs, causing tensions with locals. Rights groups have compared deletion from the citizenship list to Myanmar's removal of rights and protections for its Rohingya community in 1982. Robin Koch had hoped the process "would have sealed our Indian identity once and for all". "Instead, I don't know what went wrong. I can't eat and sleep at night," said the 55-year-old Hajong man, whose family crossed the border in 1964. "After our parents escaped... we lost all links with our clan. We have no one there now." — AFP

Sports

Kemp blasts Dodgers into National League West tie with Diamondbacks

Red Sox's Rodriguez fans 12 in win over White Sox

LOS ANGELES: Matt Kemp hit a three-run home run in the eighth inning as the Los Angeles Dodgers rallied to grab a share of first place in the National League West on Saturday with a 3-2 victory over the visiting Arizona Diamondbacks. The Dodgers had just three hits heading into the eighth inning, but they got a one-out single from Justin Turner and a walk from Manny Machado in front of Kemp's 19th home run of the season off Diamondbacks reliever Archie Bradley. Machado's walk came on a 10-pitch plate appearance. It was just the fourth home run in the second half for Kemp, who was named to the National League All-Star team. The Dodgers used home runs to put together a late rally for the second consecutive game after Turner and Enrique Hernandez went deep in a victory Friday. Eduardo Escobar and Christian Walker hit home runs for the Diamondbacks, while Patrick Corbin pitched five scoreless innings. Arizona fell into a tie for the top spot in the division for the third time since Aug. 12.

BRAVES 5, PIRATES 3

Freddie Freeman's run-scoring double drove in the go-ahead run in a four-run eighth-inning rally to help Atlanta beat visiting Pittsburgh and snap a three-game losing streak. Atlanta (75-60) extended its lead in the National League East to three games over Philadelphia and remained 7 1/2 games in front of Washington. Pittsburgh starter Chris Archer didn't allow a hit until Dansby Swanson led off the sixth inning with a double. In six innings, Archer allowed one run on two hits. Atlanta starter Kevin Gausman allowed three runs (one earned) and five hits in six innings and had a 19-inning scoreless streak end when he allowed a run in the fifth.

MARINERS 8, A'S 7

Ben Gamel and Jean Segura combined for five hits and four RBIs, helping visiting Seattle run off to a big lead en route to victory over Oakland in a key American League West showdown. By virtue of their second victory in three days in the four-game series, the Mariners (76-60) moved within 4 1/2 games of the A's (81-56) in the duel for the second AL wild-card spot. The loss dropped Oakland 2 1/2 games behind first-place Houston (83-53) in the AL West. James Paxton (11-5), returning from a bruised left forearm that landed him on the disabled list, went the first five innings, allowing three runs on just two hits. He walked four and struck out 10. Khris Davis hit his 40th homer of the season for Oakland.

ASTROS 7, ANGELS 3

Carlos Correa and Tyler White delivered momentum-swinging, two-out hits in the eighth inning and host Houston rallied from a three-run deficit for a victory over Los Angeles. The Astros plated five runs in their final at-bat. Correa drove home Tony Kemp with a game-tying single to center field off Angels reliever Cam Bedrosian (5-4). White, the designated hitter, followed by greeting right-hander Hansel Robles with his game-winning hit, a two-run double off the manual scoreboard in left, plating George Springer and Correa. Right-hander Josh James validated his reputation of possessing a plus fastball in his major league debut, retiring eight consecutive batters at one point in allowing three runs on three hits and three walks over five innings. His nine strikeouts matched the second-most in franchise history in a big-league debut.

CUBS 7, PHILLIES 1

Kyle Hendricks tossed six strong innings, Kyle Schwarber supplied a two-run triple, and visiting Chicago notched a win over Philadelphia. Hendricks

(11-10) won for the fifth time in his past six decisions, limiting the Phillies to one run on six hits while striking out four and walking two. Javier Baez contributed three hits, a run and an RBI for Chicago. Ian Happ had a solo homer, while David Bote and Ben Zobrist added run-scoring doubles. Cubs third baseman Kris Bryant chipped in two hits and a run. He was activated from the disabled list and played in his first game since July 23 after recovering from a shoulder injury.

RED SOX 6, WHITE SOX 1

Eduardo Rodriguez struck out 12 batters over 5 2/3 innings, and visiting Boston received solo homers from Eduardo Nunez, Jackie Bradley Jr. and Ian Kinsler in defeating Chicago. The Red Sox won for the fourth time in five games to remain 7 1/2 games ahead of the second-place New York Yankees in the American League East. The White Sox have won six of their past nine. Rodriguez (12-3) allowed one run on three hits and one walk. It was the third double-digit strikeout game in the majors for Rodriguez, who finished one whiff shy of his career high, set against the Tampa Bay Rays on Sept. 25, 2016.

NATIONALS 5, BREWERS 4

Juan Soto delivered a two-run single to center, which was the big hit in a four-run rally in the bottom of the eighth inning that helped Washington pull out a victory over visiting Milwaukee. The Brewers held a 3-1 lead heading into the bottom of the eighth. A nearly two-hour rain delay stopped play in the top of the frame but Washington bounced back in the bottom half on a rally that started with two outs against Joakim Soria (1-4). Soto went 3-for-4 with a double, two RBIs and a run scored to lead Washington. Stephen Strasburg allowed two runs in six innings for the Nationals in his third start since coming off the disabled list. Tyler Saladino and Manny Pina homered for Milwaukee.

MARLINS 6, BLUE JAYS 3

Martin Prado slugged a three-run double, and J.T. Realmuto homered as Miami snapped a four-game losing streak with a home win over Toronto. The Blue Jays had snapped a four-game losing streak of their own with a win in the series opener on Friday. The Marlins blew the game open with four runs in the fifth to take a 6-1 lead, with Prado delivering a double to deep center that cleared the bases and made it 6-1. The offense was more than enough support for Wei-Yin Chen (6-9), who allowed just one run on three hits and struck out seven in eight innings.

