

Friday Times

ISSUE NO: 17898

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Beware of forgery



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

The general directorate of criminal investigation arrested a local gang specialized in forging salary certificates and loan documents. This article seeks to send a warning message to everyone, especially new expatriates to Kuwait who do not know the state's laws and are in danger of being involved in a forgery crime here, leading to prison, deportation and of course losing more money. I think expat victims assume citizens may be protected by law and *wasta*, but the whole thing is a dangerous ride and not worth it.

News of fraud has become widespread, even though these crimes are very perilous and the punishment is great. When a gang falls, everyone falls - those who deceived others and those who were involved in the crime.

The arrest operation began when the Criminal Investigation Department received information about a Kuwaiti falsifying salary certificates of a government institution and major airlines, and also facilitating loans from banks and companies for money. After obtaining a warrant from the public prosecution, the suspects were arrested. They had 16 salary certificates ready for delivery for KD 1,000 each.

The detectives began the investigation with the ringleader to learn about the people who dealt with them and bought the fake salary certificates, as well as the banks and companies that provided the loans after forged documents were submitted. I think that what is happening today is a lack of awareness of the law. You find the defendant may not know that the offense is a crime of fraud. Those who paid KD 1,000 for each document naturally hoped to get double if not triple this amount from banks and companies in return.

Unfortunately, we are still using paper and manual work instead of switching to digital, which leaves little room for tampering, especially since transactions related to loans, for example, requires paperwork such as copies of salary, identity and possibly other fraudulent documents. The arrested gang knew exactly what was required, because when they were arrested, they had a number of certificates ready for delivery for the agreed amount.

I believe that research into the causes of the spread and rise of these crimes is important, because it is possible that there is a belief that these actions realize quick profits, even as some said they didn't know it was a crime punishable by law. It is known that fraud is often rampant with regards to university degrees to benefit from job promotions or driving licenses, but this has extended to making false papers to take money from banks. The arrest of the suspects has dashed everyone's hopes.

Wajif, old Kuwaiti markets reminders of striking past



The old 'Souq Wajif.'

KUWAIT: The old markets of Kuwait are replete with ancient memories, representing a vital aspect of Kuwait's life and economy. Among these old markets was Souq Wajif, perhaps one of the most important markets of ancient Kuwait. On the subject, Researcher at Kuwait Heritage Hussein Al-Qattan said yesterday that Wajif means 'standing' in Kuwaiti dialect because the sale process was done so fast the customers do not have to sit down while it takes place. One of the most prominent commodities that were traded in Wajif market were women's clothes such as dresses, cloaks, the hijab, headdresses, as well as menswear such as the dishdasha and scarfs, Qattan explained. He added that the market was a center for selling women's supplies of ornamental materials such as henna and kohl, along with sewing tools and some household utensils, especially kitchen utensils, knives and dishes, pointing out that some women in the market were selling food products such as eggs, chickens, wheat and rice. Souq Wajif was not only in Kuwait, but was also found in Qatar and Bahrain, Qattan noted.

Mohammad Jamal, a researcher in Kuwait's history, explained in his book, "Kuwait's Old Markets" Souq Wajif was located near the southern part of Abdullah Al-Salem Street, northwest of

Safat Square and extending north before Al-Gharabally market's entrance. Jamal added that the market was a tight, narrow stucco, where some women and temporary vendors sat to sell their goods as they stumbled across the land and put their goods on top of a piece of cloth or mats for sale. He pointed out that Souq Wajif included shops for cotton, hardware with watchmakers, goldsmiths, along with a showroom for cars such as Chevrolet, whose agents were then Ibrahim and Ali Al-Kulaib.

Jamal said that the market's location moved in the second half of the 1940s to its current location in Al-Dahla area, where the government has removed the old market, built a new one and constructed a large number of shops in the vicinity of the market. Al-Hareem Market differs from Souq Wajif as the first was located east of Safat Square, close to the site of the old public security from the east and is the property of Sheikh Sabah Salman Al-Malik Al-Sabah, renamed it Sabah Market. He pointed out that Al-Hareem Market was built in 1920 and covered its roof with wood, which included 20 to 30 shops that sold women's clothing and women's supplies. However the market was demolished in the late 1930s, which led to the transfer of most women to other markets. — KUNA



Southern part of Abdullah Al-Salem Street in the 1950s.

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Local

Young sailors return from pearl diving trip



By Nawara Fattahova

After a week spent at sea on traditional Kuwaiti dhows, participants of the 31st annual pearl diving trip returned yesterday. Around 200 family members of the young sailors were waiting for them at the beach of Kuwait Sea Sport Club in Salmiya to welcome them with flowers.

One-hundred ninety-five divers, in addition to their supervisors and captains (nukhatha), participated in this traditional trip on 13 dhows, where they were far from modern technology and electronic gadgets. This trip is held under the patronage of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to remind the new generation of the hard life of their

forefathers, who spent months at sea diving for pearls, which was the main source of livelihood before the oil era.

The concluding ceremony of the trip, held from July 25 to August 1, 2019, was attended by Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Saad Al-Kharaaz, representing HH the Amir. It was also attended by foreign ambassadors and some local officials.

On Tuesday, the divers had sailed off the coast of Khairan, around 100 km south of Kuwait City. The divers and organizers had hosted a ceremony the previous night featuring traditional performances popular during the heydays of pearl diving, and which have since become synonymous with Kuwait's old folklore.



Local



The conclusion ceremony held yesterday is called qafaal, which means the end of the diving season. The ceremony started with the arrival of the dhows to the beach, then one of the captains took the flag down from the dhow and handed it over to the representative of HH the Amir. The divers then opened the shells they collected during the diving trip and removed the pearls. The number of oysters collected was not very high, as they aim to preserve the marine environment and increase the stocks, according to the captains.

"The great interest of young Kuwaiti men to participate in this traditional activity signifies the enduring love Kuwaitis have for the sea and marine activities. The total number of participants along with captains this year reached 228, which is a high

number, especially during the hot weather these days. And the number is increasing every year," Kharaaz pointed out.

This year's qafaal ceremony included an exhibition of historical photos from Kuwait, in addition to some objects of Kuwait's heritage including diving and fishing tools. The exhibition was open during the entire week of the pearl diving trip at Kuwait Sea Sport Club. Although pearl diving has long been abandoned as the main source of livelihood in Kuwait, the younger generation keeps the tradition alive by conducting such expeditions during the summer under the supervision and sponsorship of Kuwaiti authorities.



Kuwait marks 29th anniversary of



KUWAIT: These archive photos show the damage caused by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait marks today the 29th anniversary of the 1990 Iraqi brutal invasion, which severely and harshly sought to efface the identity of the country. Since the early hours of the invasion, the Kuwaiti government and people utterly rejected the flagrant aggression, and Kuwaitis, both at home and overseas, stood by the side of their legitimate leadership to defend their country, freedom and sovereignty. During the invasion, the Iraqis adopted a scorched-earth policy, setting 752 oil wells on fire, digging trenches and filling them with oil as a barrier against the US-led international coalition. Thanks to the wise leadership of the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the late Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah - who was the Foreign Minister at the time - and with the assistance of the Kuwaiti people, the country was able to gain support of the international community and to achieve liberation.

World condemnation

As soon as the aggression took place, the world condemned it and the UN Security Council issued a host of decisive resolutions, starting with Resolution 660, which demanded an immediate withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Then other ones followed under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Arab and international reactions adopted similar stances, demanding immediate withdrawal of aggressors, and holding the Iraqi regime accountable for all the damages caused by the invasion. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, being in

charge of the foreign ministry portfolio, played a key role in mobilizing Arab and international support to Kuwait's legitimacy, thanks to his long experience as Kuwait's chief diplomat since 1963. Over the long years, he had managed to establish strong ties with the UN, its affiliate organizations and member states. Sheikh Sabah's hard and sincere efforts for the nation proved fruitful, as he managed to gain the world's support for ousting the aggressors, liberating Kuwait and restoring the nation's legitimacy and sovereignty.

Policy towards Iraq

In the years that followed the invasion,

more precisely 1990 to 2001, Kuwait's foreign policy towards Iraq was based on certain constants, mainly established in line with the UN Security Council resolutions issued before and during the crisis. One of these was the council's Resolution 687 of 1991. Until 2003, the main features of this policy were: Saddam Hussein's regime could not be trusted or dealt with; the Iraqis were victims of a dictatorial regime; and Kuwait would stand by the side of the Iraqis, as Arabs and Muslims. "We distinguish between the Iraqi regime and the Iraqi people, and we are outraged that the people of our neighboring country must endure poverty and starvation," His Highness Sheikh Sabah had

remarked. He stressed that Kuwait would carry on with helping the Iraqi people after the invasion, especially for the refugees in the north and south. His Highness Sheikh Sabah's famous proclamation on August 4, 1998 was in response to allegations by the Iraqi regime that Kuwait was behind the international sanctions on the government of Baghdad. "We are not a super power to force the (UN) Security Council to lift, or to keep sanctions on Iraq," His Highness Sheikh Sabah said, noting that "Iraqis residing in Kuwaiti live with dignity and respect." On November 23, 1998, during a visit by Egypt's former minister of foreign affairs Amr Moussa, His Highness Sheikh Sabah said: "Kuwait does not plan inflicting any harm on Iraq or its people, and overthrowing the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is an internal affair that Kuwait will not interfere with."

Humanitarian principles

Thanks to the humanitarian principles that Kuwait and the people have adhered to, the Kuwaiti relief aid have been flowing into Iraq since 1993. Prompted by His Highness Sheikh Sabah's directives, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) provided assistance to the refugees at home and in Iran in April, 1995. Following the liberation war of Iraq in 2003, Kuwait hurried with relief and humanitarian aid to the refugees there, as a major donor to the country. In April 2008, Kuwait donated \$1 million to the UN refugee agency to support its operations for alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people who lacked basic needs, food, water and health care. In November 2010, Kuwait announced providing \$1 million to the agency to offer



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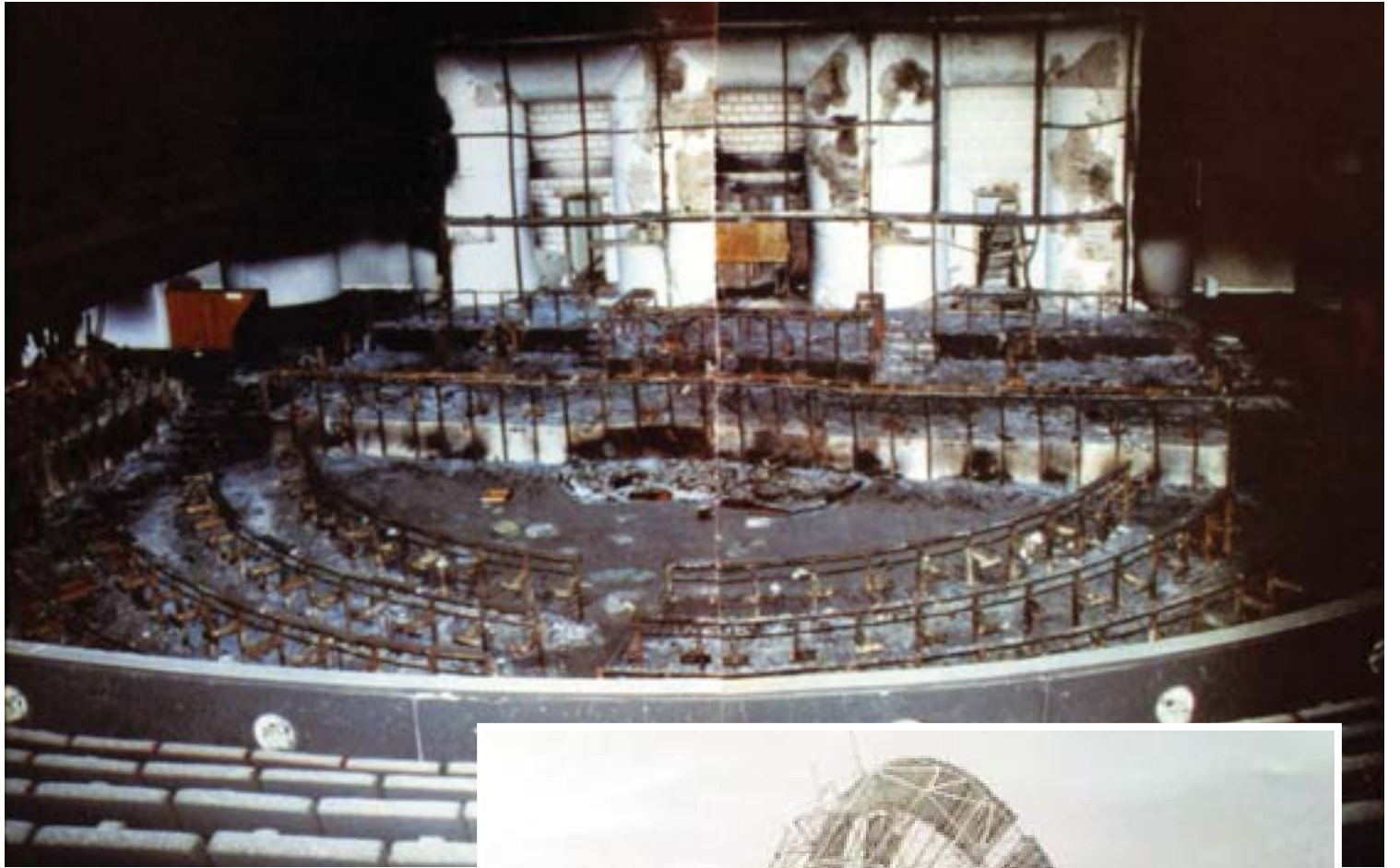
Iraq's 1990 brutal invasion

aid to the homeless Iraqis who were forced to seek safer places. During the 65th session of the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural and Social Committee of the UN General Assembly, Kuwait stressed the importance of the humanitarian side in the issue of the Iraq refugees, and providing them with protection and ensuring their safety and security is a shared responsibility of the international community.

Amid the rise of the number of displaced Iraqis and the deterioration of their conditions, Kuwait on July 11, 2014, donated \$3 million to the UN refugee agency in humanitarian aid for Iraq, and in 2015 presented \$200 million for the same purpose. In 2016, and ahead of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, Kuwait distributed 12,000 food packages through its charity organizations in Iraq's Kurdistan region. The same year, the KRCS offered 40,000 rations of food to the displaced Iraqis in the region. Also during a conference for Iraq's donors in Washington, July 2016, Kuwait pledged \$176 million to the Iraqi people. The UN Security Council highly appreciated Kuwait's continued support to realize stability in Iraq. Moreover, after the Iraqi government announced the liberation of Iraq's city of Mosul from the so-called Islamic State (IS), July 2017, Kuwait expressed readiness to host an international conference for the reconstruction of the liberated regions, in line with the country's long-established principles of supporting "Arab brothers."

Historic visit

In February 2018, The Kuwait-hosted a conference that raised up to \$30 billion of aid pledges by donor countries and the development institutions. Last June, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah headed to Iraq in a "his-



torical visit" that allowed the two countries to boost their relations on all levels. The recent visits between senior officials at the highest level between the two countries comes within the framework of mutual efforts to cement and expand economic and commercial relations, with plans to carve out a free trade zone and facilitate cross-border commodities' transport and businesses. — KUNA



Local

Invasion memory chance to learn lessons: Kuwait's parliament speaker

Health Ministry launches blood donation drive to commemorate Kuwaitis' sacrifices

KUWAIT: Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzoug Ali Al-Ghanem said yesterday that the memory of the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is a chance "for us to remember our lessons towards our nation." The speaker made his remarks ahead of the annual anniversary of the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, saying, "We might be busy all year long with our lives and get carried away, but on the 2nd of August we should take a moment with ourselves to rearrange our priorities towards our country." "The Iraqi invasion was very bitter but it has been a true test for our patriotism and revealed our true identity, it has taught us a lot," he continued. "We do not forget our martyrs who sacrificed their lives for this country, and our Arab and Muslim brothers who stood by us through this crisis," he added. Ghanem concluded his statement by asking Allah Almighty to protect Kuwait, to preserve his grace "upon us" and wished Kuwait more development and prosperity.

Blood donation

Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health, represented by the Central Blood Bank, has launched a blood donation campaign for the fourth year in a row, coinciding with the 29th anniversary of the brutal Iraqi invasion. Assistant Undersecretary for Support Medical Services Dr Fawaz Al-Rifai said in a press statement yesterday that the campaign aims to encourage citizens and residents to donate blood as an expression of loyalty and belonging to this dear land and to remember the sacrifices of the righteous Kuwaiti martyrs. Rifai added that some 400 blood bags were donated to the Central Blood Bank in the campaign last year from different nationalities residing on the land of Kuwait. He called on everyone to donate through the scattered branches in Kuwait, namely, the Sheikha Salwa Al-Sabah Stem Cell Center and the Central Blood Bank, in addition to the other branches of the Blood Bank in various hospitals in Kuwait.

Kuwaitis' sacrifices

Separately, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Infor-

mation for Press and Publications Sector Mohammad Al-Awash confirmed yesterday that the ministry has prepared special programs to be aired today and shed light on the 29th anniversary of the brutal Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, highlighting the Kuwaitis' sacrifices. Awash, head of the media discourse committee, said in a press statement that the ministry is keen to highlight the Kuwaitis' contributions and sacrifices during the brutal Iraqi invasion of the country, in addition to their adherence to their legitimate leadership and resisting the occupation with spirit, blood and civil disobedience. He added that the Kuwaiti people, in commemoration of the brutal Iraqi invasion anniversary that falls today, recall with pride the pure souls that presented themselves and their blood as a sacrifice for Kuwait. He also recalled with pride the prisoners who struck the finest examples of redemption, giving and the heroic role played by the Kuwaiti people and honorable residents in civil disobedience to occupation, social solidarity and the administration of important State facilities during the brutal aggression. He pointed out that citizens applaud the great role played by the legitimate leadership during the liberation of Kuwait, in addition to the honorable efforts of brothers and friends in this regard, which will remain in the memory of every Kuwaiti.

On the ministry's plan for programs on this painful anniversary, Awash said that 24 hour TV and radio broadcast will be dedicated to the 29th anniversary of the brutal Iraqi invasion. He pointed to the cooperation and coordination with the Blood Bank to carry out a blood donation campaign on this day in reference to the Kuwaiti blood, which was shed by the Kuwaiti on their land during the invasion, indicating that the campaign will be broadcast via radio and television studios in the blood bank during a live broadcast and continuous news reports.

True essence

Minister of Information, Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri yesterday praised the people of Kuwait who faced the flagrant and heinous Iraqi invasion in 1990. Ex-



KUWAIT: A donor giving blood at the Central Blood Bank during the blood donation campaign. — KUNA

perience of this ugly crime revealed the true essence of the Kuwaiti people who stunned the world with their steadfastness and adherence to their land, Jabri said in a press release yesterday marking the anniversary. The people of Kuwait recall with pride and deep admiration the patriotic efforts by the late Amir His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah during the hateful occupation. He lauded the late leaders for their efforts to prepare for the liberation and re-construction of the country. Moreover, he heaped praise upon His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who at the hard times led the Kuwaiti diplomacy for rallying external support in the face of aggressors. — KUNA

\$39 billion worth of Kuwaiti investments in Germany: Envoy

BERLIN: Kuwaiti Ambassador to Germany Najib Al-Bader revealed that volume of Kuwaiti investments in the European nation is growing, putting the current value at 35 billion euros (\$39 billion). In an interview with the 'Diplomatic Magazine,' published in Berlin, Ambassador Bader said the Kuwaiti businesses in German top its investments in Europe: a fact that reflects depth of bilateral relations between the two countries. Kuwait is the number-one Arab investor in Germany, he has added, affirming the two countries' keenness on maintaining this deep-rooted economic partnership. He cited as an example Kuwait's investments in the German conglomerate Daimler for cars industries since more than 40 years ago. Kuwait maintains significant ties with the European bloc as a whole. Moreover, it has been hosting since 2017 the first regional center for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in line with the Istanbul Initiative for cooperation launched by the alliance in 2014. The center is specialized in strategic analysis, planning for civil emergencies and military cooperation. — KUNA

Iraqi top lawmaker assures Kuwait's support to Iraqi govt

BAGHDAD: Speaker of the Iraqi parliament Mohammad Al-Halbousi assured yesterday Kuwait's support to the Iraqi government and reconstruction efforts. This came during a meeting held with the Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi, said the Iraqi parliament in a statement. In the meeting, they reviewed results of Halbousi's recent visit to Kuwait, where he discussed ways of investing the money allocated for Iraq at Kuwait International Conference held earlier on the Reconstruction of Iraq. The Kuwaiti side confirmed its commitment to the outcomes of the conference in supporting the Iraqi government, in the reconstruction process and providing services needed to citizens in order to achieve stability, the statement quoted Halbousi as saying. Halbousi, accompanied by a high-ranking delegation, paid three-day official visit to Kuwait last week. The Iraqi officials and legislators discussed with their Kuwaiti counterparts means of investing the \$30 billion fund, pledged at the previously held Kuwait conference for aiding Iraq. — KUNA

Kuwait Central Bank maintains current discount rate at 3%

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Central Bank decided on Wednesday to keep its discount rate unchanged at its current level of 3 percent. The decision was made to improve the non-inflationary growth-enabling environment, CBK governor Mohammad Al-Hashel said. Also, to ensure the continued attractiveness of the national currency - the Kuwaiti Dinar - as a reliable store of domestic savings, he added. It comes in light of CBK's thorough analysis of local and international economic and financial developments, interest rates trajectories of major currencies and the most recent US Fed decision to lower interest rates.

The current rate, adopted in March 2018, remains unchanged in spite of witnessing three consecutive US Fed interest rate rises since. CBK's monetary policy decisions are driven by the review and analysis of the latest available economic, monetary and banking data and information, he added. This is namely in regards to the overall economic performance, bank deposits and credit, interest rates on major currencies, predominantly the US dollar, and the Kuwaiti dinar's exchange rate regime and interest rate. Kuwait's monetary authority is confident these measures would do much to maintain a healthy margin in favor of the national currency, boost returns on dinar deposits and allow for a conducive environment for the economic growth. — KUNA

Local

Govt unlikely to approve Ashoura holiday proposal

Double low-cost hajj seats for Kuwaitis

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The government is not likely to approve Ashoura as an official holiday for workers in the private sector as was passed by the legislative committee, and sent a report to the National Assembly in this regard, informed sources quoted officials as saying. This proposal is not new and was presented in several parliaments and demanded by many MPs before, the sources noted. They said the government and both the Civil Service Council and Civil Service Commission believe any new holidays will constitute financial and administrative burdens the government can do without. The National Assembly's legal and legislative committee approved a draft law on Wednesday to declare Ashoura as a public holiday for both the private and public sectors. To become effective, the bill has to be approved by the National Assembly

when it resumes its sessions in late October. Assembly panels in the past have rejected such proposals.

Low-cost hajj

In other news, official sources said the low-cost hajj for Kuwaitis will be repeated during the next hajj season on a larger scale, as the number of seats will be doubled and a tender will be put forward for this purpose. They said the low-cost hajj for Kuwaitis requires them to pay KD 1,300 per pilgrim only, and all those who applied for it this year were accepted, while next year there will be additional places and facilities in order to make it easier for Kuwaiti pilgrims, adding the number may reach 3,000.

The sources said the arrangement for bedoon's hajj will remain as is, because it is linked to Saudi authorities' approval, who allocate 1,000 places for bedoons. The awqaf min-

istry will continue registering them electronically, then select the set number according to certain conditions including age and not having performed hajj before. They said the cost of hajj for bedoons is reduced as the awqaf secretariat and Zakat House pay for it, with the pilgrim paying KD 800 only.

As for low-cost hajj for expats, sources said Saudi authorities stipulate that the expat pilgrim should arrive from their country and be registered along with pilgrims of their country, but Kuwait was excluded to make it easy for each mission to register a certain number of expats as it may be difficult for them to go to hajj from their countries.

Pilgrims accommodations

Separately, Consul General of the State of Kuwait in Jeddah Wael Al-Enezi paid a visit to the site of the Kuwaiti Hajj Mission in Al-Naseem

to review preparations and readiness to accommodate the faithful during the annual rituals. Speaking to KUNA, Enezi said the consulate set up an office at the Kuwaiti Hajj Mission Headquarters in Makkah, as is customary each year to keep close eye on preparations for the season and provide all services pilgrims could require. The consulate office stays open round the clock, he has confirmed. The pilgrims' camps at the holy sites and their residences in Makkah are all ready, as the Kuwait Hajj Mission is continuously contacting and coordinating with Saudi officials to best serve the pilgrims, especially the Kuwaiti ones, he affirmed. He expressed his deepest thanks and appreciation to the Saudi government and people for all the services and facilities they offered to the pilgrims. He called on the Kuwaiti pilgrims and guides of hajj convoys to abide by the regulations and instructions of the Saudi authorities and to cooperate with them.



KUWAIT: A Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) delegation completed inspections of Kuwait hajj mission offices in Makkah and made sure they meet all preventive conditions. Head of the delegation Lt Col Omar Al-Kandari said the delegation cooperates with awqaf ministry inspectors and lauded all Kuwaiti hajj missions for their understanding and cooperation, especially with regards to implementing Saudi civil defense conditions. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

Worker falls to death in Mutlaa

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A Nepalese laborer fell to his death in a ditch while working at a project site in Mutlaa. Police and paramedics responded and declared him dead. The coroner recovered the body. Meanwhile, an investigation was opened to determine the circumstances behind the incident.

Vehicles on fire

A vehicle caught fire on Taawon Street. Bidaa fire station responded and put the blaze out without injuries. Meanwhile, Bidaa and Salmiya fire stations responded to a call about a vehicle on fire at a Salmiya mall. The fire was brought under control before it spread to other cars. Investigations are underway to determine the cause of the fire.



KUWAIT: A fireman extinguishes a fire in a car at a Salmiya mall.

Officer charged with blackmail released on bail

KUWAIT: The public prosecution released a senior interior ministry officer on KD 3,000 bail after spending three days in detention. The officer is charged with blackmailing a Syrian in cooperation with a lieutenant and a retired policeman. The charges include bribery and abuse of authority, in addition to embezzlement.

Medical error

A Kuwaiti woman complained against a state-run hospital, accusing staff of a medical error that led to her paralysis during surgery. She said that she felt severe pain in her chest, so she went to the hospital. She was diagnosed with an infection that needed surgical intervention. She said that following the procedure, she could not move her hands due to what she says is a medical error. Police are investigating.

Officer insulted

A customs officer asked a Saudi passenger to wait until he finished inspecting another car, then asked him how many cigarette cartons he had. The Saudi answered "two", so he was told to take them out before the car was inspected.

The passenger became angry and said, "take the cigarettes and search the car". When he was asked to open the backdoor, he refused, then went to complain to the head of the shift. An argument ensued there, so the Saudi was taken to Nuwaiseeb police station, where he was charged with insulting a public employee on duty.

Traffic offender at large

Detectives are looking for a person who left a vehicle in Sabah Al-Ahmad following a collision with an Indian man's car, then escaped from patrols that were protecting military columns. The driver, who violated traffic laws, ignored police's orders to pull over and sped off. When traffic flow was slowed down by police, the sus-

pect collided with the Indian's vehicle and entered Sabah Al-Ahmad, where he abandoned the car.

Robbery

Three Bangladeshis beat a compatriot, damaging his eardrum in the process, then robbed KD 200 from him. The victim gave police a medical report stating his injury. A police source said the victim gave them details of one of the culprits, and charges of forced robbery were ordered by the prosecutor. Separately, a Kuwaiti man accused his helper of stealing KD 500, his civil ID and passport before disappearing, and lodged a complaint at Sabah Al-Ahmad police station. Detectives are looking for the culprit.

—Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai



India coffee baron's death sparks anger

Indonesia's Aceh whips 11 for sharia-banned romance



ADEN: Yemeni security forces rush to the scene of a missile attack on a military camp west of Yemen's government-held second city Aden yesterday. Dozens of Yemeni police, including a senior commander, were killed or wounded in the attack. — AFP

Houthi attack kills over 30 in Aden

Saudi blames Iran; missile, drone hit military parade

ADEN: Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi movement said it launched missile and drone attacks yesterday on a military parade in Aden, the seat of the Saudi-backed government, that killed more than 30 people according to medical and security sources. A Reuters witness saw nine bodies on the ground after an explosion hit a military camp belonging to the Yemeni Security Belt forces backed by the United Arab Emirates, which is a member of the Saudi-led military coalition battling the Houthis.

The attack killed at least 32 people, including a commander, a medical and a security source told Reuters. Soldiers screamed and ran to lift the wounded and place them on trucks. Red berets lay on the ground in pools of blood. Yemen's Prime Minister Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed and Saudi Arabia's envoy to Yemen, in separate tweets, accused Iran of being behind the parade attack claimed by the Houthis and a blast at a police station in the southern port city yesterday that security sources said involved an explosives-laden car.

No one has claimed responsibility for the other attack which Medecins Sans Frontieres said killed 10 people. Past car attacks in Yemen have been carried out by Islamist militant group al Qaeda, one of Yemen's many destabilizing

forces. The Saudi envoy, Mohammed bin Saeed Al Jabir, said the attacks indicate that Iran "shares common goals with fellow terrorists such as Daesh (Islamic State) and Al-Qaeda".

Shi'ite Muslim Iran denies having any involvement in Yemen, where the Saudi-led Sunni Muslim coalition intervened in 2015 to try to restore the internationally recognized government ousted from power in the capital Sanaa by the



Aden is seat of the Saudi-backed government

Houthis in late 2014. The Houthi's official channel Al Masirah TV said the group had launched a medium-range ballistic missile and an armed drone at the parade, which it described as being staged in preparation for a military move against

provinces held by the movement.

Commander killed

The commander killed at the parade was Brigadier General Muneer Al-Yafee, a leading southern separatist figure, a government military source and security sources said. Yafee had stepped off the stage to greet a guest when the explosion took place. Flags of the former South Yemen and those of the coalition fluttered as the military band was waiting for its cue to start playing.

"The blast occurred behind the stand where the ceremony was taking place at Al Jalaa military camp in Buraiqa district in Aden," the Reuters witness said. "A group of soldiers were crying over a body believed to be of the commander." The Houthi military spokesman said the parade "was being used to prepare for an advance" on Taiz and Dalea provinces.

The government of Abdu-Rabbu Mansour Hadi controls Aden. The Houthi movement, which denies being a puppet of Iran and says its revolution is against corruption, holds Sanaa and most of the biggest urban centres in the Arabian Peninsula nation. The Western-backed coalition led by

Saudi Arabia and the UAE has come under international pressure to end the war that has killed tens of thousands and pushed Yemen to the brink of famine. The more than four-year conflict is widely seen in the region as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Last month the UAE said it was scaling down its military presence in areas including Aden and the western coast, but that this would not leave a vacuum as it had trained 90,000 Yemeni forces from among southern separatists and coastal plains fighters. The Houthis have stepped up cross-border missile and drone attacks on Saudi cities and the coalition has responded with air strikes on Houthi military sites, mostly around Sanaa.

Al Masirah said the Houthis launched a long-range ballistic missile on a military site in Dammam in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province yesterday. There was no immediate confirmation from the coalition or Saudi authorities. The escalating violence could complicate UN-led efforts to implement a troop withdrawal in the main port city of Hodeidah to pave the way for political talks to end the war amid mistrust among parties and competing agendas of Yemen's fractious groups. — Reuters

International

Washington puts sanctions on Iranian foreign minister Zarif

Iran arrests European accused of swindling \$1 billion

WASHINGTON: The United States on Wednesday imposed sanctions on Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, targeting the country's top spokesman and potentially hurting chances of diplomatic talks amid rising tensions between the two countries. Zarif, a critical figure in the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, dismissed the action and said it would not affect him. US President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of the deal last year and ramped up sanctions to put pressure on Iran's economy.