REDS 4, CARDINALS 0

Luis Castillo pitched 6 2/3 shutout innings and Eugenio Suarez had a two-run double as visiting Cincinnati slowed red-hot St. Louis. Castillo (8-11) struck out 11 with two walks and held the Cardinals to just two hits, both singles. His gem came after giving up five earned runs in two of his last three outings. Relievers David Hernandez and Raisel Iglesias combined for 2 1/3 hitless innings to finish off the shutout. The Cardinals dropped to 4 1/2 games behind the Chicago Cubs for best record in the National League. The NL Central rivals still have three games remaining against each other. St. Louis remains in possession of one of the two NL wild-card spots, along with the Milwaukee Brewers.

RANGERS 7, TWINS 4

Ronald Guzman hit a go-ahead three-run homer in the second inning and host Texas slugged four homers



LOS ANGELES: Brian Dozier #6 of the Los Angeles Dodgers is called for an error when he cannot handle this ground ball hit by David Peralta #6 of the Arizona Diamondbacks in the sixth inning at Dodger Stadium on Saturday in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

and snapped a five-game losing streak with a victory over Minnesota. Guzman gave the Twins a 4-2 lead when he hammered a first-pitch fastball from Jose Berrios (11-10) a few rows back into the upper deck above right field. It was Guzman's 14th homer and was his first since Aug. 13 at Arizona, three days after the rookie first baseman slugged three at Yankee Stadium. Nomar Mazara, Adrian Beltre, and Rougned Odor hit solo homers as the Rangers homered four times for the eighth time this year and the first time since Guzman's memorable night. Beltre's 470th career homer and eighth of the season moved him to three behind Carlos Delgado for 32nd on the all-time list.

RAYS 5, INDIANS 3

Blake Snell struck out nine to win his fifth consecutive start. Matt Duffy hit a two-run double in a four-run sixth inning, and visiting Tampa Bay defeated Cleveland. Snell (17-5) allowed two runs (one earned), eight hits and one walk in 6 2/3 innings. The left-hander has won nine of his past 10 decisions. Brandon Lowe hit a solo homer for the Rays, and Ji-Man Choi chipped in with three hits, including two doubles. Pinch hitter Jason Kipnis hit a solo homer for Cleveland.

ROCKIES 4, PADRES 2

Colorado's offensive slump came to an end in snapping host San Diego's four-game winning streak, which was a season high. Down 1-0 after the first of two Hunter Renfroe homers, the Rockies entered the fourth inning at Petco Park having gone scoreless for 19 innings. DJ LeMahieu snapped his 0-for-14 slump with a solo homer off Padres starter Robbie Erlin that led to a three-run inning for the Rockies. The Padres' only damage against starter Jon Gray (11-7) over six innings game on Renfroe's first multi-homer game of the season and the fourth of his career. Renfroe has 19 homers on the season, with 11 coming in 25 games since Aug. 5.

ROYALS 5, ORIOLES 4

Kansas City left fielder Whit Merrifield hit a two-run, walk-off homer with one out in the ninth inning to lift the host Royals to victory over Baltimore. Brian Goodwin had three hits and an RBI, and Brett Phillips had two hits as the Royals won their third consecutive series, a season first. Tim Beckham had four hits including a homer, and Trey Mancini also homered for the Orioles, who had taken the lead with two runs in the top of the eighth inning. Mancini opened the eighth with his 21st home run of the season and has nine homers and 24 RBIs since the All-Star break.

YANKEES 2, TIGERS 1

Gleyber Torres hit a go-ahead two-run home run in the fifth inning, and host New York recorded a victory over Detroit in the return of Gary Sanchez and debut of Andrew McCutchen. After getting the go-ahead, two-run, bases-loaded single Friday, Torres gave the Yankees a 2-1 lead when he hammered a 1-0 breaking ball from Daniel Norris (0-3) into the first row of the left field bleachers. Besides being the rookie infielder's 22nd homer, it was New York's first hit of the game. It also lifted the Yankees to their 11th win in 15 games. McCutchen batted leadoff and went 0-for-3 after being acquired from the San Francisco Giants on Friday. Sanchez went 0-for-4 in his first action since July 23.

METS 2, GIANTS 1 (11 INNINGS)

Wilmer Flores led off the 11th inning with a double and scored on a one-out sacrifice fly by Todd Frazier, allowing New York to even its three-game series with host San Francisco. Mets left-hander Steven Matz allowed only one hit through three innings before Evan Longoria homered to left-center to open the fourth. Matz went seven innings in the no-decision, allowing three hits. He walked one and struck out a career-high 11. Four New York pitchers struck out a total of 16 in the game. — Reuters

Nigerian-born Briton Obada earns spot with NFL Panthers

WASHINGTON: Nigerian-born defensive end Efe Obada, once a homeless child on the streets of London, made NFL history Saturday by being named to the 53-man roster of the Carolina Panthers. The 26-year-old defender became the first player in the NFL's International Pathway Program, launched last year to help develop global talent, to make a team roster.

"All the suffering paid off," Obada said in a posting on the team website. "I've lost a lot to get here. I've had to sacrifice a lot. I've been through a lot. I want to make those people who believed in me proud."

It's an epic journey that began in 2002 when, at age 10, a friend of his mother brought Obada and his sister to England but left them homeless to fend for themselves. "This lady just left us out on the streets," Obada told NFL UK. "It was scary and we were lonely."

A friendly security guard and a woman with five other children helped Obada and his sister survive for five years before social services took over, leaving Obada hopping from house to house as a teen. Obada began working as a security guard and at age 22 began playing American football part-time with an amateur club, the London Warriors.

A coach in the British league helped bring

Obada to the attention of NFL scouts, but he could never grab a roster spot in attempts to join the Dallas Cowboys, Kansas City Chiefs and Atlanta Falcons. When the international program began in 2017, the Panthers were given an extra practice squad spot for a non-US player and used it on Obada, giving him a chance to learn and develop under the watchful eyes of NFL personnel.