The move dismantled part of President Barack Obama's legacy and upset US allies who were party to the agreement, which was designed to restrict Tehran's pathway to a nuclear bomb in exchange for sanctions relief. Strains between Washington and Tehran have risen more in recent months after attacks on tankers in the Gulf that the United States blames on Iran and Iran's downing of a US drone that prompted preparations for a US retaliatory air strike that Trump called off at the last minute.

"Javad Zarif implements the reckless agenda of Iran's Supreme Leader, and is the regime's primary spokesperson around the world. The United States is sending a clear message to the Iranian regime that its recent behavior is completely unacceptable," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement. The sanctions against Zarif would block any property or interests he has in the United States, but the Iranian foreign minister said he had none.

"The US' reason for designating me is that I am Iran's 'primary spokesperson around the world,'" Zarif said on Twitter. "Is the truth really that painful? It has no effect on me or my family, as I have no property or interests outside of Iran. Thank you for considering me such a huge threat to your agenda." Zarif lived in the United States, from the age of 17 as a student of international relations in San Francisco and Denver, and subsequently as a diplomat at the United Nations in New York, where he was Iranian ambassador from 2002 to 2007.

The Trump administration said it would make decisions on whether to grant Zarif travel visas, including for trips to the United Nations, on a case by case

basis, holding open the possibility that he might attend the annual UN General Assembly in September. If Zarif received such a visa, that would allow direct or indirect US contacts with him during that gathering, which brings most of the world's leaders to New York and has been the venue for previous US-Iranian contacts.

Negotiator

A senior US official reiterated that Trump was open to talks with Iran, but said the administration would want to deal with a key decision maker, which it did not consider Zarif to be. Zarif, who has said a so-called B-team including Trump's national security adviser John Bolton, an ardent Iran hawk, and conservative Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu could goad Trump into a conflict with Tehran, said in a later tweet: "We know that calling for dialog & peace is an existential threat to #B_Team." Senator Chris Murphy, a Democratic member of the Foreign Relations Committee, questioned the administration's move.

"If our position is really that we want to negotiate with Iran than maybe we shouldn't sanction their chief negotiator," Murphy posted on Twitter. Wendy Sherman, who was the lead US negotiator for the Iran nuclear deal under Obama, echoed that view and said placing sanctions on Zarif "risks dangerous escalation." She linked the action to what Bolton said was a US decision to renew sanctions waivers for Iranian nuclear programs that allow Russia, China and European countries to continue their civilian nuclear cooperation with Tehran.

"One assumes sanctioning Zarif is the price for those waivers. The internal administration battle of war or diplomacy apparently wages on," said Sherman, who is director of the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School. On June 24 Trump targeted Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and other top Iranian officials with sanctions. Mnuchin said then that Zarif would be blacklisted that week, but the designation did not happen quickly. Reuters reported in mid-July that the administration had decided to hold off on sanc-

Iran of being behind several mysterious attacks on tankers in recent months, which Iran denies. Tensions escalated on July 19 when Iran impounded a British-flagged tanker with its 23 crew aboard as it passed through the Strait - the world's busiest oil shipping lane. Iranian authorities said the ship had collided with a fishing vessel then failed to respond to distress calls, as well as turning off its transponder.

Manama did not specify who attended Wednesday's conference, but the Guardian reported a day earlier that the UK had called for a meeting in Bahrain with other European countries and the US. Bahrain said earlier this month that it and the US would co-host a conference on "maritime and air navigation security", set for October. Long-simmering tensions have spiked between Tehran and Washington since US President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal last year and reimposed biting sanctions on the Islamic republic.



NEW YORK: Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif arrives at a high level political forum on sustainable development at UN Headquarters in New York. The US has imposed sanctions on Javad Zarif, effectively slamming the door on the country's top diplomat. —AFP

tions against him for the time being.

Iran arrests European

In another development, Iran has arrested a European accused of swindling at least \$1 billion out of an investor in the aftermath of a nuclear deal that saw sanctions lifted, state media reported Wednesday. "Police managed to discover a fraud case and arrest a European national who scammed 120 billion rials" since 2015 through claiming to invest in agriculture, said the force's spokesman Brigadier-General Ahmad Noorini. Currently 120 billion rials amounts to around \$1 billion, or nearly 900 million euros, under the unofficial exchange rate in the Iranian capital. The accused had come under suspicion when authorities discovered forged documents, the spokesman was quoted as saying in a report by the website of state television. The European national was then identified as a butcher by profession who had no capital and was "linked to an international conman wanted by Interpol". —Agencies

Britain last week ordered its navy to escort UK-flagged ships in the Strait of Hormuz in response to Iranian soldiers seizing its tanker in the flashpoint entrance to the Gulf. The US has proposed setting up a maritime surveillance mission in the area, but Germany said Wednesday it would be "reluctant" to take part, proposing a European mission instead. Despite the tensions, Iran on Tuesday received a coast-guard delegation from the United Arab Emirates, aimed at reviving maritime security talks cut off in 2013, state media reported.

The UAE has sided with Iran's arch-rival, regional powerhouse Saudi Arabia, over several issues — including joining a military coalition battling Iran-linked rebels in Yemen. UAE foreign affairs official Salem Al-Zaabi on Wednesday expressed "satisfaction" after the meeting. UAE state media said the meeting had addressed "routine maritime issues, including maritime connections, illegal entries and smuggling, fishermen and shared borders". —AFP

Netherlands ban on burqas in public places takes effect

THE HAGUE: The Netherlands banned the wearing of a face-covering veil, such as a burqa or niqab, in public buildings and on transport from yesterday as a contentious law on the garment worn by some Muslim women came into force. Between 200 and 400 women are estimated to wear a burqa or niqab in the country of 17 million people.

The Dutch legislation was passed in June 2018 after more than a decade of political debate on the subject. The far-right politician Geert Wilders had proposed the face-covering veil ban back in 2005. "From now on the wearing of clothing which covers the face is banned in educational facilities, public institutions and buildings, as well as hospitals and public transport," the Dutch interior ministry said in a statement.

It added that it was important in such public places to be recognized and seen, which besides the burqa, also bans a face-covering helmet or hood. A person could be fined 150 euros (\$165). However, the public transport sector said it would not stop to make a woman in a burqa get off as it would cause delays. And hospitals also said they would still treat people regardless of what they are wearing. The Dutch law does not ban the wearing of a burqa on the street, unlike France's ban which took effect in 2010. Belgium, Denmark and Austria have similar laws. —AFP

Bahrain hosts military conference amid Iran tensions

DUBAI: Bahrain hosted a conference on Gulf maritime security on Wednesday, after multiple attacks on shipping in the strategic Strait of Hormuz sent tensions soaring between Iran and the US. The tiny Gulf monarchy, which hosts the US Fifth Fleet, said the meeting was held "to discuss the current regional situation and to strengthen cooperation". In a statement, it slammed "the repeated attacks and unacceptable practices of Iran and the terrorist groups linked to it".

The US has joined Gulf allies in accusing

International

Indonesia's Aceh province whips 11 for sharia-banned romance

Buddhist man receives more than two dozen lashes

BANDA ACEH: One woman begged for mercy and another sobbed uncontrollably as Indonesia's Aceh province flogged nearly a dozen people yesterday, including a Buddhist man, charged with breaking local Islamic law. Despite widespread criticism, public whipping is a common punishment for a range of offences in the deeply conservative region at the tip of Sumatra island, including gambling, drinking alcohol, and having gay sex or relations outside of marriage. Aceh is the only region in the world's biggest Muslim-majority country that imposes Islamic law.

Yesterday, dozens watched as eleven people were whipped outside a mosque in the provincial capital Banda Aceh. A masked sharia officer rained down between eight and 32 strokes from a rattan cane on their backs after they were caught with members of the opposite sex. The six men and five women - all in their late teens and early twenties - were rounded up by religious officers who caught them behaving amorously, a crime under local law.

Authorities gave few details, but couples have been whipped in the past for cuddling or holding hands in public. One 19-year-old woman caught in an unidentified building with a man burst into tears as the whipping started, while another woman begged

for the punishment to stop. A Buddhist man caught with a woman inside a hotel room got more than two dozen lashes. About 98 percent of Aceh's five million residents are Muslims subject to religious law, known locally as Qanun.

While it's relatively rare, non-Muslims who have committed an offence can choose to be prosecuted under Islamic law, sometimes to avoid a prison sentence. On Friday, Banda Aceh's mayor Aminullah Usman warned hotels and businesses to comply with the region's conservative regulations - or risk losing their license to operate. "We've warned hotels to not even think about breaking the rules" by renting rooms to unmarried couples, he told reporters after the flogging. "Otherwise, we will revoke their licenses," he added.

The whipping came a day after three people in Lhokseumawe, a district a few hours from Banda Aceh, were flogged 100 times each for having premarital sex, including a 19-year-old man who had relations with an underage girl. In December, two men caught having sex with underage girls were whipped 100 times each. Rights groups have slammed public caning as cruel, and Indonesia's President Joko Widodo has called for it to end, but the practice has wide support among Aceh's population. — AFP



BANDA ACEH: A woman is whipped in public in Banda Aceh in Indonesia's staunchly conservative Aceh province yesterday, as punishment for being too close to the opposite sex. — AFP

Exchange of fire kills Palestinian, wounds three Israeli soldiers

JERUSALEM: A Palestinian crossed into Israel from Gaza and shot at troops, setting off a firefight in which he was killed and three Israeli soldiers were wounded yesterday, the army said. An Israeli tank targeted a Hamas military post after the incident which began at around 2:00 am, Israel's military said. It said an army officer was moderately wounded and two soldiers were lightly injured by gunfire from the Palestinian, who entered Israel from the border fence in the Khan Yunis area of the southern Gaza Strip. Israel's military believes he was a member of the Islamist movement Hamas but had acted alone, said army spokesman Jonathan Conricus.

He was armed with a Kalashnikov rifle and grenades, according to Conricus. He threw at least one grenade and was killed by Israeli soldiers who were scrambled to the area in response, Conricus said. "Our current assumption is-

and this doesn't look likely to change-is that he did not act, he was not sent, on an attack mission, but rather that he did this attempted attack on his own," the spokesman told journalists. Hamas, which rules Gaza, did not give an immediate comment but a security source in the strip also said the gunman was a member of the movement.

There has been tension along the Gaza border since regular protests and clashes erupted there in March 2018. At least 297 Palestinians have since been killed in Gaza or the border area by Israeli fire, the majority during demonstrations and clashes. Seven Israelis have also been killed. The protests have declined in intensity recently after a truce brokered by UN officials and Egypt. Under the truce, Israel agreed to take steps to ease aspects of its blockade on Gaza. Israel and Hamas have fought three wars since 2008. — AFP

Bin Laden's son Hamza 'is dead'

WASHINGTON: The United States believes that Hamza bin Laden, a son of slain Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and himself a notable figure in the militant group, is dead, a US official said on Wednesday. The US official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, provided no further details, including when Hamza died or where. President Donald Trump earlier on Wednesday declined to comment after NBC News first reported the US assessment.

Asked if he had intelligence that bin Laden's son had been killed, Trump told reporters: "I don't want to comment on it." Separately, the White House declined comment on whether any announcement was imminent. Hamza, believed to be about 30 years old, was at his father's side in Afghanistan before the Sept 11, 2001, attacks on the United States and spent time with him in Pakistan after the US-led invasion of Afghanistan pushed much of Al-Qaeda's senior leadership there, according to the Brookings Institution.

Osama bin Laden was killed by US special forces who raided his compound in Pakistan in 2011. Hamza was thought to be under house arrest

in Iran at the time, and documents recovered from the compound indicated that aides had been trying to reunite him with his father. The New York Times reported that the United States had a role in the operation that led to Hamza's death, which it said took place in the past two years. Reuters could not immediately verify those details.

Still, the US government's conclusion appears to be a recent one. In February, the State Department said it was offering a reward of up to \$1 million for information leading "to the identification or location in any country" of Hamza, calling him a key Al-Qaeda leader. Introduced by Al-Qaeda's chief Ayman Al-Zawahiri in an audio message in 2015, Hamza provided a younger voice for the group whose aging leaders have struggled to inspire militants around the world galvanized by Islamic State, according to analysts.

Hamza has called for acts of terrorism in Western capitals and threatened to take revenge against the United States for his father's killing, the US State Department said in 2017 when it designated him as a global terrorist. He also threatened to target Americans abroad and urged tribal groups in Saudi Arabia to unite with Yemen's Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula to fight against Saudi Arabia, it said. In March, Saudi Arabia announced it had stripped Hamza bin Laden of his citizenship, saying the decision was made by a royal order in November 2018. — Reuters

International

As garbage piles up in Tunisia cities, waste pickers demand recognition

Number of barbechas keeps rising amid unemployment

TUNIS: In the early hours of a Sunday morning, before the city of Tunis wakes up and the sun becomes unbearably hot, Raouf Hayetlili and his neighbor Noureddine Tayara are already pulling trailers of plastic up a hill. Tayara, a 65-year-old waste picker, started working just after the dawn prayer, when he asked that the day bring him “his share” of goods. Hayetlili, 42, said they needed to get to the bins before the municipality workers started clearing them away.

Every day, the men gather up plastic bottles, as well as aluminum, bread, and broken plastic. They live in Ettadhamen, a northern working-class district that has become the centre of Tunis’ recycling circuit, but prefer to work in the nearby neighborhoods of El Menzah and Ennasr, where there are richer pickings. “Nobody throws anything away in the poorer neighborhoods,” explained Hayetlili, dressed in overalls given to him by a maintenance worker.

“Here, they throw a lot away and everything has value.” The system of plastic recycling in Tunisian cities is largely reliant on an informal workforce of waste pickers, known as barbechas, meaning someone who searches, digs or investigates. And like thousands of other Tunisians who work in the informal sector, barbechas lack an official status and lead a precarious life, carrying out their jobs without workers’ rights or health insurance, say human rights activists. Many waste pickers live in poverty, selling the waste they find to middlemen recyclers who then sell it on for a marked-up price to the national waste collection system or, more often, a private recycling fac-

tory. “There is no legal framework that regulates (this type of) recycling,” said Mehdi Barhoumi, Tunis-based project manager for the British non-profit International Alert.

This could change with a proposed law to establish a “social and solidarity economy” which would support collectives and self-governed businesses that both make a profit and have a social objective. The idea is to create a halfway house between the informal sector and regular employment by giving workers the opportunity to self-organize and register their activity without setting up a company, Barhoumi explained.

He hopes the law will give Tunisia’s waste pickers better protection from health risks and exploitation by middlemen. For now, the law, which was proposed by Tunisia’s UGTT union in 2016 and finalized a year ago, is still waiting to be debated by parliament. But the need for it is only becoming more urgent, Barhoumi stressed. “The number of barbechas has not stopped rising, because there is an unemployment problem (and) at the same time, there is a problem with waste management,” he said.

While there are no official figures, International Alert estimates that there are 15,000 barbechas in Tunisia, who collect two-thirds of the country’s recycled plastic waste. Waste pickers say the work often puts their safety and wellbeing at risk and earns them between 10 and 40 Tunisian dinars (\$3.50-\$14) a day. Zara Mezrighi started collecting waste with her husband, an unemployed chef, two years ago. “It is always dangerous (for



LA MARSJA, Tunisia: Volunteers of ‘Tounes Clean-Up’ collect waste from a beach in the coastal town of Masra near the capital Tunis. Every Sunday, dozens of Tunisian volunteers brave the sun to scour the beaches and pick up trash that the authorities are still struggling to manage effectively. — AFP

women), that is why I work with my husband,” said the 54-year-old.

They stay mostly on one rubbish-covered hill in Ennasr, and it takes the couple one hour to walk to this spot every day because they do not make enough to buy a motorcycle. “I come here because everyone says kind things. When I used

to go to the market rubbish bins, men would harass me and say, ‘You came here to sell yourself.’” Bassradine Lassar, director of the government’s National Waste Management Agency, said that barbechas “play an important role in collecting waste and it is better to find a solution to integrate them into the system”. — Reuters

Cyprus probes bishop for possible gay hate speech

NICOSIA: Cyprus’s top law officer instructed police yesterday to investigate a Greek Orthodox bishop for possible hate speech after he claimed homosexuality is passed on if a pregnant mother enjoys anal sex. The comments made by Bishop Neophytos of Morphou during a speech in June have gone viral and caused huge controversy on an island where the Orthodox Church wields immense influence over the Greek Cypriot majority.

In a statement issued yesterday, Attorney General Costas Clerides said he had instructed the island’s police chief to “investigate the possibility of any criminal offence committed” in connection with statements made by the bishop about “homosexuals and related matters”. The move follows a statement from the government saying it was “greatly troubled and dismayed” by the bishop’s comments,

which it said were needlessly stirring up social unrest. Government spokesman Prodromos Prodromou said Tuesday that the bishop’s remarks “insult the dignity and equality” of Cypriots, and called on him to retract them.

Costas Gavrielides, an adviser to President Nicos Anastasiades on acceptance and diversity, requested the attorney general look into the matter of homophobic speech. He said that in four years since adoption of legislation outlawing hate speech, police have not investigated a complaint nor launched legal proceedings for homophobic or transphobic hate speech. Bishop Neophytos caused a furor when excerpts of his speech went viral. He also claimed that gay men were instantly recognizable because they “have an odor”.

Cyprus did not decriminalize homosexuality until 1998 and did so then only under the pressure of an ultimatum from the European Union which it was preparing to join. Opposition was led by the church. Since then, the island outlawed discrimination on the grounds of sexuality in 2004 and legalized civil unions for gay couples in 2015. Social attitudes have been slow to keep up but recent opinion surveys suggest they have eased significantly in the past few years. — AFP

Buzz kill: Mass bee deaths sting Russia beekeepers

BOBROVKA: Anatoly Rubtsov looked despondently at the beehives lining his property. “The farm used to be loud, it sang,” he said. Today just a faint buzz is audible but an overpowering rotting stench hung in the air after his bees were likely poisoned by a pesticide. Rubtsov, who keeps a large honeybee farm on the edge of a small village in the Tula region south of Moscow, is one of hundreds of beekeepers across Russia to report mass bee deaths that have robbed them of their livelihood.

Eighty-two bee colonies - almost the entire farm - have died since early July, and the survivors will unlikely make it through the winter, he said. That is over three million dead bees and Rubtsov estimated his losses at 1.6 million rubles (\$25,000). All the bees in the vicinity have met the same fate. People around Bobrovka are certain that the culprit is a local company growing rapeseed, a cash crop with yellow flowers used for cooking oil, cattle feed, and biofuel, that treated its fields with insecticides on July 4.

Viktor Morozov, another beekeeper who kept hives in a nearby forest, filmed empty pesticide con-

tainers lying on the ground alongside the rapeseed fields, but said the workers denied using a strong insecticide that contains fipronil. A lab in Moscow eventually confirmed the presence on the rapeseed plants of fipronil, which is legal in Russia provided certain precautions are taken but banned in the EU.

“They broke all the rules possible” regarding spraying, said Rubtsov. NT Agri, the accused company, denied that it broke any rules. “We followed all instructions,” said its director Irina Trubitsina. “Flowering rapeseed is a big attraction for the bees, so it was like an ambush,” said Rubtsov. Worker bees gathered the toxic nectar and brought it to the hive, where even bees born days later were poisoned. “They are the living dead,” he said, peering at the bees crawling chaotically on the bottom of one hive, unable to fly. “The whole farm is doomed.”

Russia’s agriculture watchdog confirmed the bee deaths were caused by uncontrolled use of insecticides and acknowledged that their use is not being monitored closely. “The volumes of pesticides being used and their quality aren’t checked by the government,” spokeswoman Yulia Melano told Russian news agencies. Fipronil had been used widely in the European Union before a 2017 scandal when it was found in Dutch eggs after being used illegally to treat chicken stables. Studies have shown that the neurotoxin fipronil, along with so-called neonicotinoid substances used in other pesticides, can cause bee colonies to collapse and harm other insects such as butterflies, as well as worms and fish. — AFP

International

Retracing a slave route in Ghana, 400 years on

Millions of slaves were shipped to the Americas to work

ADIDWAN: Nana Assenso stands at the grave of his uncle, remembering the man he loved but also a past that has haunted his family for generations. His uncle was called Kwame Badu, a name that has been passed on through the family in remembrance of an ancestor with that name who was captured and sold into slavery long, long ago. "Growing up, I was told the story of two of my great-great-grand-uncles Kwame Badu and Kofi Aboagye who were captured and sold into slavery," says Assenso, 68, the chief of Adidwan, a village in Ghana's interior. He followed the family tradition and named his youngest son Kwame Badu.

This month marks 400 years since the first recorded African slaves arrived in North America to work plantations in English colonies. In the centuries after, European slave traders shipped millions of African men, women and children across the Atlantic Ocean. Many died in horrific conditions on the slave boats, while survivors endured a life of misery and backbreaking farm work.

For some of them, the terrible journey began here, deep inside Ghana. Captured by slavers, they were marched along dirt tracks for 200 kilometers (125 miles) to slave castles perched on the Atlantic Coast, where they boarded ships for North America. They never saw their homeland again. From here in Adidwan, the slaves were forced south, passing through the gold-mining town of Obuasi. Kwaku Agyei is a pastor and elder in Obuasi. He tells the story of the slave trade to young workers in his neighborhood, the indignity of it mixed with pride in his ancestors.

"They captured us because they realised we were very strong," the 71-year-old says. "They sent our ancestors to work on sugar plantations. The slave trade made us realize that the white man was cruel." But many rulers of West African empires, such as the Ashanti kingdom, whose descendants still live in this part of modern-day Ghana, also profited, selling captured slaves in exchange for guns, cloth, alcohol and other

Western manufactured goods. "Our elders exchanged their children for 'nice things' like matchboxes," Agyei says.

But once again, his pride in his heritage shows through. "I can say our ancestors were the ones who developed America," he says. Abdul Sumud Shaibu, 50, also lives in Obuasi and tells of his strong ancestors. He shows a photograph of his grandfather that he saved to his mobile phone. "My ancestors were giants," he says. "They were well-built and strong. Look at the height of my grandfather in this picture." They did battle with slave raiders, he says. In those fights, sometimes they lost. And sometimes they were captured into slavery.

Near the journey's end in Ghana, the captives were given a last, ritual bath in a river before being sold. Today, the Assin Manso site is a sacred place of remembrance. In this area of mangrove swamps, an image of slaves chained by the feet promises, "Never again." In the river, 75-year-old

New Yorker Regis Thomson sits within circle with five other women from her church and prayed. "When I think of what my ancestors had to go through..." the US tourist says, adding that she would go back and tell of her experiences so today's children are made aware of their past. "We have a lot of work to do."

After they bathed in the river, the captives were then taken on the final leg of their journey in Ghana, to the last place they'd ever see in their homeland: slave forts on the Atlantic like the Cape Coast and Elmina castles. Saviour Asante, 30, a hairdresser in Obuasi, had given little thought to slave history growing up. That changed with a visit to Cape Coast castle. "I cried the whole day," she says. "It was a very painful experience to hear these stories." From the castles, where European authorities lived in comfort right above the dungeons that held the slaves, the captured Africans walked through the Door of No Return onto the ships that would take them to America. — Reuters

Baltimore pushes back against Trump while acknowledging problems

BALTIMORE: After US President Donald Trump described Maryland's largest city as "a disgusting, rat and rodent infested mess" and a "very dangerous & filthy place" last weekend, Baltimore resident Blondina Bean had mixed feelings about his tweets. Bean, whose 19-year-old son George Phillips was killed in a robbery attempt last year in Baltimore, said she was torn because she felt Trump was right about the majority-black city's high crime rate but wrong to use what she called racist language.

"I agree with what he said, unfortunately. We should totally be in a state of emergency. I don't agree with his delivery. I look at him and think, 'Wow, do I really want this message from him?' Because his character has shown who he is," Bean said. Baltimore, a city of about 625,000 people known for its scenic harbor and historic neighborhoods in addition to its urban woes, is located roughly 40 miles north of Washington.

While many in Baltimore have blasted Trump's language - he also tweeted that "No human being would want to live there" - some black residents have acknowledged not only the city's crime problems but that its political leaders have failed to take enough action. It is not the first time in recent years that Baltimore has found itself in an uncomfortable national spotlight.

Two mayors have stepped down with corruption allegations swirling around their administrations. In 2015, the death of a black man named Freddie Gray while in police custody sparked days of sometimes violent protests. For many in Baltimore, Trump's remarks added to the damage those episodes had caused to the city's image. That has both unsettled and animated community activists dedicated to improving life in the city. Francina Townes, an 18-year-old entrepreneur who had a rough upbringing in West Baltimore, took exception to Trump's remarks.

Townes also has no illusions about Baltimore's long and frustrating struggle against violence, drugs and poverty. But she resented the tone of the Republican president's Twitter remarks, saying his broadsides - directed at Elijah Cummings, an African-American Democrat who long has represented the city in the US Congress - have united the city's people. "One thing



BALTIMORE: An old cannon sits atop of Federal Hill overlooking the city in Baltimore, Maryland. — AFP

about Baltimore: We can talk about ourselves," Townes said. "But if somebody from outside comes in and tries to do something, we stick together."

Cummings, chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Reform, has led investigations into Trump and his administration and has criticized the president's hard-line immigration policies. Townes said she grew up seeing other young people get pregnant or go to jail, and was determined to find an alternative. Two years ago, she launched her own home business applying high-end false eyelashes and steadily built a loyal clientele. She now rents space in a salon and aspires to own her own shop some day.

Bean, since her son's death, has created a non-profit organization aimed at diverting young people at risk into sports, therapy or job-interview training. Baltimore has other projects that aim to help young black men overcome obstacles in a troubled city where some end up on a path of drugs and violence. Some programs have been around for years.

Edwin Avent co-founded Black Professional Men (BPM) Inc in 1991 to lift up African-American men, offering lessons in topics from financial literacy to relationships. He is also board chairman of the Baltimore Collegiate School for Boys, a public charter school. BPM has mentored 3,000 boys and awarded 225 college scholarships, using education and positive reinforcement to keep youths away from gangs, drugs and guns. — Reuters

Brazilian inmates 'suffocated' during transfer after jail riot

RIO DE JANEIRO: Four inmates involved in one of Brazil's deadliest prison riots suffocated while being transferred to another jail, officials said Wednesday, taking to 62 the number killed over two days. The men were among 46 prisoners removed from the Altamira Regional Recovery Center in the northern state of Para on Tuesday, a day after clashes between rival drug factions left 58 dead, according to the latest death toll. Sixteen inmates were decapitated in Monday's hours-long battle, but most died in a fire that engulfed part of the overcrowded facility that used converted shipping containers to house some of the inmates.

On Tuesday, 30 prisoners were handcuffed and put in four cells on a bus that was to take them to jails in the capital Belem, the state secretary for public security and social defense said in a statement. Guards found the bodies of the four inmates, who belonged to the same gang, in two cells during a stop in Maraba city. They had suffocated. "The reasons for this unfortunate act are being investigated," the statement said.

Hours earlier another body was found in debris inside the Altamira jail that took the death toll from Monday's riot to 58. President Jair Bolsonaro, who took power in January on a promise to relax gun ownership laws and crack down on crime, tweeted on Wednesday for the first time on the mass killing. "I watched the scenes of horror in the Para prison, but I also saw the macabre scenes carried out by those who died against humble and defenseless people," Bolsonaro tweeted Wednesday. "Outside the prisons there's also a war where practically only one side is armed."

It was the second major eruption of violence to rock the country's severely overpopulated and deadly prison system in as many months. In May, at least 55 inmates were killed at several jails in the neighboring state of Amazonas, in violence also blamed on an apparent drug trafficking gang dispute. — AFP

International

Johnson faces UK election test as Brexit battle looms

Conservative party looks set to lose the Welsh seat

LONDON: Britain's Boris Johnson faces his first test at the ballot box yesterday in a by-election that could reduce his parliamentary majority to one, making it harder to enact his Brexit plan. Just over a week after he took office as prime minister, Johnson's governing Conservative party looks set to lose the Welsh seat of Brecon and Radnorshire to a pro-European candidate.

He is already facing strong opposition in the 650-seat parliament to his plan to take Britain out of the European Union without a deal if necessary on October 31. Victory for the anti-Brexit Liberal Democrats in Brecon would embolden those opposition MPs and some Conservatives who have pledged to do whatever it takes to stop a "no deal" departure.

Finance minister Sajid Javid on Wednesday announced an extra £2.1 billion (\$2.6 billion, 2.3 billion euros) to prepare for the possibility of no-deal, with a parliamentary showdown looming when MPs return in September. The extra cash will be used to launch a public information campaign and "accelerate preparations at the border, support business readiness and ensure the supply of critical medicines," said a government statement.

Brexit party challenge

Yesterday's by-election was called after former Conservative MP Chris Davies was forced out, following his conviction for making false expenses claims. He insists it was an honest mistake and is standing again, but polling points to a win for the Lib Dems, who have previously held the seat. Number Cruncher Politics, a polling consultancy, put the Lib Dems on 43 percent, the Conservatives on 28, Nigel Farage's Brexit party on 20 and Labor on eight percent. However, another Wales-wide survey by YouGov published this week gave an unexpected boost to the Conservatives, which experts attributed to a modest "Boris bounce". Brecon and Radnorshire voted 52 percent to leave the European Union in the 2016 vote - echoing the UK-wide result.

Johnson, a leading Brexit campaigner in the referendum, made a low-key visit on Tuesday to meet with Davies. He urged voters not to defect to the Brexit Party, which has been capitalizing on the political deadlock over Britain's EU departure. "The Brexit party cannot deliver Brexit, only the Conservatives can," Johnson said, adding that the Lib Dems "will do everything they can to stop Brexit". In European elections in May, the Brexit Party won 31 per-



LONDON: Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson (left), accompanied by Britain's Home Secretary Priti Patel, speaks at the first meeting of the National Policing Board at the Home Office in London. —AFP

cent of the vote, pushing the Conservatives into fifth place with just nine percent.

The pro-European Welsh nationalists and Green party are not fielding candidates in Brecon to avoid splitting the anti-Brexit vote. Johnson says he wants an EU divorce deal but argues the terms negotiated by his predecessor

Theresa May - which parliament has rejected three times - are unacceptable. EU leaders have repeatedly said the existing deal is the only one available. Fears Britain was heading to a disorderly split with its closest trading partner sent the pound to new two-year lows against the dollar and the euro this week. —AFP

'Please stay with me,' kidnapped Romanian girl begged police

BUCHAREST: The family of a 15-year-old Romanian girl kidnapped earlier this month and now presumed dead has released recordings of her desperate calls for help to authorities whose handling of the case has caused public outrage and dismissals of officials. A mechanic from Caracal in south Romania has confessed to killing Alexandra Macesanu, who went missing on July 24, and another 18-year-old girl last seen in April.

With authorities taking 19 hours to locate Macesanu after she made three calls to the emergency number 112, the case has sparked street protests, the interior minister's resignation, and the firing of some local officials. "Please stay with me on the line, I'm really scared," Macesanu told a policeman while crying during her third and last call, according to a transcript released on Facebook by her uncle Alexandru Cumpanasu late on Tuesday.