'THIS HAS CHANGED MY LIFE'

That made Saturday, the NFL deadline for final roster cuts ahead of the season that starts Thursday, a crucial day for Obada, who nervously walked into the Panthers' headquarters. "Walking in and getting released is what I'm used to," Obada said. "I was walking in and making eye contact with everyone. No one spoke to me. I didn't say anything to nobody. I made it to my locker and they still hadn't stopped me or said anything."

Still not believing he had finally made an NFL roster, Obada asked Panthers coach Ron Rivera. "Is it real?" The answer was yes.

"I'm grateful," Obada said. "You know when you really want something and you get it and you're like, 'Oh my goodness.' I'm so happy. I'm going to enjoy this. I've been working very hard just to feel this." Obada, who made a quarterback sack for the Panthers in a pre-season contest, knows that getting the job is one major feat but keeping it quite another. "This has changed my life. But I know that this is just the beginning," Obada said.

Panthers defensive coordinator Eric Washington has already warned Obada that there is plenty more work to come. "Coach E told me it's going to be harder to hold onto it than it was to obtain it. And I know how hard I worked to obtain it," Obada said.

"I know that because of the training here and the environment I've been in, I can go anywhere and survive. This has instilled the belief in myself that I needed." — AFP

KIB celebrates with Dhari Al-Humaidan with first-place tournament win



Dhari Al-Humaidan

KUWAIT: Under the sponsorship of KIB, national equestrian athlete, Dhari Al-Humaidan, was crowned first-place tournament champion in the 2018 Ecurie de Saint Aulde this season in France. As part of its ongoing support of high-performance athletes, the Bank offered its sponsorship to this young athlete who then shined throughout the tournament and placed first in the equestrian games.

On this occasion, KIB stated: "We are extremely proud of this impressive achievement and soaring performance in this high-profile tournament. Our local champion has demonstrated skill, commitment and precision as he took home the first-place prize. Our sponsorship of Al-Humaidan stems from our strong belief in his athletic talent and his ability to boost Kuwait's standing both regionally and internationally. For this reason, we will continue to

support young, promising athletes in local, regional, and international tournaments and championships. Through our support, we hope to foster more young athletes who will garner a number of regional and international accolades." KIB also lauded Al-Humaidan and credits his unwavering dedication and long hours of training for his remarkable success in this tough equestrian tournament. The Bank also praised the national athlete's outstanding equestrian skills and wished him more success which can continue to raise Kuwait's standing in the future.

Sports continue to be a cornerstone of KIB's leading social responsibility program. For that reason, the Bank provides its unwavering support to talented athletes across all sports, aiming at promoting the sports culture throughout the local community and beyond.

Sports

ASIAN GAMES 2018
Jakarta Palembang

Japanese golden girl Rikako Ikee becomes first female MVP

Ikee picks up her trophy and a cheque for \$50,000

JAKARTA: Japanese swimmer Rikako Ikee became the first female athlete to be named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) at an Asian Games yesterday after the teenager scooped an unprecedented six gold medals in the Jakarta pool.

Only North Korean shooter So Gin-man, who won seven golds and a silver at New Delhi in 1982, has won more titles at one Asian Games but the 18-year-old Ikee also picked up two relay silvers to match his record tally of eight medals.

All six golds were achieved in Games record times and her achievement was made all the more remarkable as she arrived in Jakarta immediately after the Pan Pacific championships, where she won a gold, two silvers and a bronze.

Ikee, whose gold medal haul is the most for a female athlete at a single Games, was the unanimous choice for the most valuable player award, the Olympic Council of Asia said on the final day of the multi-sport event yesterday. "I had heard that for a while there was no MVP award and I felt very sad about that, but there was a re-evaluation and I am very honoured to be able to receive such a wonderful award," Ikee said after picking up her trophy and a cheque for \$50,000.

"Actually after the swimming competitions, I went back to Japan. I didn't think I had to come back to Indonesia again. This has been a place with lot of good memories."

Ikee became the fourth Japanese athlete to win the award since its inception at the 1998 Bangkok Games and can now be expected to shoulder a huge burden of expectations when Tokyo hosts the Olympics in two years' time. "There are two more years and I know

what I need to do and I will strengthen those points with that (two years) in mind," she told reporters. "I will make effort to make sure that I can perform at my best in my own country."

EARLY SPLASH

Japan finished the Games with 75 gold, 56 silver and 74 bronze for a total haul of 205 medals, making it the first time the nation secured second place on the medals table since the country hosted the regional gathering at Hiroshima in 1994.

Japan tied China on 19 swimming gold medals in Jakarta, but edged out their rivals in the discipline by 52 total medals to 50. China topped the overall medals table with 289, 132 of them gold. Yasuhiro Yamashita, the head of the Japanese delegation to the Asian Games, lauded the swimmers for a performance that exceeded expectations.

"Firstly, I have to say that our swimming team made a lot of effort," Yamashita told reporters. "They won 19 (gold) medals and that provided momentum to the entire Japanese team and created an environment where the athletes in various events could do their best in order to challenge their dreams."

Japanese women won more golds (at the Games) than their male counterparts and it was a very encouraging sign, Yamashita said. "Once again, this was an event where the performance of (Japanese) women athletes was very noteworthy," he added.

"I am hoping that in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, the women athletes representing Japan will be able to shine-I think this is something that we can anticipate." — Reuters



JAKARTA: Japan's swimmer Ikee Rikako (2nd R), who won six gold medals during the games, poses for a photo with a cheque for \$50,000 after being named as the "Most Valuable Player (MVP)" at an awards ceremony for the 18th Asian Games in Jakarta yesterday. — AFP

Sex scandal didn't harm Japan's Asian display, says JOC

JAKARTA: The head of Japan's Asian Games delegation said yesterday that a scandal involving basketball players caught paying for prostitutes had no negative impact on the country's overall performance in Jakarta. "It was unprofessional and unpalatable behaviour," Yasuhiro Yamashita told a news conference after Japan finished second behind China with 75 gold, 56 silver and 74 bronze medals. "Their conduct betrays public confidence in the athletes and sport as a whole," he added. "It was a huge shock to us and was a setback but I don't think it had any negative impact overall. The rest of the players stepped up, and fought with great pride and gave everything for the shirt."

The four Japanese basketball players—Yuya Nagayoshi, Takuya Hashimoto, Takuma Sato and Keita Imamura—were sent home in disgrace after being spotted in a notorious red light district of Jakarta, and subsequently banned for a year. Dressed in black suits at a press conference after their return home, Nagayoshi said he "could not imagine" playing basketball again after bringing the sport into disrepute. The incident came as a major embarrassment for Japan, which is preparing to host the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Japanese swimmer Naoya Tomita was sent home in shame from the 2014 Asian Games after he was caught on video stealing a journalist's camera from the pool deck.

But Yamashita was anxious to put a positive spin on Japan's performance in Jakarta, which he said "far exceeded expectations." Japan's swimmers set the stage for their country's medal rush by winning 19 golds, pipping mighty China on total medals, with Rikako Ikee grabbed the MVP award for the Games after capturing a record six titles in the pool.

"I was on my way to Disneyland when my coach called to tell me I might win it," said the 18-year-old, who had to fly back to Jakarta to collect the award. "I couldn't take the grin off my face all day." — AFP

Extra toes and a cattle herder as India unearths unlikely heroes

JAKARTA: From a twelve-toed heptathlete to a one-time cattle herder, it was an eclectic mix of athletes mostly from rural areas that saved the day for India at the Asian Games in Jakarta. After teams from traditional powerhouse sports kabaddi and hockey crashed out, it was up to this group from humble origins to turn around the country's fortunes.

Swarna Barman stood out with her twelve toes-six per foot—to clinch gold in heptathlon, chipping in to help India achieve a record 69 medals at the continental games. A daughter of a rickshaw puller from the West Bengal city of Jalpaiguri, Barman overcame serious pain as she blazed to victory with ill-fitting shoes.

For jobless Manjit Singh—once a cattle herder—it was gold in the 800 metres as he outpaced race favourite Jinson Johnson to become a national hero. Singh, who hails from a small village in the northern state of Haryana, trained far away from home for over a year, helped out for money by his father.

Javelin-thrower Neeraj Chopra, a farmer's son from a rural Delhi suburb, didn't disappoint as he claimed victory with an Indian record of 88.05 metres to add to his Commonwealth title. Meanwhile Dutee Chand, who was barred from the 2014 Games over her hyperandrogenism, a condition that raises testosterone levels, captured two silver medals in the 100 and 200m women's sprint. India's total of 15 golds, 24 silvers and 30 bronze surpassed their previous best of 65 medals in the 2010 edition in Guangzhou, China. Brij Bhushan Singh—India's wrestling federation chief and the team's chef de mission—said the country's Asiad campaign was a success, barring the two blips in kabaddi and hockey.

"It was a decent showing by our squad. There were more medals than the previous years and there are more silvers than bronze. And even the gold count increased in the last few days," Singh told AFP.

"More importantly there was no controversy of any

kind. All the players showcased utmost discipline. There was disappointment in kabaddi and hockey but these things happen in sports," he added.

India's failure to reach the men's kabaddi finals had threatened to plunge their Games campaign into crisis after Iran stunned the seven-time winners in the semi-finals. India had already slumped to their first Asian Games kabaddi defeat against South Korea in the group stages, but having to settle for bronze in a sport widely thought to have originated in India was a bitter pill to swallow.

The Indian women also lost out to Iran in the final. The defeats were part of a wider scandal in India that saw a high court rule the selection process for athletes as "eyewash" a day before the Games began.

In a bizarre series of events, it was decided that the Asian Games team would have to square off in September against the athletes who missed out to win the right to keep their competition bonuses.

Singh said events back home likely impacted the performance of the Asiad team. "They must have been under pressure to win here and then go for the trials back home," he said. "So that would have played on their mind, but nonetheless it was disappointing."

India's hockey team was also in the firing line as they suffered a shock loss to Malaysia in the semi-finals. Their win in the bronze play-off against arch-rivals Pakistan was barely any consolation as the one-time hockey powerhouse missed out on a chance to qualify for Tokyo 2020.

India's women settled for silver after losing the final to Japan. One official in India claimed the men's poor performance was down to their bad attitude. "Our men players have become spoilt brats. They are always busy on social media and have no regard for discipline," the hockey official was quoted as saying by the Press Trust of India.

Still, India towered over its neighbours Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nepal who could only muster seven medals between them, while Bangladesh and Sri Lanka drew a blank. Pakistan teenager Nargis, who goes by a single name, was the first woman to win a medal for her country at the Asiad after bagging bronze in karate.

Nepal got a silver in paragliding, but Bangladesh went home without a medal for the first time in 36 years. "We don't have good (enough) infrastructure to produce medal-winning athletes. There are not many facilities in districts," AK Sarkar, Bangladesh's deputy chef de mission, told said. — AFP

MEDALS TABLE

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
China	132	92	65	289
Japan	75	56	74	205
South Korea	49	58	70	177
Indonesia	31	24	43	98
Uzbekistan	21	24	25	70
Iran	20	20	22	62
Taiwan	17	19	31	67
India	15	24	30	69
Kazakhstan	15	17	44	76
North Korea	12	12	13	37
Bahrain	12	7	7	26
Thailand	11	16	46	73
Hong Kong	8	18	20	46
Malaysia	7	13	16	36
Qatar	6	4	3	13
Mongolia	5	9	11	25
Vietnam	4	16	18	38
Singapore	4	4	14	22
Philippines	4	2	15	21
UAE	3	6	5	14
Kuwait	3	1	2	6
Kyrgyzstan	2	6	12	20
Jordan	2	1	9	12
Cambodia	2	0	1	3
Saudi Arabia	1	2	3	6
Macau	1	2	2	5
Iraq	1	2	0	3
United Korea	1	1	2	4
Lebanon	1	1	2	4
Tajikistan	0	4	3	7
Laos	0	2	3	5
Turkmenistan	0	1	2	3
Nepal	0	1	0	1
Pakistan	0	0	4	4
Afghanistan	0	0	2	2
Myanmar	0	0	2	2
Syria	0	0	1	1