"I can't stay on the line with you, miss, I have other calls," replied the officer Vasileca Viorel Florescu, according to the transcript and audios. "Stay there, a police car will come without fail, in 2-3 minutes ... what the hell, calm down, the car is en route." Reuters has been unable to independently verify the audios, and neither the Special Telecommunications Unit (STS) in charge of directing 112 calls, police nor the Interior Ministry responded to requests to confirm them or comment on their contents.

The uncle, who has acted as a spokesman for the family, said when he released the transcripts that the parents have asked the media not to use their daughter's voice. Some Romanian media, however, have broadcast what they said were



CRAIOVA: Police escort suspect Gheorghe Dinca in Craiova, Romania, after the 65-year-old has admitted to killing two teenage girls including a 15-year-old whose disappearance last week shook the country. —AFP

leaked fragments of the call, so later on Tuesday Cumpanasu released the entire audio recordings, which he had requested from the STS.

Florescu, a policeman from the nearby town of Slatina, told local media that he talked to Macesanu twice out of the three calls she made, including the last one, and gave her details to Caracal police. "I repeatedly told her to stay calm and that a police car was coming," he was quoted as saying by the private television station Romania TV. He added he disconnected the call so that local police could get in touch with her. Reuters could not immediately reach Florescu for comment. Human remains have been found at the house of 65-year-old mechanic Gheorghe Dinca, where Macesanu was kept. A preliminary forensic report is expected today. —Reuters

Philippine ride-hailing firm 'sorry' for likening service to sex

MANILA: A popular ride-hailing firm in the Philippines issued a public apology yesterday after touching off a social media firestorm with a claim its motorcycle-based service was "like sex". Angkas deleted the tweet and issued a disclaimer and apology after being called out by the Philippine police and other irate users of the mobile phone-based service. "Angkas is like sex. It's scary the first time but fun to do over and over again," the company had posted in a mixture of English and Filipino on its official Twitter account on Monday.

Chief executive Angeline Tham, in a statement yesterday, said: "Safety has always been our brand's priority, and we apologize for how our recent tweet has made users feel unsafe and cast doubt on the integrity of our service." "Sex should never be used to create shame, fear, or disgust, and certainly not used lightly for the sake of some buzz," Tham added. Angkas, literally pillion rider, ingeniously makes use of motorbikes to get its passengers through Manila's notorious traffic gridlocks, giving it an edge over its car-based ride-sharing app rivals.

While the post was later deleted, it did not escape the attention of the police, who posted a screenshot of it on Twitter with a call for regulators of the transportation industry to take action. "This is not acceptable to commuters. Angkas will scare people off with this. This is not promoting public safety in transport business anymore," the Philippine National Police said. However, other social media users also hit out at the police for its alleged double standard. —AFP

International

Coffee baron's death fuels anger over India crackdown

Tax collectors labeled 'tax terrorism'

NEW DELHI: The apparent suicide of India's coffee baron VG Siddhartha, under investigation by tax authorities, has inflamed anger towards the government among business leaders who feel it is going too far in its crackdown on fraud and tax evasion. Drastic measures taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration include stringent action to enforce tax compliance, probes into bank lending practices and threatening auditors with five-year bans for alleged lapses in their work.

In particular the push by tax collectors has been labeled 'tax terrorism' by TV Mohandas Pai, a former director of Indian IT giant Infosys Ltd, even before the Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd founder disappeared and his body was later found floating in a river in southern India on Wednesday.

In a letter circulating on social media since Tuesday and purportedly written by Siddhartha to the firm's board and employees, he said he "gave up", blaming tax authorities for "harassment" and decisions that caused a liquidity crunch as well as an unnamed private equity partner for pressuring him into a share buyback. The letter's authenticity has not been verified and much remains unclear about his financial situation and apparent suicide. But the company's board said it is taking the letter's content seriously and will thoroughly investigate.

The prime minister's office did not respond to requests for comment. India's income tax department, part of the finance ministry, has said it acted as per the law in its investigation of Siddhartha and the coffee chain, and its probe was

based on credible evidence of transactions done in a concealed manner. Former government officials, industry executives and their advisors, including lawyers, told Reuters that investigations conducted by Indian agencies and tax inspectors had often resulted in harassment for business leaders.

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, managing director of biotech firm Biocon Ltd, said she knew many industrialists who have been called in by Indian enforcement agencies but were made to wait for long periods before questioning began and subjected to "insulting kind of treatment." "People are made to wait for 24 hours, 12 hours, 16 hours. This is not some kind of inquisition. It cannot be treated like an inquisition," she said. "Today every business person is made out to be as if there is something very crooked about them."

Pressure to collect

Since Modi came to power in 2014, he has made fighting fraud and tax evasion a top goal, saying he wanted to break previous cosy ties between policymakers and rich capitalists. His administration has targeted banks and heavily indebted businesses and tracked down rich fugitives hiding out in other countries - popular policies that helped him win a second-term in a landslide election victory in May. While many government officials and business leaders agree that regulations need to be more strictly enforced, they also say the government has been overzealous, making business leaders too fearful to invest and endangering the health of the economy. In particular, they are concerned that en-



CHIKMAGALUR: People pay homage to the remains of late coffee baron VG Siddhartha, founder of the Cafe Coffee Day retail chain, in Chikmagalur in Karnataka state. — AFP

forcement agencies increasingly go after loan defaulters without differentiating between genuine business failures and corrupt practices. "Any enforcement agency first looks at you as a crook," said JN Gupta, a former executive director at India's capital markets regulator, adding that the loss of Siddhartha's life was a very sad moment but one that was giving India an oppor-

tunity to find out what had gone wrong with the system. "We have a very thin line between duty and harassment. The enforcement agencies fail to realize that sometimes their zeal could be seen as harassment." Tax collectors are also under pressure, government sources familiar with the matter have said, declining to be identified as they were not authorized to speak on the matter. — Reuters

Afghan troop numbers drop in crackdown on 'ghost' soldiers

WASHINGTON: There has been a sharp drop in the size of Afghanistan's National Defense Security Forces in the past few months due to changes in the way troops are counted and an effort to reduce the number of so-called "ghost" soldiers, a US government watchdog said yesterday. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said in a report that ANDSF personnel size had gone down by nearly 10 percentage points in the most recent quarter compared to the previous trimester.

The number of ANDSF troops fell by nearly 42,000 compared to roughly the same period, between April and the end of June last year, the report said. The disclosure comes as Washington attempts to clinch a framework peace agreement with Taliban insurgents that is expected to include a timeline for withdrawing US troops, which now number about 14,000 in Afghanistan.

Some 9,000 of those forces are in-

involved with training, advising and assisting Afghan security forces. US officials have long expressed concerns about the strength and capability of the Afghan forces, especially without adequate international support. SIGAR, citing information from the US-led coalition, said the decline in Afghan force levels owed to a move by the ANDSF to switch their reporting of personnel strength to the number of biometrically validated forces, rather than just the number reported on-hand by officials in the field.

"The change was part of an effort by the United States and its partners to reduce opportunities for corrupt ANDSF officials to report 'ghost' (nonexistent) soldiers and police on personnel rolls in order to pocket the salaries," the report said. With a potential US drawdown looming, recent Taliban attacks in Afghanistan have underscored pressure on Afghanistan's overstretched security forces. — Reuters

India court takes over contentious teen rape case

NEW DELHI: India's top court yesterday ordered a major state to pay compensation to a teenage girl accusing a prominent lawmaker of rape and moved the case to the capital, amid growing calls for authorities to properly address the long-running saga. The allegations, first raised by the 19-year-old against legislator Kuldeep Singh Sengar in Uttar Pradesh state in 2017, have taken on national significance as he was from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

It sparked further public outrage and drew the attention of the Supreme Court this week after the girl was critically hurt when a truck smashed into the car she was travelling in on Sunday, with her family alleging it was arranged by Sengar. Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi ordered the national Central Bureau of Investigation, which has assumed jurisdiction of the case from local police, to complete their probe into the crash in seven days.

He set a time limit for the trial process and instructed Uttar Pradesh to pay 2.5 million rupees

(\$36,172) to the victim by Friday. "The trial in the case shall commence forthwith on a day-to-day basis and the trial shall be completed within 45 days," Gogoi said. Sengar, a four-term legislator, was only expelled from the party yesterday after public pressure on the state's chief minister Yogi Adityanath, a BJP stalwart, to take action.

The girl's family has been beset by a string of tragedies, with two of her aunts dying in the crash and her lawyer also critically injured. Her father was detained by police last year and severely beaten in custody - allegedly by Sengar's brother - and later died from his injuries. The teenager also tried to set herself on fire outside Adityanath's home. Sengar - whose case has become an embarrassment for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party - has been in jail since last year and denies the allegations.

The events have sparked protests and parliament walkouts, and highlighted the apparent impunity enjoyed by the powerful in India's patriarchal society. The court's orders were welcomed by rights activists, with Swati Maliwal of the Delhi Commission of Women tweeting: "The girl would have never got justice in Uttar Pradesh. We will help her fight the case in Delhi." The world's largest democracy has an abysmal record on sexual crime against women, particularly in rural areas where the majority of the 1.3-billion population lives. — AFP

International

North Korea puts 'guided rocket launcher' on show

US-South Korea drills still on despite Pyongyang warnings

SEOUL: North Korea yesterday released heavily pixelated images of its latest weapons test, describing it as a new guided rocket launcher and fuelling concerns that it could be used to target a key US military base in South Korea. Pictures carried by the North's state television showed leader Kim Jong Un supervising Wednesday's launch from what appeared to be a mobile command post, and a silhouette of him watching the weapon rising into the sky.

But in an unusually secretive move, some of the images were heavily pixelated and the official KCNA news agency did not release photos of the test. That suggested Pyongyang had not previously displayed the system at one of its military parades and was trying to hide some of its characteristics.

Following the launch, Seoul on Wednesday said it involved two short-range ballistic missiles that travelled 250 kilometers before coming down in the sea. But KCNA described it as a "newly-developed large-caliber multiple launch guided rocket system". The system would have a "main role in ground military operations", KCNA said, quoting Kim as saying it would cause "inescapable distress" to the forces which became its "fat target". Pyongyang has long possessed the ability to devastate Seoul—which is only around 60 kilometers from the border—with artillery fire.

Pose new threat

Cho Sung-ryul, a researcher at the Institute for National Security Strategy, said a working guided rocket system capable of precision targeting would pose a new threat to specific in-

stallations in the South. The US stations 28,500 troops in South Korea, a security ally, to protect it against its nuclear-armed neighbor, many of them based south of Seoul at Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek—its biggest overseas military facility.

"If it travelled 250 kilometers at an altitude of 30 kilometers, it could reach the US base in Pyeongtaek," Cho added. "I think this is being overlooked since North Korea keeps warning the South." US President Donald Trump—who has repeatedly touted his relationship with Kim—has played down the North's recent launches, saying its rhetoric was targeting Seoul rather than Washington.

Wednesday's test came after two launches which travelled much further last week—one going almost 700 kilometers — that Seoul also said were short-range ballistic missiles, which the North is banned from firing under UN Security Council resolutions. Pyongyang described it as a "solemn warning to the South Korean warmongers", calling for the cancellation of planned joint military drills between Washington and Seoul. But the US and South will press ahead with the exercises, a Pentagon official said.

US-South Korea drills

Meanwhile, the US and South Korea will press ahead with joint military exercises, a Pentagon official said, defying demands from a furious Pyongyang for their cancellation as it carries out a series of weapons tests. North Korea fired what Seoul called two short-range ballistic missiles on Wednesday after two sim-



NORTH KOREA: This screen grab image shows a ballistic missile being launched from an unknown location in North Korea early on July 31. — AFP

ilar launches last week, one of which Pyongyang described as a "solemn warning to the South Korean warmongers" over the planned military drills.

The joint exercises are set to begin on Monday and last for just over two weeks after the US and South Korea scaled them down earlier this year amid a flurry of diplomatic exchanges with

the North. But the military activities on both sides raise questions over the prospects for an imminent start to negotiations on Pyongyang's nuclear arsenal. Washington is Seoul's security ally and stations 28,500 troops in the South against its nuclear-armed neighbor and the annual drills have always enraged Pyongyang, which sees them as a rehearsal for invasion. — Agencies

North Korean soldier defects across DMZ

SEOUL: A North Korean soldier made a river crossing of the Demilitarized Zone that divides the peninsula, Seoul's military said yesterday, in a rare direct defection across the heavily fortified frontier. More than 30,000 North Koreans have escaped to the South since the two were separated by war more than 65 years ago, according to Seoul government data, many of them driven by prolonged economic hardship.

But the vast majority have gone first to the North's neighbor and ally China before making their way to the South, usually via a third country. Only a few have dared to cross the DMZ, which is riddled with landmines and has a heavy military presence on both sides. In November 2017, a North Korean soldier made global headlines when he dashed through the border village of Panmunjom in a hail of gunfire from his own side. The trooper, then 24, was hit several times but survived.

The defection announced yesterday, which took place in the central part of the peninsula, was only the third DMZ crossing since then. The man was spotted by

surveillance equipment late Wednesday in the Imjin river south of the Military Demarcation Line that forms the border in heavy rain and fog, Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. It was not clear whether he was swimming, floating, or walking through the shallow waters as only his head was visible.

He was taken into custody "in accordance with procedures" and questioned, during which he was identified as an "active-duty soldier" and expressed his "desire to defect" to the South, the JCS said. The corpse of a man who was "assumed to be a North Korean soldier" was also discovered Wednesday near the Imjin river, police in the border city of Paju said, but the circumstances of his death could not be determined.

The DMZ is the Cold War's last frontier, separating the nuclear-armed North from the democratic and economically advanced South. In 2012 a North Korean soldier walked unchecked through rows of electrified fencing and surveillance cameras, prompting Seoul to sack three field commanders for the security lapse.

But it is extremely rare for the North's troops to defect at Panmunjom itself, the only place on the frontier where forces from the two sides come face-to-face and a major tourist attraction. Contact between the North and South has been minimal since February, when a second summit between the US and Pyongyang collapsed without an agreement over possible denuclearization and sanctions relief. — AFP

Malaysia lawmaker sorry for proposed 'anti-seduction law'

KUALA LUMPUR: A Malaysian lawmaker apologized yesterday after his proposal for legislation to protect men from being "seduced" by women into committing sex crimes such as rape sparked a storm of criticism. Mohamad Imran Abdul Hamid, a senator from the country's ruling coalition, made the comments during a debate in parliament's upper house Wednesday.

"I propose... a sexual harassment act to protect men from the actions, words and clothing of women, which can cause men to be seduced to the point they can commit acts such as incest, rape, molestation, (watching) pornography," he was cited as saying by local media. "This is important, we (men) need to be protected. The actions, clothing of women can seduce us into breaking the law."

The retired admiral's remarks drew swift criticism from campaigners in the Muslim-majority country and the leader of his own People's Justice Party, Anwar Ibrahim, called on him to retract them. Mohamad Imran apologized and withdrew his proposal: "Although my intention was sincere, I did not expect it to be perceived as a huge mistake that offended many women and men as well." Women's rights campaigner Marina Mahathir was among those criticizing his comments, saying they went "over the line".

"He's giving excuses for men behaving badly," the activist, who is also the daughter of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said. "It just points to the type of toxic environment that women in politics, and in other areas, have to live in." Women's rights group Sisters in Islam tweeted that sex crimes were "despicable", adding that "men must be held accountable if they commit these crimes, regardless of what women wear". It is not the first time the lawmaker has found himself in hot water - in 2015 he was criticized after warning in parliament against athletes dressing in a "sexy" fashion at sports events. — AFP

International

Facebook-backed research sees progress linking minds, machines

Facebook removes profile frame targeting religious minority

SAN FRANCISCO: Facebook-backed researchers have managed to translate brain signals into spoken words, bringing the social network's vision of linking brains and machines closer to reality. A study published this week by University of California-San Francisco scientists showed progress toward a new type of brain-computer interface. The project involved brain implants, but could be a step toward accomplishing the goal with a non-invasive method such as augmented reality glasses with sensors.

"A decade from now, the ability to type directly from our brains may be accepted as a given," Facebook said Tuesday in an online post updating a project announced two years ago. "Not long ago, it sounded like science fiction. Now, it feels within plausible reach." Such a breakthrough could benefit people with paralysis, spinal cord injuries, neurodegenerative diseases or other conditions making them unable to speak, and may also let people control technology such as augmented reality glasses just by thinking, Facebook said.

"It's never too early to start thinking through the important questions that will need to be answered before such a potentially powerful technology should make its way into commercial products," Facebook said. A study published in

Nature Communications detailed how researchers were able to capture brain signals being sent to produce speech and figure out what people were trying to say.

A standard set of questions were asked of the volunteers in the study, with the computer provided context to help figure out answers. "Currently, patients with speech loss due to paralysis are limited to spelling words out very slowly using residual eye movements or muscle twitches to control a computer interface," said UCSF neuroscientist Eddie Chang. "But in many cases, information needed to produce fluent speech is still there in their brains. We just need the technology to allow them to express it."

Augmented minds

The study was funded by Facebook Reality Labs, a research unit at the California-based internet titan focused on technology for augmented and virtual reality experiences. The work is part of "Project Steno" exploring the feasibility of a wearable device that lets people type by imagining themselves talking.

"Our progress shows real potential in how future inputs and interactions with AR glasses could one day look," Facebook vice president of aug-

mented and virtual reality Andrew Bosworth tweeted. Researchers hope to eventually decode 100 words per minute in real time with a 1,000-word vocabulary and an error rate below 17 percent, according to Facebook. Futurist entrepreneur Elon Musk revealed this month his secretive startup is making progress on an interface linking brains with computers, and said testing on people may begin next year.

Religious minority

In another development, Facebook said it has removed a profile frame targeting Pakistan's long-persecuted Ahmadi community as the media giant continues to grapple with the proliferation of hate speech on the social network. Profile frames are filters Facebook users can add to their pictures that often promote a cause, celebrate a holiday, or commemorate an event or tragedy. The frame withdrawn by Facebook called for the death of the Ahmadi in Urdu and was widely shared in Pakistan.

"We have removed the Profile Frames in question for violating our rules, and have ensured that they're unavailable for future use," a Facebook spokesperson told AFP via email. "We do not tolerate any content-including anything shared

within Profile Frames-that incites violence, and we remove this content whenever we become aware of it." The frame was extensively used by Pakistani Facebook users after US President Donald Trump met with several leading members of persecuted religious groups in the White House earlier this month, including a representative from Pakistan's Ahmadi community.

Ahmadis were legally declared non-Muslims in Pakistan decades ago for their belief in a prophet after Mohammed and have long been persecuted and widely hated in the deeply conservative country. Hardline Islamic scholars denounce the Ahmadi as heretics and the group has been the target of violence and threats by leading politicians in Pakistan over the years.

Facebook disabled 2.19 billion accounts in the first quarter of this year, nearly double the number of accounts nixed in the prior three-month period. The social network took down four million posts considered hate speech in the first quarter of this year and continues to invest in technology to better detect such material in various languages and regions. However Facebook has been battered by criticism that it was more focused on growth than protecting users or thwarting deception, bullying, and harassment. — Agencies

Rivals clash with Biden at debate

DETROIT: Democratic frontrunner Joe Biden went on the offensive on Wednesday against his main 2020 opponents, but was rapidly assailed on the debate stage over key issues like health care, race, immigration and criminal justice. Tensions rose rapidly between the former vice president and Senator Kamala Harris, the most prominent African American in the field, as the two reprised their clash from a month earlier at the debut debate.

But while Biden aimed aggressive attacks at Harris and her health care plan, other rivals in the second night of the two-night, 20-candidate debate sought to undercut him on a host of issues. Biden is leading polls for the nod to take on President Donald Trump in 2020, and nearly all of the other nine Democrats on stage attacked him at some point. He found himself in a series of sharp exchanges on the central campaign issue of health care along with his stance on climate change and his past legislative record, in particular his failure to take decisive action against illegal immigration.

When Biden jostled with Harris about her "double talk" on her own modified Medicare for All plan, which he noted would take 10 years to kick in, Harris shot back: "You're simply inaccurate in what you're describing." She said Biden's proposal for gov-



DETROIT: Democratic presidential hopefuls participate in the second round of the second Democratic primary debate of the 2020 presidential campaign season hosted by CNN at the Fox Theatre on Wednesday. — AFP

ernment-backed health insurance for those who want it "leaves out almost 10 million Americans" from coverage.

Biden's advisors had urged him to be more aggressive after his lackluster first debate performance, but the 76-year-old struck a curious opening note on Wednesday. As the debate began, Biden greeted Harris, a 54-year-old former California attorney general, by shaking her hand and saying, "Go easy on me, kid." She did not. Harris renewed the criticism that gave her a viral moment in the first debate by accusing Biden of making light of his work with segregationists in the Senate in the 1970s. "The vice president has still failed to acknowledge that it was wrong to take the position that he took at that time," Harris said.

Rare unity

The squabbling came after deep fault lines between the party's centrist and progressive wings were exposed on the first de-

bate night, which featured leading liberals Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren. In one of the few moments of broad unity onstage Wednesday, several candidates joined Biden in condemning Trump. Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard said the president "is not behaving like a patriot", while Julian Castro, the only Latino in the field, branded Trump an outright "racist".

But much of the night was consumed with clashes between candidates, and progressives were quick to highlight the ideological divide with moderates on multiple fronts. "Middle ground approaches are not enough," said Washington Governor Jay Inslee, who has released a trillion-dollar plan to tackle climate change. "We must confront the fossil fuel industry." New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, in the race's left lane, laid down the gauntlet by saying he was fully prepared to "restructure" the US economy and society. "We will tax the hell out of the wealthy," he boomed. — AFP

Drug lab raids in Myanmar's meth capital met with artillery fire

YANGON: Raids on jungle drug labs have been met with heavy artillery fire, Myanmar narcotics police said yesterday, in an area riddled with armed groups accused of pumping out much of the world's methamphetamine. Myanmar is under increasingly intense pressure from its neighbors to close down the meth labs festooning lawless parts of Shan State, the heart of the notorious "Golden Triangle".

A major crackdown kicked off last month in Kutkai township, northern Shan, the army has said, where an entwined network of drug lords, ethnic rebel groups and security forces are accused of running a shadow drug economy worth billions of dollars. Huge stockpiles of chemicals as well as millions of dollars of ice - the highly addictive crystallized form of meth - were seized in one raid on homespun labs buried deep in the jungle. "The crackdown is ongoing," a senior police officer from the anti-drugs squad told AFP, requesting anonymity.

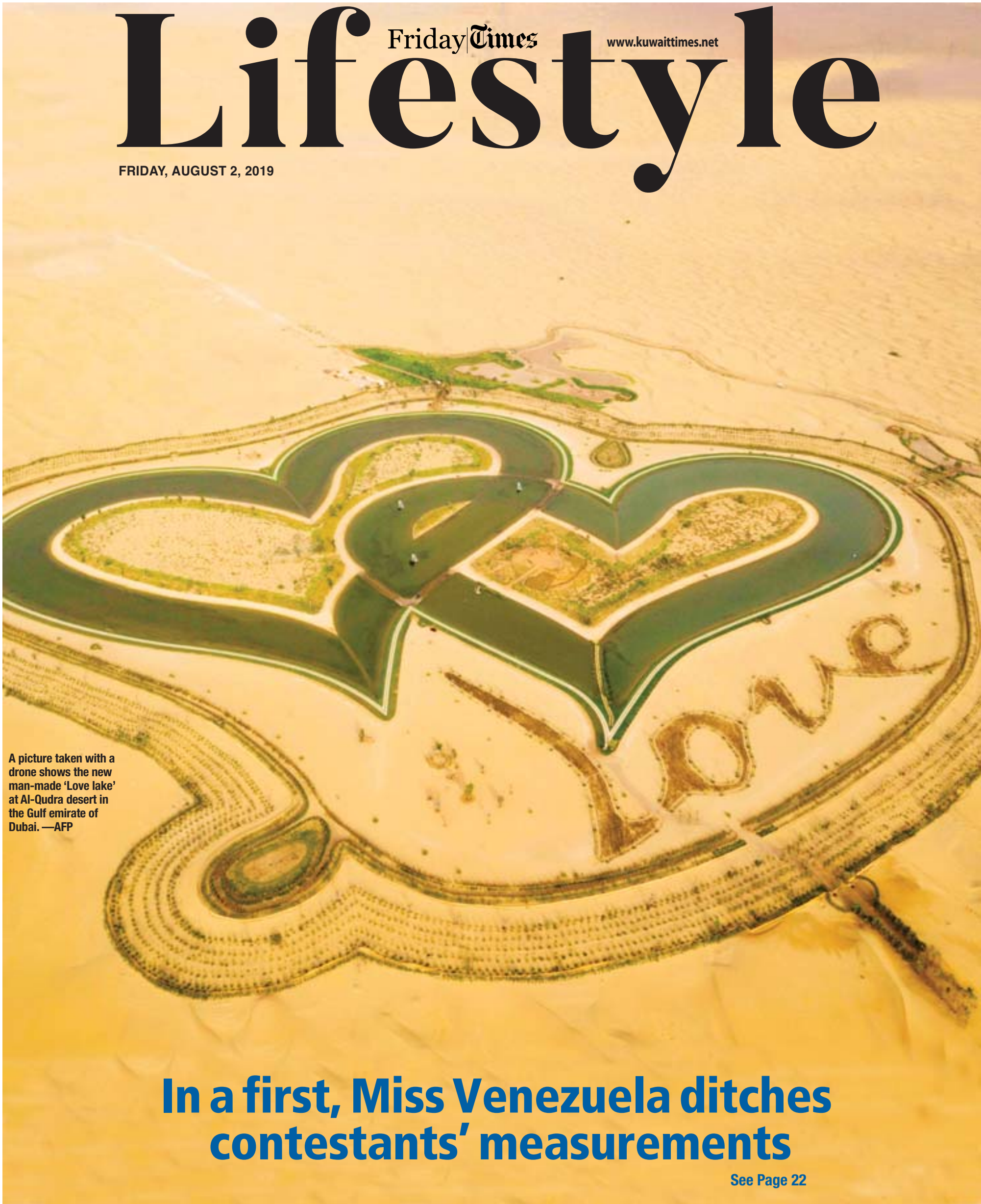
The army and drug police initially conducted raids in the area on July 21 but were repelled by "heavy artillery" at the site, the officer said. They returned several days later, busting a massive production site of nearly 100 huts. Police seized 750 kilograms (1,650 pounds) of ice worth an estimated \$10.5 million along with 9,000 yaba pills - caffeine-laced meth tablets - the army said. They also found thousands of acid barrels and bottles, stoves, fridges, power generators and tea bags, which are often used to disguise drugs for smuggling. — AFP

Lifestyle

Friday Times

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2019



A picture taken with a drone shows the new man-made 'Love lake' at Al-Qudra desert in the Gulf emirate of Dubai. —AFP

In a first, Miss Venezuela ditches contestants' measurements

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Lifestyle | Gossip

Blink-182 EP to feature Williams and Lil Uzi Vert

Blink-182's new EP will feature Pharrell Williams and Lil Uzi Vert. The chart-topping band - which features Mark Hoppus, Travis Barker, and Matt Skiba - will release their album 'Nine' in September but they are also planning an EP next year. Mark told Alt105.7: "That is the plan - we have a lot of stuff that we didn't put on the record that we kind of set aside for an EP after the album comes out. "It's some collaborations - we did a track with Pharrell and Lil Uzi Vert, and we have some other stuff in the works as well that we're planning on putting out." The band have not released an album since 'California' in 2016, but Mark insists their new music will be much more fre-

quent. He said: "The whole idea with Blink now is to keep writing, keep recording, keep putting out music - I think that it's really exciting to live in this age where you can kind of record and release music very easily." Travis previously insisted that their new record will have the same "vibe" as their 2003 self-titled debut, in that "anything goes". He said: "It's kind of anything goes. "It's the same vibe that was going on when we did [2003 eponymous album] self-titled. "Literally, anything goes. "I think we're creating one of the most important Blink albums. I'm really proud of it."



Lewis Capaldi wants Dolly Parton collaboration

Lewis Capaldi wants to collaborate with Shawn Mendes and Dolly Parton. The 22-year-old singer/songwriter admitted he would be open to working with Shawn because the 'If I Can't Have You' hitmaker is so successful but Dolly, 73, is his dream duet partner. Speaking to Jason King and Kelly Brook on Heart Breakfast, he said: "Of course I'd work with Shawn. Not only because he makes hits and I would love the money. I'd love to sing a song with Dolly Parton. "Yeah I'd love to do a sing with Dolly Parton. And plus like Lil Nas had Billy Ray Cyrus and I could do Dolly Parton." Lewis also explained that Shawn, 20, started following him on Instagram after Lewis revealed he carries a shirtless picture of Shawn in his wallet. He said: "Shawn

Mendes followed me on Instagram yesterday. Was it yesterday or the day before? Basically I did as thing, it was like a 'what's in my bag' sort of thing on YouTube. And one of the things that I pulled out was my wallet and I said 'I can't go anywhere without my wallet' and I pulled out my wallet - a big picture of Shawn Mendes in his pants. And I was like 'I can't go anywhere without this'. And when I pull it out I go 'I wanna follow where she goes'. And yeah, then they asked me 'have you ever met Shawn?' and I say 'no and I don't think I will after me doing this'. But no he followed me and he reposted it and was laughing away!" Tune in to Heart Breakfast weekdays from 06:30 - 10:00.

Wilson says TV career saved Kaiser Chiefs

Ricky Wilson thinks his TV career saved The Kaiser Chiefs. The 41-year-old musician signed up as a coach on the TV talent show The Voice in 2013 and although he was accused of selling out, Ricky believes it was a healthy thing to do for the sake of his band's future. He told BBC.com: "I thoroughly enjoy going on TV and stringing sentences together and sitting on a sofa next to Giles Brandreth. "There's a lot of people who don't like doing that, who think it gets in the way of the music. But if other bands had someone like me in them, they'd do a lot better." The band have just released their seventh album 'Duck' and Ricky admitted that in the past he has struggled to come up with melodies for their tunes. He said: "It's a lot of pressure. There've been a few in the past where the band think it's the best thing they've ever done and I'm like, 'I've got nothing.'" Ricky has been more

honest than ever on the latest album, admitting on the track 'Golden Oldies' that buying a puppy made him unsure if he will ever become a father. He said: "The puppy's now three-and-a-half but I still haven't got an answer. I'm thinking about children more and more but "I find it quite uncomfortable talking about it, because I just don't know. "But then, that's what the song's about... And the great thing about being in a band is you can write songs and it might help you answer those questions." He also shares his thoughts on ageing in the track 'The Battle For Seattle', referencing two of Seattle's most famous characters. He explained: "When I was a teenager, I thought I was Kurt Cobain, but then you get old and you see, no, you're Frasier Crane. "You are just desperate to settle down. So desperate that it'll never happen."



Lifestyle | Gossip



Corey Taylor: Slipknot scavenged for food during first tour

Corey Taylor says Slipknot used to go “scavenging for food” when they first started touring. The heavy metal band’s frontman recalls the ‘Wait and Bleed’ hitmakers’ first-ever run in 1999, when they played Ozzfest, and admitted they lived off “cans of tuna fish” and fish-shaped cheese crackers. He said: “I can remember waking up every morning and scavenging for food. ‘We lived off of cans of tuna fish and a giant bag of goldfish crackers that someone had just left in our bus. ‘I mean, it was the size of a pillow - so we lived off of that for about a month.’ Corey insists the group “didn’t care” about the tiredness and full-on schedule that goes with touring, because they were so focused on making it big in the industry. He said: “We didn’t care about being tired. We didn’t care about the travel, we didn’t care about anything other than doing it. ‘We had waited our whole lives for this shot and when the opportunity came, we knew that it didn’t stop with that. We

had to earn it all, and that’s still the way it is to this day.” And Corey insists Slipknot’s attitude to touring is no different today, which makes him feel “proud”. Speaking on Full Metal Jackie’s radio show, he added: “The work ethic, basically is still there. None of us are as young as we used to be. “That work ethic will always be the same, as long as this band is this band. That’s something I’m very proud of.” Slipknot will drop their sixth studio album, ‘We Are Not Your Kind’, on August 9th, and Corey recently admitted it contains some of the “darkest writing” he has done in years. He said: “It’s very dark. It’s some of the darkest writing I’ve done in years. “In the Slipknot index, this album would sit somewhere between [2001 second album] ‘Iowa’ and [2004 third album] ‘Vol. 3: (The Subliminal Verses)’. “Lyrically, it has the force of ‘Iowa’, but musically it has the heaviness but the experimentation as well. “It was very important for us to go somewhere crazy and make something insane.”

John by quitting touring the world, as getting on stage each night still brings him so much joy. However, the ‘Come On To Me’ hitmaker previously admitted he did contemplate calling it a day in 2007, when he was 65. That year, Macca completed just a mini six-date tour of intimate shows in the US and Europe to promote the release of the ‘Memory Almost Full’ album. Asked if the thought has ever crossed his mind, he said: “Inevitably you do, I mean, I had those thoughts at 65. “Which is a while ago. ‘Cos 65 is the retirement age. In my world, in the working class.” When reminded that it has been pushed back to 66 now, he added: “Oh they moved it? Hey, they can move it as far as they like, I don’t mind. ‘Cos my work is play. Seems to be working OK.” The ‘Hey Jude’ hitmaker released his 17th solo album, ‘Egypt Station’, in September - his first album in five years, following 2013’s ‘New’ - and he wrapped his ‘Freshen Up’ world tour earlier this month.



Paul McCartney

can’t remember how to play every Beatles song

Sir Paul McCartney has admitted he doesn’t remember how to play all of The Beatles’ songs. The 77-year-old music legend puts a lot of time into re-learning their back catalog, because there is so much material he’s penned over the years that he’s forgotten some of the notes. McCartney is quoted by the Daily Mirror newspaper as saying: “I have to re-learn everything. “I’ve written an awful lot, you can’t retain them all. “We go in rehearsal and I’m, ‘Oh yeah, that’s how it goes.’” The ‘Let it Be’ hitmaker even surprises himself at how “clever” he was with their songs. Asked if he thinks their music is “pretty good”, he replied: “I do, I really do. “Some of the old songs you say, ‘Oh, that’s clever, I wouldn’t have done that.’ “It’s exciting to think that still works. “We were a little rock and roll group from Liverpool, it just kept going.” Despite forgetting the odd notes and chords, McCartney isn’t going to retire anytime soon. The ‘FourFiveSeconds’ hitmaker is currently writing a children’s book, which is being published in September, and is working on a stage version of the musical ‘It’s A Wonderful Life’. And he will “hopefully” be working on another record. He said: “Writing music is still a thrill - out of nowhere you produce a rabbit. If you get one you like it’s a great feeling.” The music legend has no plans to follow in the footsteps of Sir Elton

Wilson set to return to road after mental health struggle



Brian Wilson is returning to the road after struggling with his mental health. The Beach Boys legend was due to head out on the ‘Pet Sounds’ and ‘Greatest Hits Live’ tours in June, but he postponed the dates because he needed to take some time off to work on his issues. However, he has now confirmed that he is feeling “much better” and will begin the rescheduled shows on August 7 in New York. In a post on Facebook, he said: “Thank you to everyone for your cards and best wishes. “Your concern and love just blows me away. “I’m feeling much better and I look forward to seeing you when we start up our tour on August 7!” The ‘Good Vibrations’ hitmaker had penned an emotional letter to fans and admitted he had been “struggling with stuff in my head and saying things I don’t mean”. He wrote: “I had every intention to do these shows and was excited to get back to performing. I’ve been in the studio recording and rehearsing with my band and have been feeling better. But then it crept back and I’ve been struggling with stuff in my head and saying things I don’t mean and I don’t know why. Its something I’ve never dealt with before and we can’t quite figure it out just yet.” Brian has been open with his battle with mental illness for “many decades”, and said that although he’s still able to live a “wonderful, healthy life”, it wasn’t “good for [him] to be on the road” at the time. He added: “It is no secret that I have been living with mental illness for many decades,” he wrote. “There were times when it was unbearable but with doctors and medications I have been able to live a wonderful, healthy and productive life with support from my family, friends and fans who have helped me through this journey.” The 77-year-old musician previously postponed his tour last year to have surgery on his back, and said in his recent update that while he feels physically stronger than ever, he’s been left “mentally insecure”. Writing on his website, he explained: “As you may know in the last year or so I’ve had 3 surgeries on my back. The surgeries were successful and i’m physically stronger than i’ve been in a long time. “However, after my last surgery i started feeling strange and it’s been pretty scary for awhile. I was not feeling like myself. Mentally insecure is how I’d describe it. We’re not sure what is causing it but i do know that it’s not good for me to be on the road right now so I’m heading back to Los Angeles.” Brian’s full reschedule tour dates can be found by visiting brianwilson.com/tour



Hosts of the event and contestants pose during a 2019 Miss Venezuela beauty contest rehearsal in Caracas, Venezuela. — AFP photos



Venezuela's Zulia state contestant Melissa Jimenez poses during a 2019 Miss Venezuela beauty contest rehearsal in Caracas.

In a first, Miss Venezuela ditches contestants' measurements

For the first time in its history, the Miss Venezuela contest will not publish the 24 contestants' waist, bust and hip measurements, organizers said—as pageants face criticism for their primary focus on physical appearance. The event has been running since 1952 and has an enviable record on the international stage, having produced seven Miss Universe winners and six in Miss World. Traditionally, the contestants' vital statistics have been publicized—with a 90-centimeter (36-inch) bust, 60-centimeter waist and 90-centimeter hips long considered the ideal.

This year, contestants will still parade on stage in swimsuits and evening gowns, but organizers say they want to fight stereotypes about what an ideal woman looks like and hence will not reveal their measurements. “A

woman's beauty isn't 90, 60, 90 ... It is measured by each one's talent,” said Gabriela Isler, the pageant's spokeswoman and Venezuela's last Miss Universe winner in 2013.

At past pageants, presenters would tell the audience the exact size of each contestant, many of whom underwent cosmetic surgery and followed strict diets in a bid to achieve the supposedly ideal physique. Miss Venezuela is normally big business in the crisis-wracked Latin American country, but it is suffering from the same difficulties as the rest of the population. One of those is frequent blackouts, the latest of which hit the country on July 22. Isler revealed that the pageant did not have enough money to put in place contingency measures in case of a power outage. — AFP



Venezuela's Delta Amacuro state contestant Thalia Olvino walks the catwalk during a 2019 Miss Venezuela beauty contest rehearsal.



Contestants walk the catwalk during a 2019 Miss Venezuela beauty contest rehearsal, in Caracas, Venezuela.



Contestants pose for pictures during a rehearsal for 2019 Miss Venezuela beauty contest, in Caracas, Venezuela.

Troubled Woodstock 50 celebration officially canceled

A festival to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Woodstock with a star-studded blow-out has officially been canceled, organizers said Wednesday, nailing shut the coffin on an event long plagued by permit and financial woes. After it could not secure a site in upstate New York, where the original Woodstock took place, organizers had vowed the show would go on at the Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, Maryland northeast of the US capitol.

But that move saw artists including Jay-Z and Miley Cyrus, along with veterans of the 1969 festival like Santana, begin backing out of the August 16-18 weekend. "We are saddened that a series of unforeseen setbacks has made it impossible to put on the Festival we imagined with the great line-up we had booked and the social engagement we were anticipating," said Michael Lang, a promoter and co-founder of the first Woodstock.

"We released all the talent so any involvement on their part would be voluntary. Due to conflicting radius issues in the DC area many acts were unable to participate and others passed for their own reasons," he said, encouraging artists and agents "who have been fully paid" to donate 10 percent of their fees to causes "in the spirit of peace." Much of the music world had already given up on the prospect of the anniversary blast, as the festival's producers ran into a number of financial battles and rejection by multiple venues in upstate New York.

A separate celebration not connected to Woodstock 50 is planned for the same weekend at the original site, now operated by the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts. There performances by Ringo Starr, Santana and Fogerty will commemorate the weekend of peace, love and music that saw hundreds of thousands descend on a dairy farm to see Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and others play in the pouring rain. "My thoughts turn to Bethel and its celebration of our 50th Anniversary to reinforce the values of compassion, human dignity, and the beauty of our differences embraced by Woodstock," Lang said. — AFP



Broadway icon **Harold Prince** dead at 91

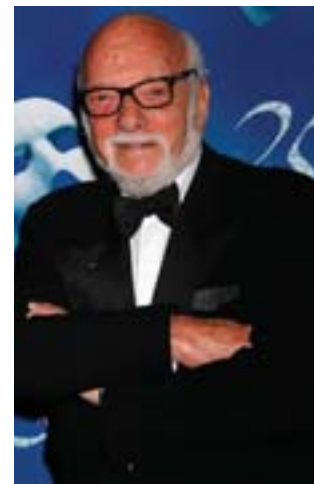
Broadway director and producer Harold Prince—who brought some of the most successful musicals ever to the stage including "The Phantom of the Opera" and won a record 21 Tony awards—died Wednesday after a short illness. He was 91. Tributes poured in for Prince, whose glittering career lasted more than 60 years and featured several hit collaborations with fellow musical theater royalty Stephen Sondheim ("Company" and "Sweeney Todd") and Andrew Lloyd Webber ("Phantom" and "Evita"). Lloyd Webber described him as "the prince of musicals." "This wonderful man taught me so much and his mastery of musical theater was without equal," the British composer wrote on Twitter.

Prince—called "Hal" by those close to him—passed away in Reykjavik, Iceland, his publicist said in a statement emailed to AFP. He leaves behind his wife of 56 years, Judy; a son and a daughter, and three grandchildren. "As per his wishes, there will be no funeral but there will be a celebration of his life this fall with the people he loved most, the members of the theatrical community that he was a part of for seven decades," the spokesman said.

Prince was born in New York on January 30, 1928, getting his first foot through the theater door as an assistant to producer-director

George Abbott in the late 1940s and early 1950s. He shot to fame as a co-producer of Abbott's "The Pajama Game," which won the 1955 Tony for best musical. Prince enjoyed further success with "Cabaret" in 1966 before starting a long and fruitful partnership with Sondheim, which brought a string of accolades. Their 1970 comedy "Company" won six Tony awards, including best musical. "Follies," which opened the following year, went one better, picking up seven Tonys. "A Little Night Music" (1973) and "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street" (1979) both won Tonys for best musical. The latter also collected an Olivier Award for Best New Musical.

Prince directed Lloyd Webber's hit musicals "Evita" (1978 in London's West End) and "The Phantom of the Opera," which opened in London in 1986 and went on to become the longest-running show in Broadway history. He received a special Tony Award for lifetime achievement in 2006. "I am saddened beyond words," said actress-dancer Chita Rivera, who starred in the Prince-directed London and Broadway productions of "Kiss of the Spider Woman." "There are some people you feel we will never be without. Hal is one of them. I owe so much to him. He knows my love for him." — AFP



In this file photo taken on January 25, 2013 Harold Prince attends "The Phantom Of The Opera" Broadway 25th Anniversary at Majestic Theatre in New York. — AFP

Hamilton wants to edit himself out of Netflix series

Lewis Hamilton has said he will not let Netflix use film of his travails while feeling sick at last weekend's German Grand Prix to be used in their second 'Drive to Survive' Formula One series. The defending five-time world champion, who had a sore throat, secured pole position, but endured an error-riddled race. In a tempestuous rain-hit event he finished 11th before being elevated to ninth when both Alfa Romeo cars were given time penalties for a technical infringement.

"I won't be in the Netflix show much, because I was sick the whole time," said Hamilton, as quoted by GPFans on Wednesday. "I won't allow them to release that." Netflix, who were barred from filming behind-the-scenes at Mercedes in 2018, were granted access for one race this year and chose the team's home German Grand Prix. The weekend began with celebrations and anniversaries, but ended in a bruising defeat. "We have given the Netflix guys more content than on any other weekend," said rueful team boss Toto Wolff who preferred to look ahead to this week's Hungarian Grand Prix.

"I believe that one of the core strengths of our team is the way we handle defeat," he said. "We accept responsibility for mistakes so we can learn and improve and we will come back stronger from this." Hamilton has said he wants to return feeling physically fit and competitive for one of his favorite races where he will be seeking a record-extending seventh victory. He leads this year's drivers' championship by 41 points ahead of his Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas. He won last year's Hungarian race from pole position. — AFP



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton reacts after the qualifying session of the German Formula One Grand Prix at the Hockenheim racing circuit on July 27, 2019 in Hockenheim, southern Germany. — AFP



Japanese breakdancer Shigeyuki Nakarai performs breakdancing at Odaiba by Tokyo Bay.



Japanese breakdancer Issei Hori performs during a training session in Tokyo. — AFP photos

Sultans of spin: The Japanese breakdancers busting Olympic moves



Japanese breakdancer Shigeyuki Nakarai performs breakdancing at Odaiba in Tokyo Bay.

For Japanese breakdancer Shigeyuki Nakarai, the prospect of winning a gold medal at the 2024 Paris Olympics has become something of an obsession. The proposal by Paris organizers in February to include the street dance lit a fire under the 17-year-old, aka Shigekix, who took bronze at last year's Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires. "I still have a lot of regrets at failing to win gold," he told AFP after showing off some crazy-legs breaking moves in the shadow of Tokyo Bay's Rainbow Bridge. "I've thought about that night every day since," added the snake-hipped b-boy from Osaka, dressed in blue jeans and a baggy white T-shirt.

"But my time will come—at the 2024 Olympics I'll be trying to turn this frustration into positive energy." The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has voted to approve the addition of

breakdancing, which grew up alongside hip hop in the South Bronx of New York in the 1970s. The decision still has to be rubber-stamped at the IOC's executive commission in December next year, but after accepting hipster sports skateboarding and surfing into the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, it's widely seen as a done deal. Arguably Japan's best Olympic hope, Shigekix has unfinished business.

In his sights is Russian foe Sergei Chernyshev, known as Bumblebee, who beat him in their semi-final in Argentina, where breakdancing made its Youth Olympic debut. "Our rivalry fuels me," said the floppy-fringed breaker. "In a face-to-face battle the plan is to knock your opponent out." He added: "But breakdancing is also like a game of poker—you have to calculate the level of risk you need to take to get the win."



Japanese breakdancer Issei Hori performs during a training session in Tokyo.



Japanese breakdancer Ami Yuasa performing a breakdancing technique in front of graffiti in Tokyo.

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Japanese breakdancer Issei Hori performs during a training session in Tokyo.



Japanese breakdancer Shigeyuki Nakarai performs a breakdancing technique at Odaiba by Tokyo Bay.

'Wild Style'

Japan caught breakdancing fever following the release of the 1983 hip hop movie "Wild Style"-featuring cultural icons such as DJ Grandmaster Flash and breaking group Rock Steady Crew. Hollywood hit "Flashdance", which appeared soon after, also depicted scenes of moonwalking street dancers, further popularizing the urban craze among Japanese youth. "Breakdancing is a mix of acrobatics, dancing and gymnastics," explains Issei Hori, who became Japan's first winner of the Red Bull BC One World Finals-and de facto world champion-in 2016. "For me it's a culture, a lifestyle, it's all I do. When I was small it blew me away seeing people spinning on their heads. I wanted to be just like them."

The 22-year-old, born in Fukuoka, southern Japan, started breakdancing in kindergarten and used to clash with his parents for skipping school to dance. "When I'm in the zone, it feels like the whole venue belongs to me," said Issei. "All I'm thinking about is kicking my opponent's butt." Known for his dynamic power moves and sinew-stretching freezes, Issei admits he was surprised when he heard breakdancing could become an Olympic sport. "People can criticize the decision to bring hip hop culture into the Olympics if they want to, but bring it on," he said. "I would love to win that first gold medal." Fellow Red Bull member Ami Yuasa last year became the first female world champion at the sports marketing giant's inaugural B-Girl World Finals in Zurich.

Scrapes and bruises

But it could have been so different for the pint-sized dancer, who had wanted to be a ballerina after being seduced by the tiaras and frilly tutus. Instead she followed her elder sister into breakdancing at elementary school. "I used to get a lot of scrapes and bruises," said the 20-year-old, who goes by her first name. "You can pull your hair out too-but if I start going bald, I'll quit!" Ami says breakdancing is a good fit for the Olympics, noting that points-based sports such as figure skating and synchronized swimming have long been accepted. "I used to think of dance more as a form of individual expression, like art or photography," she said after showcasing an array of lung-bursting windmill spins at a Tokyo studio.

"It's amazing to think it could become an Olympic sport. If I get the chance to compete for the gold medal, I'll go for it." A hundred years after British runners Harold Abrahams and Eric Liddell inspired the movie "Chariots of Fire" at the 1924 Paris Olympics, the Games look set for a modern-day makeover with Japan's breakdancers hoping to make history. "For something born out of gang rivalry to be accepted as an Olympic sport is a great chance for breakdancing to endure as a culture," said Shigekix. "Every day for the next five years I'll be working hard to reach my peak for the 2024 Paris Olympics. It's the biggest goal in my life." — AFP



Japanese breakdancer Ami Yuasa poses in front of graffiti in Tokyo.



Japanese breakdancer Ami Yuasa poses in front of graffiti in Tokyo.



Japanese breakdancer Ami Yuasa poses in front of graffiti in Tokyo.

A summer tomato gratin with bright flavor and no mush



BEST SUMMER TOMATO GRATIN

A summer tomato gratin should burst with concentrated, bright tomato flavor and contrasting firm texture from the bread, but most recipes lead to mushy results. Not this one. Starting our gratin on the stovetop initiated the breakdown of the tomatoes, drove off some moisture that would otherwise have sogged out the bread, and shortened the overall cooking time. We finished the dish in the dry, even heat of the oven.

Toasting large cubes of a crusty artisan-style baguette ensured that the bread didn't get too soggy once combined with the tomatoes. After toasting the bread, we added the coarsely chopped tomatoes as well as garlic, a small amount of sugar, and salt and pepper. Just before moving the skillet to the oven, we folded in most of the toasted bread and scattered the remainder over the top along with some Parmesan to create a crusty, savory topping that contrasted with the custardy interior.

A scattering of fresh basil provided color and bright flavor. The success of this recipe depends on using ripe, in-season tomatoes. Do not use plum tomatoes, which contain less juice than regular round tomatoes and will result in a dry gratin. You can serve the gratin hot, warm, or at room temperature. You will need a 12-inch oven-safe skillet for this recipe.

BEST SUMMER TOMATO GRATIN

Ingredients

Servings: 6-8

Start to finish: 1 hour, 15 minutes

6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
6 ounces crusty baguette, cut into 3/4 inch pieces (4 cups)
3 garlic cloves, sliced thin
3 pounds ripe tomatoes, cored and cut into 3/4 inch pieces
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon pepper
1 1/2 ounces Parmesan cheese, grated (3/4 cup)
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

Preparation

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 F. Heat 1/4 cup oil in 12-inch oven-safe skillet over medium-low heat until shimmering. Add bread and stir to coat. Cook, stirring constantly, until bread is browned and toasted, about 5 minutes; transfer to bowl. Cook remaining 2 tablespoons oil and garlic in now-empty skillet over low heat, stirring constantly, until garlic is golden at edges, 30 to 60 seconds. Stir

in tomatoes, sugar, salt, and pepper. Increase heat to medium-high and cook, stirring occasionally, until tomatoes have started to break down and have released enough juice to be mostly submerged, 8 to 10 minutes.

Off heat, gently stir in 3 cups bread until completely moistened and evenly distributed. Using spatula, press down on bread until completely submerged. Arrange remaining 1 cup bread evenly over surface, pressing to partially submerge. Sprinkle evenly with Parmesan. Transfer skillet to oven and bake until top of gratin is deeply browned, tomatoes are bubbling, and juice has reduced, 40 to 45 minutes. After 30 minutes, run spatula around edge of skillet to loosen crust and release any juice underneath. (Gratin will appear loose and jiggle around outer edges but will thicken as it cools.) Remove skillet from oven and let sit for 15 minutes. Sprinkle with basil and serve.

Nutrition information per serving: 301 calories; 148 calories from fat; 16 g fat (3 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 6 mg cholesterol; 740 mg sodium; 31 g carbohydrate; 4 g fiber; 7 g sugar; 8 g protein.

How to make a moist, chunky shrimp burger without the mush

A good shrimp burger should be first and foremost about the shrimp. Unfortunately, many shrimp burgers are more reminiscent of fish-flavored rubber patties or over-seasoned bread balls than shrimp. We set out to develop a recipe for our ideal shrimp burger: moist, chunky yet still cohesive, and with seasoning that complements the sweet shrimp flavor but doesn't overpower it.

After early testing we decided we needed a combination of finely chopped shrimp to help bind the burgers, as well as some larger, bite-size chunks. We achieved this texture with help from the food processor. We wanted to use as little binder as possible, to avoid the soggy, mushy results we'd seen in other shrimp burgers that frequently used a combination of mayonnaise, egg, and bread crumbs. We kept the mayonnaise for the much-needed moisture and fat it added but left out the egg and decreased the bread crumbs. Some minced scallion and parsley, lemon zest, and a touch of cayenne pepper rounded out the flavor of our burgers.

GRILLED SOUTHERN SHRIMP BURGERS

Ingredients

Servings: 4

Start to finish: 1 hour, 15 minutes

Chef's Note: Be sure to use raw, not cooked, shrimp here. Dry the shrimp thoroughly before processing, or the burgers will be mushy. Handle the burgers gently when shaping and grilling; if overhandled while being shaped, the burgers will be dense and rubbery, and if handled roughly during cooking, they will break apart.

1 slice hearty white sandwich bread, torn into large pieces

1/4 cup mayonnaise

2 scallions, minced

2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley

2 teaspoons grated lemon zest

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon pepper

Pinch cayenne pepper

1 1/2 pounds extra-large shrimp (21 to 25 per pound), peeled, deveined, and patted dry

Vegetable oil

Preparation

Pulse bread in food processor to coarse crumbs, about 10 pulses. Transfer to small bowl. Do not clean food processor. Combine mayonnaise, scallions, parsley, lemon zest, salt, pepper, and cayenne in large bowl until uniform. Pulse shrimp in now-empty food processor until some pieces are finely minced and others are coarsely chopped, about 7 pulses. Add shrimp to mayonnaise mixture and gently fold until just combined. Sprinkle bread crumbs over mixture and gently fold until incorporated. Scrape shrimp mixture onto small baking sheet, divide into 4 equal portions, and loosely pack each into 1-inch-thick patty. Cover and refrigerate patties for at least 30 minutes or up to 3 hours.

• For a charcoal grill: Open bottom vent completely. Light large chimney starter three-quarters filled with charcoal briquettes (4 1/2 quarts). When top coals are partially covered with ash, pour evenly over grill. Set



GRILLED SOUTHERN SHRIMP BURGERS

cooking grate in place, cover, and open lid vent completely. Heat grill until hot, about 5 minutes.

• For a gas grill: Turn all burners to high, cover, and heat grill until hot, about 15 minutes. Turn all burners to medium-high.

Clean and oil cooking grate. Lightly brush tops of burgers with oil, lay them on grill, oiled side down, and lightly brush other side with oil. Cook burgers, without pressing on them, until lightly browned and cooked through, 10 to

14 minutes, flipping them halfway through grilling. Transfer burgers to platter, tent with aluminum foil, and let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrition information per serving: 300 calories; 171 calories from fat; 19 g fat (3 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 220 mg cholesterol; 1236 mg sodium; 7 g carbohydrate; 1 g fiber; 1 g sugar; 24 g protein.



Must see museums to put on your bucket list

The foliage-clad, brightly coloured exterior of the Ghibli Museum in Tokyo.



Schoolchildren examine an old tram carriage in the Hong Kong Museum of History.

Ghibli Museum (Tokyo)

Nestled in Inokashira Park, the Ghibli Museum is enchanting for kids and adults alike. Here, Hayao Miyazaki's cinematic visions come to life - characters from Studio Ghibli films line stained glass windows and frescoes, and original artwork is on display. You can explore spiral staircases, passages and hidden doorways to your heart's delight, while kids can climb aboard the furry cat bus and discover the robot in a lush rooftop garden. Tickets also grant access to a short Ghibli film, exclusive to the museum, in a gorgeous in-house cinema.

Top tip: Book in advance; this place is no secret!

Lousiana (Humbleak, Denmark)

Lousiana's collection of modern art is so incredible it's almost intimidating. Luckily, even visitors who don't know much about - or care for - contemporary works can get something out of a visit. The glass-heavy modernist building allows art and nature to blend together.

Top tip: On a clear day, pack a lunch and sit on the water's edge, looking across to neighbouring Sweden (while saving yourself a few kroner).

Hong Kong Museum of History

This excellent (and free) museum does away with tedious displays of out-of-context artifacts, and has you literally wandering through the fascinating history of Hong Kong. You'll stroll through the city's recreated streets from 1881, board an early 20th-century tram and learn about HK's troubled World War II occupation. It's an engaging overview of this incredible city from its founding to the Handover.

Top tip: As a reward for all that culture-vulturing, check



The Little Museum of Dublin occupies a lovely Georgian townhouse.

out nearby bar Lee Family Chicken where meat and beer are the perfect restorative.

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (Boston)

Walking around Isabella Stewart Gardner's former home, you can't help but be gobsmacked by both her exquisite taste and her thorough pillaging of world art. Works by Botticelli, da Vinci and Titian, to name but a few, vie for space, while priceless statues from ancient Greece and Rome are casually strewn across the magnificent courtyard.

Top tip: Get there early on a weekday to wander in peace.

Little Museum of Dublin

The Little Museum of Dublin tells the story of the Irish capital in a quirky, relatable way. Set in a Georgian townhouse location, it takes you through history from Alfie Byrne (former Dublin Lord Mayor and the city's most popular politician of the 20th century) to U2.

Top tip: Guided tours are run by locals with a passion for the city. Book quickly as they sell out.

Speculum Alchemiae (Prague)

This museum of alchemy is intimate but intricate, focusing on a little slice of history that can be devoured and enjoyed in under an hour. A genuine alchemist's lab, it was only discovered in 2002 and sheds light on Prague's history of occultism. Explore secret tunnels full of curios, including labs where alchemists worked futilely to create gold.

Top tip: Don't confuse it with the Museum of Alchemists and Magicians of Old Prague across the river. This one is

tucked away in the Jewish Quarter.

Islamic Arts Museum (Kuala Lumpur)

Enter the Islamic Arts Museum and be fascinated by the incredible scholarship, innovation, exploration, creativity and mashup of styles between indigenous cultures and the Islamic world. It's hard not to fall in love with the beautiful mathematical designs, the architecture, and the storytelling here.

Top tip: Stay for lunch at the tasty Middle Eastern restaurant on-site.

Horniman Museum (London)

The Horniman is the astonishing collection of tea merchant John Horniman, housed in a lovely art-nouveau building. It's worth a trip to just to see the 100-year-old overstuffed walrus that takes centre stage (it even has its own Twitter account). It's surrounded by ageing cabinets that contain all sorts of questionable taxidermy specimens; elsewhere there's art and musical instruments from all over the world.

Top tip: Outside in the surrounding farm and gardens, visit real-life animals that have escaped being stuffed, and enjoy a breathtaking view of the London skyline.

DDR Museum (Berlin)

The DDR Museum is ideal for anyone wanting a hands-on experience of history. Drive a simulated route in a Trabant (East German car), take a seat in a typical DDR tower-block flat, rummage through a collection of books and tapes, and fiddle around with digital displays; all to get a feel for life in former East Germany under the Stasi regime, a sector of the government that kept its citizens cut off from the rest of the world.



The intricate dome of the Islamic Arts Museum in Kuala Lumpur.



A recreated single-room apartment in the DDR Museum, Berlin

Top tip: For more history, cross the river to visit the Cathedral Museum in the spectacular Berliner Dom.

California Academy of Sciences (San Francisco)

This fun, interactive place bills itself as the world's only aquarium-planetarium-rainforest-living museum. The albino alligator is particularly memorable, as is the 'living roof' of wildflowers, earthquake simulator, and the opportunity to climb into the canopy of a rainforest.

Top tip: The museum offers 'nightlife' tickets so you can explore the exhibits with a cocktail in your hand.

Garden Museum (London)

The Garden Museum is a hidden oasis. Housed in a Victorian church, visitors journey through exhibitions focusing on quirky gardening histories, alongside contemporary artworks. The best bit is the tranquil, leafy courtyard - grab a deckchair and forget you're in the heart of London.

Top tip: Don't miss venturing up the winding medieval tower that rewards with panoramic views of Victoria Gardens and the Houses of Parliament.

Palais de Tokyo (Paris)

Paris has a reputation for having a somewhat fusty, traditional art scene compared to New York, Berlin and London, but Palais de Tokyo is one of the city's major risk-takers. As a contemporary art museum, it's less commercial than most places in Paris. Whether you truly understand what you see or not, whatever's on display will put your imagination to work.

Top tip: Museum cafe The Readymade is a popular workspace with locals, so bring your laptop if you want to catch up on emails in one of the trendiest places in Paris.

National September 11 Memorial Museum (New York City)

The National September 11 Memorial Museum, on the site of the World Trade Center, is an interactive experience that pays tribute to the 2,977 people killed in the 2001 terror attacks. The victims' stories are central to this poignant and powerful memorial, which contains thousands of artifacts, videos, images and oral recordings.

Top tip: Book the early access museum tour, before the crowds arrive, for an intimate experience with an expert guide.

Te Papa (Wellington)

Te Papa ('treasure box') is indeed a trove of Māori history and culture, with environmental exhibitions, 'discovery centres' for children, and New Zealand's National Art Collection. Given the country's youth, it's fun to see relatively modern items such as Converse and pop culture artifacts included as pieces of history too.

Top tip: Be sure to check out the realistic and thought-provoking earthquake simulator.

Natural History & Pitt Rivers museums (Oxford)

At the Museum of Natural History in Oxford you're encouraged to touch the taxidermy and fossils, unlike in its London equivalent. Afterwards, descend into the basement Pitt Rivers Museum, home to the anthropological collections of the University of Oxford. It's a maze of close cabinets filled with sometimes creepy curiosities, including shrunken heads from the Amazon.

Top tip: Make sure you seek out the Museum of Natural History's very own dodo!

Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)

This former school was transformed into a prison during the Cambodian genocide of the 1970s; most of the rooms have lain largely untouched since the tragedies. Horrifying in its entirety, the museum provides the ambience required to reflect on the horrendous crimes of its past.

Top tip: Think carefully about what you want to get out of a visit; though an important and powerful museum, this is an extremely sobering place.

Zeitz MOCAA Museum (Cape Town)

The most important museum to open in Africa for more than a century, the new Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa has been miraculously hewn from the inside of a mas-

sive disused grain silo. The sense of space within this state-of-the-art complex is as enthralling as the collection of art it showcases.