PALEMBANG: Athletes compete in the mixed triathlon during the 2018 Asian Games in Palembang yesterday. — AFP

Son thanks 'special' Spurs as Asian gold spares him military duty

JAKARTA: Son Heung-min will rejoin his Tottenham Hotspur team-mates next week buzzing after his emotional rollercoaster ride at the Asian Games in Jakarta. The decision by Spurs to release Son for a far-flung, under-23 tournament already looks like a shrewd piece of business after he led South Korea to a gold medal that spares him a career-threatening stint of military service.

One of three permitted over-age players in the Korean squad, the 26-year-old forward recently signed a new five-year deal with the London club and was quick to thank Spurs manager Mauricio Pochettino after a 2-1 extra-time win over Japan on Saturday.

"I'm so grateful to Tottenham because they let me come here," Son told AFP, clutching his gold medal and grinning from ear to ear. "Normally that's not an easy decision. I would have felt very sorry if I didn't win the gold medal," he added, after escaping almost two years of compulsory military service.

"I really want to say thank you to the coach, the players and fans of Spurs. They are so special." Son's plight has captured the hearts of Spurs fans, who have

taken to social media in their thousands to wish the player luck in Indonesia.

Nearly every able-bodied South Korean male is required to perform 21 months of military service before the age of 28, although the government rewards Asian Games gold medals and Olympic medals of any colour with an exemption.

"I'm so grateful for all the support," said Son, who will have missed at least three games at the start of the Premier League season to play the Asian Games. "It means a lot to me. Now I'm looking forward to getting back to England and showing what I can do. I'll continue to work hard for Tottenham."

Hugely popular at Spurs, Son joked before the final that he was upset team-mates Harry Kane and Dele Alli hadn't texted. With the weight of the world lifted from his shoulders after overcoming Japan, he revealed that he was still waiting.

"Not yet, but it doesn't matter-I know they're focused on the Premier League so no worries," smiled Son. "The coaching staff from Tottenham have been watching me. I hope this makes them happy. It's the best present for my life." Goals from Lee Seung-woo and Hwang Hee-chan in sweltering West Java will allow the South Korea pin-up to see out his new contract in London, although a late header from Ayase Ueda meant the defending champions had to survive a heart-stopping last few minutes. Son, substituted in the dying seconds, sprinted from the bench to embrace World Cup goalkeeper Jo Hyeon-woo, sobbing tears of joy as they rolled on the turf together.—AFP

Sports

Ali bowls England to series-clinching 60-run win over India in fourth Test

India, set 245 to win, were dismissed for 184

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fourth day of the fourth Test between England and India at Southampton yesterday:

England 1st Innings 246 (S Curran 78; J Bumrah 3-46)
India 1st Innings 273 (C Pujara 132 no; M Ali 5-63, S Broad 3-63)

England 2nd Innings (271).

India 2nd Innings (target: 245)

S. Dhawan c Stokes b Anderson	17
KL Rahul b Broad	0
C. Pujara lbw b Anderson	5
V. Kohli c Cook b Ali	58
A. Rahane lbw b Ali	51
H. Pandya c Root b Stokes	0
R. Pant c Cook b Ali	18
R. Ashwin lbw b Curran	25
I. Sharma lbw b Stokes	0
M. Shami c Anderson b Ali	8
J. Bumrah not out	0
Extras (lb1, w1)	2
Total (all out, 69.4 overs, 293 mins)	184

Fall of wickets: 1-4 (Rahul), 2-17 (Pujara), 3-22 (Dhawan), 4-123 (Kohli), 5-127 (Pandya), 6-150 (Pant), 7-153 (Rahane), 8-154 (Sharma), 9-163 (Shami), 10-184 (Ashwin).

Bowling: Anderson 11-2-33-2; Broad 10-2-23-1; Ali 26-3-71-4; Stokes 12-3-34-2 (1w); Curran 3.4-2-1-1; Rashid 7-3-21-0;

Result: England won by 60 runs.

SOUTHAMPTON: Moeen Ali bowled England to a series-clinching 60-run win in the fourth Test against India at Southampton yesterday. Victory, achieved with more than a day to spare, left England an unassailable 3-1 up in the five-match series against India, the world's number one ranked Test side, ahead of Friday's finale at The Oval.

India, set 245 to win, were dismissed for 184 with recalled off-spinner Ali taking four for 71 in 26 overs on a wearing pitch, including the key wicket of star batsman Virat Kohli (58). That gave Ali a match return of nine for 134 following his first-innings five for 63.

It was another star turn at Hampshire's headquarters from Ali, who took six for 67 when England beat India by 266 runs in the corresponding Test at Southampton four years ago. While India captain Kohli and his deputy Ajinkya Rahane (51) were sharing a century stand for the fourth wicket, the tourists had hope of chasing down their stiff target.

But after Ali dismissed both senior batsmen either side of tea, India lost four wickets for 13 runs before Sam Curran, capping another fine all-round display, ended the match by having Ravichandran Ashwin lbw for 25. After they were dismissed for 271 in their second innings, England made early inroads into India's top order. KL Rahul was bowled for a duck by a Stuart Broad delivery that kept cruelly low.

James Anderson, surprisingly, wicketless in an India first innings of 273 that featured Cheteshwar Pujara's excellent 132 not out, then struck twice. He had Pujara lbw for just five yesterday and his next over saw Shikhar Dhawan (17) well caught in the gully by Ben Stokes. That double strike left paceman Anderson on 559 Test wickets and just four behind retired Australia great Glenn McGrath's mark of 563, the most taken in Tests by any fast bowler.