Top tip: With more than 80 galleries, it's a place to lose yourself in. Just make sure you find your way to the rooftop sculpture garden.

Mutter Museum (Philadelphia)

This multi-storey museum echoes a 19th-century circus sideshow, with rare, odd and sometimes disturbing medical specimens from history. It might be one to avoid if you are squeamish, but it's fascinating to see how the human body has developed, adapted, and disformed through modern-day medical observance.

Top tip: You can get \$2 off admission on Monday and Tuesday.

Theta Museum (Bergen, Norway)

This fascinating, single-room exhibit is officially the smallest museum in Norway. The room was used by the Norwegian resistance during Nazi Occupation. The guided 'tour' includes insights into how the resistance worked with the British Navy during the war, and how their secret activities were eventually, and accidentally, discovered by the Germans.

(www.lonelyplanet.com)



London's Garden Museum is housed in the disused church of St Mary-at-Lambeth



The subterranean concrete wall in the National September 11 Memorial Museum, New York City.

Comic

Word Search

Baseball

Find and circle all of the Baseball words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Humphrey Bogart quotation.

A H B A T T E R O U T F I E L D E R O T
Y R O T I R R E T L U O F R E N N U R D
O G H E A E B D R A O B E R O C S T T G
L F C E S C V A N E L L A B E V I L H R
E A T M O N R I S U D E L L A B Y L F O
A I A A V E E B F R E O A H C A O C O A U
G R C G E R T F S O T M E L W O R H T N
U T L E R E O F R E H E H L H N F R P A D
E E L I S F U B I D O N G O E E R F K B
I R A T L R C U G P S R I I D L O B L A
E R B T I E H N T I L T T L L R B L E L
P I D H O T I T N U C E E S C F A U O L
E T A C E N R F M U D I P E T B N F O N
N O E T N I I P R G F P P L L O F I W D
A R D I T E I T A N T L I U A E P O S L
L Y H P L R S M I A A U O T N Y D K T A
T N S D E B E T E Y A F O S C N K L R E
Y A F L O F O U L T I P E G U H A A I P
T L G I P I V O T F O O T R U T E B K P
Y H E W R I T F A I R B A L L D Z R E A

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| APPEAL | FAIR TERRITORY | INTERFERENCE | RETOUCH |
| BALK | FLY BALL | LEAGUE | RUN DOWN |
| BASE | FORCE PLAY | LINE DRIVE | RUNNER |
| BATTER | FORFEITED GAME | LIVE BALL | SCOREBOARD |
| BUNT | FOUL BALL | MOUND | SHORTSTOP |
| CATCH | FOUL TERRITORY | OBSTRUCTION | STRIKE |
| COACH | FOUL TIP | OFFENSE | TAG |
| DEAD BALL | GROUND BALL | OUTFIELDER | THROW |
| DEFENSE | IN FLIGHT | OVERSLIDE | TIE GAME |
| DOUBLE HEADER | INFIELD FLY | PENALTY | TRIPLE PLAY |
| DOUGOUT | INFIELDER | PITCHER | UMPIRE |
| FAIR BALL | INNING | PIVOT FOOT | WILD PITCH |

Yesterday's Solution

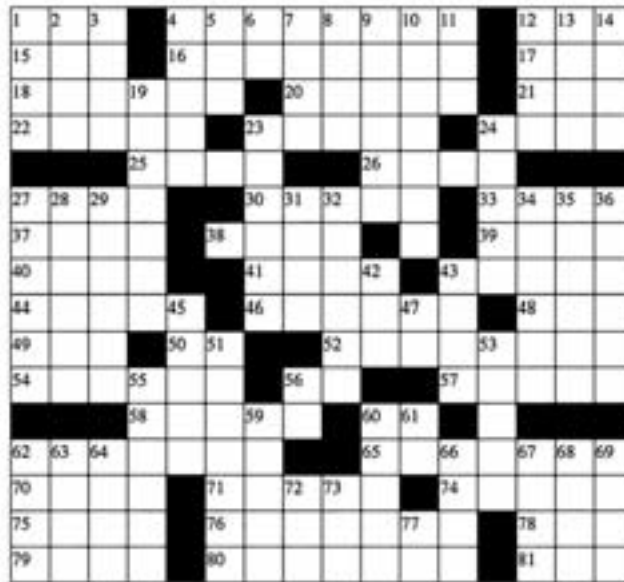
Back to School

I Y D U I T S E P T E M B E R N U R S E H
S L T U N E P A V C H A L K B O A R D E
B R N E U N T R H A E L V E R L M E T S
G E M Y S E I D U I T S L A I C S T
G L L C L H C U R S E S O O L O G E R
S J I M F O U R T E E N T H M O N T H
E A R C A R D S A N N C S E G I
L N S A I N T E G O P R C S N S I A
U I T P E E D O M W G S R U R C U G
F O A C C E U E U E G E E L W S I L
S R Y I L E S C O U N T D O W N S I L
A S S E S S M E N T S A N T H O M Y E
W A G G O N B O I L G E I N E U I T S
L R D E L C R A R O O R R E H L A B I
L E S U S U B M A M U S A N M T D
A K R I A M O L L R A T I A R E P A P
H B I N D E R O L N N O T E B O O K

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| ASSIGNMENTS | ERASER | LUNCHROOM | ROLL CALL |
| BACKPACK | EXAMS | MATH | RULES |
| BATHROOM | FIRST DAY | NEW FRIENDS | SCHOOL BUS |
| BELL | GYMNASIUM | NOTEBOOK | SCHOOL OFFICE |
| BENDER | HALLWAY | NURSE | SCHOOLYARD |
| CAFETERIA | HOMEWORK | OLD FRIENDS | SCIENCE |
| CHALKBOARD | INTERCOM | PADLOCK | SECRETARY |
| CLASSROOM | JANTOR | PAPER | SEPTEMBER |
| CLOCK | LANGUAGE ARTS | PENCILS | SOCIAL STUDIES |
| COURSES | LEARNING | PENS | STUDENT |
| DESK | LIBRARY | PRINCIPAL | STUDY |
| DOORS | LOCKER | QUIZZES | TEACHER |
| ENROLL | | | |

The hidden message is: I HAVE NEVER LET MY SCHOOLING INTERFERE WITH MY EDUCATION.

Crossword 2273



ACROSS

- A device for creating a current of air by movement of a surface or surfaces.
- A language spoken by the Atakapa people of the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
- The syllable naming the first (tonic) note of any major scale in solmization.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- A restricted computer network.
- Any of various primates with short tails or no tail at all.
- Of or concerning this.
- Become ground down or deteriorate.
- Goddess of the dead and queen of the underworld.
- A design fixed to some surface or a paper bearing the design to be transferred to the surface.
- A river that rises in western New Mexico and flows westward through southern Arizona to become a tributary of the Colorado River.
- Harsh or corrosive in tone.
- Any character from an ancient Germanic alphabet used in Scandinavia from the 3rd century to the Middle Ages.
- A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
- A quantity of no importance.

- Horny plate covering and protecting part of the dorsal surface of the digits.
- Being or occurring at an advanced period of time or after a usual or expected time.
- African mahogany trees.
- Inability to walk.
- An extension at the end and at right angles to the main building.
- A local computer network for communication between computers.
- A radioactive transuranic metallic element.
- A formal written defense of something you believe in strongly.
- Land received by fee tail v 1.
- A landlocked desert republic in north-central Africa.
- Slandering defamation.
- Atlantic coast round clams with hard shells.
- Stem of the rattan palm used for making canes and umbrella handles.
- Cancel, annul, or reverse an action or its effect.
- Follower of Rastafarianism.
- Affect with wonder.
- Type genus of the Aceraceae.
- An antibiotic (trade name Azactam) used against severe infections.
- The United Nations agency concerned with the international organization of food and agriculture.
- Having finished or arrived at completion.
- The basic unit of money in Honduras.
- Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.

Daily SuDoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 2 | | | 3 | | | 5 | | |
| 3 | 9 | | | | | 7 | 8 | |
| | | 6 | 8 | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | 7 | 2 | 8 | | |
| | 2 | 4 | 5 | | 6 | 1 | 3 | |
| | | 9 | 3 | 4 | | | | 7 |
| | | | | | | 8 | 3 | |
| | 5 | 7 | | | | | | 1 2 |
| | 6 | | | 2 | | | | 8 |

DOWN

- King of Saudi Arabia since 1982 (born in 1922).
- American novelist (1909-1955).
- A lawman concerned with narcotics violations.
- Garlic mayonnaise.
- A proinflammatory cytokine that is produced by white blood cells (monocytes and macrophages).
- (astronomy) A measure of time defined by Earth's orbital motion.
- A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
- The lean flesh of a fish that is often farmed.
- A kind of heavy jacket ('windcheater' is a British term).
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- Goddess of criminal rashness and its punishment.
- Tropical woody herb with showy yellow flowers and flat pods.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- Goddess of the dead and queen of the underworld.
- With eagerness.
- An esoteric or occult matter that is traditionally secret.
- A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
- A resident of Utah.
- (heraldry) Applied to a fish depicted horizontally.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- The peninsula and island in the Philippines where Japanese forces besieged American forces in World War II.

- English courtier (a favorite of Elizabeth I) who tried to colonize Virginia.
- A port city in southwestern Turkey on the Gulf of Antalya.
- A narrative song with a recurrent refrain.
- Apparent power to perceive things that are not present to the senses.
- Containing or filled with salt.
- (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
- (Greek mythology) A maiden seduced by Zeus.
- Of or relating to the pleura or the walls of the thorax.
- English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
- Towards the shore from the water.
- A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- Beyond what is natural.
- Chief port of Yemen.
- A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
- A small restaurant where drinks and snacks are sold.
- A male monarch or emperor (especially of Russia prior to 1917).
- (in Gnosticism) A divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of the universe.
- A guided missile fired from shipboard against an airborne target.
- A protocol developed for the internet to get data from one network device to another.
- A colorless and odorless inert gas.

Yesterday's Solution

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G | A | P | F | A | T | T | A | C | H | T | O | R | T |
| O | G | L | E | G | A | U | C | H | O | O | L | E | O |
| U | R | A | L | S | G | L | E | A | N | M | E | A | N |
| T | A | K | A | H | E | I | G | I | M | B | A | L | S |
| | F | A | E | P | I | G | A | E | A | | | | |
| C | A | M | E | L | B | C | A | R | K | O | M | I | |
| A | V | E | L | L | A | N | E | A | D | C | O | O | |
| P | U | D | C | D | L | E | P | S | E | U | D | | |
| S | L | E | W | S | H | A | O | M | A | H | A | J | I |
| I | S | A | A | C | E | M | B | E | D | E | N | I | D |
| D | E | G | R | A | Z | A | T | O | M | L | I | K | E |
| | A | G | A | Z | E | R | I | B | A | L | D | | |
| M | A | K | O | M | A | K | O | C | O | M | A | T | I |
| A | K | A | N | L | I | K | E | M | C | K | I | M | |
| R | E | B | N | E | A | R | S | I | D | E | E | P | A |
| K | E | A | M | A | H | A | R | A | J | A | B | U | M |

Yesterday's Solution

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 9 |
| 8 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 2 |
| 4 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| 3 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| 9 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| 5 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 8 |
| 7 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 3 |
| 1 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 7 |
| 6 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 1 |

TV Listings



01:45 Johnny Frank Garrett's Last Word
 03:35 Deadly Expose
 05:15 A Deadly View
 06:55 Striking Distance
 08:50 A Deadly View
 10:30 Deadly Expose
 12:10 Flight Of The Intruder
 14:15 Encounter
 16:05 American Ninja III
 17:50 Thor: The Dark World
 20:00 The Taking Of Pelham 123
 22:00 Intruders
 23:50 The Devil Inside



00:45 North Woods Law
 01:40 Expedition Mungo
 02:35 Growing Up...
 03:25 Lone Star Law
 04:15 North Woods Law
 05:02 Wildest Islands
 05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees
 06:36 Escape To Chimp Eden
 07:00 Escape To Chimp Eden
 07:25 The Bronx Zoo
 12:50 Growing Up...
 13:45 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
 14:40 Nature's Strangest Mysteries: Solved
 15:08 How Do Animals Do That
 15:35 Expedition Mungo
 16:30 Biggest And Baddest
 17:25 Animal Cops Miami
 18:20 Africa's Super Seven
 19:15 The Vet Life
 20:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
 21:05 Wildest Islands
 22:00 Expedition Mungo
 22:55 Pit Bulls & Parolees
 23:50 The Vet Life



00:20 And Then There Were None
 01:20 Holby City
 02:15 Mum
 02:45 The Detectorists
 03:20 EastEnders
 03:50 EastEnders
 04:20 Father Brown
 05:05 Death In Paradise
 06:00 EastEnders
 06:30 EastEnders
 07:00 Last Tango In Halifax
 07:55 Holby City
 08:50 Casualty
 09:40 Friday Night Dinner
 10:05 The Detectorists
 10:35 The Detectorists
 11:05 Death In Paradise
 12:00 Father Brown
 12:50 Holby City
 13:45 The Musketeers
 14:40 The Detectorists
 15:10 The Detectorists
 15:40 EastEnders
 16:10 Casualty
 17:05 Holby City
 18:00 The Detectorists
 18:30 Shakespeare & Hathaway: Private Investigators
 19:20 Shakespeare & Hathaway: Private Investigators
 20:10 The Witness For The Prosecution
 21:15 Line Of Duty
 22:20 Cold Feet
 23:10 The Detectorists
 23:40 The Witness For The Prosecution



00:00 Homicide Hunter
 01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
 01:55 Homicide: Hours To Kill
 02:50 It Takes A Killer
 03:20 It Takes A Killer
 03:45 Live PD: Police Patrol
 04:10 Live PD: Police Patrol
 04:30 The First 48
 05:15 Homicide Hunter

06:00 Cold Case Files
 07:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
 07:20 The First 48
 08:05 The First 48
 08:50 Homicide Hunter
 09:35 Homicide Hunter
 10:30 Cold Case Files
 11:25 Homicide: Hours To Kill
 12:20 Crimes That Shook Britain
 13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol
 13:45 Live PD: Police Patrol
 14:10 It Takes A Killer
 14:40 It Takes A Killer
 15:05 Homicide Hunter
 16:00 The First 48
 17:00 Cold Case Files
 18:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
 19:00 The First 48
 20:00 Homicide Hunter
 21:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
 21:30 Live PD: Police Patrol
 22:00 The Jail: 60 Days In
 23:00 Live PD: Police Patrol
 23:30 Live PD: Police Patrol



00:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
 00:30 Broad City
 00:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand
 01:20 Tosh.0
 01:45 Friends
 02:08 Friends
 02:30 Kroll Show
 02:55 Takeshis Castle Thailand
 03:20 Tosh.0
 03:45 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
 04:15 Broad City
 04:40 Impractical Jokers: The Murder Jury 1
 05:00 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
 07:05 Lip Sync Battle
 07:30 Lip Sync Battle
 07:55 Comedy Central Presents: Menna W FINA
 08:30 Takeshis Castle Thailand
 08:55 Ridiculousness Arabia
 09:20 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagaf
 09:50 Takeshis Castle Thailand
 10:15 Friends
 12:10 Key And Peele
 14:30 Lip Sync Battle
 15:00 Lip Sync Battle
 15:25 Tattoo Disasters
 16:15 Tattoo Disasters
 17:10 Friends
 19:30 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party
 20:00 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party
 20:30 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party
 21:00 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party
 21:30 Teachers
 22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
 22:30 Demetri Martin: Stand Up Comedian
 23:30 Broad City



00:05 React To That
 00:30 Insane Coaster Wars: World Domination
 00:55 Insane Coaster Wars: World Domination
 01:20 My Cat From Hell
 02:10 Bad Dog
 03:00 The Carbonaro Effect
 03:25 The Carbonaro Effect
 03:50 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre
 04:40 React To That
 05:05 React To That
 05:30 My Cat From Hell
 06:15 Bad Dog
 07:00 The Carbonaro Effect
 07:25 The Carbonaro Effect
 07:50 Are You Smarter Than A 5th Grader?
 08:40 Weather Top Tens
 09:30 Bad Universe
 10:20 How The Earth Works
 11:10 React To That
 11:35 React To That
 12:00 Pawn Queens

12:25 Pawn Queens
 12:50 The Big Brain Theory
 13:40 Did I Mention Invention?
 14:05 Did I Mention Invention?
 14:30 Strange Evidence
 15:20 The Carbonaro Effect
 15:45 The Carbonaro Effect
 16:10 React To That
 16:35 React To That
 17:00 My Cat From Hell
 17:50 Bad Dog
 18:40 The Carbonaro Effect
 19:05 The Carbonaro Effect
 19:30 Guy's Grocery Games
 20:20 Sci-Jinks
 20:45 Sci-Jinks
 21:10 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie
 22:00 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
 22:25 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
 22:50 Wild Africa: Rivers Of Life
 23:40 React To That



00:00 Home Alone
 01:00 Evil Stepmothers
 02:00 The Real Story With Maria Elena Salinas
 03:00 Body Cam
 03:45 Home Alone
 04:30 Grave Secrets
 05:20 Border Control: Spain
 05:45 Border Control: Spain
 06:10 Who Killed Jane Doe?
 07:00 Murder Decoded
 07:55 Murder Decoded
 08:50 Obsession: Dark Desires
 09:45 Obsession: Dark Desires
 10:40 Border Control: Spain
 11:10 Border Control: Spain
 11:35 Grave Secrets
 12:30 Grave Secrets
 13:25 Who Killed Jane Doe?
 14:20 Nightmare Next Door
 15:15 Nightmare Next Door
 16:10 Border Control: Spain
 16:40 Border Control: Spain
 17:05 The Perfect Murder
 18:00 The Perfect Murder
 19:00 Disappeared
 20:00 Disappeared
 21:00 Twisted Sisters
 22:00 Kiss Of Death
 23:00 Diabolical: Deadly Love



00:00 Alex & Co.
 00:25 Alex & Co.
 00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
 01:15 Evermoor Chronicles
 01:40 Alex & Co.
 02:05 Binny And The Ghost
 02:30 Binny And The Ghost
 02:55 Hank Zipzer
 03:20 Hank Zipzer
 03:45 Alex & Co.
 04:10 Alex & Co.
 04:35 Violetta
 05:25 Binny And The Ghost
 05:45 Rolling With The Ronks
 05:50 Rolling With The Ronks
 06:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
 06:25 Coop And Cami Ask The World
 06:50 Disney Mickey Mouse
 06:55 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp
 07:20 Penny On M.A.R.S
 07:45 K.C. Undercover
 08:10 Bizaardvark
 08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
 09:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
 09:25 Tangled: The Series
 09:50 Tangled: The Series
 10:15 Bizaardvark
 10:40 Bizaardvark
 11:05 Liv And Maddie
 11:30 Liv And Maddie
 11:55 K.C. Undercover
 12:15 K.C. Undercover
 12:40 Tangled: The Series
 13:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
 13:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
 13:50 101 Dalmatian Street

14:15 Shake It Up
 14:40 K.C. Undercover
 15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
 15:10 Fast Layne
 15:35 Penny On M.A.R.S
 16:00 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp
 16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
 16:50 Raven's Home
 17:15 Coop And Cami Ask The World
 17:40 Bizaardvark
 18:05 K.C. Undercover
 18:30 Bunk'd
 18:55 Descendants Wicked World
 19:00 Raven's Home
 19:25 Liv And Maddie
 19:50 K.C. Undercover
 20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
 20:20 A.N.T. Farm
 20:45 Bizaardvark
 21:10 Coop And Cami Ask The World
 21:35 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp
 22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
 22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
 22:50 Lolirock
 23:10 Evermoor Chronicles
 23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 The Lion Guard
 00:25 Disney Junior Music Nursery Rhymes
 00:30 Trulli Tales S1
 01:00 PJ Masks
 01:25 PJ Masks
 01:50 The Hive
 02:00 Zou
 02:15 Zou
 02:30 Henry Hugglemonster
 02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
 03:20 The Hive S2
 03:30 The Hive
 03:40 Zou
 04:25 The Hive
 04:35 The Hive
 04:45 Henry Hugglemonster
 05:10 Henry Hugglemonster
 05:35 The Hive
 05:45 PJ Masks S2
 06:00 PJ Masks
 06:15 PJ Masks S2
 06:30 PJ Masks
 06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons S1
 07:00 Disney Muppet Babies S1 Splits
 07:15 PJ Masks S2
 07:30 PJ Masks
 08:00 Vampirina S2
 08:30 Fancy Nancy S1
 09:00 Sofia The First S1
 09:30 Elena Of Avalor S2
 10:00 Fancy Nancy Splits S1
 10:20 Fancy Nancy Splits S1
 10:40 Disney Muppet Babies S1 Splits
 11:00 Sofia The First: Once Upon A Princess
 11:55 Marvel Super Hero Adventures
 12:00 PJ Masks
 13:30 Vampirina S2 Splits
 14:30 Vampirina S2
 15:00 Puppy Dog Pals S1 Splits
 16:00 The Lion Guard
 16:30 Elena Of Avalor S2
 17:00 Gigantosaurus S1
 17:25 Marvel Super Hero Adventures
 17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
 18:00 Fancy Nancy S1
 18:30 Vampirina S2
 19:00 PJ Masks
 19:30 Puppy Dog Pals
 20:00 The Lion Guard
 20:25 Marvel Super Hero Adventures
 20:30 Doc McStuffins
 21:00 Gigantosaurus S1
 21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
 22:00 Fancy Nancy S1
 22:30 Vampirina S2
 23:00 PJ Masks
 23:30 Puppy Dog Pals



00:15 Ultimate Survival
 01:05 Abandoned Engineering
 01:50 How Do They Do It?
 02:15 How Do They Do It?
 02:35 Capsized: Blood In The Water
 04:05 Fast N' Loud
 04:50 How Do They Do It?
 05:15 How Do They Do It?
 05:35 Garage Gold
 06:00 Salvage Dawgs
 06:20 Garage Gold
 06:45 Ultimate Survival
 07:35 Ultimate Survival
 08:20 Gold Rush
 09:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier
 09:55 Salvage Hunters
 10:45 How Do They Do It?
 11:10 How Do They Do It?
 11:30 Fast N' Loud
 12:20 Fast N' Loud
 13:05 Salvage Dawgs
 13:30 Garage Gold
 13:55 Salvage Hunters
 14:40 Into Alaska
 15:30 Legend Of Deep Blue
 16:15 American Chopper
 17:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier
 17:50 Gold Rush
 18:40 How Do They Do It?
 19:05 How Do They Do It?
 19:25 Fast N' Loud
 20:15 Fast N' Loud
 21:00 Unique Rides
 21:50 American Chopper
 22:40 Monster Mako 3
 23:30 Deadliest Catch



00:15 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
 00:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
 01:00 Boyster
 01:25 Boyster
 01:45 Counterfeit Cat
 02:10 Counterfeit Cat
 02:35 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
 03:00 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
 03:20 Boyster
 04:10 Counterfeit Cat
 04:35 Counterfeit Cat
 05:00 Furiki Wheels
 06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
 06:25 Space Chickens In Space
 06:35 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest
 07:00 Phineas And Ferb
 08:00 Big Hero 6 The Series
 08:25 Mech-X4
 08:50 Milo Murphy's Law
 09:15 Milo Murphy's Law
 09:40 Big City Greens
 10:00 Big City Greens
 10:25 Kick Buttowski
 10:50 Phineas And Ferb
 11:00 Gravity Falls
 11:25 Gravity Falls
 11:50 Milo Murphy's Law
 12:05 Furiki Wheels
 12:30 DuckTales
 12:55 Big Hero 6 The Series
 13:20 Lab Rats
 13:45 Lab Rats
 14:10 Phineas And Ferb
 15:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
 15:25 Phineas And Ferb
 15:35 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
 16:00 Big City Greens
 16:25 Big Hero 6 The Series
 16:50 Suite Life On Deck
 18:29 Mech-X4
 19:00 Mech-X4
 19:25 Milo Murphy's Law
 19:50 Marvel's Avengers: Black Panther's Quest
 20:15 Gravity Falls
 20:40 Gravity Falls
 21:05 Kick Buttowski
 21:30 Big City Greens
 21:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
 22:00 Milo Murphy's Law
 23:00 Furiki Wheels
 23:25 Dude That's My Ghost
 23:50 Dude That's My Ghost



00:00 Dating: No Filter
 02:00 E! News
 03:00 WAGs Miami
 04:00 WAGs Atlanta
 08:00 E! News: Daily Pop
 08:55 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
 09:50 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
 10:45 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
 11:40 E! News
 12:35 Dating: No Filter
 15:20 E! News: Daily Pop
 16:15 Very Cavallari
 19:00 E! News
 20:00 Dating: No Filter
 22:00 Botched
 23:00 Very Cavallari



00:15 Dogfights
 01:00 UFO Hunters
 01:45 Engineering An Empire
 02:30 The Universe
 03:15 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
 04:00 Ancient Aliens
 04:45 Mummy Forensics
 05:30 Search For The Lost Giants
 06:15 How The States Got Their Shapes
 06:40 How The States Got Their Shapes
 07:00 UFO Hunters
 07:45 Engineering An Empire
 08:30 The Universe
 09:15 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
 10:00 Ancient Aliens
 10:45 Mummy Forensics
 11:30 Search For The Lost Giants
 12:15 How The States Got Their Shapes
 12:40 How The States Got Their Shapes
 13:00 Engineering An Empire
 13:45 The Universe
 14:30 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
 15:15 Ancient Aliens
 16:00 Mummy Forensics
 16:45 Search For The Lost Giants
 17:30 How The States Got Their Shapes
 17:55 How The States Got Their Shapes
 18:15 UFO Hunters
 19:00 Engineering An Empire
 19:45 The Universe
 20:30 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
 21:15 Ancient Aliens
 22:00 MysteryQuest
 22:45 Search For The Lost Giants
 23:30 How The States Got Their Shapes
 23:55 How The States Got Their Shapes



00:20 Mountain Men
 01:05 Pawn Stars
 01:25 Pawn Stars
 01:50 American Pickers
 02:35 Storage Wars: Barry's Best Buys
 03:25 Ax Men
 04:15 Custer: The Final Mystery
 05:05 Forged In Fire
 06:00 Detroit Steel
 06:45 Mountain Men
 07:30 Pawn Stars
 07:50 Pawn Stars
 08:15 American Pickers
 09:00 Storage Wars: Barry's Best Buys
 09:45 Ax Men
 10:30 Custer: The Final Mystery
 11:15 Forged In Fire
 12:00 American Pickers
 15:00 Counting Cars
 15:45 Counting Cars
 18:00 Counting Cars
 18:45 The Universe
 19:30 The Universe
 20:15 The Universe
 21:00 Battle Of Kings
 22:40 American Pickers
 23:30 American Pickers

Stars



Aries (March 21-April 19)

If you have vacation days, take one today. You'll find yourself arguing with those you may not be able to win against such as your boss. Go backpacking or fishing something that takes your mind off work pressures and how your life really ought to be. Let go of thinking you're not getting the rewards you think you should right now. Give yourself some time to think your actions over before putting them into gear. This isn't the day that you'll back down peacefully if anyone rubs you the wrong way. Try to turn your thoughts to love especially if you have someone about which you care. Make love not war today.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You feel as if you're boring others today and you could be right. Take the time to assess the situation rather than pouring out your thoughts to those who will listen now. Others always seem to think that a quiet person knows it all and has the wisdom to boot. That's not always true though, which you very well know at this time. Don't worry. Most of the people you're associated with today, especially at work, don't even realize you're having this kind of trouble. There may be one who sympathizes with you today. Hopefully it's your life's partner. It'll get better.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

At work tread carefully expressing your thoughts. Others might not be open to new ideas at this time. Do your work by doing what is necessary to get through the day. Make a date for lunch with someone you love, perhaps a picnic by the water with ducks. This will give you the much-needed break you desire away from intimidating coworkers, Gemini. Your day will move much quicker and you'll be home earlier. Take time with to court your lover tonight because mental, emotional and physical love is what you need more than anything now.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

At work it seems that everyone is coming to you for suggestions both on the work front and with their lives in general. You're the helper again today. Besides the fact that you're learning more about the people close to you and can truly sympathize, this is like reading a "Dear Abby" column with you being the one giving the answers. You're able to take into account your own life and all the positive things that are happening for you just by it's being a normal work day, Cancer. You may be complimented for something you do or how you look. Take this day in and enjoy.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may be thinking of a new home possibly in a new area right now. You're not as happy with how things are working out in that part of your life. This could be because you're unsure of your love life along with a few other items. Work today leaves you feeling that you're less thought of by your coworkers. This isn't your finest time and you're well aware that affects your life. Perhaps you should take off early and decide what is really best for you now. Once a logical decision is made, then you can act upon it, Leo, without regret.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You can see through any given emotional situation both at work and at home. Having that ability can cause some deep discussions, perhaps you might call them arguments. Be thoughtful of explaining human emotion to someone you know has a problem even if they haven't told you about it yet. Sometimes people don't want to think others know of their problems. Whether you're right or wrong, they don't want to acknowledge anything you say. That could lead to words. At work you won't be seen as helpful if you promote this. At home you might be seen as starting a disagreement which your lover will surely have issues with, Virgo. Keep your opinions like cards, close to your vest.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your management abilities and healthy quick thought processes plus your capacity for understanding what makes others tick puts you on top of the boss's list today. Quick thinking is great but changing your mind at the drop of a hat isn't. That could give coworkers the wrong message. Do this, no do this, no back to the first "Do" item can have people running in circles. Be sure of what you instruct others to accomplish before setting it into motion. Also, watch your temper, Libra. Although it's unlike you to rage you could find yourself going there without what you consider good reason.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Work and being respected for your part in that work is what is sorely needed in your life now. It gives you reason to continue the career you're in now. Obstacles in your work life are quickly overcome and leave you with a sense of self-worth that's hard to beat. You need to be needed and you want to be wanted but you don't know how to go about getting those gifts easily. You don't want to ask but sometimes that's the only way people have of knowing your needs. Your secret side holds you back sometimes.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Though you're ready and willing to do the work that you're doing right now it seems that you're at a standstill trying to get people willing to listen to you. It's like herding cats. No one will cooperate. It's not that you can't explain items in an understandable manner. Your family and friends have told you how good you are at that. Still, you feel inadequate to get your point across at work today. When you're finished on the job try to do something that helps you with your confidence levels like have dinner with those who love and support you.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

At home you're distant from someone you love or thought you loved. You're not sharing as some might expect you to do and the reason you're not is because someone one in the household doesn't really want to hear your feelings, or so you think. You're in a sensitive mood and your lover might not understand your actions now, Capricorn. You don't want to share your thoughts and personal issues with that person now. At work you're able to understand and identify with coworkers giving them the benefit of your life's experience.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Taking the initiative at work today, you immediately upon arrival at work, start putting together the ideas you've worked on all weekend. Plus, you're gotten more ideas to assimilate into your plan also. Coworkers see the value of those ideas and rush to help. Realization is there that this can make everyone more money. Tonight, enjoy time with friends and family again. Expand your ability to get more work done by inviting workmates that you can communicate with for more ideas too. After all, work is at the top of your list now.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Thank goodness you're in the mood for work today after the last few. You've thought life through and you're capable of making good, intelligent work decisions. You have the carry through to make them work. Be careful at work though, because you might find yourself in the midst of an argument that gets emotional. That wouldn't be the best thing for you at any time but more so not now. Don't let another be in control of you or your work situation. Go home and make a light dinner then go walking just to eliminate some of the worktime stress.

Country Codes

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|-----------------------|--------|
| Afghanistan | 0093 | Jordan | 00962 |
| Albania | 00355 | Kazakhstan | 007 |
| Algeria | 00213 | Kenya | 00254 |
| Andorra | 00376 | Kiribati | 00686 |
| Angola | 00244 | Kuwait | 00965 |
| Anguilla | 001264 | Kyrgyzstan | 00996 |
| Antigua | 001268 | Laos | 00856 |
| Argentina | 0054 | Latvia | 00371 |
| Armenia | 00374 | Lebanon | 00961 |
| Australia | 0061 | Liberia | 00231 |
| Austria | 0043 | Libya | 00218 |
| Bahamas | 001242 | Lithuania | 00370 |
| Bahrain | 00973 | Luxembourg | 00352 |
| Bangladesh | 00880 | Macau | 00853 |
| Barbados | 001246 | Macedonia | 00389 |
| Belarus | 00375 | Madagascar | 00261 |
| Belgium | 0032 | Majorca | 0034 |
| Belize | 00501 | Malawi | 00265 |
| Benin | 00229 | Malaysia | 0060 |
| Bermuda | 001441 | Maldives | 00960 |
| Bhutan | 00975 | Mali | 00223 |
| Bolivia | 00591 | Malta | 00356 |
| Bosnia | 00387 | Marshall Islands | 00692 |
| Botswana | 00267 | Martinique | 00596 |
| Brazil | 0055 | Mauritania | 00222 |
| Brunei | 00673 | Mauritius | 00230 |
| Bulgaria | 00359 | Mayotte | 00269 |
| Burkina | 00226 | Mexico | 0052 |
| Burundi | 00257 | Micronesia | 00691 |
| Cambodia | 00855 | Moldova | 00373 |
| Cameroon | 00237 | Monaco | 00377 |
| Canada | 001 | Mongolia | 00976 |
| Cape Verde | 00238 | Montserrat | 001664 |
| Cayman Islands | 001345 | Morocco | 00212 |
| Central African Republic | 00236 | Mozambique | 00258 |
| Chad | 00235 | Myanmar (Burma) | 0095 |
| Chile | 0056 | Namibia | 00264 |
| China | 0086 | Nepal | 00977 |
| Colombia | 0057 | Netherlands (Holland) | 0031 |
| Comoros | 00269 | Netherlands Antilles | 00599 |
| Congo | 00242 | New Caledonia | 00687 |
| Cook Islands | 00682 | New Zealand | 0064 |
| Costa Rica | 00506 | Nicaragua | 00505 |
| Croatia | 00385 | Norway | 00227 |
| Cuba | 0053 | Nigeria | 00234 |
| Cyprus | 00357 | Niue | 00683 |
| Cyprus (Northern) | 0090392 | Norfolk Island | 00672 |
| Czech Republic | 00420 | Northern Ireland (UK) | 0044 |
| Denmark | 0045 | North Korea | 00850 |
| Diego Garcia | 00246 | Norway | 0047 |
| Djibouti | 00253 | Oman | 00968 |
| Dominica | 001767 | Pakistan | 0092 |
| Dominican Republic | 001809 | Palau | 00680 |
| Ecuador | 00593 | Panama | 00507 |
| Egypt | 0020 | Papua New Guinea | 00675 |
| El Salvador | 00503 | Paraguay | 00595 |
| England (UK) | 0044 | Peru | 0051 |
| Equatorial Guinea | 00240 | Philippines | 0063 |
| Eritrea | 00291 | Poland | 0048 |
| Estonia | 00372 | Portugal | 00351 |
| Ethiopia | 00251 | Puerto Rico | 001787 |
| Falkland Islands | 00500 | Qatar | 00974 |
| Faroe Islands | 00298 | Romania | 0040 |
| Fiji | 00679 | Russian Federation | 007 |
| Finland | 00358 | Rwanda | 00250 |
| France | 0033 | Saint Helena | 00290 |
| French Guiana | 00594 | Saint Kitts | 001869 |
| French Polynesia | 00689 | Saint Lucia | 001758 |
| Gabon | 00241 | Saint Pierre | 00508 |
| Gambia | 00220 | Saint Vincent | 001784 |
| Georgia | 00995 | Samoa US | 00684 |
| Germany | 0049 | Samoa West | 00685 |
| Ghana | 00233 | San Marino | 00378 |
| Gibraltar | 00350 | Sao Tome | 00239 |
| Greece | 0030 | Saudi Arabia | 00966 |
| Greenland | 00299 | Scotland (UK) | 0044 |
| Grenada | 001473 | Senegal | 00221 |
| Guadeloupe | 00590 | Seychelles | 00284 |
| Guam | 001671 | Sierra Leone | 00232 |
| Guatemala | 00502 | Singapore | 0065 |
| Guinea | 00224 | Slovakia | 00421 |
| Guyana | 00592 | Slovenia | 00386 |
| Haiti | 00509 | Solomon Islands | 00677 |
| Holland (Netherlands) | 0031 | Somalia | 00252 |
| Honduras | 00504 | South Africa | 0027 |
| Hong Kong | 00852 | South Korea | 0082 |
| Hungary | 0036 | Spain | 0034 |
| Ibiza (Spain) | 0034 | Sri Lanka | 0094 |
| Iceland | 00354 | Sudan | 00249 |
| India | 0091 | Suriname | 00597 |
| Indian Ocean | 00873 | Swaziland | 00268 |
| Indonesia | 0062 | Sweden | 0046 |
| Iran | 0098 | Switzerland | 0041 |
| Iraq | 00964 | Syria | 00963 |
| Ireland | 00353 | Taiwan | 00886 |
| Italy | 0039 | Tanzania | 00255 |
| Ivory Coast | 00225 | Thailand | 0066 |
| Jamaica | 001876 | Toga | 00228 |
| Japan | 0081 | Tonga | 00676 |

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

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Friday, August 2, 2019

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 Ear, Nose, and Throat conditions in adults & pediatric
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- Diagnosis & treatment of Otolgy 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, Belajaf Street, Tel: 1881122

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

ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES:

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

SPECIALIZED IN:

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

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 www.beautybeyond.com.kw

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

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.

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

Scope of Clinical Practice:

- General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- Single Port Surgery
- Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, including Colorectal Cancer
- Surgical treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (cryptic fistula)
- SWAT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Robot-assisted)
- Treatment of Intractable Bowel Symptoms
- Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- Gallstones & Mechanical Intestinal Surgery
- Colonoscopy Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- Laparoscopic mini hepatectomy
- 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. 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).

Dr. Hani Haider
 General Surgery Consultant

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 care surgeries
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- Surgery for morbid obesity (sleeve, gastric bypass)
- Hernia repair
- Surgery for reflux disease
- Minor surgeries (lipoma, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
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Health & Science

Rwanda shuts DR Congo border after Ebola cases in frontier city

GOMA, DR Congo: Rwanda has shuttered its frontier with Ebola-hit Democratic Republic of Congo after a third case of the deadly virus was detected in the border city of Goma, the Congolese presidency said yesterday. The announcement coincided with the first anniversary of an epidemic that has claimed more than 1,800 lives, stoking dread that the disease may spread from eastern DRC to vulnerable neighbors.

In a statement, President Felix Tshisekedi's office condemned a "unilateral decision by the Rwandan authorities" that affected citizens from both countries who had to cross the border as part of their daily life. Goma, a city of two million people and a major transport hub, shares the border with the Rwandan city of Gisenyi,

which has a population of more than 85,000.

Cross-frontier links are intense. Many people have jobs on the other side of the border while others have homes or put their children in schools in the neighboring city. "On the basis of a unilateral decision by the Rwandan authorities, Rwandan citizens cannot go to Goma and Congolese cannot leave Gisenyi but are prevented from going home," the statement said.

"This decision harms a number of Congolese and expatriates who live in Gisenyi but work in Goma." It added: "The Congolese authorities regret this kind of decision, which goes against the recommendation of the World Health Organization." "Response teams are continuing to ensure that the city of Goma is out of dan-

ger," it promised. An AFP reporter at the Goma-Gisenyi crossing confirmed the frontier had been closed. There was no immediate announcement or reaction from Rwanda.

Just hours earlier, a third case of Ebola was recorded in Goma, adding to two fatalities. Health workers are racing to find people who have had contact with these patients. In an urban setting, density of population, anonymity and high mobility make it far harder to isolate patients and trace contacts compared to the countryside.

Goma is capital of North Kivu province, which has borne the brunt of the year-old epidemic, followed by neighboring Ituri province. Bad news came on Wednesday from South Kivu

province, which had previously skirted the epidemic. Fifteen people were placed in quarantine in Birava, 30 kilometers (18 miles) south of the provincial capital Bukavu, the chief doctor at the local hospital, Ciza Nuru, said. They included a mother and her six children who come from Goma, and whose family head "had fled an Ebola treatment centre," he said. The first death in Goma, reported on July 16, was of an evangelical preacher who had travelled from Goma to Butembo, one of the towns hardest hit by the outbreak.

During his stay there, he preached at seven churches and regularly touched worshippers, including the sick, and then returning to Goma by bus, investigators said. — AFP

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DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED
 Consultant of General Surgery Laproscopic 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 - lthyroid surgeries.
- Anal surgeries.

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228
 Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 15 - Queen Center Mazaya Building

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Mr. POLAKANTI SUBRAMANYAM (Old Name) S/o (Late) PULLAGANTI SUBBARAMAIAH hereby declare that my name is changed as PULLAGANTI SUBRAMANYAM (New Name) R/o Dno. 17/57, J. Vaddipalli Vil, Obulavaripalli Mdl, YSR Dt. A.P. My Passport No. M2310570. (C 5569)

I, GRUPARSHAD hereby change my name to GURU PRASAD. (C 5568) 31-7-2019

I, SALVADOR GABRIEL SOFIA D'SILVA currently holder of Indian Passport No. K4650361 issued at Kuwait on

11/03/2012, presently residing in Kuwait, my permanent address: Pequeno Rumbordem, Curtorim, Salcette, Goa, pin code: 403709, India, do hereby permanently change my name as SALVADOR GABRIEL SOFIA DA SILVA. (C 5567) 29-7-2019

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Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

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Fax: (+965) 24348714
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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot with light to moderate freshening gradually north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 50 km/h causing rising dust over open areas and some scattered clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Hot to relatively hot with light to moderate freshening at times over costal areas north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

| WEATHER WARNING | No Current Warnings | |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------|
| | | |
| STATION | MAX. EXP. | MIN. REC. |
| KUWAIT CITY | 49 °C | 37 °C |
| KUWAIT AIRPORT | 49 °C | 29 °C |
| ABDALY | 48 °C | 31 °C |
| BUBYAN | - °C | - °C |
| JAHRA | 48 °C | 33 °C |
| FAILAKA ISLAND | 41 °C | 29 °C |
| SALMIYAH | 45 °C | 38 °C |
| AHMADI | 46 °C | 36 °C |
| NUWASIB | 48 °C | 30 °C |
| WAFRA | 49 °C | 29 °C |
| SALMY | 47 °C | 30 °C |

| SFC. CHART | 01/08/2019 0000 UTC |
|------------|---------------------|
| | |

4 DAYS FORECAST

| DAY | DATE | WEATHER | Temperatures | | Wind Direction | Wind Speed |
|----------|-------|--------------------------|--------------|-------|----------------|--------------|
| | | | MAX. | MIN. | | |
| Friday | 08/02 | Very hot and rising dust | 50 °C | 30 °C | NW | 20 - 55 km/h |
| Saturday | 08/03 | Very hot | 49 °C | 32 °C | NW-VRB | 08 - 35 km/h |
| Sunday | 08/04 | Very hot | 48 °C | 33 °C | NW-VRB | 08 - 35 km/h |
| Monday | 08/05 | Very hot | 48 °C | 32 °C | NW | 15 - 42 km/h |

PRAYER TIMES

| | |
|---------|-------|
| Fajr | 03:40 |
| Sunrise | 05:08 |
| Zuhr | 11:54 |
| Asr | 15:30 |
| Sunset | 18:40 |
| Isha | 20:06 |

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| MAX. Temp. | 48 °C |
| MIN. Temp. | 30 °C |
| MAX. RH | 24 % |
| MIN. RH | 06 % |
| MAX. Wind | N 50 km/h |
| TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR. | 0 mm |

Business

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2019

38 No EU consensus yet on IMF chief to succeed Lagarde



39 Britain to spend extra \$2.6bn on no-deal Brexit planning



40 LSE shoots for global finance data league with Refinitiv takeover



NEW YORK: Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) after the Federal Reserve announced a cut in interest rates on Wednesday in New York City. — AFP

Dollar dazzles as US Fed cuts interest rate

Stocks blindsided as Powell rules out a long series of cuts

LONDON: The dollar pushed higher yesterday following the US Federal Reserve's first rate cut in more than a decade, but a lack of clear signals on future easing whipsawed equity markets. The move to ease the cost of borrowing had been well telegraphed and was meant to inoculate against global risks washing onto American shores.

Fed chair Jerome Powell said the US central bank decided on a 25-basis-point cut in the rate to "insure against downside risks from weak global growth and trade policy uncertainty". He told reporters he remains confident in the American economy and sees no sectors ready to go "bust". The Federal Reserve cut interest rates, but the head of the US central bank said the move might not be the start of a lengthy campaign to shore up the economy against risks including global weakness.

Powell cited signs of a global slowdown, simmering US trade tensions and a desire to boost too-low inflation in explaining the central bank's decision to lower borrowing costs for the first time since 2008 and move up plans to stop winnowing its massive bond holdings.

Some in the markets, as well as US President

Donald Trump, thought the Fed might go for a bigger cut and signal that further easing was on the way, but Powell declined to commit to, or rule out, further cuts. Moreover, the decision to cut rates on Wednesday wasn't unanimous, with two members voting against.

"Investors quickly came to the conclusion that, with an 8-2 vote and a reluctance to commit to further cuts, the Fed was less dovish than they had believed," said analysts at Moneycorp.

"They marked down equity prices and took the US dollar higher." The Fed decision sent the US dollar rallying to its highest level in more than two years against the euro and the pound. On equity markets, Asian stock markets followed Wall Street lower. European markets opened lower, but with weaker currencies good for export businesses, they pushed into positive territory as the morning wore on. The strong dollar made oil more expensive for customers in countries outside the United States, with the two main crude futures contracts losing more than 1.1 percent.

"Commodities should still see some support on easy money flowing throughout all the major central banks in the world," said OANDA Markets

senior analyst Edward Moya. "Let me be clear - it's not the beginning of a long series of rate cuts," Powell said in a news conference after the Fed released its latest policy statement. At the same time, he said, "I didn't say it's just one rate cut."

Financial markets had widely expected the Fed to reduce its key overnight lending rate by a quarter of a percentage point to a target range of 2.00 percent to 2.25 percent, but many traders expected clearer confirmation of forthcoming rate cuts. US President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly attacked the Fed's policy stance under Powell and demanded that it push through big rate cuts, said on Twitter the Fed chief "let us down" by not telegraphing that an aggressive easing was coming.

US stock prices fell during Powell's news conference. The benchmark S&P 500 index closed down 1.1 percent for the day. Yields on 2-year notes, a proxy for Fed policy rates, rose to 1.87 percent. Ken Polcari, managing principal at Butcher Joseph Asset Management, said Powell's message was "not what the market was expecting to hear" even though most traders expected a rate cut. "He is not shutting the door, but he is also not saying there is another one coming in Sep-



WASHINGTON: US Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell speaks during a press conference after a Federal Open Market Committee meeting in Washington, DC on Wednesday. — AFP

tember, so hold on," Polcari said. Heading into Wednesday's Fed decision, the S&P 500 was up about 3 percent since June 19, when the Fed first signaled a rate cut was likely as it pledged then to "act as appropriate to sustain" the record-long US expansion. — Agencies

Business

No EU consensus yet on IMF chief to succeed Lagarde

Calvino, Dijsselbloem and Carney among names floated

PARIS: EU members have yet to reach a consensus on a candidate to replace Christine Lagarde as head of the International Monetary Fund, missing a July deadline they set themselves to fill the job, the French finance ministry said yesterday. "At this stage, although some candidates' names gather more support than others, there is not yet a full consensus around one name," the ministry, which is spearheading efforts to find a replacement for France's Lagarde, told reporters in a message. The post of IMF managing director goes to a European by convention while an American heads the World Bank.

The post became vacant after Lagarde was tapped by EU leaders to head the European Central Bank. Several names, including Spain's Finance Minister Nadia Calvino and former Dutch finance minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem and Bank of England governor Mark Carney, have been floated as possible successors.

The name of current ECB chief Mario Draghi had also been bandied about but he said last week he was "not available" for the position. At 71, he is also too old to hold the post, according

to IMF rules, which state that the managing director must be under 65 when appointed.

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire, who is leading the talks on finding a candidate, has spoken to "all his colleagues" over the last few days, "in particular with Olaf Scholz", his German counterpart, his office said. He has organized a conference call with his EU counterparts yesterday "to update them on the latest developments following his extensive consultations, and to agree on the process to reach a consensus around one name," it added.

Nominally open contest

The IMF says any of the fund's 189 members can nominate a candidate between July 29 and September 6, after which the board will announce its shortlist of up to three names.

But with the US and Europe having the biggest voting blocs in the IMF, it would be difficult for an outside candidate to upset the tradition whereby they divvy up the IMF and World Bank jobs between them. The convention has nonetheless come under strain in recent

years, with developing economies demanding a greater say at the Washington-based institutions. But when the World Bank job opened up this year there was no competition to the US choice of David Malpass, a former treasury official. The IMF said last week it planned to select its new leader by October 4, meaning the new boss would be in place for the lender's annual meeting in mid-October.

Last month, the finance ministers of Germany, France, Britain and Italy met on the sidelines of a G7 meeting in Chantilly outside Paris to discuss the issue of Lagarde's replacement.

Sources said the ministers agreed that Le Maire, whose country currently heads the G7, head the discussions among EU members on coming up with a single European candidate.

Five of its 11 leaders have been French nationals and they have been the longest serving in the institution's 75 year history. At the Chantilly meeting, US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin emphasized that naming a European to head the IMF was a convention, "not an official policy".

Former French finance minister Lagarde took



In this file photo, former International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde speaks during a press conference during the IMF - World Bank Spring Meetings at IMF Headquarters in Washington, DC. — AFP

over in 2011 from compatriot Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who resigned under a cloud after being arrested on charges of sexually assaulting a New York hotel maid. The criminal charges were later dropped and Strauss-Kahn settled a civil case out of court. — AFP

US weekly jobless claims rise; labor market tightening

WASHINGTON: The number of Americans filing applications for unemployment benefits increased last week, but the trend in claims remained consistent with tightening labor market conditions.

The health of the labor market, which so far does not appear to have been impacted by a bitter trade fight could help to determine whether the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates again this year. The US central bank on Wednesday lowered its benchmark overnight rate for the first time since 2008, to insure against downside risks to the economy from the trade tensions and slowing global growth. Fed Chairman Jerome Powell said the preemptive monetary policy easing was "not the beginning of a long series of rate cuts."

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits rose 8,000 to a seasonally adjusted 215,000 for the week ended July 27, the Labor Department said yesterday. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast claims increasing to 214,000 in the latest week. The Labor Department said no claims were estimated last week. The labor market has remained resilient even as the economy has shifted into lower gear, mainly as the stimulus from last year's \$1.5 trillion tax cut package fades. Powell on Wednesday gave an upbeat assessment of the labor market, saying "people who live and work in low-and middle-income communities tell us that many who have struggled to find work are



WASHINGTON: Initial claims for state unemployment benefits rose 8,000 to a seasonally adjusted 215,000 for the week ended July 27, the Labor Department said yesterday. — AFP

now getting opportunities to add new and better chapters to their lives."

US financial markets were little moved by the data as investors continued to digest Wednesday's rate decision and Powell's comments. The four-week moving average of initial claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, fell 1,750 to 211,500 last week.

The claims data has no bearing on July's employment report, which is scheduled to be released today. According to a Reuters survey of economists, nonfarm payrolls likely increased by 164,000 jobs in July after surging by 224,000 in June. Job gains averaged 172,000 per month in the first half of this year, below the monthly average of 223,000 in 2018, mainly because of a shortage of qualified workers.

The pace of job gains, however, remains above the roughly 100,000 per month needed to keep up with growth in the working-age population. — Reuters

Thomson Reuters raises outlook, grows fastest since financial crisis

LONDON/NEW YORK: Thomson Reuters Corp raised its sales and core profit outlook for 2019 and 2020 yesterday after reporting 4 percent organic revenue growth in the second quarter, which it said was its best since 2008 and ahead of its expectations.

Growth was driven by recurring revenues at all three of its biggest units since the news and information provider sold a majority in its Financial and Risk business, now known as Refinitiv, to Blackstone last year - Legal, Corporates and Tax & Accounting. The company said that it and Blackstone had agreed to sell Refinitiv, which provides data and news to financial customers, to London Stock Exchange in a \$27 billion all-share deal.

Thomson Reuters will hold a 15-percent stake in the London Stock Exchange on completion of the deal, which is expected in the second half of 2020, the companies said. A Thomson Reuters representative will also sit on the LSE board. Under the agreement, Thomson Reuters cannot sell its LSE stake for two years following completion of the deal.

It can sell a third of its shares in each of the third and fourth years after completion, and the rest thereafter. Chief Executive Officer Jim Smith told Reuters the company will decide whether to sell its shares as the lock-up expires. "Over the course of time, we would likely see that investment shifted behind our core businesses," he said.

Smith said the deal would "create a great deal of value" for Thomson Reuters shareholders. A \$10-billion share buyback and the launch of new products following the Blackstone deal have propelled Thomson Reuters stock 85 percent

higher since May last year, and the shares hit an all-time high of C\$90.04 this week.

The company said it expects 2019 and 2020 revenue growth and adjusted earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) to each be at the upper end of the guidance ranges previously provided. Smith said the launch of legal research product Westlaw Edge last year had been a key driver of growth in the company's legal division, its biggest business.

"It's been a very, very solid performer for us and continues to gain a lot of traction," he said. The parent of Reuters News had forecast 2019 revenue growth of 7 percent to 8.5 percent before the effect of currency, and growth of about half that pace in 2020. For EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization), Thomson Reuters had forecast \$1.4-\$1.5 billion for 2019, up from \$1.4 billion in 2018, and an EBITDA margin of 30-31 percent for 2020.

Thomson Reuters set aside \$2 billion of the \$17 billion proceeds from last year's Blackstone deal for acquisitions. The company has made three acquisitions so far and has about half of the funds left for more deals. Smith said in an interview. "We see a lot of opportunity there and we're looking at a lot of things," Smith said. "We're considering a number of further options but one can never predict the timing of M&A."

In the second quarter, revenue rose to \$1.42 billion from \$1.31 billion a year ago as Thomson Reuters gained from payments it received from Refinitiv for its news service. Adjusted earnings per share of 29 cents were ahead of analyst estimates of 18 cents, according to IBES from Refinitiv. — Reuters

Business

Britain to spend extra \$2.6bn on no-deal Brexit planning

UK to 'turbo-charge' no-deal preparations

LONDON: Britain said it is ramping up preparations for a no-deal Brexit by spending an extra 2.1 billion pounds (\$2.6 billion) to stockpile medicines, hire more border officials and fund one of the biggest peacetime advertising campaigns. Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who took power last week, has pledged to leave the European Union without transitional arrangements in three months' time unless the EU agrees to renegotiate the deal reached by his predecessor Theresa May.

In his first major policy announcement, new finance minister Sajid Javid said the outlay would allow the government to increase training for customs officials, hire more staff to deal with an expected increase in passport applications, and improve infrastructure around ports.

Javid said the United Kingdom's economy was strong enough to cope with a no-deal Brexit and rejected criticism that the money would be better spent on healthcare or education. "A lot of the work was going on but (what) we needed to do was turbo charge it to make sure we are properly, genuinely ready," he said on a tour of a Tilbury Docks near London.

The main opposition Labor party branded the spending an "appalling waste of taxpayers' cash" because the majority of lawmakers in parliament had made clear their intention to block an exit without a withdrawal agreement. Wrenching the United Kingdom out of the EU without a deal means there would be no formal transition arrangements to cover everything from post-Brexit pet passports to customs procedures on the Northern Irish border with EU member Ireland.

UK holiday-makers feel early hit from pound's new Brexit fall

LONDON: For millions of people in Britain, the timing of sterling's latest pre-Brexit fall could not have been worse, coming just as they prepare to head abroad on their summer holidays.

Clients at a money exchange shop in London's Canary Wharf financial district said they were feeling the hit after the pound this week sank close to a decade-low against the euro and not far off its lowest level in 34 years against the dollar. "I'm disappointed rather than surprised," Gary Lacey, a 54 year-old bank cashier, said after settling for an exchange rate of less than 1.07 euros to the pound before he began a four-day trip to Austria.

He recalled the much stronger euro-sterling rates of the early 2000s, before the pound was pummeled by the global financial crisis and then by Brexit. "The days of 1.60 are probably long gone," Lacey said. "But you have to pay or you just don't go on holiday."

Britain's holiday-makers are feeling the most immediate hit of the recent fall in the value of the pound which has lost about 7 percent of its value against the euro since mid-May. That was when the Brexit crisis

Many investors say a no-deal Brexit would send shock waves through the world economy, tip Britain into a recession, roil financial markets and weaken London's position as the pre-eminent international financial center. Supporters of Brexit say that while there would be some short-term difficulties, the disruption of a no-deal Brexit has been overplayed and that in the long term, the United Kingdom would thrive if it left the EU.

Javid warned the EU that if a new deal is to be agreed then one of the most hotly contested elements of the divorce agreement - the Irish border backstop - will have to be struck out, something the bloc has repeatedly said it won't agree to.

"We have been clear we want to get a deal, but it has to be a different deal, a good deal, one that abolishes this undemocratic backstop, and if we cannot remove that backstop then we have to leave with no deal," he said. The backstop is an insurance policy accepted by May that would force Britain to continue obeying some EU rules if no other way could be found to keep the land border open on the island of Ireland. Dublin and Brussels say an open border is crucial to preserving the 1998 Good Friday accord that ended decades of Irish sectarian conflict.

'Turbo-charge no-deal'

Britain's finance ministry will provide an immediate cash boost of 1.1 billion pounds and make a further 1 billion pounds available for government departments and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This means the government has in total allocated 6.3 billion

gripping British politics began to push Theresa May towards her resignation as prime minister in July. Her successor Boris Johnson has taken a tougher line with Brussels, spooking investors by promising to take Britain out of the European Union on Oct. 31 without a deal to soften the economic shock, unless the EU rewrites May's exit deal.

"With all the uncertainty over Brexit, I can't see the pound's weakness going away any time soon," Lacey said. For some in Britain, the fact that the pound has traditionally bought more than one unit of other currencies around the world, with the exception of some oil states, has been a source of pride.

Now analysts are working out the likelihood of the pound falling to parity against the euro and dollar. Sterling's current three-month slide has not been as dramatic as its 10% plunge against the dollar and 6% euro drop in the space of a few hours on the night of the Brexit vote.

But unless there is a quick reversal in foreign exchange markets, it will push up inflation soon, hitting the spending power of the consumers who have helped the economy through the Brexit crisis.

What is less clear is whether the fall will hamper Johnson and his ability to take Brussels to the wire over Brexit. The careers of at least two former prime ministers were fatally wounded by big drops in the value of the pound as Britain struggled to come to terms with the decline of its once world-leading economy after World War Two. Harold Wilson was lampooned by cartoonists and comedians in 1967 when he told voters that the "pound here in Britain, in your pocket" would not change value after a devaluation. — Reuters



LONDON: Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Sajid Javid (fourth left) and Britain's Home Secretary Priti Patel (third left) visit Tilbury Docks in Tilbury, east of London, yesterday. Finance minister Sajid Javid announced Wednesday an extra £2.1 billion (\$2.6 billion, 2.3 billion euros) to prepare for leaving without an agreement. — AFP

pounds to prepare for a no-deal exit, including 4.2 billion pounds of funding for this financial year.

The finance ministry said that, among other initiatives, 434 million pounds would be spent to ensure vital supplies of medicines and medical products can be brought into the country, including hiring additional freight capacity, warehousing and stockpiling.

To get people and businesses ready for a no-

deal Brexit, 138 million pounds will be spent on one of the biggest peacetime advertising campaigns and provide extra consular support for citizens living overseas. A total of 344 million pounds would be spent on new border and customs operations, including hiring an extra 500 border force officers and doubling the support for customs agents to help companies fill in customs declarations. — Reuters

France's EDF fined nearly 2m euros for not paying bills on time

PARIS: Forgot to pay your bills? Don't worry. So did your electricity provider. France's state state energy giant EDF has been fined 1.8 million euros (\$2 million) for not paying its bills on time, a record amount that aims to dissuade big businesses from starving small suppliers by putting off payment for as long as possible.

Junior economy minister Agnes Pannier-Runacher said yesterday the government wanted to "hit companies in the wallet" to force a change in their thinking on paying bills, currently treated by many as "a minor administrative issue". France, like many European countries, has been getting tougher on late payers, blamed for sometimes bankrupting small companies by failing to settle their bills on time.

In 2016, the socialist government of then president Francois Hollande increased the

maximum fine for late payments from 375,000 euros to 2 million euros. President Emmanuel Macron has continued on the same track, pushing through a UK-inspired law that allows the government to publicly name and shame offenders for the first time. Several big companies have been ousted as late payers in recent months, including US online retail giant Amazon, China's Huawei and France's own cosmetics chain Sephora as well as the national postal service.

But the fine imposed on EDF dwarfs all previous sanctions, with the stiffest to date — 670,000 euros—going to a subsidiary of German industrial giant HeidelbergCement in May. As further punishment for EDF, in which the state has a 83.7-percent stake, the company will also be stripped of a label it earned in 2015 for its "balanced relations" with suppliers. The government audited over 130,000 bills received by the company between March and August 2017.

It found that 3,452 suppliers who sent bills totalling 38.4 million euros had not been paid on time. EDF said Thursday that it had "taken note" of the fine and vowed to "continue reinforcing internal procedures...so that procedures allowing bills to be paid on time are understood and followed" by staff. In France, companies have 30 days to pay their bills unless otherwise stated in the contract, which can give creditors up to 60 days to pay up. — AFP

Business

LSE shoots for global finance data league with Refinitiv takeover

New market information giant could rival Bloomberg

LONDON: London Stock Exchange unveiled yesterday a \$27 billion takeover of US financial data provider Refinitiv that would create a market information giant to rival Bloomberg. In a statement, LSE said it had agreed “definitive terms” with shareholders for “an all share transaction for a total enterprise value of approximately \$27 billion”.

Shares in the LSE soared after the announcement of the deal, which is scheduled to be completed next year. Refinitiv’s shareholder consortium, made up of funds affiliated with private equity firm Blackstone and Canadian media group Thomson Reuters, will own around 37 percent of LSE but less than 30 percent of voting rights.

The deal will help shift LSE from generating revenue solely from the trading of securities to providing investors information about trading, which will put it in direct competition with data and financial news firm Bloomberg. Refinitiv, which serves in excess of 40,000 institutions in more than 190 countries, was formerly the financial and risk business of Thomson Reuters.

Private equity firm Blackstone subsequently became its majority shareholder alongside Thomson Reuters. “The transaction brings together two highly complementary businesses... to create a leading, UK headquartered, global financial markets infrastructure (FMI)... provider,” the LSE said.