India were again looking for another major innings from Kohli, who had already scored two hundreds this series and would pass 500 runs for the campaign during yesterday's innings. England thought they had the world's number-one ranked batsman lbw for nine to Ali. But after England's review of an original not out decision from Kumar Dharmasena, third umpire Joel Wilson ruled there had been an inside edge.

At lunch, India were 46 for three with Kohli 10 not



SOUTHAMPTON: England's Moeen Ali (C) celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of India's Ajinkya Rahane for 21 during the fourth day of the fourth Test cricket match between England and India at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton, southwest England yesterday.—AFP

out and Rahane unbeaten on 13. Kohli had moved on to 15 when he survived another huge lbw appeal from Ali. Although he looked out, with the ball striking him low down and in front of the stumps, Dharmasena's decision was upheld on review because the ball had pitched outside off stump with the batsman playing a shot.

Kohli went to fifty with just a third four in 114 balls when he clipped Anderson off his pads through square leg. It had seemed as if England had missed a huge chance when Alastair Cook dropped Kohli off Ali at short leg. But the very next ball saw Kohli get a thin glove and this time Cook made no mistake. Kohli reviewed, but to no avail, before appearing to exchange angry words with

Broad. The scale of India's task was evident from the fact they had only three times before scored 200 or more in the fourth innings to win a Test match outside of Asia. And for all that England had suffered 203-run thrashing by India at Trent Bridge last week, it was still a decade since they had last lost successive home Tests following back-to-back defeats by South Africa in 2008. Three balls after tea, Hardik Pandya was well caught for a duck in the slips by England captain Joe Root off Stokes. His exit sparked a cascade of wickets, with Rahane's painstaking 159-ball effort ending when he was lbw to a sharply turning Ali delivery. Rishabh Pant drove Ali for six before he holed out off the spinner at a sun-drenched Southampton.—AFP

Matuidi scores winner, Ronaldo draws blank as Juventus beat Parma

MILAN: Cristiano Ronaldo drew another blank in his bid to score his first Serie A goal for Juventus but the Italian champions kept their winning momentum 2-1 at promoted Parma on Saturday with goals in either half from World Cup stars Mario Mandzukic and Blaise Matuidi. World Cup winner Matuidi bagged the decisive goal on 58 minutes after Croatia's Mandzukic, a finalist in Moscow this summer, had scored after just two minutes in Emilia Romagna.

New Parma signing Gervinho-back in Italy after two years with Chinese club Hebei China Fortune-pulled one back after 33 minutes for the hosts who have returned to the top flight after three consecutive promotions following demotion for bankruptcy in 2015.

Ronaldo is yet to score but the seven-time reigning Italian champions are on maximum points after winning all three of their games this season.

The 33-year-old five-time Ballon d'Or winner missed a chance to open his account after 26 minutes when his powerful header was just wide, and spurned another chance ten minutes into the second half. "Cristiano had a good game, he made himself available, but it was a moment when the ball did not bounce back in the right direction," coach Massimiliano Allegri told streaming broadcaster DAZN. "I'm happy with what he's doing... After the (international) break he will surely get a goal because we'll all be in better shape."

Matuidi added: "He (Ronaldo) had a great match but no luck. He's going to be a little annoyed because he's hungry to score, but we're going to help him."

Allegri said he was impressed with Mandzukic who has scored twice in the opening three games and set up Matuidi for the winner. "I didn't expect Mario to be in this condition after the World Cup," he added.

Earlier Radja Nainggolan scored on his debut as Inter Milan claimed their first three points of the season with a 3-0 win in Bologna. Nainggolan missed the first two games of the campaign with injury following his summer move from Roma. But the 30-year-old Belgian midfielder made his mark on his league debut, opening his and Inter's account at the Stadio Dall'Ara after 66 minutes. Italy midfielder Antonio Candreva and Croatia's World Cup runner-up Ivan Perisic added two quickfire goals in the final ten minutes to seal all three points. The win gives Luciano Spalletti's side four points from three games, equal with Roma who lost 2-1

at AC Milan on Friday. Filippo Inzaghi's Bologna are stuck on one point, without a single goal scored in three games. "We were patient because there was a risk of starting to panic," said Spalletti. "There were three beautiful goals and the team shook off the tension after the opener. "We still have some players who aren't in peak condition, we'll have to get up to that quickly because you really need to sweat to win games."

Inter captain and striker Mauro Icardi tried, unsuccessfully, to shake off a muscle strain by warming up before being forced to watch from the stands, along with Lautaro Martinez. It left Keita Balde as Inter's sole striker, but with Nainggolan, Matteo Politano and Perisic in support. Perisic nodded into the side-netting early with Roberto Gagliardini also firing over for the visitors before Bologna threatened, Filip Helander's header cleared off the line by Inter goalkeeper Samir Handanovic.

Nainggolan missed a chance to open the scoring just before the break with a powerful half-volley from the edge of the box flying over. But the Belgian made no mistake after the break, controlling Politano's cross to fire past his former Roma teammate Lukasz Skorupski.

Candreva replaced Keita on 79 minutes and three minutes later turned in a low cross from Perisic for his first goal in over 18 months before the Croatian sealed victory two minutes later. Serie A while runners-up Napoli play Sampdoria in Genoa, looking for a third straight win.—AFP

Watford stun Spurs to extend perfect start

WATFORD: Watford's stunning start to the season hit a new high as they made it four successive Premier League wins with a shock 2-1 success against Tottenham yesterday. Having fallen behind to Abdoulaye Doucoure's 54th minute goal, Watford responded impressively, recovering to claim the points through headers from Troy Deeney and Craig Cathcart.

It remains to be seen how long Javi Gracia's third-placed side can remain among the upper echelon, but this win confirmed they are currently there on merit.