The company will be “a leading data and ana-

lytics business, significant capital markets capabilities across multiple asset classes, and a broad post-trade offering, well positioned for future growth in a fast evolving landscape,” it added.

‘Unprecedented change’

The Refinitiv takeover marks a change of LSE strategy and comes two years after its failed £21-billion (\$25.5 billion, 23 billion euro) merger with Germany’s Deutsche Boerse. That gigantic deal—the third failed attempt at a tie-up between the British and German stock exchange operators—was blocked by the European Commission on fears it would undercut competition.

American David Schwimmer then took the top job at the LSE, after a 20-year career with US banking behemoth Goldman Sachs. The combined business will be chaired by LSE chairman Don Robert, with Schwimmer as chief executive and David Warren as chief financial officer.

David Craig will continue as Refinitiv chief executive and join LSE’s executive committee.

“LSE’s business is highly complementary with Refinitiv’s leading global data platform, transaction and distribution network,” said Craig. “Our aim is to capture the opportunity of data which we believe is driving unprecedented change in the global financial community.

“The combined business will allow us to better serve customers across all regions.” LSE and Re-



LONDON: Commuters walk past the London Stock Exchange in the City of London. —AFP

finitiv generated combined annual revenue of more than £6 billion in 2018, which would have made the combined business the largest listed global financial markets infrastructure provider by revenue last year. Schwimmer said: “With the acquisition of Refinitiv, we will transform our position as a leading global FMI group. “Refinitiv brings highly complementary capabilities in data and capital

markets, as well as deep customer relationships across a truly global business.

“Our shareholders and customers will benefit from attractive top line growth prospects, substantial cost and revenue synergies, as well as ongoing efficiency initiatives, and this transaction will ensure we are well positioned for future growth in an evolving landscape.” —AFP

Profits jump at British bank Barclays

LONDON: Net profits nearly quadrupled at British bank Barclays in the first half of the year on reduced litigation costs, helping compensate for difficult conditions in retail and investment banking.

Net profit of 2.1 billion pounds (2.3 billion euros, \$2.5 billion) was a stellar improvement but when heavy legal costs it suffered in the same period last year are stripped out, earnings actually slid 15 percent.

Last year Barclays was hit by a huge \$2 billion fine to resolve a US fraud case involving mortgage derivatives sold in the run-up to the 2008 global financial crisis, as well as the costs of settling claims of mis-selling consumer credit insurance in the UK.

Chief executive Jes Staley described the bank’s performance as resilient in what Barclays acknowledged was a difficult market environment and pointed to the fact it increased its half-year dividend.

“This increase in ordinary dividend reflects the confidence that the Board and management have in the sustainable earnings generation of our business,” he said. But Barclays also noted difficulties in the retail banking segment due to fierce competition in providing home mortgages, which has pushed down margins. Revenues from consumer credit cards also declined. Credit impairment charges in the first half rose to 928 million pounds from 571 million in the same period last year. While it attributed the increase to a less favorable economic outlook, the loan loss rate ticked higher. The investment bank arm also suffered a poor second quarter, with net profits sliding 18 percent. Stock transactions fell but bonds rose.

The performance of the investment bank is under intense scrutiny by shareholders and analysts as activist investor Edward Bramson has been pushing for it to be restructured. Barclays shares rose 2.0 percent in morning trade while London’s FTSE 100 index of blue chip stocks slid 0.3 percent. —AFP

Sterling sinks below \$1.21 after dollar jump, BoE cut to growth forecasts

LONDON: Sterling sank to a 30-month low yesterday below \$1.21, pressured by a stronger dollar, renewed worries about a no-deal Brexit and the Bank of England lowering its economic growth forecasts.

The pound plunged to a low of 1.2085, its weakest since January 2017. It came after the US Federal Reserve’s less dovish than expected policy meeting on Wednesday spurred dollar buying, and before the BoE kept interest rates on hold but cut its growth forecasts amid mounting Brexit risks.

The Bank of England lowered its near-term economic growth forecasts yesterday amid continued uncertainty over Brexit, while warning that a “no deal” exit from the EU would hit growth and the pound. Members of the central bank’s monetary policy committee held the key interest rate at 0.75 percent.

In an accompanying inflation report, the committee said the British economy

was now on target to grow by 1.3 percent in 2019 and 2020, down from the previous forecast of 1.5 and 1.6 percent respectively.

But these assume a “smooth adjustment” to Britain’s looming departure from the European Union, and the committee noted an increase in perceived risk that this will not be the case.

Boris Johnson took over as Britain’s prime minister last week, promising to deliver Brexit on the next scheduled departure date of October 31, with or without a deal with Brussels.

“In the event of a no-deal Brexit, the sterling exchange rate would probably fall, CPI inflation rise and GDP growth slow,” the minutes of the committee’s latest meeting said. Sterling was last down 0.4 percent at \$1.2111, while against the euro it was unchanged at 91.055 pence. The pound shed more than 4 percent of its value in July, its worst month since October 2016, following new Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s vow to leave the European Union on Oct. 31 whether or not a transition deal can be agreed with Brussels.

This sparked panic among investors that Britain was on course for a disorderly divorce after 46 years in the world’s largest trade bloc.

The BoE kept rates on hold at 0.75 percent yesterday but gave no indication it was considering lowering interest rates like other central banks. The

pound was little moved by the announcement, hovering around the \$1.21 mark. BoE Governor Mark Carney was to give a press conference at 1130 GMT.

“Sterling remains vulnerable to a further escalation in Brexit tensions and we anticipate the market will likely discount higher risks of a ‘no deal’ outcome in the weeks ahead,” said Roger Hallam, Currency Chief Investment Officer at JP Morgan Asset Management.

“The UK’s significant current account deficit (4.4 percent of GDP) also makes the UK particularly vulnerable to a deterioration in Brexit sentiment,” he said in emailed comments. Money markets are pricing in a 25 basis point rate cut by the BoE before March 2020.

On the Bank of England’s trade-weighted index, which measures sterling against its trading partners’ currencies, the pound has dropped to its weakest since early November 2016, having fallen more than 7 percent since early May.

Also weighing on sterling are signs of an economic slowdown in the British economy. British manufacturers’ output fell by the most in seven years in July, the Purchasing Managers’ Index survey for the manufacturing sector showed, as Brexit jitters and weaker global demand choked off growth. —Agencies

Business

Factory pain spreads through Asia, Europe; stimulus expected

Manufacturing shrinks in Japan, much of Europe

LONDON: Factory activity contracted across Asia and Europe in July, fuelling worries a prolonged trade war and an economic slowdown could tilt the world towards recession, which central banks would have to fight with depleted ammunition.

Manufacturing activity in the eurozone fell at its steepest rate since late 2012 last month as demand sank, a survey compiled by IHS Markit showed, puncturing sentiment among factory managers.

Forward-looking indicators in yesterday's survey suggest manufacturing won't rebound anytime soon and is likely to embolden policymakers at the European Central Bank, who last week all but promised to ease policy further as the bloc's growth outlook deteriorates. Earlier figures from Germany, Europe's largest economy, showed a recession among its manufacturers deepened. France and much of the rest of the eurozone also faltered.

"The manufacturing sector is going through some sort of correction, some of it due to trade uncertainty, some of it due to a slowdown in other countries," said Jacqui Douglas, chief European macro strategist at TD Securities.

"Some of the commentary ... is about the falling demand from Asia, so there is some sort of global phenomenon going on here where manufacturing is getting hit quite hard."

British manufacturers' output fell by the most in seven years last month, adding to signs the econ-

omy may slip into recession as businesses confront falling demand from Europe and the risk of a disruptive no-deal Brexit. New Prime Minister Boris Johnson has promised to take Britain out of the European Union on Oct. 31, regardless of whether he can secure a revised transition deal with the bloc.

Other Purchasing Managers' Indexes showed export-driven economies in North Asia - Japan, South Korea and Taiwan - have been in pain for longer. South Korea's exports, a bellwether for global trade, tumbled for an eighth straight month as an escalating political and economic dispute with neighboring Japan painted an increasingly gloomy picture for Asia's fourth-largest economy.

Taiwan's streak of contraction reached its 10th month, while Indonesia's PMI fell below 50 for the first time in six months. Vietnam, Philippines and Thailand PMIs suggested mild growth. In India, where the economy relies more on domestic demand, manufacturing growth picked up.

Rates falling

As expected, the Federal Reserve cut interest rates on Wednesday, but Chairman Jerome Powell said the move was not necessarily the start of a lengthy easing cycle. He also signaled, however, that the Fed might cut further. The Bank of Japan and the ECB have signaled their readiness to ease, although they have less room to move than the Fed.

Expectations have grown that the BOJ's next



RAWALPINDI: People eat charity food at a roadside restaurant in Rawalpindi. Nearly one year after the election which brought Imran Khan to power in Pakistan, the cricket-hero-turned-prime-minister faces growing anger as he chases an elusive target: how to right the South Asian nation's teetering economy. —AFP

policy move will be to ease, and the ECB is expected to cut rates in September, according to Reuters polls of economists. In Hong Kong, the central bank cut its base rate for the first time in a decade, as its currency peg to the US dollar forced the monetary authority to move with the Fed. Central banks in Australia, India and Russia, among others, have also already loosened policy.

And while more stimulus from Chinese policymakers is expected, the People's Bank of China gave no sign of whether it will immediately follow the Fed's rate cut, as it has done on occasion. The International Monetary Fund has warned their trade dispute will reduce global output by 0.2 percent. Many economists say any escalation could lead to a global recession. — Reuters

Shares in SocGen surge after capital base beefed up

PARIS: Shares in French banking giant Societe Generale surged yesterday as markets welcomed assurances that it had strengthened its capital base despite weaker profits in the second quarter.

Chief executive Frederic Oudea said the bank was successfully increasing its level of capital and had achieved a key target in the

first half of this year. Net profits for the second quarter weakened to 1.05 billion euros (\$1.16 billion) from 1.2 billion euros in the same period last year, a drop of almost 14 percent. But Oudea said the bank had raised its Core Equity Tier 1 target—a ratio of equity capital and disclosed reserves to risk-weighted assets, which measures a bank's financial strength—to 12 percent in the first half of this year. "Societe Generale has provided further evidence of the successful execution of its strategic plan with two priority financial objectives: increasing its level of capital and improving profitability," Oudea said in a statement. Markets welcomed the news, with Societe Generale shares trading up 4.4 percent at 23.14 euros on the Paris stock exchange.

There had been concerns over the last years about the financial condition of Societe

Generale after it emerged as the French bank with the weakest results in so-called "stress tests" of European lenders.

The second-quarter earnings-based on a banking income of 6.3 billion euros, down 2.6 percent from a year earlier—were in line with analysts' expectations. The bank is in the throes of a broad restructuring program which saw Societe Generale announce in April it plans to cut 1,600 jobs worldwide, including around 750 in France. It is emerging from a difficult period that included a \$1.3 billion fine last year by the United States on charges it had violated US sanctions on Cuba, Iran and other countries. It has also been shadowed by the case of its former trader Jerome Kerviel, whose deals cost the bank 4.9 billion euros after they turned sour. —AFP

Shell blames lower energy prices for profit squeeze

LONDON: Energy giant Royal Dutch Shell said yesterday its net profit was halved in the second quarter due to lower oil and gas prices as well as lower margins in refining. The net profit for the three months to the end of June came in at \$3 billion, compared to \$6 billion in the same period last year and in the first quarter of this year.

Investors' preferred yardstick of performance that strips out variations in the price of crude oil and natural gas, CCS earnings, fell by 26 percent to \$3.5 billion. Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets UK, said that figure was well below expectations of \$4.9bn. "Shell has blamed the miss on profits on the recent weakness in the oil price, however this doesn't really stack up given that Q2 average oil prices were higher than in Q1," he said in a note to clients.

Shell's strong position in natural and liquefied natural gas had previously helped it weather fluctuations in crude oil prices, but Hewson noted that gas prices have now fallen too, halving from their levels last year. A four-percent increase in output, to 3.6 million barrels per day of oil equivalent, helped compensate in part. Shell took the opportunity yesterday to announce \$2.75 billion in share buybacks through October 28. However, Shell's A shares fell 4.3 percent in morning trading in London while the FTSE 100 blue chip index was 0.3 percent lower. —AFP



Sports

Donaldson lifts Braves over Nats

ATLANTA: Josh Donaldson hit a solo home run with one out in the top of the 10th inning to lead the Atlanta Braves over the Washington Nationals 5-4 on Wednesday. Donaldson's 25th homer of the season came on a 1-2 pitch from closer Sean Doolittle (6-3). Sean Newcomb (5-1) got the win after blowing a save opportunity in the ninth. Josh Tomlin worked the bottom of the 10th for his second save. The Nationals tied the game in the ninth, putting two runners on against Luke Jackson before Newcomb entered the game. After a walk, Kurt Suzuki drove in a run with a bases-loaded single and a run scored when Gerardo Parra hit into a double play. Juan Soto of the Nationals hit a long homer to center — his 20th of the year — in the bottom of the second. He became the third player in major league history with more than one 20-homer season before his 21st birthday, after hitting 22 homers last year as a rookie.

Rays 8, Red Sox 5

Austin Meadows hit a three-run home run, and Kevin Kiermaier and Willy Adames added solo shots as Tampa Bay held off host Boston. Kiermaier, fresh off the injured list (thumb), also had a key RBI triple. The Rays have won the first two games of the series — and five of their last six — and will seek a sweep today. JD Martinez and Michael Chavis homered for the Red Sox, who dropped their third straight. Rick Porcello (9-8) gave up six runs on nine hits and a walk in 5 2/3 innings, his fourth time allowing six runs in his last six starts. He struck out seven.

Mets 4, White Sox 2

Todd Frazier grounded a go-ahead, ninth-inning single to right field against right-hander Alex Colome before Michael Conforto busted open a tight game with a two-run single, lifting visiting New York over Chicago. New York extended its winning streak to six games while handing the White Sox their 15th loss in 19 games since the All-Star break. Edwin Diaz navigated Leury Garcia's solo home run with two out in the ninth, striking out three of the four batters he faced to earn his 24th save.

Indians 10, Astros 4

Roberto Perez homered twice and drove in four runs as host Cleveland slugged its way to blowout over Houston. Carlos Santana and Jason Kipnis joined Perez in belting three-run homers, while Francisco Lindor collected three hits and scored twice for the Indians, who have won 13 of their last 17 games. Yuli Gurriel ripped a three-run double to extend his hitting streak to a career-best 18 contests, and Carlos Correa launched a solo homer for the Astros, who saw their three-game winning streak come to a halt.

Cubs 2, Cardinals 0

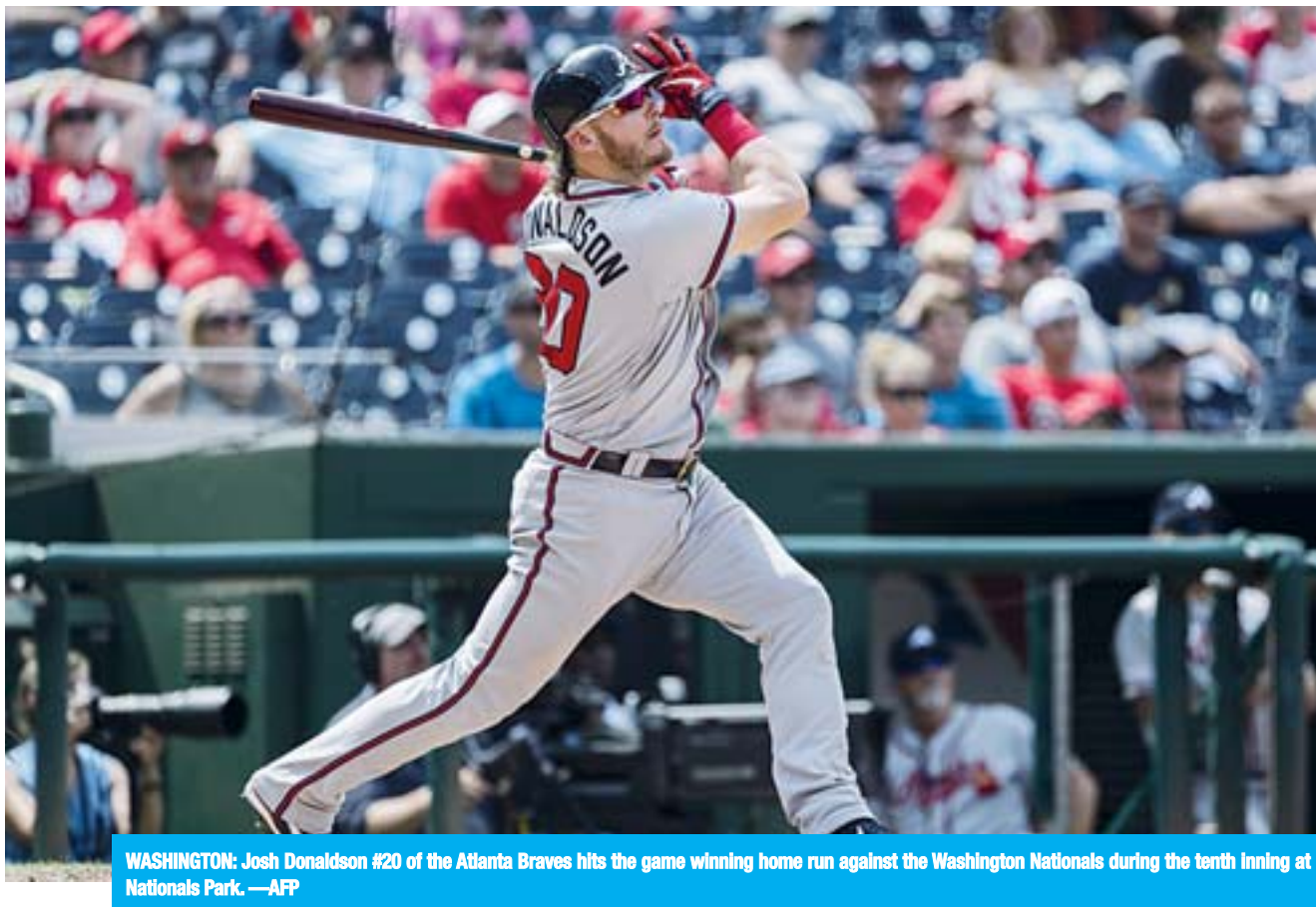
Kyle Hendricks pitched seven scoreless innings, Ian Happ drove in the go-ahead run in the sixth inning, and Chicago held on to defeat host St. Louis. Hendricks (8-8) held the Cardinals to seven hits while walking none and striking out seven. He improved to 3-0 with a sterling 0.39 ERA against St. Louis this season. Cardinals right-hander Miles Mikolas (7-11) drew the hard-luck loss despite limiting Chicago to one unearned run on six hits in 5 2/3 innings. The Cubs posted their first victory in five games in St. Louis this year. Entering the night, the home team had won all 10 games during the season series between the longtime division rivals.

Reds 4, Pirates 1

One night after a bench-clearing brawl between the two teams, Luis Castillo allowed one run in seven innings, and Cincinnati won the rubber game of a tense three-game series against visiting Pittsburgh. Castillo (10-4), who made his first All-Star team this summer, was coming off his worst outing of the season, allowing six earned runs and eight hits in five innings of a 12-2 loss to the visiting Colorado Rockies on Friday. He gave up six hits on Wednesday, struck out seven and didn't walk a batter. Jesse Winker went 3-for-3 with a solo homer for the Reds, who have won four of five. Nick Senzel also had three hits and drove in a run, and Eduardo Suarez blasted a two-run homer for Cincinnati.

Giants 5, Phillies 1

Buster Posey, Pablo Sandoval and Kevin Pillar all homered in the sixth inning as visiting San Francisco defeated Philadelphia, capping a torrid July by going 19-6 in the month. Giants starter Jeff Samardzija (8-8) was stellar in his six innings, giving up just three hits and no runs. He walked one and struck out five. The Giants had



WASHINGTON: Josh Donaldson #20 of the Atlanta Braves hits the game winning home run against the Washington Nationals during the tenth inning at Nationals Park. —AFP

a thin bullpen since the club made a flurry of trades before the deadline earlier in the day. Phillies starter Vince Velasquez (3-6) tossed five-plus innings and allowed four hits and two runs. He walked three and struck out six. Jean Segura had a pair of hits for the Phillies, who managed only five overall.

Yankees 7, Diamondbacks 5

Austin Romine hit a go-ahead two-run homer with two outs in the seventh inning as New York beat Arizona. Romine homered approximately 30 minutes after the 4 p.m. ET trade deadline passed without a major deal for the Yankees, and his blast gave New York a 4-3 lead. Mike Tauchman also hit a two-run homer in the second off Arizona starter Zack Greinke, who was later dealt to the Houston Astros for four prospects. The Yankees won for the fourth time in 10 games on a day in which Masahiro Tanaka slogged through four-plus innings. The Diamondbacks lost for the eighth time in 13 games and were unable to sweep the four-game season series from the Yankees.

Dodgers 5, Rockies 1

Will Smith and Kristopher Negron homered in the ninth inning, and Los Angeles beat Colorado in Denver. Alex Verdugo tied a career high with four hits, and Joe Kelly (5-3) got the win with an inning of relief. Cody Bellinger started the rally with a one-out walk, Corey Seager singled and Smith hit his fourth homer off reliever Wade Davis (1-5). Negron later hit his second homer in as many games to make it 5-0. Rockies starter German Marquez struck out a season-high 10 batters before leaving the scoreless game in the top of the seventh with what the team said was full-body cramping.

Twins 7, Marlins 4

Jose Berrios struck out a season-high 11 batters while pitching seven scoreless innings, leading Minnesota over host Miami. The Twins, who lead the American League Central and have won five of their past six games, also got a three-run homer by Mitch Garver, a two-run shot by Eddie Rosario and a solo blast from Max Kepler. Miami, which has the worst record in the National League, will try to avoid a three-game sweep. The Marlins got a grand slam from Brian Anderson in the ninth before falling short.

Brewers 4, A's 2

Lorenzo Cain hit the second pitch of the game for a home run, and Jordan Lyles threw five strong innings in his Milwaukee debut, lifting

the visitors over Oakland in the second game of their three-game interleague series. Lyles (6-7), who had been winless in eight starts for Pittsburgh dating to May 28 before being acquired by the Brewers in a trade Monday, checked the A's on three hits before leaving with a 3-1 lead. The right-hander walked two and struck out four. The Brewers, who lost the series opener 3-2 in 10 innings on Tuesday night, never trailed after Cain took Brett Anderson (9-7) deep for his eighth homer of the season, his first leading off a game since last August against the Chicago Cubs.

Tigers 9, Angels 1

Daniel Norris ended a seven-decision losing streak by throwing five scoreless innings, and Jake Rogers, Brandon Dixon and Gordon Beckham hit home runs to lead Detroit over Los Angeles in Anaheim. Dixon and Beckham combined for four hits and seven RBIs, as the Tigers won the rubber match of a three-game series that they entered on a six-game losing streak. Mike Trout's American League-leading 35th homer of the season in the sixth inning was the only offense the Angels could muster, as they managed five hits against Norris and four relievers.

Blue Jays 4, Royals 1

Bo Bichette hit his first career home run, and Jacob Waguespack pitched six strong innings as Toronto completed a three-game sweep at Kansas City. Bichette led off the eighth with a home run for a 3-1 lead. The touted shortstop prospect made his debut Monday against the Royals, and finished the series 6-for-9 with a double and home run. Waguespack (2-1) went six innings, allowing one run on three hits. He struck out two and walked two. Waguespack joined recent call-ups Thomas Pannone and Sean Reid-Foley, as the Toronto starters limited the Royals to three earned runs in 17 innings in the three-game series.

Rangers 9, Mariners 7

Willie Calhoun hit a go-ahead, three-run homer, and host Texas held on to turn back Seattle. Shin-Soo Choo also homered for the Rangers, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Austin Nola and Keon Broxton homered for the Mariners, who saw their season-high-matching, six-game winning streak come to an end. Rangers left-hander Mike Minor (9-6), who had been the subject of trade rumors leading up to Wednesday afternoon's deadline, got the victory despite struggling with his command. Minor went five innings, allowing five runs on seven hits. He walked three and struck out five. —Reuters

Sports

Andy Murray reunites with brother Jamie for doubles win

WASHINGTON: Three-time Grand Slam champion Andy Murray moved closer to a singles comeback six months after hip surgery, joining brother Jamie for a doubles victory Wednesday at the ATP Washington Open. The Murrys, partnered for the first time since the 2016 Rio Olympics, downed Frenchmen Nicolas Mahut and Edouard Roger-Vasselin 6-4, 6-7 (7/9), 10-5 to reach the last eight at the US Open tune-up event.

"The level of tennis I thought was really good," Andy Murray said. "It felt like there were some good points and quick reactions out there." Andy Murray is practicing singles and playing doubles as the former world number one, now ranked 222, continues his fightback from right hip surgery in January. The 32-year-old Scotsman feared he could be forced into retirement before the operation. He returned to the court in June but only in doubles while he rehabilitates.

"I have no pain," Murray said. "It's not restricting me in any of the shots that I'm hitting. I'm still maybe a little bit slow. I'm hoping that's something that comes back with time." Murray departed Washington in tears from pain and frustration last year after a rain-delayed 3:00 am singles victory that led him to withdraw. "I'm in a much better place than I was last year. Physically, I just feel so much better," Murray said. "I didn't know how much more I was going to be playing after here last year. To come back and be competing and be pain-free is brilliant."

The British duo trailed 5-2 in the decisive super-tiebreaker but steamrolled back by taking the last eight points, with Jamie Murray's service winner securing the victory. It was Andy who began the rally with a backhand winner and added backhand volley and drop volley winners on the two penultimate points. Murray declared Monday his hip has responded better than expected and he was "quite close" to a singles comeback, perhaps as soon as Cincinnati in two weeks.

That would be only two weeks ahead of the US Open, with Murray also saying if he didn't play Cincinnati he would likely wait until after the US Open, cautious of pushing his luck untested in best-of-five-set matches. Murray, who won Grand Slam titles at the 2012 US Open and in 2013 and 2016 at Wimbledon, most recently played singles at the Australian Open in January, losing a first-round five-setter to Spaniard Roberto Bautista Agut.

The Murrys, who helped Britain win the 2015 Davis Cup, broke the French duo in the final game to claim the first set, then outlasted them to the finish after one hour and 51 minutes. They will play for a semi-final spot against third seeds Michael Venus of New Zealand and Raven Klaasen of South Africa.

Verstappen looms large in Hamilton's rear view mirror

BUDAPEST: After two stunning wins in three races, the force in Formula One is with Max Verstappen who will this weekend bid for another victory at the Hungarian Grand Prix. The 21-year-old Red Bull driver, whose father Jos reached the podium in Hungary in 1994, is hoping to sign off before the mid-season break with another flourish.

Verstappen's powerful performance in winning last weekend's tumultuous rain-hit German Grand Prix lifted him within 63 points of the defending five-time champion Lewis Hamilton with 10 of this year's 21 races to go. The Dutchman is a distant third in the driver standings, behind the Mercedes pair of Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas. Yet the Silver Arrows' self-described "Armageddon" on home soil at Hockenheim, has inspired Verstappen's team to dream of greater glory. The Dutchman played down his potential in the championship on Sunday night but Red Bull sporting director Helmut Marko thinks Verstappen might snatch the title from Hamilton. "I would not rule it out," he said.

Hockenheim horror

Hockenheim marked Hamilton's worst outing since joining Mercedes and with questions being raised about the Briton's durability and exhausting 'jet-set' lifestyle, Verstappen is emerging as the man to beat.



WASHINGTON: Andy Murray (L) and his brother Jamie Murray of Great Britain celebrate a point during their doubles match against Nicolas Mahut and Edouard Roger-Vasselin of France during Day 3 of the Citi Open at Rock Creek Tennis Center. —AFP

Top seed Tsitsipas wins

Greek top seed Stefanos Tsitsipas, the 20-year-old who ousted Roger Federer on the way to the Australian Open semi-finals, advanced to the third round in singles by defeating US wildcard Tommy Paul 6-3, 7-5. US fifth seed John Isner advanced to the third round by eliminating Poland's Hubert Hurkacz 6-4, 6-4. Isner, seeking his 16th career ATP crown, was a Washington runner-up in 2007, 2013 and 2015.

Hamilton was ill throughout the weekend and did well to step into his car but was clearly shaken by his error-strewn race.

He finished outside the top 10 but was awarded two points when Alfa Romeo's two cars were penalized, moving him up to ninth. It was scant consolation for Mercedes on a day when Bottas crashed and the team, distracted perhaps by their own 'retro' celebrations of 125 years in motorsport, made some poor decisions on strategy and pit stops. "We know that they weren't good enough, and that's why we ended up with such a bad result," said Mercedes engineering director Andrew Shovlin.

Mercedes were unbeaten in the opening eight races. Yet they could start to feel the pressure if they have another bad weekend, if Verstappen can turn the screw or if the Ferraris, with a more extensive upgrades package, can continue the resurgence they signaled in Germany. Ferrari's own rising star, Charles Leclerc, started well in qualifying before being undone by the persistent Ferrari mechanical problems that forced him to start 10th. His team-mate Sebastian Vettel started in 20th.

The young Monegasque crashed out in the rain but four-time champion Vettel delighted his home support by picking his way through the field to finish second ahead of Daniil Kvyat's Toro Rosso. Hamilton won last year's race in Hungary from pole and, if he is recovered from his illness, should start again as favorite. But neither he nor Mercedes are invincible, especially if Verstappen continues to drive so fearlessly. "I like the Hungaroring," said the Dutchman.

"It's one of my favorite tracks and I'm looking forward to going there. It's technical and you have to hit the apexes to position yourself well for each corner. "It feels a bit like you're driving a big car on a small track, as it's so narrow, but that doesn't make it any less fun. "The whole team looks forward to this race. It's one of the warmest and it's a good track for us. We'll give it everything before the summer break." —AFP

"It was a good start. I'm happy with the win," said Isner, who faces French 10th seed Benoit Paire next. Canadian eighth seed Milos Raonic, the 2014 Washington winner, ripped US qualifier Tim Smyczek 6-1, 6-4. He next meets German lucky loser Peter Gojowczyk, who dispatched Australian Alex de Minaur 6-3, 7-6 (8/6). In the accompanying WTA event, US third seed Sofia Kenin, who upset Serena Williams at the French Open, lost to compatriot Lauren Davis 5-7, 6-3, 6-4. —AFP

Champion Tanak aims to repeat Finland triumph

JYVASKYLA: The World Rally Championship comes out of its seven-week aestivation with Ott Tanak looking to build on his lead in the drivers' championship at the Rally of Finland which starts yesterday. "I'm really looking forward to getting the second part of the season started on Rally Finland," the 31-year-old Estonian told his team website. Tanak, who won here last year, finished only fifth after a mechanical problem in the last race in Sardinia in mid-June. It was still enough for Tanak — part of former world champion Tommi Makinen's Toyota Gazoo team — to nip four points above six-time defending world champion Sebastien Ogier. The Belgian Thierry Neuville is a further three points back in what looks like a three-horse race for the title. "It's a rally that I enjoy a lot with the fast and smooth roads and it was an incredible feeling to win last year," said Tanak whose title challenge has been built on victories in Sweden, Chile and Portugal. "Of course, we will try to achieve the same result this year but it looks as though it will be more difficult, as we will be running first on the road on the Friday." Tanak has resisted the temptation to spend his down time on the beach. Two weeks ago he raced in, and won, his home rally in Estonia — not part of WRC. "It was great to win the rally again," said Tanak. "But it was also a really good test for Rally Finland. I believe that we learned a lot so I'm feeling well-prepared." —AFP

Sports

Clinical Sri Lanka whitewash series win over 'negative', dire Bangladesh

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka put on a clinical performance with bat and ball to record a 122-run win in the third and final one-day international and complete a clean sweep over Bangladesh in Colombo on Wednesday. Former captain Angelo Mathews led Sri Lanka with 87 off 90 balls, guiding the side to 294-8 before Dasun Shanaka backed his 30 off 14 with three wickets for 27 runs to complete the rout.

Soumya Sarkar hit the only half-century for Bangladesh, 69 off 86 balls, but it gave Sri Lanka no trouble as the visitors were bowled out for 172. Kasun Rajitha (2-17) and Lahiru Kumara (2-26) complemented Shanaka with the ball to complete the victory in 36 overs. Leg-spinner Akila Dananjaya deceived Soumya with his flight to bowl the left-hander in the 32nd over for his only wicket, rendering the rest of the game a mere formality.

Tail-ender Taijul Islam's unbeaten 39 off 28 balls only managed to entertain a sparse crowd at the R. Premadasa Stadium and delay the result. "I worked hard after getting dropped from the side. I was confident with my batting which helped me perform well. We're all relieved as a team because we performed together," Shanaka said after the match. The home side won the first two matches respectively by 91 runs and seven wickets.

"There are a lot of negatives, starting from

myself to the team. We have to hold it tight and come back strong," said Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal, who scored 21 runs in the three matches. Mathews and Kusal Mendis, who made 54 off 58 balls, set the platform for Sri Lanka's big innings after skipper Dimuth Karunaratne won the toss and elected to bat first. Mathews and Mendis put on 101 for the fourth wicket.

Bangladesh got an early breakthrough when Shafiqul Islam removed Avishka Fernando for six but Karunaratne (46) and Kusal Perera (42) steadied the innings with an 83-run stand. Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam removed Karunaratne to break the partnership and Rubel Hossain got rid of Perera in the next over to bring Bangladesh back into the contest. But Mathews and Mendis snatched the momentum back thanks to some sloppy fielding by Bangladeshi players. Mushfiqur Rahim dropped Mathews on 32 off Shafiqul before Sabbir Rahman gave the former Sri Lankan captain another life on 63 off Mehidy Hasan's bowling.

Mathews, who hit eight fours and a six, was finally dismissed by Soumya Sarkar in the last over but not before Bangladesh reviewed a caught behind appeal initially dismissed by on-field umpire. Soumya finished with 3-56 while medium pace Shafiqul also claimed 3-68. The island nation's cricket board has dedicated the match to pace bowler Nuwan Kulasekara who



COLOMBO: Sri Lanka cricketers celebrate after victory over Bangladesh by 122 runs in the third one day international (ODI) cricket match of a three-match ODI series between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh at The R Premadasa Stadium. — AFP

announced his retirement last week. Tamim-led Bangladesh wore black armbands to pay respect to their first national captain, Shamim Kabir, who died on Monday. — AFP

Unsettled India start rebuilding in Florida

LAUDERHILL: India head into their all-format tour of the West Indies this weekend with more on their mind than simply winning a couple of T20s. For Virat Kohli's side — and indeed for the West Indies — it is a chance to pick up the pieces after a disappointing one-day international (ODI) World Cup in England and put behind them the recent talk of splits in the camp.

Kohli's confidant Ravi Shastri is on borrowed time before the appointment of a new coach, former captain MS Dhoni has skipped the tour to do military service while Kohli this week has had to dismiss talk of a rift with prolific opening batsman Rohit Sharma. "It baffles you as a leader, as a coach, and as a team when lies are being floated around," Kohli told reporters this week. "And they are made to look believable. We have had no issues."

India, unexpectedly beaten by New Zealand in the World Cup semi-final last month, are likely to find plenty of support during the first two T20s on Saturday and Sunday with expatriate Indians expected to outnumber West Indian fans at the delightful Central Broward Stadium in Lauderhill, Florida.

Lauderhill, home of (USA) cricket

The stadium hosted its first internationals back in 2010 when New Zealand played Sri Lanka in two T20s. West Indies and India played a T20 there three years ago and produced real fireworks, with KL Rahul smashing a century off 46 balls and Evin Lewis responding for the West Indies with a ton off 49 balls. The Indians won by just one run.

Rahul will be hoping to replicate that form in Lauderhill and in the third T20 and ODI series in Guyana and

Trinidad but the Indians will miss the experience of Dhoni as well as all-rounder Hardik Pandya, who has been rested, and fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah, who will join the squad for the tour-ending Test matches. The Tests in Antigua and Jamaica will have a special significance as they will mark the first round of matches for each side in the new World Test Championship.

Unlike the visitors, the West Indies went into the World Cup as one of the outsiders and despite a resounding victory over Pakistan to open their campaign, they slid down to ninth in the final standings amid much disaffection and rancor among their diehard supporters over the repeated manner in which they surrendered potential winning positions. Their meeting with India at Old Trafford ended in a crushing 125-run defeat.

Now, with an eye on building towards the defense of their World T20 title in Australia in 15 months' time, they have welcomed back experienced franchise globetrotters in all —rounder Kieron Pollard and spinner Sunil Narine. Carlos Brathwaite is back as captain. There is no Chris Gayle in Florida as he is hard at work in the Global T20 event in Canada. But the big-hitting opener has been selected for the ODI leg of the tour, perhaps as a final farewell in front of home fans. Already 39, he is hardly likely to feature in the next World Cup in India in 2023. India will start favorites across all three formats although the West Indies are expected to be at their most competitive and explosive in the T20s.

T20 Teams (probable):

West Indies — Carlos Brathwaite (captain), Evin Lewis, John Campbell, Shimron Hetmyer, Nicholas Pooran, Kieron Pollard, Keemo Paul, Rovman Powell, Sunil Narine, Khary Pierre, Oshane Thomas

India — Virat Kohli (captain), Rohit Sharma, Shikhar Dhawan, K. L. Rahul, Rishabh Pant (wicketkeeper), Manish Pandey, Krunal Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Khaleel Ahmed, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Deepak Chahar. — AFP

Tiger commits to first two US PGA playoff events

MIAMI: Reigning Masters champion Tiger Woods committed Wednesday to playing in US PGA Tour playoff events the next two weeks, hoping for the chance to defend his Tour Championship title. Woods, a 15-time major champion chasing the all-time record of 18 major wins by Jack Nicklaus, tweeted that he would play in the Northern Trust at Liberty National in suburban New York next week and the BMW Championship at Medinah near Chicago in two weeks.

"Ready to begin the FedExCup playoffs starting with @TheNTGolf and then the @BMWChamps. Hope to see you there," Woods tweeted. Woods was a Northern Trust runner-up at Liberty National in 2009 and 2013 and captured PGA Championships at Medinah in 1999 and 2006. The 43-year-old US star has won 81 US PGA titles, one shy of the career record set by Sam Snead. Woods, a two-time winner of the US PGA playoff crown, stands 27th in the season points standings, at risk of not cracking the top 30 who qualify for the season-ending showdown at East Lake in Atlanta.

The top 125 players on the season points list after this week's Wyndham Championship in Greensboro, North Carolina, will secure 2019-20 US PGA berths and advance to the three-event playoffs. From a field of 125 at the Northern Trust only 70 advance to the BMW and from there only 30 reach the Tour Championship. If Woods plays at the Northern Trust and BMW events in consecutive weeks, it will be the first time he has played in back-to-back weeks since February at Riviera and the WGC Mexico Championship.

Should he then attempt to defend his crown in the Tour Championship, it would be the first time he has played three weeks in a row since last year's playoffs. Woods has played a very limited schedule since capturing his fifth green jacket last April at Augusta National, snapping a major win drought dating to 2008 and serving notice he had completed his fight-back following multiple back surgeries. Since the Masters, Woods has played only this year's three other major tournaments and the Memorial, a Nicklaus-hosted US Open tuneup event. In his most recent start, he missed the cut two weeks ago at the British Open at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland. — AFP

Sports

Long-awaited Asian juniors boxing tournament will begin tomorrow



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The Asian juniors boxing tournament will begin tomorrow under the patronage of Kuwait Olympic Committee President Sheikh Fahd Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad and in the presence of Deputy Director General of the Public Authority for Sports Saqer Al-Mulla, head of Asian Boxing Federation Anas Al-Otaiba and heads of Asian boxing federations that are participating in the championship. The opening ceremony will witness a parade of participating countries, a show that will reflect the youth's happiness towards the lifting of Kuwait's international sports participation as well as folkloric dances.

Preliminary matches will also be held, leading to the finals on Aug 8, as boxers will compete for 14 gold medals. Chairman of Kuwait Boxing Federation Mohammad Mansi said everything is ready for the Asian championship, as efforts were made to ensure the success of this important event.

Mansi thanked Kuwait Olympic Committee and its President Sheikh Fahd, who followed preparations day by day and provided great support to the Kuwait Boxing Federation. He also fol-



Mohammad Mansi

lowed the national boxing team and gave all what was required to ensure their best physical and technical readiness. Mansi also lauded the distinguished role of PAS in removing all obstacles in order to ensure an organization that reflects the status of Kuwaiti youth in Asia. Mansi thanked Kuwait Sports Club board and its Chairman Khalid Al-Ghanem, who welcomed the hosting of the tournament at his club.

Meanwhile, Kuwait national team coach Hamid Zayed said the national boxing team has reached the best physical and technical preparedness, despite the short period they had compared to the rest of teams, especially teams from Kazakhstan, the best in the world, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, South Korea, China and India. "Time was not on our side to pre-



pare boxers the way we wanted, but we reached a satisfactory level," Zayed said. "The Kuwaiti athlete is courageous and clever, and this is required in a boxer. We

hope this continental tournament will be a launch pad for Kuwait boxing to make the best achievements regionally and at the continental level," he added.

Australia's Folau launches legal action over homophobia sacking

SYDNEY: Fallen star Israel Folau has launched legal action against Rugby Australia and the NSW Waratahs for unfair dismissal, he said yesterday, demanding an apology, compensation and the right to play again after he was sacked for making homophobic comments. Super Rugby's record try-scorer, who was on a Aus\$1 million-a-year (US\$690,000), four-year contract, was fired in May for posting online that "hell awaits" gay people and others he considers sinners.

The devout Christian opted not to appeal and mediation attempts failed, prompting Folau to take the highly divisive case, which has drawn support from conservatives and outrage elsewhere, to the courts. "A conciliation before the Fair Work Commission did not resolve the matters between us. Accordingly, I am commencing court proceedings against Rugby Australia and

the NSW Waratahs," he said in a video message.

Folau, who has played 73 times for the Wallabies, raised more than Aus\$2 million in just two days through the Australian Christian Lobby to help pay his legal fees, before the appeal was paused, with enough money "for now". It replaced a GoFundMe crowdfunding campaign that was shut down after raising more than Aus\$700,000, with the platform saying it would not "tolerate the promotion of discrimination or exclusion".

Folau's claim, lodged with the Federal Circuit Court in Melbourne on Wednesday and seen by AFP, argued he was unlawfully dismissed under a section of Australia's Fair Work Act that disallows sackings because of a person's religion. It said the 30-year-old was seeking compensation, interest, damages, injunctive and declaratory relief, along with an apology.

'Fundamental human right'

Previous reports put the compensation figure at Aus\$10 million, including for lost sponsorship and marketing opportunities, a sum that could prove disastrous for Rugby Australia. "Mr Folau is an elite sportsman and record try-scorer who should be playing for the NSW Waratahs and the Wallabies, including in the upcoming Rugby World Cup," his lawyers said in the claim. "His form and natural talent suggest he would continue to be a star player for both teams."

It added that there was nothing unlawful about uploading religious content to social media. "This benign conduct, which the community accepts is a recognized fundamental human right and freedom, did not justify any punitive action being taken against him by his employer

under the player contract or otherwise," the claim stated.

"It certainly did not justify Mr. Folau losing his career and livelihood." The governing body had no immediate comment, but has insisted Folau's firing was purely contractual, saying he had agreed not to disparage anyone over their sexual orientation following a similar controversy last year. "I have been blessed to have received the support of tens of thousands of Australians throughout my journey, and I want to say thank you to everyone who has offered their prayers and support," Folau added in his video message. "It has meant so much to (wife) Maria and me over the last few months and gives us strength for the road ahead." The matter has been listed for a directions hearing on August 13. — AFP

Sports

Fantastic Felix: Atletico blanks MLS All-Stars team

ORLANDO: Portuguese teen sensation Joao Felix came off the bench to score a superb goal yesterday as Atletico Madrid blanked the Major League Soccer All-Stars 3-0 at rain-soaked Exploria Stadium. Marcos Llorente, signed from city rivals Real this summer for \$42 million, had put the Spanish side ahead in the first half before 19-year-old, \$134 million striker Felix scored a brilliant second to decide a match that failed to spark into action, a swathe of changes on both teams contributing to a decidedly low-tempo affair.

Diego Costa's late third was no more than the visitors deserved. Los Angeles Galaxy star Zlatan Ibrahimovic was withdrawn after just 30 minutes and despite Wayne Rooney's best efforts in the first half, it was the La Liga side that was far superior. "I haven't seen too much of Joao Felix but... he looks like he has good technique," Rooney told AFP. "I'm sure he will be a good player for Atletico in the near future." The Spanish side spent plenty of money betting Rooney is right.

"Of course it's a big price to pay for such a young player but that's the way the market is going now," Rooney told AFP. "Everyone is spending a lot of money. 'I remember a few years ago, Zinedine Zidane went for over \$60 million and everyone was saying 'What's going on?' But that's the price you have to pay now.'" Madrid manager Diego Simeone refused to single out any of his new players, including Felix.

"I've been pleased with all the new signings and the path we are going on during this pre-season," Simeone said. Inclement weather in the Orlando area delayed kickoff before a sellout crowd for 40 minutes but the rain failed to dampen an excellent atmosphere for the North American league's annual exhibition match.

First real opportunity

The MLS All-Stars, captained by leading scorer Carlos Vela of LAFC, boasted the likes of DC United's Rooney, Ibrahimovic and home favorite Nani in their starting line-up. Rooney, the former Manchester United and England forward, was operating in a deep lying midfield role and saw plenty of the ball in the opening stages without being able to penetrate the Spanish team's defense. Atletico created the first real opportunity, Rodrigo Riquelme firing high and wide on 17 minutes following good work from Vitolo, while Rooney saw a brilliantly struck effort from 30 yards whistle just over the bar.

Ibrahimovic, who had barely touched the ball, was withdrawn on 30 minutes, much to the disappointment of the 25,527 spectators who hoped to see the mercurial Swedish superstar in the action. Atletico's opening goal on 43 minutes was a superb team effort, Riquelme brilliantly back flicking the ball to Llorente, who drove the ball past Philadelphia Union goalkeeper Andre Blake.

James O'Connor, the Orlando City coach in charge of the All-Stars, completely changed his



ORLANDO: Joao Felix #7 of Atletico de Madrid controls the ball against Bastian Schweinsteiger #31 of the MLS All-Stars during the 2019 MLS All-Star Game at Exploria Stadium. — AFP

team at half-time, including withdrawing Rooney and Nani. It was one of the substitutes, Diego Rossi, who almost equalized when his close-range effort hit the side netting before Nicolas Lodeiro was denied by Atleti keeper Antonio Adan. On 55 minutes, Simeone shuffled

his pack by making seven changes of his own including introducing Felix, who was signed from Benfica this summer, and his superb long range effort in the 84th minute sealed a comprehensive victory. Costa made it three at the death from close range. — AFP

Leeds target Premier League push

LONDON: Marcelo Bielsa has another chance to deliver Premier League football to the success-starved fans of Leeds United after falling agonizingly short last season, as the Championship starts this weekend. The charismatic 64-year-old Argentine, idolized by Tottenham boss Mauricio Pochettino, gave the three-time English champions a boost by agreeing to stay on for a second campaign.

Leeds start their latest bid to escape the second tier on Sunday against Bristol City after the bitter disappointment of letting slip a 2-0 aggregate lead against Derby in the play-off semi-finals in May. Derby should once again be strong after replacing replaced Frank Lampard, who left to manage Chelsea, with former Dutch star Phillip Cocu. The relegated Premier League trio of Cardiff, Fulham and Huddersfield, will be buoyed by parachute payments, but the last side to go straight back were Newcastle, after they slipped out of the top flight in 2016. West Brom, who reached the play-offs in May are positioned to make a strong push under former West Ham and Croatia manager Slaven Bilic.

Leeds favorites

But fallen giants Leeds, missing from the Premier League since 2004, are the early favorites to complete their journey back to the top flight. Bielsa, who has kept faith with most of the squad from last season, also bringing in Portugal inter-

national winger Helder Costa on loan from Premier League side Wolves, has been succinct in his appraisal of their chances of success. "We can arrive at the goal we want to achieve," he said. The goal of automatic promotion has been hammered out in no uncertain terms by the club hierarchy.

Italian owner Andrea Radrizzani has stayed put, having denied rumours he was trying to sell the club. "When you are really close to something and you don't get it, you can take two roads," Leeds director of football Victor Orta told the BBC. "You can think about the chance you lost, or think about the one in front of you. We have decided on the second one. When you look back, you can't advance." Orta said he was not concerned by the lack of new faces at the club, adding "continuity is our value for next season".

At least Bielsa's famously tough training regime will not be the shock it was on his arrival last year. "You can have double, triple, four sessions a day," said captain Liam Cooper. "There were hard blisters on my feet. 'Everything just ached. Sometimes I don't even get to put my little girl to bed at 7:00 pm. This is day after day.'"

Cocu is taking charge of a Derby side brimming with young talent and will seek to inspire the players after the disappointment of defeat in the play-off final against Aston Villa. The 48-year-old Dutchman, capped 101 times, is seeking to restore lustre to his CV after a brief, traumatic, stay with Turkish outfit Fenerbahce following a successful spell in the PSV Eindhoven dug-out.

"Over the last few years the club has tried to build something and I want to continue this process, this philosophy," he said. "I have the feeling it's a good fit and a good moment to step in." Bilic, another high-profile appointment, is bullish about West Brom's chances, describing them as a "massive club". — AFP

US women's league seeks World Cup winning bounce

NEW YORK: The US women's football team is the best on the planet, but the sport's domestic league is virtually unknown. Players, organizers and fans hope that is about to change as the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) is looking to capitalize on the national team's triumph at the World Cup in July — and it could already be seeing a bounce. "We're seeing a huge wave from the World Cup. In the NWSL attendances have been up, so it's great to see," two-time world and Olympic champion Carli Lloyd told a group of reporters.

Lloyd, 37, spoke after playing a match for New Jersey club side Sky Blue FC. More than a half hour after the game, Sky Blue FC players were still busy signing programs, posters and calendars for the hundreds of young fans who lined up to meet their heroes. "There's a lot of people that still have no idea that there is a NWSL women's league," Lloyd said, and explained what the players could do to help change that.

"Changing people's lives. Going down the line, signing autographs, taking selfies. A kid sees that. 'Wow, I just got a selfie with Carli. I want to come back.' That's really what it's all about," she added. A capacity crowd of 5,000 packed into

Yurcak Field stadium last week for Lloyd's first Sky Blue FC game since she returned from the World Cup in France. The hosts lost 1-0 to the Washington Spirit. The same night in Seattle, the Portland Thorns thrashed the Houston Dash 5-0 in front of a crowd of more than 22,000, just short of the largest-ever attendance for an NWSL match.

"Sometimes in the NWSL you don't play in front of big crowds, so I feel like it's awesome to have two games back-to-back where it's been a sell-out crowd, said national team member Rose Lavelle, who plays for the Washington Spirit. "Hopefully, it will just keep continuing," she said. Many of the spectators AFP spoke to were watching Sky Blue play for the first time, highlighting the growing interest in the women's game following the national team's successful defence of their World Cup crown.

Sponsorship

In addition to their 2019 and 2015 titles, the US team also triumphed in 1999 and at the sport's 1991 inaugural championship. "I think women sports in general are catching on and being more popular," said PJ Petrow, who has been coaching girls' football for 25 years. "I don't think this win was any bigger than any others. It's just because of social media and a lot of stuff going on it's attracted a lot more people to the sport," she added.

Interest in US women's football has tended to soar after each of the country's four World Cup titles before dipping again later, but the NWSL is determined to make this year's bump last. The league suffered a blow earlier this year when the A&E network, a long-time broadcaster and an NWSL shareholder, suddenly withdrew its support. — AFP

Sports

‘Spree from the East’ - No Bale, but China resurgent in transfer market

SHANGHAI: Gareth Bale’s £1-million-a-week move from Real Madrid collapsed but Chinese football has re-emerged as a force in the global transfer market despite measures to rein in spending. Marko Arnautovic, Salomon Rondon and Stephan El Shaarawy all landed in the Chinese Super League (CSL) during China’s summer transfer window, which closed on Wednesday. There was a flurry of domestic transfers too, while Champions League-winning coach Rafael Benitez also arrived, taking over at Dalian Yifang.

Nearly 100 million euros was spent in transfer fees by CSL clubs, compared to the record 128 million euros splurged in the summer of 2016, said the respected Oriental Sports Daily. The Austrian forward Arnautovic was the biggest mover, swapping West Ham United for CSL champions Shanghai SIPG for 25 million euros. But it was Bale’s proposed transfer to Jiangsu Suning which really made headlines and renewed fears about Chinese clubs distorting the transfer market with wages the rest cannot match.

The 30-year-old forward was all set to sign a handsomely paid three-year contract with Jiangsu, but Real pulled the plug at the last moment because of wrangling over the fee, a source told AFP. Two years ago, after a series of record deals, the Chinese Football Association — at

the behest of the government — slapped a 100 percent tax on the transfers of incoming foreign players. The prohibitive move worked: in the summer of 2017 the highest-profile arrival was Anthony Modeste on loan from Cologne.

The CFA brought in more cooling measures at the start of this year, including a cap on the wages of Chinese players and a limit on bonuses. Clubs were also told that their annual expenditure could not exceed 1.2 billion yuan (\$174 million, 158 million euros) in 2019, which will decline to 900 million in 2021. But in light of the latest transfer dealings, those measures were now “a pile of waste paper”, said a commentary in the Oriental Sports Daily.

Government’s ‘hidden hand’

Harry Belford Spencer, co-founder of First Pick Group, a Shanghai-based sports advisory company, said that the swingeing tax slapped on in 2017 has deterred CSL clubs from shelling out huge transfer fees. Oscar’s 60-million-euro move from Chelsea to Shanghai SIPG in January 2017 remains a Chinese — and Asian — transfer record. “The dust has settled and teams are now more savvy about their recruitment,” he said.

But the Shanghai-based Briton, who is involved in the Chinese transfer scene, said that CSL teams



SHENZHEN: Paris Saint-Germain’s French forward Kylian Mbappe looks on during a training session at The Xixiang Sports Centre in Shenzhen yesterday, ahead of the French Trophy of Champions football match between Rennes and Paris Saint-Germain. — AFP

continue to offer wages that are two or even three times what players earn in Europe. That is, however, different from the heady days of a few years ago, when salaries could be four or five times higher, he said. William Bi, a Beijing-based sports expert, said this transfer window was the “hottest” since the winter of 2016.

“The football spending spree

from the East seems to have resumed,” he said, agreeing with Spencer that Chinese clubs were now smarter in the market, buying players for footballing reasons rather than show and shunning has-beens looking for a final payday. Bi believes that Chinese football will attract more highly rated coaches like Benitez because there is no transfer fee and clubs can justify

the outlay on wages to the government, because having top-notch managers helps Chinese football. “For financial reasons, it is still far away from claiming China is a big spender like three or four years ago,” said Bi. “But for the time being, what we can feel is that the hidden hand (of the government) curbing football investment is gradually loosening.” — AFP

‘We’ll have a good season’: Zidane remains confident

MUNICH: French striker Karim Benzema scored a hat-trick as Real Madrid defeated Fenerbahce 5-3 in a pre-season friendly on Wednesday which temporarily lifted the summer gloom which has engulfed the Spanish giants and coach Zinedine Zidane. However, problems remain for Real as they have now conceded 16 goals in just five friendly matches. They faced their Turkish opponents having been defeated by Tottenham 1-0 on Tuesday in the first match of a four-team event which also features German champions Bayern Munich.

“We are going to find the solutions, we are going to work. I stand by my players and I know that we are going to make progress and that we will have a very good season,” said Zidane whose team had been left bruised by a humiliating 7-3 defeat by

city rivals Atletico in a friendly in the United States last week. “Nobody likes conceding three goals but we have scored five. For us, this is a positive victory.” Zidane’s preparations for the new season have also been overshadowed by the saga of Gareth Bale’s future at the club.

The Welsh star was left out of the Spanish side’s squad for the two matches in Munich after his planned transfer to Chinese side Jiangsu Suning, who had offered the Welshman a three-year-deal worth £1 million (\$1.1 million) a week, broke down. Benzema said the humiliation at the hands of Atletico was a thing of the past and that the crucial date will be the weekend of August 17 when the new La Liga season starts. “The criticisms after the match against Atletico were normal. It was only a friendly but you cannot concede seven goals,” said the French striker. “However, it’s no longer on my mind.”

In the final of the tournament, Tottenham claimed the trophy 3-2 in a penalty shoot-out win over Bayern after the game had ended 2-2. Eric Lamela and Christian Eriksen had put Spurs 2-0 up ahead before 19-year-old Jann-Fiete Arp, signed in the summer from Hamburg, and Alphonso Davis, just 18, pulled the German giants level with second-half strikes. — AFP

Football calendar is harming star players

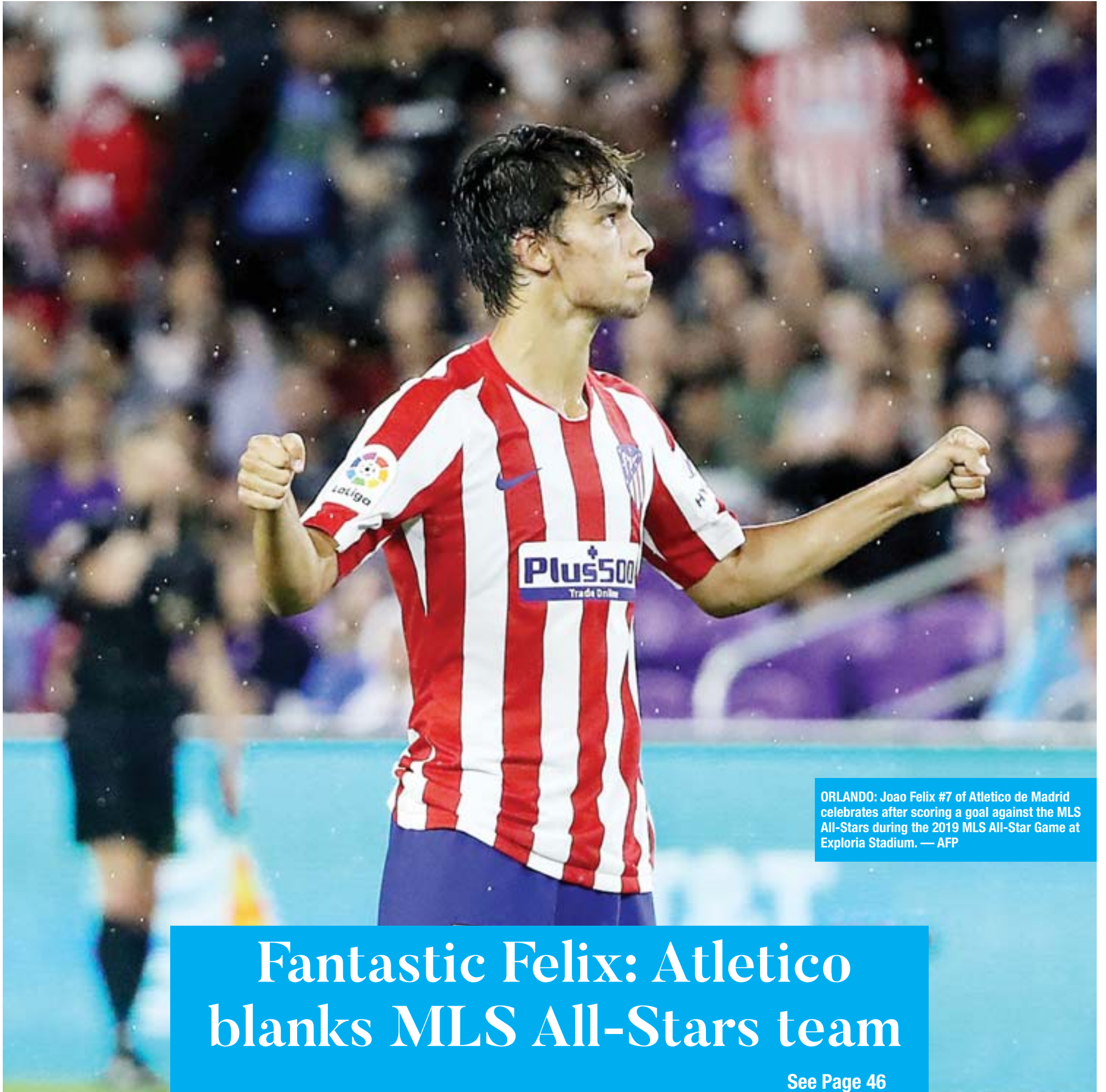
PARIS: Top players are being put at risk by an increasingly crowded international calendar that gives them no chance to recover from matches and travel, said their union, FIFPRO, in a report published yesterday. ‘At the Limit,’ a glossy 40-page document, builds on demands the union has long expressed. It wants players to have five-day breaks between matches, extra recovery time after long international flights, a two-week winter break and a summer off season of at least four weeks.

“The international match calendar has become denser. The game is faster, more physical and more global than ever,” says the report. “Although the demands on players are increasing, their physical and psychological capacity has natural limits.” The report argues that science backs up its recommendations, without going into details. It also offers quotes top managers and players. “If we don’t learn to deal with our players in a better way,” said Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp. “We will kill the beautiful game. Without the player, the game is not a good one.”

Pep Guardiola of Manchester City agrees. “It’s a crazy schedule and it’s going to kill our players,” said the Spaniard. “They have to rest.” FIFPRO, which represents more than 65,000 players worldwide, said football could place a limit on how much and when each individual plays but schedule the same number of games. “While the top few hundred players in the world are being drained by an overload of competitions, thousands of their colleagues are offered too few playing opportunities to shape a lasting career,” wrote Theo van Seggelen the FIFPro Secretary General.

FIFPRO surveyed 543 elite players. Some of them clocked up huge numbers of playing minutes and air miles. The leading example is Heung-Min Son, the Tottenham and South Korea star, who last season helped his club reach the Champions League final and his country win gold at the Asian Games. He played 78 games, 53 of them for Spurs. Of those, 72% were played on less than five days rest. Son flew 110,600 kilometers for international matches, a number that does include six competitive games on the European continent with Spurs.

“Global elite players are faced with match overload which threatens not only their sporting performance but also their health and sustainable career,” said the report. “There are a limited number of elite athletes whose talents light up our sport. Their careers are short, intense and fragile.” — AFP



ORLANDO: Joao Felix #7 of Atletico de Madrid celebrates after scoring a goal against the MLS All-Stars during the 2019 MLS All-Star Game at Exploria Stadium. — AFP

Fantastic Felix: Atletico blanks MLS All-Stars team

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