They have won their first four league games for the first time since 1988 and remarkably sit level on points with leaders Liverpool and second-placed Chelsea heading into the international break.

Having beaten Brighton, Burnley and Crystal Palace in their opening three games, this was Watford's first test against a top six side. Tottenham arrived with an unbeaten record of their own to protect, having won 3-0 at Manchester United in their previous league game.

But Watford rose to the challenge to secure a first league win against Tottenham since 1987 — underlining their status as the league's surprise package. For Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino, this was a concerning defeat.

The result means his side have lost early ground to their main rivals and the way his side was overpowered during the final half hour was alarming. Had Harry Kane not sent a late headed chance over the bar, Pochettino would have considered a draw to be reasonable reward against obstinate opponents. Defeat, though, highlighted Tottenham's lack of cutting edge, with Lucas Moura the only player to consistently threaten, while the manner in which they conceded was cause for concern.

Pochettino made three changes to the side that won so convincingly at Old Trafford.

Michel Vorm deputised for Hugo Lloris, the goalkeeper and captain who was ruled out with a thigh problem, while defenders Ben Davies and Davinson Sanchez came in for Danny Rose and Eric Dier.

Initially, though, Spurs' problems appeared to lie further up the pitch during a laboured first half—not that Watford displayed much attacking threat of their own in the first half. There was a much greater sense of urgency after the break—initially from Tottenham—with Moura and Christian Eriksen at the forefront of Tottenham's improved efforts.

Christian Kasabele's poor clearing header allowed Moura the opportunity to collect the ball on the right hand side of the box and drill in a cross that deflected off the backtracking Doucoure and past keeper Ben Foster. At that point there seemed little chance that Watford's dismal record against Spurs was about to change. Gracia's side, though, have already demonstrated commendable resilience this season and the way they responded confirmed their growing stature.

For the first time in the game they applied sustained pressure and were unfortunate not to equalise when Spurs defender Toby Alderweireld headed Deeney's cross against bar and post.

Spurs were rattled and confirmation the balance of the game had shifted came in the 69th minute when Deeney headed home from Jose Holebas' free-kick. Then seven minutes later, Pochettino's side were unable to deal with another set-piece when Cathcart met Will Hughes' corner to head past Vorm.—AFP

Emery impressed by spirited Arsenal

CARDIFF: Unai Emery praised Arsenal's character after they gave a glimpse of their potential in a thrilling 3-2 victory at Cardiff yesterday. Emery was rewarded for a bold selection after partnering Alexandre Lacazette and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, his two main forwards, together from the start for the first time in the Premier League.

Both scored as Emery's men collected the second victory of his reign. The Spaniard saw his side make hard work of seeing off the newly-promoted Welsh club with old defensive failings twice allowing Cardiff to equalise. But Emery was impressed with the way Arsenal responded to each of those setbacks. "The reaction is very important. The reaction was very good. We were calm," Emery said. "The most important thing is to be calm and to continue working. "We controlled the match for 70 percent of the 90 minutes." Emery got a crash course in both the strengths and weaknesses of the squad he inherited from Arsene Wenger. His decision to field two forwards paid handsome dividends as first Aubameyang and then Lacazette scored excellent goals to finally kill off Cardiff. The Bluebirds had equalised through Victor Camarasa and Danny Ward after Shkodran Mustafi headed the Gunners ahead. "They are playing minutes each match and today they started (together)," said Emery of his strikers. "We are continuing to work on the combinations. Today I think the two players scored goals and helped us. "We can continue to work to find the best performance with each player."

There is, however, plenty for Emery to ponder during the international break after the familiar failings that dogged the end of Wenger's reign reared their heads again. After Mustafi's powerful header from Granit Xhaka's corner had put his visitors ahead in the Welsh capital, they failed to see the game out to half-time.

In stoppage-time a poor Xhaka pass was intercepted, Nacho Monreal failed to deal with a Joe Bennett cross and Camarasa fired home. Then, after Aubameyang had bent home a superb shot to restore their lead after clever work



CARDIFF: Arsenal's Gabonese striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang vies with Cardiff City's English defender Sean Morrison (2nd L) during the English Premier League football match between Cardiff City and Arsenal at Cardiff City Stadium in Cardiff, south Wales yesterday.—AFP

from Mesut Ozil and Lacazette, the Gunners switched off again and allowed Ward a free header to equalise again.

"We need to continue improving on our defence," admitted Emery, who also saw further teething problems for Petr Cech in the veteran goalkeeper's efforts to play from the back. Twice in the opening eight minutes Cech made a mess of dealing with back-passes and, on the second occasion, Harry Arter fired over when he should have opened the scoring. "He has experience," said Emery. "He is intelligent. He is doing what we want."

"It's very important for me to continue doing this and to

keep improving. "We take a little risk, but when you break this risk and their pressing you can find space. We need to continue with this personality." There was a sighting, too, of Ozil, who played a decent hand in victory having missed last week's win at West Ham amid rumours of a row on the training ground with his manager. "Ozil with his quality, I think we need him to give us his moments in the match," said Emery. "I think today in the second half he played a good match, he worked every minute he was on the pitch. "Maybe in the second half with his position on the pitch I think he feels better." —AFP

25 Kemp blasts Dodgers into National League West tie with Diamondbacks



26 Japanese golden girl Rikako Ikee becomes first female MVP



27 Ali bowls England to series-clinching 60-run win over India in fourth Test



18th Asian Games close in Jakarta

Indonesia dreams to host the Olympics in 2032



JAKARTA: Artists perform during the closing ceremony of the 18th Asian Games at the Gelora Bung Karno main stadium in Jakarta yesterday. —AFP

JAKARTA: The 18th Asian Games closed in a glittering ceremony in Jakarta yesterday as hosts Indonesia dreamed of stepping up to host the Olympics in 2032. Thousands of athletes in ponchos marched in heavy rain at the Gelora Bung Karno stadium at the close of a two-week tournament featuring 40 sports.

"I declare the 18th Asian Games closed," Sheikh Ahmad Al Fahad Al Sabah, president of the Olympic Council of Asia, told the packed crowd. "You did it! You made the energy of Asia come through... Jakarta has the capability to host any such major international event," he added. Indonesia has defied expectations to host a smooth Games, which with 17,000 athletes and officials is second in size only to the Olympics. Riding high on the Games' success, President Joko Widodo has announced a bid to hold the 2032 Olympics—which would have seemed unthinkable just a few weeks ago.

The president addressed the ceremony by video link from an emergency shelter in Lombok, where a string of earthquakes in recent weeks killed 555 people. "This (Games) is the energy of Asia united to make a difference to the world," he said.

Olympics chief Thomas Bach has welcomed Indonesia's bid but he warned the sprawling Southeast Asian country needed to maintain the positive energy generated by the Games. "I think what is important now for Indonesia is to keep the momentum of this Games," he said. "So for you now not to fall into a black hole the moment after everybody has left."

BUMPER GAMES FOR INDONESIA

China topped the medals table for the 10th Games in succession, a streak stretching back to New Delhi 1982, with a runaway 132 golds. They will now look to make a deafening statement by repeating the feat at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, capital of their war-time colonisers and bitter rivals Japan.

Japan, who won the Games' 465th and final gold medal in Sunday's mixed team triathlon, placed a distant second with 75 golds, while South Korea had 49 and hosts Indonesia finished with 31.

Japanese swimmer Rikako Ikee, who became the first woman to six gold medals at a single Games, was named the best athlete or Most Valuable Player. "I still haven't won a

world title so that's my next goal," she said after a small awards ceremony on Sunday.

The 18-year-old, who looks set to be the face of the Tokyo 2020 Games, stole the limelight at the pool from China's triple Olympic champion Sun Yang and Singaporean butterfly hero Joseph Schooling.

Premier League star Son Heung-min's joyous celebration at winning football gold, a title that earned him an exemption from South Korea's military service, will live long in the memory. Tobacco and banking billionaire Michael Bambang Hartono, one of Indonesia's richest men, was the Games' oldest medalist at 78, in the card game bridge. He is 66 years older than 12-year-old Indonesian skateboarder Bunga Nymas, whose bronze medal in the street event made her the youngest athlete to mount a podium.

They were part of a bumper Games for Indonesia, whose 31 golds was a record for a Southeast Asian country and who, more importantly, proved the critics wrong by hosting a successful tournament.

Despite concerns over air pollution, traffic and a pre-Games police crackdown that killed



JAKARTA: President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah (C) smiles next to a representative of the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee (L) as Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan (R) kisses the torch during the closing ceremony of the 18th Asian Games at the Gelora Bung Karno main stadium in Jakarta yesterday. —AFP

dozens, the venues were ready on time and most events went off smoothly. It came after the 2011 Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia

were plagued by corruption and delays—and may have put the country in line to host the biggest tournament of all, the Olympics. —AFP

Lukaku double relieves pressure on Mourinho

BURNLEY: Two goals from Romelu Lukaku brought Jose Mourinho a much-needed 2-0 win at Burnley yesterday, although it was another eventful and controversial afternoon for his Manchester United side.

England international Marcus Rashford, only on the field for 10 minutes as a substitute, was sent off after 70 minutes for a headbutt on Phil Bardsley who had clipped the United man's ankles in cynical fashion.

Just two minutes earlier, Mourinho had also seen Paul Pogba miss a penalty with the chance to put the visitors out of sight. But Lukaku's first-half double was enough for a well-earned three points as United bounced back from consecutive defeats to Brighton and Tottenham that had put Mourinho under the spotlight.

Lukaku opened the scoring on 26 minutes,

after a period of bright and direct football from Mourinho's team. Alexis Sanchez was recalled to Mourinho's starting line-up and responded by setting up the opener as Lukaku rose impressively between two defenders to head the Chilean's cross past Joe Hart.

A second goal before the break looked inevitable, although it took until the final minute for it to arrive as Luke Shaw chased onto Sanchez's back heel and into the Burnley area.

The ball eventually landed with Jesse Lingard on the edge of the area and, after his shot took deflections off both Charlie Taylor and Ashley Westwood, Lukaku was well positioned to turn and sweep in from six yards.

It was a rewarding first period for Mourinho and his team, not to mention the 2,400 visiting supporters at Turf Moor who showed their backing for Mourinho. In contrast, there was a demonstration by fans against the club's executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward with a plane flown over the Lancashire ground towing a banner that read: "Ed Woodward, a specialist in failure." It was a poignant comment from supporters who clearly blame Woodward's lack of action in the transfer market for the club's poor start to the season - rather than their high-profile

manager. That lacklustre opening to the campaign saw United in danger of losing three of their first four league games for the first time since 1986. Mourinho, though, had looked relaxed even before kick-off, joking with officials in the tunnel and shaking hands with players from both teams as they exited the dressing rooms. And within minutes of kick-off, that confidence looked well placed as United dominated. Lingard, alone, was presented with three decent chances inside the opening nine minutes, one of which drew a slightly panicked save from Hart.

Hart also saved well from Lukaku, as he and Sanchez looked to convert a three-on-two break, while his opposite number David De Gea remained a virtual spectator. The Spanish keeper was finally forced into action after 63 minutes, comfortably stopping Chris Wood's header at the foot of his post.

But that was a rare respite for Burnley who needed Hart to save from a Sanchez half-volley and to parry a fierce shot from Shaw before the late controversies. Lukaku should have claimed a hat-trick, being denied again by Hart, when clean through on goal, then actually rounding the keeper only to miss an open net under pressure from Ben Mee. —AFP



BURNLEY: Manchester United's Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku (L) vies with Burnley's English defender Ben Mee during the English Premier League football match between Burnley and Manchester United at Turf Moor in Burnley, north west England yesterday. —AFP